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Evolution of the right to education concept in general pedagogy and its influence on Ukraine's educational policy

Evolución del concepto de derecho a la educación en la pedagogía general y su influencia en la política educativa de Ucrania

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Abstract

The article analyses the evolution of the right to education in general pedagogy, taking into account historical, legal and educational transformations. Particular attention is paid to the development of Ukrainian educational policy from 1991 to the present. Using a historical and legal approach, the study covers the analysis of legal acts and key laws in the field of education. The research methods included analysis of legislation, assessment of education policy reforms, and comparison with international standards. The results showed significant progress in the formation of the Ukrainian educational system, its orientation towards European standards, ensuring the right to education in times of war and enhancing the digitalisation of the educational process. The main

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conclusions include the transition to the European system of secondary education, the introduction of inclusive programmes, the increased role of higher education and the optimisation of educational institutions. The discussion focuses on the unique challenges that Ukraine faces in ensuring access to education in times of war and overcoming structural policy deficiencies. The study makes a significant contribution to the discourse on the role of legal and pedagogical transformations in shaping equitable and modern educational systems in the global context.

Keywords: right to education, education system, educational authorities, educational reform, international standards.

Resumen

El artículo analiza la evolución del derecho a la educación en la pedagogía general, considerando las transformaciones históricas, jurídicas y educativas. Se presta especial atención al desarrollo de la política educativa ucraniana desde 1991 hasta la actualidad. A través de un enfoque histórico y jurídico, el estudio examina actos jurídicos y leyes clave en el ámbito de la educación. Los métodos de investigación incluyen el análisis de la legislación, la evaluación de reformas de política educativa y la comparación con normas internacionales. Los resultados evidencian avances significativos en el sistema educativo ucraniano, su alineación con normas europeas, la garantía del derecho a la educación en tiempos de guerra y la promoción de la digitalización del proceso educativo. Entre las principales conclusiones figuran la transición al sistema europeo de enseñanza secundaria, la introducción de programas integradores, el fortalecimiento de la educación superior y la optimización de instituciones educativas. El debate destaca los retos específicos que enfrenta Ucrania para garantizar el acceso a la educación durante la guerra y superar deficiencias estructurales. Este estudio contribuye al discurso sobre el impacto de transformaciones jurídicas y pedagógicas en la configuración de sistemas educativos equitativos y modernos en un contexto global.

Palabras clave: derecho a la educación, sistema educativo, autoridades educativas, reforma educativa, normas internacionales.

Introduction

Education, as a fundamental human right, requires comprehensive analysis and evaluation through various historical and societal stages of its development. Since the recognition of education as a human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948), the role of educational systems has evolved significantly, becoming an instrument for social integration and economic development. In the context of Ukraine, the research problem focuses on the interplay of historical, political, and cultural factors shaping the modern education system, along with challenges related to implementing innovative methods, digitalisation, and inclusivity.

The growth of education as a fundamental right deserves detailed analysis and scrutiny, taking into consideration different historical and societal stages. This has been a long journey, from the earliest references to schools in ancient Babylon and Greece, where education was only for the few, to today's ideas of education as a fundamental human right. Adopting such a nuanced document as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 became a milestone in the history of education, as this document recognised the importance of education in an individual's life in Article 26 (Lorente et al., 2020). In the XX century, with the consolidation of democracy, even greater perceptions were constructed that there was a need to facilitate education for every stratum of society, especially in the era of decolonisation (Ruiz, 2020). As a member of the global movements, Ukraine mirrors this advancement by assimilating international norms within its national legal order. The new world that we live in today calls for the education systems in the countries to be highly developed to enhance fair competition for all the citizens in the country. Education serves the purposes of economic growth and development as well as building the cultural character of people in nations to help them compete globally (Eduardo & Gabriel, 2021). In the framework of international cooperation, the European Union pays considerable attention to harmonising educational standards, contributing to the accessibility and inclusiveness of educational systems (Muskaj et al., 2022).

Ukraine is actively implementing reforms aimed at improving the quality of education, expanding its accessibility and ensuring social integration, focusing on European development models.

The research focuses on the transformation of Ukraine's education system through the integration of international standards and practices, particularly European educational models. Special attention is paid to analysing the role of educators in shaping national identity, incorporating innovative teaching methods such as STEM and digital technologies, and adapting these approaches to national realities. The study also emphasises the challenges of accessibility for vulnerable groups, especially in times of modern crises.

Pedagogical activity has always been the basis for the formation of society, influencing the development of its cultural, social and economic potential. In the historical context, the role of teachers has changed along with social transformations: from the traditional role of teachers as carriers of knowledge to active participants in the process of socialisation and critical thinking. In Ukraine, as in many other countries, teaching laid the foundation for national identity and contributed to the strengthening of culture and language preservation. During the Soviet period, the educational system was shaped by an ideology that limited pedagogical freedom and created barriers to innovation. Nevertheless, since the country became sovereign in 1991, the focus of the pedagogical process has altered to the orientation towards the rather modern methods, building up a new education system that is democratic and adopting global norms. Ukrainian educators were again able to put into practice their concepts about making scholars independent and self-actualised personalities. This liberation, moreover the plenty of reforms that resonated more in the 2000s, has contributed to the existing state of the education system and, in the majority of cases, enhancement of learning inclusiveness, digitalisation and innovation activities in teaching.

The digitalization of education is becoming a central element in the redefinition of education purposefully meant to ease access to knowledge. Introducing information and communication technologies (ICTs) considerably expands the learning possibilities, particularly for disadvantaged groups. The COVID-19 crisis, on one hand, was a successful deployment of distance education but on the opposite — raised the issue of the level of accessibility to digital means (Lorente et al., 2020). In Ukraine, as in many countries, various projects oriented toward education digitization were adopted, such as the development of online educational services and interactive tools that help to reach even the most distant populations (Herawati & Ermakov, 2022). The formation of the Ukrainian education system is closely linked to historical, political and cultural processes that determined its specificity at different stages. During the Kyivan Rus period, the first schools were established based on church centres, focusing on spiritual education. Later, especially when Ukraine was under the influence of Poland, Lithuania and Austria-Hungary, the educational system began to integrate elements of Western European pedagogy. This synthesis significantly expanded the horizons of education while preserving national traditions. In the nineteenth century, under the influence of the Russian Empire, Ukrainian education was Russified, but at that time, the foundations of identity-oriented pedagogy began to take shape. After Ukraine declared independence, the educational system began actively integrating into the European educational space, implementing the Bologna Process in higher education and adapting national education to international standards. Cooperation with the EU countries, which supported Ukraine financially and methodologically, helped reform school education, create inclusive environments and introduce modern teaching methods, became vital.

The latest methods in pedagogy help to improve the educational process, taking into account the needs of modern society. The spread of interactive approaches, such as the flipped classroom, project-based learning models, and the introduction of STEM education, is changing the traditional learning paradigm. These approaches allow pupils and students to participate actively in the educational process, develop critical thinking skills, and make independent decisions (Yen & Hoang, 2022). The Ukrainian education system is actively integrating these innovations, adapting them to national realities and enriching them with its practices through the support of philosophical education and democratic learning models (Butchenko et al., 2022).

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To identify the critical features of the transformation of Ukraine's education system, evaluate the effectiveness of modern pedagogical approaches, and provide recommendations to enhance inclusivity and digitalization in educational processes.

1. How have historical and political contexts influenced modern Ukrainian education?
2. How are modern innovative approaches, such as STEM and digital technologies, integrated into Ukraine's education system?
3. What are the main challenges to inclusivity and accessibility in Ukrainian education, and how can they be addressed?

Currently, there is a lack of research on adapting innovative pedagogical approaches within the Ukrainian education system, considering its national cultural characteristics and historical prerequisites. This study aims to bridge this gap by analyzing modern teaching methods, digitalization, and inclusivity while providing recommendations for their effective implementation within the Ukrainian context.

This study consists of several parts. The first part presents the theoretical framework of the research and provides a literature review, with particular emphasis on the analysis of contemporary works related to the right to education in the international context. The following section presents the main findings concerning the development of the right to education in modern pedagogy and their impact on the Ukrainian education system. This part also includes a discussion of the obtained data in comparison with the work of other scholars. In the conclusion, the findings are summarized, and it is noted that this research makes a significant contribution to the discourse on the role of legal and pedagogical transformations in shaping equitable education.

Literature Review

The evolution of the right to education reflects key socio-economic and political transformations in the global context. For example, research on the legal mechanisms for ensuring the right to education through the decisions of the Constitutional Court in Indonesia highlights the importance of judicial systems in addressing issues of access to education (Subawa & Hermanto, 2023). Similarly, as demonstrated by the analysis in Myanmar, legal education in transitional societies is an important factor in democratising the education system (Eberbach, 2023). At the same time, Ukraine is considering challenges regarding ensuring the right to education during the war and integration into European Union standards (Kovtunets & Shevtsov, 2022). These kinds of research exemplify the importance of looking at the aspects of the intellectual mechanism of educational processes governance on the universal levels. The influence of COVID-19 on the education-related rights of people who are at risk is profound. For instance, during the COVID crisis in the UK, one of the provisions of the legislation concerned the extent to which education could be made accessible to children perceived as having challenging behaviour, further entrenched (Ferguson, 2021; (Barrientos Delgado et al., 2021).

In contrast, focusing on the oppressive measures adopted in Malaysia towards facilitating children's right to education during the quarantine highlights the need for reformist efforts to enhance traditional educational systems (Rahman et al., 2023). A similar research gap exists in the provision of education for girls in Tanzania, strengthening the argument for the need for an integrated model of inclusive education (Iddy, 2021). In Ukraine, the issues of inclusive education, especially in times of war, need to be backed by additional legislative measures (Shevchuk et al., 2020). Migration trends are also crucial when enforcing the right to education. Within the European Union, the schooling of immigrant pupils has been analysed from the perspective of educational strategies concerning these groups of children (Neubauer, 2023a; Neubauer, 2023b). In the case of Indonesian Rohingya children, the right to education was frequently inhibited by social and cultural factors (Rumiartha & Jayantiari, 2023). In Ukraine, the efforts to provide children, especially those affected by war, with education often include repurposing resources, which is

crucial (Tomlyak, 2023). Research demonstrates the need to develop adaptive mechanisms to ensure inclusivity in global education systems (Muskaj et al., 2022; Flores Giménez, 2023).

The digitalisation of education is one of the key topics in contemporary educational research. Machado and Pereira (2023) examine the impact of digital tools on assessment in higher education. UNESCO's role in promoting accessibility to higher education through digitalisation is an important step towards integrating new technologies into the learning process (Lázaro Lorente, 2022). The use of digital tools to develop democratic competencies in sports pedagogy demonstrates the interdisciplinary potential of such approaches (Žnidarec Čučković, 2022). In Ukraine, strategic digital initiatives during the war became key to ensuring the continuity of the educational process (Romanova, 2023; Matsheta & Sefoka, 2023).

The significant emphasis on the introduction of e-assessment in the higher education system described by Shalatska et al. (2020) indicates a shift towards more integrated digital technologies that contribute to the modernisation of educational processes. Comparison with the European experience presented by Saienko et al. (2023) demonstrates Ukraine's orientation towards adapting educational trends of the information society, emphasising the role of technical innovations in shaping modern educational policy.

Inclusiveness and social justice in ensuring the right to education are gaining more and more attention in the current literature. In Portugal, for example, adult education is seen as a basis for social mobility (Barros, 2023). In Indonesia, legal provisions for inclusive education are becoming a central element in ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities (Notoprayitno & Jalil, 2019). A global approach to the right to education, as Amin (2023) notes, provides a basis for critical rethinking of educational systems. In Ukraine, the right to education becomes especially important in times of war, when the protection of intellectual property in universities becomes an additional challenge (Osypova, 2021). Inclusive strategies and cross-border synergy are central to understanding the current education policies, as evidenced in many of these works. In different regions of the world, the evolution of the right to education can be viewed as the cornerstone of social development. For instance, in Indonesia, it has been shown how policies that guarantee access to education for all citizens have been affected by constitutional provisions (Subawa & Hermanto, 2023). In contrast, together with other components of social transformation in Myanmar, human rights education anticipates and supports the design of a democracy (Eberbach, 2023).

Owing to the war circumstances, the system of education in Ukraine has also started to embody degree provisions within the law concerning the provision of education in general and especially in regard to that of displaced persons (Kovtunets & Shevtsov, 2022); (Romanova, 2023). In the global context, research demonstrates the importance of legal support for education as a tool for reducing social inequalities and building sustainable societies. Large-scale global crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, have had a significant impact on the realisation of the right to education. In Malaysia, quarantine restrictions have sparked discussions about adapting education systems to emergencies (Rahman et al., 2023). In the UK, pandemic measures have affected vulnerable groups such as children with behavioural disorders, highlighting the importance of integrative approaches to educational reforms (Ferguson, 2021). Tanzania's experience combating gender discrimination in education points to gaps between legislative initiatives and their implementation (Iddy, 2021). These examples, complemented by Ukrainian research on inclusive education, emphasise the relevance of developing flexible and adaptive education policies (Shevchuk et al., 2020; Tomlyak, 2023; Wodon, 2023).

Studies of the digitalisation of education broaden the understanding of modern educational transformations. Neubauer (2023a) studies the influence of digital platforms on the educational inclusion of migrants, particularly children, in Europe. In the publications of Lorente & Rodríguez (2023), the arguments are established on the necessity to democratise access to higher education using digital transformations. In turn, deploying digital technologies during the war in Ukraine was a tactical measure to sustain the educational process (Romanova, 2023). It has also been argued in Indonesia that the digitalisation of education has proven to help ensure inclusive learning methods for the disabled (Notoprayitno & Jalil,

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2019). Thus, scientific publications uphold the argument that access to education is a social advancement resulting from innovative ways of achieving teaching, digitalisation, and inclusive practices around the world. In response to the war, the education sector of Ukraine seeks to embrace educational reforms by incorporating new strategies that will promote the fair distribution of educational resources. Such educational transformations occur against the backdrop of the universal right to education, fraught with challenges posed by globalisation and rapid socio-economic changes. Therefore, recent academic works address alleviating educational inequities and using technology to support educational systems during emergencies. However, in modern works, the emphasis is mainly on the use of empirical data processing methods. Also, many authors have carried out systematic reviews that have drawn attention to works up to 2020. Accordingly, the main attention should be paid to the analysis of new sources and their critical processing. This study will fill these methodological gaps and carry out a comprehensive theoretical analysis In addition, there is a lack of works in the scientific space that would analyze the historical development of laws on education and their implementation in Ukraine. Accordingly, this study aims to address this gap and describe the main evolutionary milestones of modern education in Ukraine with a focus on international practices.

Methodology

Type of Research

The research presented is evaluative and organised into coherent sections offering a thorough historical, present-day and prospective study of the issue of the right to education in the universal aspect and its influence on the education of Ukraine. The main goal was to study structural changes in the Ukrainian education system under the influence of historical, social and political factors, focusing on the challenges and transformations caused by the war in 2022. The research covered international aspects of the evolution of the right to education and their adaptation in Ukraine, including digitalisation, inclusion, and school and higher education reforms. The analysis made it possible to assess the level of compliance of Ukrainian educational reforms with international standards and identify potential gaps in integrating modern pedagogical practices in distance learning and ensuring the right to education in times of crisis. The article highlights the scientific understanding of the transformation of education in the context of global challenges and forms the basis for further research in this area.

Research data

The study was based exclusively on secondary data collected from official sources of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, state statistics portals, regulations, reports of international organisations (UNESCO, World Bank, European Commission) and scientific publications covering 2017-2024.

Secondary data was used to study the following aspects:

1. The evolution of international standards in the field of the right to education influenced the reform of the education system in Ukraine.
2. Study the educational changes occurring across different European countries and their relation to the case of Ukraine.
3. Study the transformations in educational infrastructures, inclusive education technologies, and digitalization strategies during the war.

Methods of collecting secondary data

The main sources of data were:

- Regulatory documents of Ukraine: The Laws of Ukraine "On Education" (Law No. 2145-VIII, 2017), as well as numerous bylaws and recommendations of the Ministry of Education
- Statistical data published by the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, including the distribution of education expenditures and the number of pupils and students in different categories of educational institutions.
- International reports covering global trends in the right to education, digitalisation and inclusion.
- Analytical materials published by scholars and international organisations on education transformation during the war.

The inclusion of these sources was based on a strict selection criteria. In particular, the criteria were as follows:

1. Time range from 2017-2024
2. Geographical range: EU countries, Ukraine.
3. The study should present the following aspects:

   - The impact of historical changes on the Ukrainian education system
   - The results of education reform in the context of European integration
   - An analysis of wartime challenges

4. Methodological value: a clear text about the instruments and methods used is presented

Therefore, to ensure the rigor of the study, explicit criteria were established for the selection, evaluation, and systematization of documentary sources. First, official documents issued by recognized national and international organizations (the Ministry of Education of Ukraine, UNESCO, the European Union, among others) were prioritized, as well as peer-reviewed scientific articles published between 2017 and 2023. The sources were evaluated based on their relevance, thematic relevance, institutional validity, and analytical contribution to the object of study.

Data analysis

The analysis process was carried out in three phases:

1) Identification and thematic classification of documents according to previously defined analytical categories (right to education, inclusion, digitalization, educational legislation, war context);
2) Application of content analysis to identify trends, convergences, and contradictions between sources;
3) Comparison of national regulatory frameworks with international standards to assess the degree of alignment and adaptation.

Secondary data were processed and analysed using content analysis and comparative analysis. Data was systematized using a thematic analysis matrix developed in Excel, which ensured the traceability, transparency, and replicability of the research process.

This method allowed us to identify the main trends in the evolution of educational rights and their integration into Ukrainian legislation. Comparative analysis helped to identify the relationship between international standards of the right to education and their implementation in Ukraine, especially in times of war. Particular attention was paid to:

Systematising changes in legislation, including a focus on patriotic education, digitalisation and inclusion. Assessing the impact of the war on access to education and the destruction of educational infrastructure. Analysing statistical data on education spending that reflects government priorities during the crisis.

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The data were processed using Microsoft Excel software to create tables and graphs showing key indicators such as education expenditure, access to education for different social groups, and the pace of digitalisation.

Limitations of the study

The study has several limitations. First, it is based solely on secondary data, which may reduce the possibility of taking into account specific local aspects not covered in existing sources. Second, due to the dynamic nature of events in Ukraine, some of the data may become obsolete in the event of changes in legislation or policy. Third, the data was limited to official sources and reports, which affected the scope of the analysis.

Results and Discussion

The evolution of law as a system of rules governing social relations can be traced back through centuries of human history, reflecting the specifics of cultures, social conditions and political institutions. One of the earliest examples of a legal system is the Hammurabi Codes in Mesopotamia (around the 18th century BC), which established the foundations of legislation and the principle of proportionality of punishment. In the Middle Ages, religious law, such as sharia or canon law, played an important role in shaping the norms of social life. Gradual secularisation in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, due to the influence of Enlightenment ideas, helped to consolidate the concept of natural rights and freedoms, enshrined in documents such as the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (Elysee, 2022). In the twentieth century, the efforts of international organisations such as the United Nations led to the creation of universal human rights standards, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948), which ensured the global unification of legal norms. The evolution of law continues in the modern world, shaping new approaches to the protection of rights in the context of digitalisation, globalisation and climate change. The chronological sequence of the evolution of the right to education is shown in Table 1.

Table 1.
Chronological evolution of the right to education: stages and their characteristics

Stage	Chronological sequence	Characteristics of the stage
Antique period	VI century BC - V century AD.	Education as a privilege of the elite. The main ideas belonged to Plato and Aristotle, who focused on the development of a virtuous citizen. Education was limited to men of free status.
Middle Ages	V-XV centuries.	Education became religiously oriented, concentrated in monasteries and cathedrals. The main emphasis was on spiritual education. Education was available only to a narrow circle: the clergy and aristocracy.
The Renaissance	XV-XVI centuries.	Revival of interest in ancient culture and science. Education becomes more accessible to the laity. Humanist ideas such as individual human development (Erasmus of Rotterdam, Vittorino da Feltre) emerge.
Education	XVII-XVIII centuries.	Education is perceived as the key to society's development. Thanks to thinkers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John Locke, the idea of equality in education is spreading. The concept of state participation in ensuring the right to education is introduced.
The revolutionary period	XVIII-XIX centuries.	Education has become compulsory in many countries (Prussia, France). The idea of universal access to education emerges, and primary education is made compulsory for children, regardless of social status.
The industrial period	XIX - early XX centuries.	The idea of mass education spreads, especially in connection with the needs of industrialisation. Vocational schools emergence. Education becomes a tool for training the workforce.
The modern period	XX - XXI centuries.	Enshrining the right to education in international documents (in particular, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948). Emphasis on inclusion, gender equality, and access to quality education for all population segments. Digitalisation of education.

The historical development of education reflects the multifaceted evolution of human civilisation, transforming its meaning from the transmission of basic skills to the formation of an innovative and competent society. In ancient cultures, such as Egypt, Sumerian, and India, education was sacred, focusing on teaching religious dogma, writing, and mathematics to a narrow circle of elites. Medieval Europe promoted education through monastic schools and universities, which became the basis for transferring knowledge in theology, law, and medicine. The industrialisation of the 18th and 19th centuries changed the approach to education, consolidating the idea of universal secondary education, which was enshrined in the laws of Prussia and France. The modern era is shaping new approaches, focusing educational systems on sustainable development, digitalisation and inclusiveness, which requires responses to the challenges of globalisation, migration and technological progress.

In contemporary society, education takes on the role of a social escalator and a way of innovative advancement, which is of great importance in forming a sustainable future. Ukrainian education is an ancient system based on the customs of many peoples and epochs. The first evidence of a school system in Ukraine is known from historical accounts of Kyivan Rus, which adopted мир schools run by monks and cathedrals, such as that of Saint Sophia in Kyiv. This was a facilitating factor towards education development as Ukrainian lands became attached to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Polish-Lithuania and incorporated from the activities of fraternal schools in the 15th-17th centuries, which integrated the national and Western European education systems. Under the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires, Ukrainian education maintained distinctly autonomous aspects – for example, the presence of Lviv University or the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. From the mid-twentieth century onwards, Soviet Ukraine underwent a process of standardization of education that was characteristic of the entire USSR, focusing on technical education, universal flooding of education and ideological training. After the declaration of independence in 1991, Ukraine made its education system incompatible with the existing system in the European countries. It joined the Bologna Process and enacted the new Law of Ukraine "On Education, which laid the foundation for subsequent reforms (Law No. 2145-VIII, 2017). Education in Ukraine has always coexisted with local and transnational forces and has sought to maintain its uniqueness while aspiring to become part of the global education system.

Ukraine has been on the right path to reforming education since it became an independent country in 1991, looking specifically for ways to improve standards at European levels and provide quality education for everyone. Moreover, in 2017, a new Law on Education was passed where the New Ukrainian School (NUS) paradigm was described where instruction is anchored on competencias (Law No. 2145-VIII, 2017). The Bologna process was also acceded to in 2005, and this facilitated the Ukrainian higher education system's full compliance with the European system of higher education and the adoption of the ECTS grading system.

Other important initiatives include introducing external independent testing (EIT) in 2008, which significantly increased the transparency and accessibility of higher education. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic triggered a large-scale shift to distance learning, which revealed both a significant digital divide in access to education and the need to modernise schools' technical bases.

The full-scale war launched by Russia in 2022 has radically changed the Ukrainian education system, posing numerous challenges. Security issues, mass migration of students and teachers, and the destruction of schools (3,793 damaged and 365 destroyed) have made access to education more difficult, especially in the frontline and occupied regions (Bobro, 2024). The Constitution of Ukraine continues to guarantee the right to education even in times of crisis, and government policy has focused on maintaining accessibility and quality of education. Changes have also affected higher education, with numerous universities relocated and mergers becoming a key optimisation strategy. Legislative initiatives focused on university autonomy, quality training and international cooperation. Given the military mobilisation, students, postgraduates, and teachers are still granted a deferment from service, which is an important mechanism supporting educational institutions' functioning. At the same time, the role of education in

patriotic education is being strengthened through updated programmes such as Defence of Ukraine, which cover first aid, tactical medicine and drone control skills (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, 2023). Ukraine has many higher education universities, allowing everyone to receive a quality education, as shown in more detail in Figure 1.
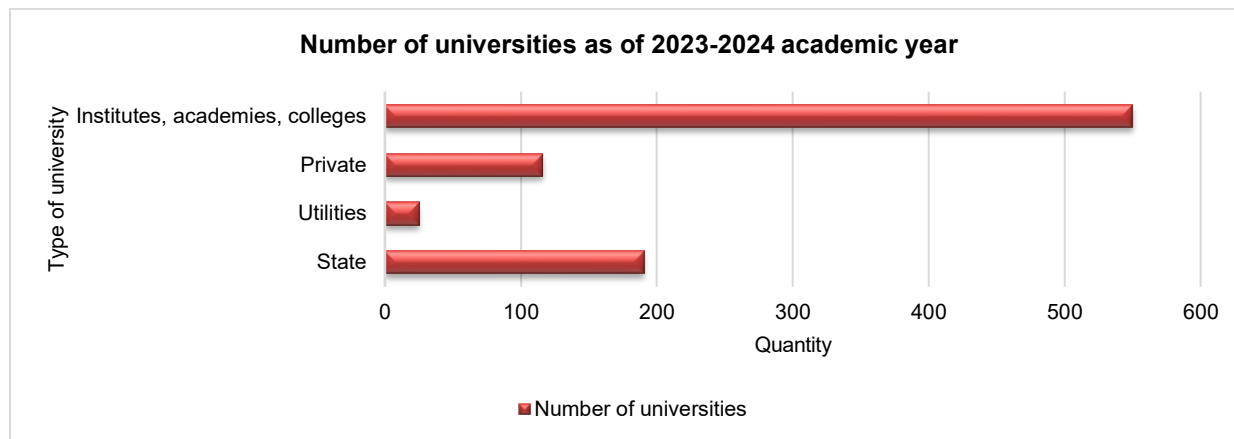

Figure 1. Distribution of higher education institutions in Ukraine in the academic year 2023-2024
Soure: Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (2023)

Beyond 2023, Ukraine is actively introducing digital technologies into the education system to ensure access to education in times of war and reconstruction. The Mriya educational app has become an important step in digitalisation, offering students and teachers tools for interactive learning, assessment and feedback. In 2023, a new educational ombudsman service was launched to protect the rights of students, teachers and parents and to strengthen social support for participants in the educational process. The reform plan for 2024-2025 includes strengthening inclusion, developing programmes for children with special educational needs, and upgrading infrastructure by constructing school shelters. Significant changes are planned for school curricula: expanding the digital component, integrating artificial intelligence, and updating civic and national-patriotic education courses. In the higher education sector, the emphasis is on grant funding for students, modernisation of research programmes and increased academic mobility, shaping a new paradigm for Ukrainian education as part of the global education space.

The importance of education in Ukraine's current policy is underscored by the significant increase in budgetary spending on this sector, even under martial law. In 2024, education received approximately 20% of the country's total budget, demonstrating the significance of this area in terms of national security, cultural growth, and citizenship. The war destroyed the educational facilities, rendering the need for the inclusive resolution of the Ukrainian cultural space via education. Initiatives on patriotism, recent changes to school syllabus, and incorporation of national history and language courses point to the importance of education in maintaining one's identity. On the other hand, the funds allocated to the programs aimed at rehabilitating educational facilities with such focus on reconstructing and repairing shelters, buying e-resources and providing technological gadgets for learners show the value of education even in circumstances of emergency.

Table 2.
Consolidated budget expenditures on education in 2022-2023 (by level of education)

Direction	Expenditures, actual 2022, UAH billion	Number of students, 2022, people	Per applicant, 2022, UAH	Expenses, plan 2023, UAH billion	Number of students, 2023, people	Per applicant, 2023, UAH
Pre-school education	40,7	1 111 358	36 629,53	51,4	739 722	69 550,45
General secondary education	145,3	4 230 358	34 346,84	145,1	4 041 976	35 898,28
Professional (vocational) education	15,5	243 825	63 571,73	17,3	230 474	75 049,68
Professional higher education	14,9	362 485	41 059,15	15,5	331 488	45 747,66
Higher education	40,9	973 205	47 116,50	45,2	973 020	46 433,02
Extracurricular education and out-of-school activities for children	13,0	980 789	13 208,17	14,5	1 011 403	14 361,04

Soure: Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (2023)

The process of including Ukraine in the common European educational area has enshrined the primary vector of educational policy development directions after signing the Association agreement with the EU in 2014. Reforms are being implemented with the European partners to ensure that Ukrainian education corresponds to the Bologna Process. Some legislative changes, such as the Doctrine of National Education Development, 2016, Law on Education, 2017, Law on Complete General Secondary Education, 2020, etc., which underpin the introduction of competency-based education, are meant to enhance the quality of education and the movement of the students and teachers as well. Everything possible has been done to educate everyone, especially vulnerable ones, including internally displaced persons and those with special educational needs. In primary education, the implementation of the New Ukrainian School has become a bright example of innovative changes in education, as in higher education, there has been an increase in the issuance of grants and partnerships with top European UCs. The shifting paradigm of understanding the right to education significantly impacts the shaping of the present-day education policy in Ukraine, primarily relating to its contemporary global context. With the Polish, German, and Finnish experience, as well as in many other European countries, Ukraine's education has begun to embrace equality, accessibility, and innovation as stipulated in the European education norms. The use of digital resources, implementation of inclusive strategies, and development of comprehensive curricular reforms are indicators of the transformation of education from a basic right to education as a fundamental human right to a means of social transformation. As part of that process, Ukraine participates in various projects, such as the Erasmus+ programme. The subject matter of the research contained the study of historical delineation, contemporary issues, and implications within Ukraine for a relevant topic: the evolution of the right to education. The objective was to study whether Ukraine's education system could withstand the existing conflict and crisis. Results indicated that the significant forces of change stemmed from global developments and local factors, including wars or other disasters, and the advancement of information technology in education. These results correspond with the findings of other researchers that state the great necessity of ensuring the right to education in times of crisis for the country's social cohesion (Llona et al., 2023; Barrientos Delgado et al., 2021; Amin, 2023). There is correspondence and divergence with the analysis results in the body of literature. The studies of the functioning of educational systems in the context of COVID-19 also include global challenges, for example, access-related inequalities or digital divides (Czerepaniak-Walczak, 2020);

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Kryvenko, 2023). Ukraine's digitally active strategies correspond with the world's strategies and have, however, been hampered by the prevalence of war. In the case of war, unlike previously during the pandemic, the policy pursued by Ukraine centres on tackling the problem of student displacement and restoring the available infrastructure (Van Esveld, 2023; Zancajo & Valiente, 2019; Zayukov et al., 2024). The results of the study showed progress in the education authorities of Ukraine; the use of information technologies has improved, participation has increased, and there has been an improvement in the role of education towards the promotion of human rights. Even with the destructive regularity of warfare as experienced in Ukraine, the growing effectiveness of educational institutions lifts the necessity for specific innovations, especially those provided by educational technology systems such as online learning platforms.

However, issues remain, such as ensuring fairness for displaced students and connecting the isolated regions. These remarks strengthen the ongoing discourse about the need to revise the right to education in a globalizing world, as proposed by (Beiter, 2023; Sheppard, 2022; Ulfat, 2023; Munongi, 2023). The research underlined some aspects of the education systems studied that remained unexamined. Analysis was limited only to the secondary sources concerning conflicts and provided no direct input from the students and the teachers in the conflict zone. The narrow scope of the research, which is on Ukraine, makes it impossible to extrapolate findings to other contexts.

In the same way, they do not impair the study's value about the comprehension of the endurance of education systems in extreme situations (Ducarre, 2023; Flores Giménez, 2023; Wodon, 2023). The study's outcomes reveal the degree of local and global influences on the right to education development in Ukraine, similar to some processes observed in other countries. This is consistent with the work of Sverdlick (2019), who argues that in times of crisis, inclusion becomes a paramount aspect of the right to education. Simultaneously, while ASEAN counterparts addressed similar concerns during the pandemic Juwita (2020), the education policy of Ukraine pursues more digitalisation and physical infrastructure reconstruction, which is quite the opposite. Alternatively, using educational technologies such as the Mriya application for education lessens the differential access to education, according to Rakhimov and Mukhamediev (2022).

The high degree of focus on e-education that was analysed in this study is in line with the digitalisation of the educational process, which, as noted by Sydorenko (2024), aims at fostering communication competencies of learners irrespective of their age as part of the so-called lifelong learning, through the use of training techniques based on interactions. Uniquely in the case of Ukraine, online psychological testing has been implemented (Reva & Demchenko, 2024), a crisis intervention tool that also serves to individualise the educational experience. Compared to the findings of Nagro et al. (2022), who analysed legislative initiatives in the United States, the Ukrainian approach shows less dependence on court decisions but a greater focus on practical reforms and innovations. The integration of international approaches into Ukrainian education confirms the universality of certain principles, such as openness and accessibility. The study by Katsouda et al. (2024) emphasises the role of openness in ensuring accessibility of education through virtual platforms, which resonates with Ukrainian initiatives in the field of distance learning. However, the uniqueness of the Ukrainian experience during the war lies in strengthening national and patriotic education, which guarantees the preservation of cultural identity even in crisis conditions. Similar to Chile (Sánchez-Mendiola et al., 2023), Ukraine uses digital platforms to ensure the quality of education, but with a focus on local specifics.

The addition of nationalistic subjects in the curriculum, including components like "Defence of Ukraine," is determined by national interests absent in other legislation. Apart from that, the current research findings indicate the usefulness of international assistance for the education system in crisis, which is consistent with Van Esveld's (2023) suggestion of delivering education to all internal refugees and their children. Ukraine illustrates how its internal reforms can move quickly along with integrating international norms and principles. The research outcomes underline the need for a philosophical stance towards the legal dimension of education. The advancement of the regulatory processes in the constitution-making drafter

in Ukraine pertains to the concept given by Prodan (2023), who refused to separate the culture of education from its place in a mat constitutional framework. However, the Ukrainian case draws attention to the concern of educational policy due to the regional challenges faced. Findings agree with Rodinova et al. (2024), who indicate exploring the Politics of Digital Branding in Education and the Economy: Risks and Opportunities.

The distinctiveness of the Ukrainian experience is manifested in the implementation of inclusion at the time of active military hostilities, which also correlates with the results related to the provision of education to displaced persons. This is in line with the research findings of Sverdlick (2019), which remark on the challenges of promoting educational inclusion during periods of crisis. Nonetheless, public policy seems to play a bigger part in these countries due to the existence of digital inclusiveness projects in the case of Ukraine. This is most effective, as opposed to the approaches employed in the research by Juwita (2020), in which access to education in the ASEAN region is explained. The measures taken by the Ukrainian administration to pursue the implementation of digital educational tools prove the affinity to the view held by Katsouda et al. (2024) on the philosophy of openness. Our findings support the argument that there is a need to modify norms and practices in the education system for it to operate in conditions of a crisis, as Ramadani et al. (2021) argue while analyzing the educational balance with public health in Indonesia during the COVID–19 rut. In the case of Ukraine, this resulted in accelerating digitalization processes in education, which were actively used in the educational policy during wartime. The disparity, however, exists in the promptness with which the education system of Ukraine has adjusted itself, relatively blending both the physical reorganization of schools and the digitization of schools, which is quite exceptional based on other nations.

Furthermore, the practical aspect of the teaching and psychological assistance projected by Reva and Demchenko (2024) explains the modernisation of the educational system in a way that is consistent with very recent developments in the work of Rakhimov & Mukhamediev (2022). In this regard, this research work's value or scientific contribution is that it explores the global education policy landscape and presents the unique problems that Ukraine encounters. The research contributes to overcoming the existing barriers to understanding education about the dynamics of war to strengthen society by providing a model other countries can adopt. It builds on previous work, emphasising the importance of integrating global criteria and local approaches (Van Esveld, 2023; Barrientos Delgado et al., 2021; Pache et al., 2023; Hélot & Bonacina-Pugh, 2023).

Among the future research prospects is the longitudinal assessment of the effects of education policies and their comparative study with those of other crisis-affected countries. Further exploring the nexus between the digital divide, socio-economic disparities, and education reform would offer practical insights on maintaining a balance in the education system (Llona et al., 2023; Zancajo & Valiente, 2019). This brings about new horizons in studying education as a basic right and an instrument for the development of society.

Conclusions

The objective of research on the development of the concept of the right to education in general pedagogy has been achieved. It also involved consideration of unique features of the Ukrainian educational system through the lens of its historical evolution and wartime crisis. Finally, it assessed how the educational system has been (re)adjusted in these digitalization and globalization times. The primary findings indicated that everyone's right to education has progressed through several transformations, from an entitlement available to few to a universally recognized and codified system. The educational system of Ukraine, even under the circumstances of war, can reconstruct itself in terms of digitalisation, inclusion and integration into the global educational system. It has been found that modern solutions, including digital channels, mobile learning tools, and curricula, enable resources in situations, and access even in unfavourable situations about inclusion and mobility in education remains central to this study and warrants further

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exploration. It is concluded that implementing national education systems within the framework of the Bologna Process enhances academic quality and helps develop the mobility of students and academicians. Contrary to these advances, issues such as how exactly the provision of such education via digital means will affect the quality and access of education to disadvantaged populations in the long run still need to be answered. The analysis exhibited that Ukraine's constitutional guarantee of the right to education has been adapted to the wartime crisis. Remarkable advances have already been achieved in extending educational facilities through developing digital resources, which has reduced education losses even in the regions where active conflict operates. Special efforts were made to transform the legislation, guaranteeing equal rights and opportunities in the education process for all, including displaced persons and disabled people. Integration of the national programs with those of the international standards is another milestone, as it serves to uphold and advance education, which the society of Ukraine cherishes as one of its fundamental values, including in times of crisis. A further line of inquiry may consider the effects of digital educational technologies examined over an extended time frame, particularly concerning learning outcomes. In addition, such a comparative analysis could also be conducted by focusing on the education system reforms in other crisis countries, which would facilitate the recognition of successful strategies and their transformation to Ukrainian realities. Investigating these areas will enhance education policy and practice regarding its sustainability and capacity to meet global challenges.

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