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INTEGRATION OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND BUSINESS AS A FACTOR OF SOCIAL SECURITY AND POST-WAR RECOVERY OF UKRAINE

The research is devoted to the development of scientific and practical approaches to the integration of education, science and business and to the definition of prospects for the interaction of the outlined spheres in the context of the need to ensure social security and post-war reconstruction of Ukraine. The methodological basis of the study was the fundamental aspects of modern economic theory, scientific works of domestic and foreign scientists on the issues of ensuring the interaction of the education and science system and business structures. In order to solve the tasks set in the work, both general scientific and special research methods were used, including: analysis and synthesis, deduction and induction, generalization method and system analysis, abstract-logical method, method of systemic generalization. The directions of integration of education and business in the context of solving the problem of youth employment were outlined, in particular: the introduction of dual education, the organization of joint educational events with business representatives, the promotion of the establishment of startup schools and young entrepreneur schools, the organization of events for the purpose of research projects by students, teachers and scientists commissioned by enterprises, the holding of all-Ukrainian and regional competitions for the best scientific and practical development of students with encouragement from employers, monitoring the employment of graduates of educational institutions and the creation of an information base of graduates at the national and regional levels. The directions of integration of education and business were determined regarding the training, retraining and advanced training of older people and a conceptual mechanism of cooperation between employers and educational institutions was proposed, which can be taken into account in the process of implementing the relevant project. The separate direction of interaction between education and business is proposed - cooperation between universities with representatives of business and the public in the direction of training and further employment of war veterans. It is determined that it is the educational direction in the process of professional adaptation of war veterans to civilian life that should become an important priority of interaction between education and business in the context of training, retraining and advanced training of military personnel who have completed military service. Promising directions of cooperation between scientists and business representatives are outlined, in particular, in the context of using grant funding opportunities, organizing events aimed at developing research projects commissioned by enterprises, popularizing the results of research by young scientists, etc.

Key words: Education, Science, Business, Entrepreneurship, Veteran business.

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ІНТЕГРАЦІЯ ОСВІТИ, НАУКИ І БІЗНЕСУ ЯК ФАКТОР СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ БЕЗПЕКИ ТА ПОВОЄННОГО ВІДНОВЛЕННЯ УКРАЇНИ

Дослідження присвячено розробці науково-практичних підходів до інтеграції освіти, науки і бізнесу та визначенню перспектив взаємодії окреслених сфер у контексті необхідності забезпечення соціальної безпеки та післявоєнної відбудови України. Методологічною основою дослідження стали фундаментальні положення сучасної економічної теорії, наукові праці вітчизняних і зарубіжних вчених з питань забезпечення взаємодії системи освіти і науки та бізнес-структур. Для вирішення поставлених у роботі завдань використовувалися як загальнонаукові, так і спеціальні методи дослідження, зокрема: аналіз і синтез, дедукція та індукція, метод узагальнення та системного аналізу, абстрактно-логічний метод, метод системного узагальнення. Окреслено напрями інтеграції освіти та бізнесу в контексті вирішення проблеми зайнятості молоді, зокрема: запровадження дуальної освіти, організація спільних освітніх заходів з представниками бізнесу, сприяння створенню стартап-шкіл та шкіл молодого підприємця, організація заходів з метою виконання науково-дослідних робіт студентами, викладачами та науковцями на замовлення підприємств, проведення всеукраїнських та регіональних конкурсів на кращу науково-практичну розробку студентів із заохоченням з боку роботодавців, проведення моніторингу працевлаштування випускників навчальних закладів та створення інформаційної бази випускників на загальнодержавному та регіональному рівні. Визначено напрями інтеграції освіти та бізнесу щодо підготовки, перепідготовки та підвищення кваліфікації осіб старшого віку та запропоновано концептуальний механізм співпраці роботодавців та навчальних закладів, який може бути врахований в процесі реалізації відповідного проекту. Запропоновано окремий напрям взаємодії освіти та бізнесу - співпраця університетів з представниками бізнесу та громадськості в напрямку навчання та подальшого працевлаштування ветеранів війни. Визначено, що саме освітній напрям у процесі професійної адаптації ветеранів війни до цивільного життя має стати важливим пріоритетом взаємодії освіти та бізнесу в контексті підготовки, перепідготовки та підвищення кваліфікації військовослужбовців, які пройшли військову службу. Окреслено перспективні напрями співпраці науковців та представників бізнесу, зокрема, в контексті використання можливостей грантового фінансування, організації заходів, спрямованих на розробку науково-дослідних проектів на замовлення підприємств, популяризації результатів досліджень молодих науковців тощо.

Ключові слова: освіта, наука, бізнес, підприємництво, ветеранський бізнес.

Рис. – 1, Літ. – 16

Introduction. The war in Ukraine has led to an increase in negative trends in the socio-economic sphere, numerous challenges and threats to the social security of citizens, including rising unemployment, declining real incomes, an increase in the number of people below the poverty line, a growing number of emigrants and internally displaced persons, loss of labour and intellectual potential, and a demographic crisis. That is why the issue of integration of education, science and business deserves special attention both during martial law and at the stage of post-war reconstruction of the country, which will help to overcome negative trends in employment and thus create a state of protection of social interests of the population in terms of preserving labour potential and professional fulfilment, and creating the welfare of citizens.

Literature review and problem statement. The importance of youth employment and youth policy in the labour market has been studied by scholars O. Hryshnova, A. Samartseva, and O. Shtanska. O. [1, 2]. O. Kolomiets studied the problems of employment of older people [10]. Problems and prospects of veteran business development in Ukraine were considered by R. Korinets, O. Protchenko, K. Kraus, A. Ignatyuk, N. Kraus [3, 4]. At the same time, the issue of forming promising areas for the integration of education, science and business in the context of social security and post-war reconstruction of Ukraine requires further research.

The purpose of the article is to develop scientific and practical approaches to the integration of education, science and business and to determine the prospects for interaction between these areas in the context of the need to ensure social security and post-war reconstruction of Ukraine. The methodological basis is the fundamental provisions of modern economic theory, scientific works of scholars on the issues of ensuring the interaction of the education and science system and business structures. Both general scientific and special research methods were used to solve the tasks set in the study, in particular: analysis and synthesis, deduction and induction, method of generalisation and system analysis, abstract and logical method, method of system generalisation.

Results of the research.

Interaction between education and business in the context of overcoming the risks of youth unemployment. Given the importance of establishing a partnership between public authorities, employers and the education sector, the main areas of their interaction should be identified. For example, preferential taxation may become a very effective tool for encouraging employers to hire graduates in the future. Preferential taxation instruments can be applied to enterprises and organisations that hire graduates of educational institutions for their first job, as well as hire young people under vocational training programmes of the State Employment Service.

In the context of the significance of the educational component, it is important to update educational standards to form a system of competencies, taking into account the opinion of employers (stakeholders in the educational process), and to expand cooperation with business structures on practical training of students (in particular, in the area of dual education); involvement of employers in joint lectures, seminars, and trainings for students both at enterprises and educational institutions; implementation of projects and scientific and technical developments commissioned by employers; development of career centres at educational institutions to help future graduates find their first job, monitor employment of both students and graduates, and establish links with employers to build effective cooperation [5].

In order to improve the focus of the educational sector on solving the problem of youth employment, as well as to integrate the efforts of education and business, we propose a list of strategic priorities for cooperation between educational institutions and representatives of business structures:

1. Implementation of dual education.
2. Organisation of joint educational events with business representatives.
3. Promoting the establishment of start-up schools and schools for young entrepreneurs.
4. Organising events for research projects by students, teachers and researchers commissioned by businesses.
5. Conducting national and regional competitions for the best scientific and practical development of students with the encouragement of employers.
6. Monitoring the employment of graduates of educational institutions and creating an information base of graduates at the national and regional levels.

All of the above priorities can be implemented in the process of substantiating the directions of state, regional, and corporate policies aimed at establishing partnerships between education and business in the context of ensuring the interaction of the educational system and the labour market and compliance with the conditions for protecting the social interests of the population.

Interaction of education and business in the context of overcoming the risks of unemployment of older people. A separate area of integration of education and business is the training, retraining and professional development of older people. Given the significant strengths of this age group of the workforce, including a high level of professional experience and intellectual potential, extensive life experience, and a desire to continue working and be in demand in society, it is advisable to use them to improve the quantitative and qualitative structure of the workforce in wartime. In the presence of a huge number of socio-economic threats associated with a decline in employment and welfare of citizens in times of war, we consider it appropriate to specify the main directions and measures to overcome them by intensifying the interaction between education and business.

The experience of economically developed countries, as well as research by leading scholars, shows that a significant number of people of pre-retirement and retirement age in the labour market does not harm the employment of young people. For example, studies by the International Labour Organization and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development show that the employment rate of older people is positively correlated with the employment rate of young people, meaning that older workers do not limit employment opportunities for young people [6]. However, among the latest trends, it is worth noting the processes of increasing the proportion of older workers in relation to the working population. In this regard, there is an objective need to transform the state policy in the context of ensuring that the interests of representatives of all age groups in the labour market are respected. Foreign studies confirm that most employers do not consider older workers as potential future employees [7].

In addition, employers believe that older workers lack the skills required in the modern business environment. At the same time, older workers have a number of significant advantages that form the basis of their competitiveness in the labour market: qualifications, practical skills, experience and maturity. Unfortunately, age discrimination is a negative factor that works against them. However, on the other hand, it is the employees of this age group who are usually the most experienced and could pass on their work experience to younger employees. Moreover, according to a study by the International Labour Organization, older workers are more committed to their work, spend more time at the workplace, and take less sick leave [8].

Taking into account the experience of developed countries implementing the concept of active ageing, in order to extend working life and realise the potential of older people, it is necessary not only to ensure equal working conditions and eliminate age discrimination, but also to widely apply training and professional development programmes. According to the definition of the concept of active ageing, it is “the process of optimising opportunities for health, participation in community life and security in order to improve the quality of life with increasing age” [9]. Since the practical implementation of the above concept in developed countries is associated with raising the retirement age, as well as the objective need to curb the ageing process and reduce the burden on the working population, the relevant steps have been taken in Ukraine. However, the ‘mechanical’ increase of the retirement age in Ukraine was not coordinated with the overall labour market policy, and did not address such important aspects of employment of older people as low productivity and wages, as well as unsatisfactory working

conditions [10, p. 24]. All of this had a negative impact not only on the ability of older people to work, but also on their health, which led to an increase in morbidity and accidents at work.

Despite the gradual increase in the retirement age, most pensioners continue to work to improve their financial situation. All this is due to the extremely low level of pension provision, which does not meet even the minimum set of human needs. According to the results of a survey of living conditions and activities of older people conducted by the Social Monitoring organisation and the Ukrainian Centre for Social Reforms in 2013 among 1,806 respondents aged 60 and over, almost 30% of pensioners worked after retirement, and 10.6% of the population aged 60 and over still work [11].

Moreover, the possibility of using the professional experience of older people and their desire to work is an additional reserve for the development of social and labour relations and the improvement of living standards for this category of the population. That is why the concept of active ageing is gaining ground around the world, which involves not only eliminating age discrimination and providing jobs with decent working conditions, but also continuous training and professional development.

Measures to improve the competitiveness of older people in the labour market include: providing tax benefits for employers who provide jobs for older people (in particular, the possibility of partial compensation of social security contributions, reduced rates of the single social contribution, etc.); strengthening financial support for the State Employment Service's programmes for vocational training, retraining and professional development of older people; and introducing the concept of lifelong learning.

It is the latter area that is highlighted in the draft Law of Ukraine "On Adult Education". The importance of practical implementation of lifelong learning is determined by the dynamism of the socio-economic environment, which requires constant updating of knowledge, skills and abilities in the professional field. All this, in turn, will help ensure a high level of competitiveness of the workforce and broad employment opportunities due to the compliance of the competences acquired in the course of training with the requirements of employers. In order to implement lifelong learning in practice, it is advisable to encourage higher education institutions to provide educational services to adults, including older people, and to encourage business entities to cooperate with higher education institutions in the training of older people. As a positive example of implementing the concept of lifelong learning, we can cite the creation of a social project - third-age universities based on higher education institutions in Dnipro, Kyiv, Vinnytsia, Lviv, Poltava, Chernihiv, Sumy, and many other cities of Ukraine. In addition to broad learning opportunities and increased general knowledge, older people improve their communication skills and make new useful contacts.

To strengthen the interaction between education and business in the context of training of older people, we propose a conceptual mechanism for cooperation between employers and educational institutions, which can be taken into account in the process of implementing a relevant cooperation project aimed at promoting the competitiveness of older people in the labour market and ensuring their employment in the labour market and ensuring their employment through training and professional development within the concept of lifelong learning (see Fig. 1).

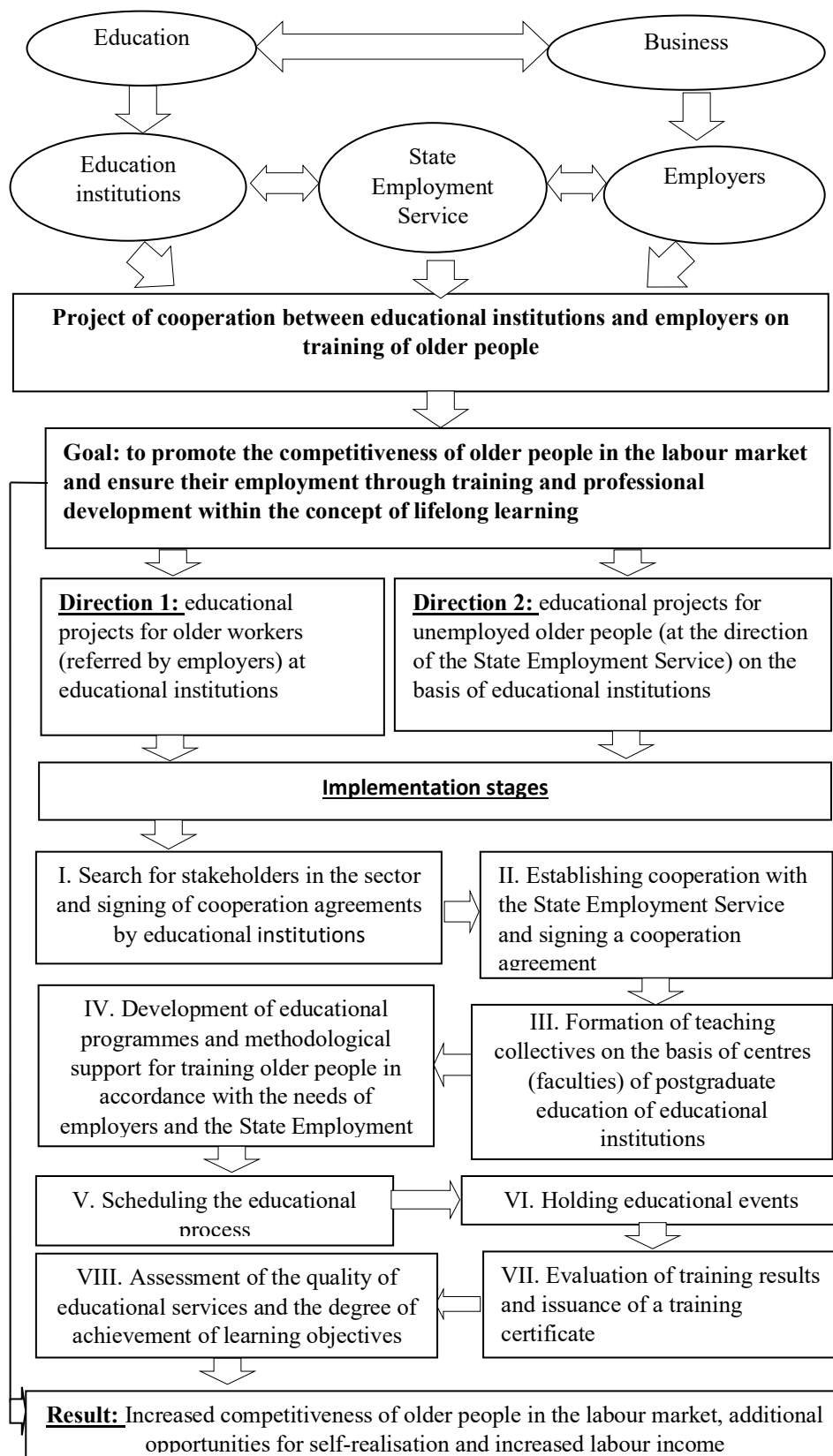


Fig. 1 - The mechanism of interaction between educational institutions and employers in the context of training older people

Source: author's development [5]

It is important to identify two separate areas of cooperation that can be implemented simultaneously, ensuring not only the implementation of educational activities for the working older population aimed at improving and updating existing professional knowledge, skills and abilities (direction 1), but also educational projects for the unemployed registered with the State Employment Service and in need of professional retraining and advanced training to ensure that their competencies meet the requirements of employers (direction 2). Thus, the practical implementation of both areas will contribute to an increase in the level of competitiveness of older people in the labour market, additional opportunities for their self-realisation and an increase in labour income.

The latter can be achieved both through employment of the unemployed and through professional growth of employed older people, which will have a positive impact on their income.

Among the stages of implementation of the proposed areas, it is advisable to highlight:

- search by educational institutions for employers interested in cooperation, signing of cooperation agreements that will document the rights and obligations of both parties: educational institutions and business entities, including determining the financial component of cooperation;

- establishing cooperation with the State Employment Service and signing a cooperation agreement that will document the main aspects of cooperation between educational institutions and the State Employment Service;

- the process of forming teaching staff on the basis of postgraduate education centres (faculties) should take into account the needs of customers of educational services (employers and the State Employment Service), determining the main professional and qualification characteristics of teachers. In turn, the selection of teaching staff should be based on an assessment of their professional competence and motivation to participate in an educational project for older people;

- with the participation of a team of selected teachers, employers and representatives of the State Employment Service, educational programmes and methodological support for training older people are being developed;

- the next stage should be to draw up a schedule of the educational process, agreed with the customers of educational services (employers and representatives of the State Employment Service) and a curriculum that will take into account the need to combine the process of education and work for older workers;

- educational activities involve direct training of older persons both at educational institutions and at enterprises for trainees and at employment centres for the unemployed (by mutual agreement of the participants);

- assessment of learning outcomes can be carried out through testing or conversation (an interesting option is to combine both tools, which allows for a comprehensive assessment of the level of knowledge gained in the course of training) and the provision of a certificate of training (retraining, advanced training, etc.);

- evaluation of the quality of educational services and the degree of achievement of the learning objectives involves the expression of opinions by older people who have completed training and filling in a questionnaire to assess the quality of training, accessibility of educational methods used, achievement of the goal, etc. The availability of feedback is the basis for improving the educational process and enhancing its quality in the future.

Thus, the practical implementation of the above measures will help to neutralise the threat of unemployment among older people and ensure better protection of their social interests in the labour market.

Initiatives to support the war veterans in the context of education and business integration. In times of war, state support for war veterans and their families is of particular relevance. Currently, it is particularly important to train military personnel who have completed their military service in the basics of entrepreneurship, grant writing and business planning. According to the results of studies, including the national survey “Needs of Veterans 2023” conducted at the initiative of the Ukrainian Veterans Fund, 63.6% of respondents from among war veterans would like to engage in entrepreneurship, which demonstrates the importance of the need to develop entrepreneurial initiatives [12]. However, in addition to the problem of attracting financial resources, there is a lack of knowledge and information in the process of starting a business.

In 2023, the Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine launched the Veteran's Assistant project, which aims to assist in the process of adaptation to civilian life and professional fulfilment by creating a new category of employees from among veterans and their family members who, on a peer-to-peer basis, will help, inform, and advise on social, economic, medical, and other issues after completing military service. The pilot project was launched in summer 2023 in Dnipro, Vinnytsia, Lviv, and Mykolaiv regions, and in autumn 2023, it was joined by territorial communities in Zakarpattia, Kyiv, Sumy, Poltava, Kharkiv regions and the city of Kyiv [13]. In 2024, this project was transformed into a system of training and employment of specialists in support of war veterans and demobilised persons who interact with veterans and demobilised servicemen after their return from the front in the form of individual support, primary counselling and comprehensive support for integration into civilian life. The relevant professional standard has already been updated and included in the register of classifications. Specialists are trained at veteran development centres. Thus, in the Dnipro region, the Veteran Development Centre at the University of Customs and Finance provides training for war veterans and their family members who work/plan to work as support specialists. For several years now, the Centre has been providing professional training for veterans' assistants and, now, for support specialists for war veterans and demobilised persons on the comprehensive study of the specifics of case management in supporting war veterans and demobilised persons, which provides opportunities for them to perform their respective professional activities. The main areas of the training programme include social and legal protection of war veterans, demobilised persons and their families, case management in working with war veterans, demobilised persons and their families, adaptation of war veterans and demobilised persons to life in the local community, professional documentation and reporting, psychosocial support for war veterans, demobilised persons and their families. Among the important areas of educational work, a special place is occupied by familiarising war veterans with business financing opportunities and the specifics of starting their own business, grant programmes at both national and international levels, and the regulatory and organisational framework for doing business. Specialists in supporting war veterans will be able to pass on all this knowledge to their clients in the course of their work, providing them with appropriate information and advice.

The relevant and significant area of interaction between education and business in the current context is close cooperation between universities and representatives of business and the public in the area of training and further employment of war veterans. A striking example of such a partnership is the involvement of practitioners, representatives of business communities, public authorities and state regulators (in particular, specialists from regional offices of the State Employment Service, the Department of Social Policy of the Dnipro City Council, and the State Tax Service) in the process of training war veterans and their families at the Veteran Development Centre of the University of Customs and Finance.

It is the educational area in the process of professional adaptation of war veterans to civilian life that should become an important priority for cooperation between education and business in the context of training, retraining and professional development of servicemen who have completed military service. At the same time, the development and implementation of training courses, in particular in the area of initiating and organising a business, teaching the basics of entrepreneurship, etc., should be carried out jointly with business representatives who can develop relevant practical skills and provide important practice-oriented information. Ultimately, all of this should become a key feature of corporate social responsibility of business entities and business communities in supporting war veterans and a specific part of the veteran business development policy.

Integration of science and business. The aspect of interaction between the spheres of science and business requires special attention. Given the need for post-war reconstruction of Ukraine based on the implementation of the latest scientific achievements, the development of particularly relevant areas of activity - the defense industry, construction, restoration of damaged infrastructure, etc. - the task of additional financing of scientific developments aimed at the development of these areas arises. Moreover, there is currently a trend of a critical decrease in the level of funding for science: in 2020, the level of funding for science was 0.41% of GDP (although according to the Law of Ukraine "On Scientific and Scientific and Technical Activities" the state must provide budget funding for scientific and scientific and technical activities in the amount of at least 1.7% of GDP). Currently, funding for science remains at an extremely low level, about 0.28% of GDP. A positive fact is only a slight increase in the volume of state budget expenditures for scientific and scientific and technical activities in 2022 (14.3 billion hryvnias, which is 2.1 billion hryvnias more than in 2021 (17.2% growth by 2021) [14]. For the following periods, expenditures for science were increased, in particular, for 2024, funding for science increased by 20% compared to the previous period. Among the priorities of funding [15]:

- Applied research, development on request from ministries and major state services, which form the topics for the scientific developments they need.

- Support for young scientists: according to the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, from 2018 to 2021 the number of young scientists in the Academy of Sciences decreased by more than 40%, and after the start of the full-scale Russian invasion this indicator worsened even more. That is why it is possible to keep young people in Ukraine and prevent scientific migration precisely with targeted funding, which is directed specifically at the project activities of young scientists.

- Performance-based Research Funding, that is, the distribution of basic funding between universities in accordance with their scientific results. In the future, this principle of distributing basic funding should work for the entire scientific sphere.

We believe that the possibilities of real funding of scientific research for scientists are competitions of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (in particular, "Science in Universities" and the competition of developments by state order), competitions of the National Academy of Sciences and competitions of the National Research Foundation of Ukraine. Participation of young scientists in any competitive direction is encouraged. But, unfortunately, the corresponding scientific developments are not able to significantly influence either the scientific and technological level of the state due to the lack of real practical implementation of research results, or the improvement of the standard of living of researchers.

The priority task for Ukraine is and will be to prevent a critical level of emigration of young scientists abroad and to create conditions for the return of young people to their homeland after the cessation of hostilities in conditions of stabilization of the security situation.

However, the problem of the low standard of living of young scientists cannot be solved in the short and medium term. That is why it is advisable to determine priority areas for improving the standard of living of scientists in the conditions of a difficult socio-economic situation for the future.

A partial solution to the problem could be a system of grants (national, regional, home-based) for conducting research for young scientists [16]. At the same time, the improvement of the situation in terms of raising the standard of living of young scientists will be facilitated by the consolidation of the efforts of the state, education and business at the national, regional and corporate levels.

In particular, we consider it appropriate to identify the following promising areas for solving the problem: using grant funding opportunities from both national and foreign sources; developing programs for the re-emigration of young scientists for the future; increasing the participation of young scientists in international grant competitions and academic mobility programs (ERASMUS +, etc.); organizing events aimed at developing research projects commissioned by enterprises in the context of cooperation between educational institutions/scientific institutions and business structures; popularizing the results of research by young scientists.

Conclusions. Thus, in order to form an effective mechanism for integrating education, science and business, we consider it appropriate to take into account the following areas:

1. Interaction of education and business, in particular, in the context of training and employment of young people, training, retraining and advanced training of older people, cooperation of universities with representatives of business and the public in the direction of training and further employment of war veterans.

2. Interaction of science and business, in particular, in the context of using grant funding opportunities, organizing events aimed at developing research projects commissioned by enterprises, and popularizing the results of research by young scientists.

The proposed conceptual areas for integrating education, science and business will contribute to balancing the labor market and neutralizing the risk of spreading unemployment, implementing the concept of lifelong education, reducing the loss of intellectual potential, and solving the problem of adapting war veterans to civilian life. All this will become a factor in ensuring social security in the post-war recovery of Ukraine in the future.

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