

СВІТОВЕ ГОСПОДАРСТВО І МІЖНАРОДНІ ЕКОНОМІЧНІ ВІДНОСИНИ

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THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE GLOBALISED KNOWLEDGE SOCIETIES

Higher education has always been a driving force of a nation's development, economic, technological and cultural. Since the industrial revolution it has always been considered as an important factor of competitiveness in some countries (USA, for example). Nowadays education, and the higher education in particular, attracts more and more attention from government authorities and general public, especially taking to consideration today's rapid innovations in practically all society's activities.

In the today's knowledge society talent becomes the main factor of production and of a country's competitiveness on the global arena. Taking to consideration the fact that societies now face various challenges which are to be handled, the development of a highly competitive human and intellectual capital is vital for surviving in the post-industrial era.

Most of the highly developed countries, defined by the World Economic Forum as «innovation-driven» [1], are paying attention to the importance of maintaining the high status of their labour in the world. For example, much of the Finland's success (number 4 in the WEF Global Competitiveness Report 2014-2015) is due to the country's profound and thoughtful policies in education, which has given it the highest positions among the advanced economies on such indexes as 'Health and primary education' and 'Higher education and training' [1, p.196]. It might be a wonder, how such a small Scandinavian country, which for long has relied on its resources (forests in particular), now is one of the most competitive nations in the world. Since 1960's Finland has undergone through a lot of reforms. All of them including those concerning education were tailored by the 'talent' – the best professionals, who took advantage of all strengths of the nation, and created such a policy that suited Finland's peculiarities.

The interesting fact about Finnish education policy is that it meets as perfectly as possible the needs of *all* students (from primary education to higher) in the society. While being highly effective (as it manages to prepare children in school well enough to be the best according to the Programme for International Student Assessment, or PISA, the test sponsored by the OECD), Finnish education system involves very few examinations, and in general this system is very 'user-friendly' and not stressful. The Minister of Education and Communications of Finland K. Kiuru once told in the interview that the population of the country is comparatively very small, and that Finland cannot allow losing, 'failing' any single

student because the country needs everyone to become an effective part of the today's society, which relies on talent and has practically no other options. That approach to education means that:

- 1) The educational sector is regarded as a holistic one, so that its levels – primary, secondary and higher, – are connected and logical, and support each other;
- 2) The society values its intellectuals; this means that the professions of teachers/professors are highly respected among others, and fairly remunerated;
- 3) The Finnish education system chooses teacher candidates from the top 10% of graduates, pays much attention to train teachers very well, and then lets the teachers design the curriculum around quite lean national standards.

All that basic things allowed Finland to create a competitive national higher education system (number 5 in the world ranking) [2]. In its turn it has served as a solid ground for further technological and economic development of the country.

In the struggle for the education systems' modernization the countries of the world mainly choose between 2 approaches: they either reorganize their HEIs as market, entrepreneurial organizations which strive to do everything possible to compete in today's global economy, or create a special national knowledge regime (which can though be integrated in the international one) to suit perfectly their nation's needs without primary aim on global competitiveness [3]. It is yet difficult to distinguish which one is the best.

The higher education system in the Republic of Korea is also a very competitive one in the world. It has also been restructured in the process of major reforms in the country, and was realized in several stages. In general it provided for the Korean HEIs to become globally integrated (by establishing partnerships with top world's universities and benefiting from global talent by inviting experts and professors from abroad); regionally specialized and tailored for the countries peculiarities and needs in the labour; holistic (by modernizing the whole education system from the primary level to the higher level) etc. Several effective programs were brought in place (such as Brain Korea 21, NURI Project, Brain Korea 21 Plus and other) and successfully realized. That made Korean universities highly compatible in the Southern and Eastern Asia, and known in the world. According to the QS Asian Universities ranking, 55 of 300 universities analyzed are the Korean ones, and the Seoul State University ranks 4th [4]. Nevertheless, it is not alike to the Finnish one, as it is aimed at high competitiveness no matter the price. Korean higher education is very tough since it is reorienting from quantity (making higher education available to more people, as was until 1990's) to quality, and current policy strives to focus on creating highly qualified and well-prepared professionals. It makes the higher education system in Korea very stressful, and in general elevates the level of pressure in the society. That is why nowadays the think-tanks of the Korean Ministry of Higher Education are looking forward creation of the more humane system of education aimed at developing creativeness, social and emotional competencies among students etc. [5].

The experience of different nations is vital to understanding the essentials of developing the competitive system of education in Ukraine. Though it may seem that a market model in education will be the best solution wherever the reform is needed, some countries seem to be very successful in implementing their own

development strategies which take to account the best world's experience and transform it according to the country's peculiarities, priorities, needs and vision.

Moreover, the best higher education systems prepare graduates to be ready to address today's and future challenges and global issues in order to assure the world's sustainability in the future. The term 'education for sustainable development' (ESD) has originated as a result of global need for talent capable to deal with problems in ecology, economy, and in society, which means to possess the «knowledge, skills, understanding and values to participate in decisions about the way we do things individually and collectively, both locally and globally, that will improve the quality of life without damaging the planet of the future» [6, p.5]. But it is still on an early stage of development within academic society, despite the fact that further improvement of ESD programs and their implementation could probably solve the main problem of higher education – the irrelevance of the graduates' skills to the needs of today and tomorrow.

Still, there are some factors that should be regarded while setting the framework for educational reforms. One of those is the necessity to create and successfully implement skills-oriented learning experience, as competency-based higher education has proved to be competitive worldwide. With a vast choice of online resources and IT tools aimed at helping universities and teachers to deliver competency-based knowledge, it is important for the HEIs to adapt these practices the sooner the better, and not to lose the sense of one's own strategy in the progress. Apart from that, it is important to decide whether the system will be more 'humane' (as the one of Finland with its orientation on all students' success and high standards with low pressure) or more like that of the Republic of Korea (also having highest standards but not oriented on low pressure). Every country chooses its path, so there is probably no unique recipe to develop a highly competitive higher education system; still, in addition to the factors mentioned above, the one which is also important is that teaching profession should be prestigious in the society and education programs should be thoughtful enough to address future needs of the nation.

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