

COOPERATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF INTERNATIONAL GRANTS

The development of higher education systems of countries is increasingly taking into account global trends, including tendencies in the globalization of the educational space. Higher education institutions in many countries maintain extensive international relations, accept foreign students, implement international academic mobility programs, participate in grant programs, etc. A comprehensive study and generalization of this experience is undoubtedly of significant scientific and applied interest and confirms the relevance of the research topic.

Domestic universities and scientific institutions take an active part in bilateral scientific and technical cooperation within the framework of intergovernmental agreements. Thus, in 2019, Ukrainian scientists together with scientists from 12 countries (EU members, India, China, USA, Korea) carried out 119 bilateral projects. Compared to 2018, the number of bilateral projects increased by almost a quarter [1].

In addition, Ukraine takes an associated part in the Euroatom Research and Training Program, the International European Innovative Scientific and Technical Program EUREKA, the NATO Science for Peace Program, etc. Ukrainian research organizations and universities cooperate with international organizations and foundations, including the European Organization for Nuclear Research, the Ukrainian Science and Technology Center, the Scientific Committee for Antarctic Research [2].

According to the official information of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, there are a number of prerequisites for Ukrainian education institutions to enter into cooperation with foreign education institutions. In particular, one of the main priorities of the national policy in the field of education and science is the integration of Ukraine into the European Research Area. This is facilitated by bilateral international cooperation with EU member states, Eastern Partnership countries, participation in the EU Framework Program for Research and Innovation "Horizon 2020". Since 2014, Ukrainian participants have received 182 grants worth 31.8 million euros [2].

Adherence to the conceptual guidelines for the management of cooperation of higher education institutions for the development of global competitiveness allows to expand the area of cooperation of research and innovation in international higher education institutions. These actions correspond to the current activities of various institutions and research funding instruments, for example Erasmus+ programs, European Structural and Investment Funds. Using this toolkit allows to build and develop skills, especially in the fields of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and ICT (Information and Communication Technologies). In addition, in connection with the "green" and digital transition of society, new skills are needed. International higher education institutions must act to ensure continuous capacity development and remain economically competitive on a global scale. Given the growing need for labor and labor skills and professions, it is worth encouraging more citizens to learn the very skills that are lacking in the labor market. However, all learners without exception need to acquire advanced cross-curricular skills such as critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as well as key computing and digital competencies and skills, so that they can be assured of success after graduation.

In 2014, all countries were given access to the Erasmus+ program, which is now an integral part of the EU's regional cooperation around the world to help reduce poverty and promote inclusive and sustainable growth. Erasmus+ supports the modernization of curricula, helps to improve the quality of teaching and education, and supports more transparent education management and cooperation between the public and private sectors in this field. More information on the role of Erasmus+ in international cooperation on a global scale is presented in the regional newsletters of the EU flagship program in the field of education.

Cooperation among higher education institutions through international grants is a valuable approach for fostering collaboration and advancing various aspects of education and research. The key points of this cooperation are the following:

1. Research cooperation: higher education institutions can collaborate on research projects, summarizing their expertise and resources to address global challenges.
2. Academic mobility: international grants often support student and faculty exchanges, enabling cross-cultural learning and knowledge sharing.
3. Interdisciplinary Initiatives: this cooperation can encourage interdisciplinary approaches to complex problems, leading to innovative solutions.
4. Infrastructure and Facilities: grants may fund the development or improvement of research facilities, benefiting multiple universities.
5. Global Networks: collaboration on international grants can help higher education institutions expand their global networks, connecting with other institutions and experts worldwide.
6. Capacity Building: such cooperation can contribute to the capacity building of institutions in less developed regions, promoting equitable access to education and research opportunities [3, 4].

As a part of its internationalization policy, Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design (KNUTD) is an active participant in education and research grants, particularly Erasmus+. In 2020 Jean Monnet module of KNUTD "Role of Financial Consumer Protection in the Financial Stability in Digital Era: European Approaches" was supported by the European Commission. The module is aimed at Europeanizing the institutional, organizational and procedural architecture of consumer protection in financial conditions in the context of digital transformation. In the future it will contribute to financial integration and financial stability of Ukraine and will be achieved through European studies by bachelors in finance and economics [5].

Moreover, in 2022 project team from KNUTD won Erasmus+ grant Virtual Exchanges (VEHUB4YOU). The VEHUB4YOU project is a set of online activities between participants from different countries that promote intercultural dialogue between young people and the development of their soft skills. This enables every young person to access high-quality international and intercultural, formal and non-formal education without physical mobility. Although virtual meetings are not able to replace physical mobility, participants in virtual exchanges receive significant benefits from the international educational experience. Digital platforms are a valuable tool for partially responding to the global mobility constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent Russian invasion. Virtual exchanges also contribute to the spread of European values outside the EU, and they can also be the basis for expanding physical exchanges. VEHUB4YOU provides for greater use of virtual exchanges between young people and education institutions in Europe and beyond to further continents as they engage young people in intercultural dialogue and improve their skills, create international online projects and implement good practices [5, 6].

In 2023 KNUTD department of smart-economics won Jean Monnet Module "Promotion of European skills and approaches for sustainable bioeconomy in the conditions of Ukrainian acute challenges" (PESAB). The main goal of PESAB is to promote the knowledge of the European Union in order to develop a sustainable bioeconomy in Ukraine according to the EU strategy for the Bioeconomy. The PESAB proposal will disseminate its ideas in the framework of virtual hubs for young people, namely including the ideas of the proposal to the programs of trainings of these hubs [5].

It is expected that cooperation within the framework of these international grants will enhance the synergistic effect of interaction for all participants of the process. Adaptation to work in new conditions will allow higher education institutions to employ leadership positions in the industry and gain new management skills both from a systemic point of view approach as well as technically [7].

An important issue that is considered possible to solve due to the creation of education of alliances within the framework of international grants is financing of activities. In connection with the political and economic situation in Ukraine, higher education, unfortunately, in the coming years, will not be in the field of priority funding from the side of the state, which may lead to the closure of education programs, reduction of full-time employees, refusal to study in a number of specialties in accordance with part-time employment, signing of temporary labor agreements with employees, reduction of scientific activity in higher education institutions.

To conclude, international grants provide a platform for higher education institutions to work together, fostering innovation and addressing global challenges more effectively. However, successful cooperation often requires effective communication, common goals and efficient resource allocation. Involvement of Ukraine in the global education space of higher education, risks caused by Russian aggression and rapidly changing economic conditions of activity, require the latest approaches and methods of cooperation within the framework of international grants.

Literature

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