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SOME ASPECTS OF FOREIGN STUDENTS STUDYING AT UKRAINIAN UNIVERSITIES

The training of foreign students in Ukrainian universities is an important indicator of the participation of national education in the global education market [1]. According to the data of the State Enterprise «Ukrainian State Center for International Education» [2], which is the official representative of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine on issues of education of foreigners in Ukraine, 76 548 foreign students out of 155 were studying in Ukraine in 2020. As compared to 2019, in 2020 the proportion of foreign students decreased by 5,1% or 3 922 persons, mainly due to quarantine restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic (fig. 1).

Ukrainian higher educational institutions provide three levels of higher education:

- I level: Junior Bachelor / Bachelor.
- II level: Master.
- II level: Doctor of Philosophy / Doctor of Science.

Basic education is a priority for foreign students since 90,02% or 68 908 foreigners receive educational services, the total duration of which is 6 years. 6,45% or 4 936 foreign students study in language training programs within a year, after which they can move on to basic education. A much smaller proportion of foreign students acquire postgraduate education, namely 2,25% or 1 719 students. The percentage of foreigners in PhD programs is 1,27% or 974 foreigners, in academic mobility programs study 0,01% or 11 foreign students.

In the 2020/21 academic year, foreign students studied at 394 Ukrainian universities. Trends in the number of Ukrainian universities where students from abroad studied are given on figure 2. The figure shows that in the 2019/20 academic year the number of such universities showed a positive upward trend, but in the academic year of 2020/21, there was a decrease of 61 universities compared to the previous year.

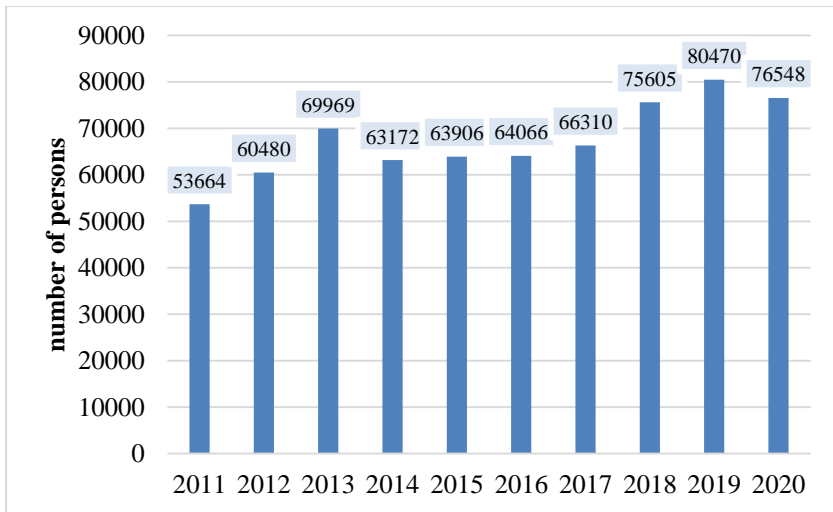


Figure 1. Dynamics of the number of foreign students in Ukraine in 2011–2020

Source: compiled by the author based on [2]

The largest number of foreign students receiving higher education in Ukraine are citizens of Asian and African countries, in particular, Indian students make up about a quarter (18 095 students or 23,6%) of all foreign students in Ukraine in recent years. Regarding the number of foreign students from post-Soviet countries, their share decreases each year, from 29,47% in the 2018/19 academic year to 20,53% in the 2020/21 academic year.

Ukrainian universities-leaders in the number of foreign students are two universities from Kharkiv, namely: V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University and Kharkiv National Medical University, and the third-place takes Bogomolets National Medical University, which is located in Kyiv. These universities provide education for 29 058 foreign students or 37,96% of their total number.

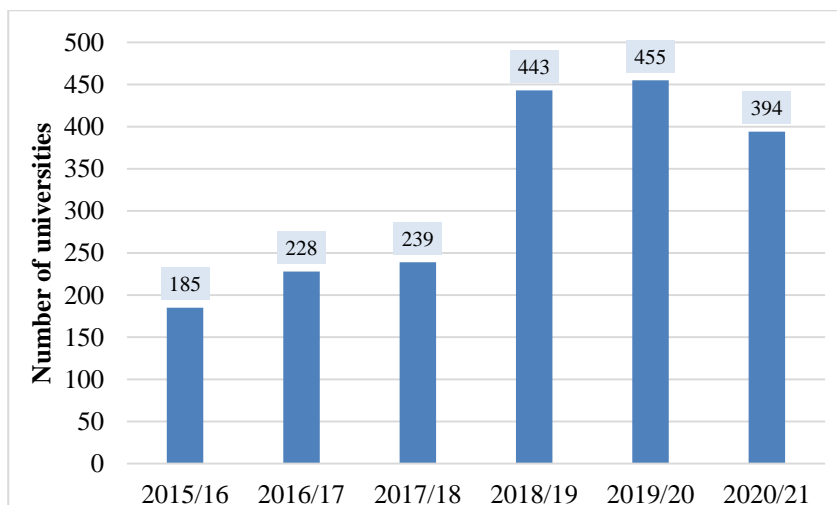


Figure 2. Number of universities in Ukraine providing education to foreign students during the 2015/16–2020/21 academic year

Source: compiled by the author based on [2]

Among the ten leading universities in the number of foreign students, it is interesting that eight universities have medical direction, respectively, the most popular specialties among foreign students in Ukraine are medicine and pharmacology. Other promising specialties among foreign students are the following: management, law, finance, banking and insurance, economics, construction, philology applied physics and nanotechnology, gas and oil engineering and technology, shipbuilding, and others.

In general, the number of foreign students and universities in Ukraine has shown a positive trend in recent years. However, the COVID-19 pandemic made changes in the organization of the educational process not only in Ukraine but throughout the world. Accordingly, in 2020 the number of foreign students in Ukraine was slightly smaller, as was the number of universities where they can study.

Nevertheless, the education of foreign students in Ukrainian universities demonstrates the prestige and demand of higher education in Ukraine among educational represented in the global market. Also, the education of foreign students in Ukraine contributes to the improvement of the quality of educational services, strengthens competition between universities, and is a powerful tool for attracting additional investment in the country's economy.

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