

# The Role of Educational Projects in Ensuring Youth Competitiveness in the Labor Market

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**Abstract – In the article the role of educational projects in ensuring youth competitiveness in the labor market is revealed. Examples of different forms of educational projects, including certified online courses, trainings and webinars are given. Significant role of such structures as BritishCouncil, Victor Pinchuk Foundation, the European program Erasmus + and other programs in higher education is reviewed.**

Key words – educational projects, online courses, trainings, webinars, BritishCouncil, Victor Pinchuk Foundation, Erasmus+.

## I. Introduction

The outlook on the education in Ukraine is changing daily. Since last couple of years the educational system has changed its standard look. Increasing emphasis is put on self-education, private organizations that make appearance in the educational market, and various educational projects financed by foreign countries. Such an approach to education has become a chance for all students to turn into skilled professionals needed in the international labor market.

## II. Main Results

Certified online courses, trainings and webinars are gaining popularity in the market for educational services. The majority of Internet users have become familiar with the two aforementioned concepts, however a webinar is the one that has recently been gaining momentum. Web conferencing may be used as an umbrella term for various types of online collaborative services including web seminars ("webinars"), webcasts, and peer-level web meetings. It may also be used in a more narrow sense to refer only to the peer-level web meeting context, in an attempt to disambiguate it from the other types of collaborative sessions [1]. A webinar is a way of organizing online meetings, and a format of seminar or workshop hosting, as well as conducting other events using the Internet.

One of the examples of certified online courses are those developed by the founders of the educational Internet platform called "Prometheus". This is a public project for mass open online classes (MOOCs). MOOCs are created in collaboration with teachers from best Ukrainian universities and uploaded into own online platform. They provide a free opportunity to publish and share courses using this platform for both universities, organizations and leading businesses. "Prometheus" offers free online access to top university-level courses for everyone interested [2].

Other popular websites for undergoing online courses are:

- Coursera [3];
- SkillsAcademy [4].

There are many opportunities for obtaining additional education over the Internet, but they are often scattered across different organizations. Thus, there is a number of online resources where the information about such events is gathered. STUDWAY is the most popular among them.

"Studway" is an online magazine about student life. The goal of the project is to help youth live a brighter and more comfortable life, find motivation, plan own professional development and interesting trips. From Latin "studens" means the one who works hard, therefore "Studway" is not about having a student ID, but rather about the way of life and thinking [5].

Platfor.ma and Unistudy are very similar Internet resources. Platfor.ma talks about ways of working, things to learn and places to rest so that our country can become a true part of Europe and not only on a map [6].

BritishCouncil is actively participating in Ukraine, strengthening ties between Ukraine and the United Kingdom in the area of arts, English learning, higher education and social development. In teaching English, the Council collaborates with the Ministry of Education and constantly conducts internal trainings for teachers of educational institutions. Around 3,000 students pass through the Kyiv School annually, taking over 11,000 exams and tests.

In higher education BritishCouncil is establishing connections between the United Kingdom and Ukraine - in areas such as liaising between universities and employers as well as internationalization of higher education [7].

BritishCouncil also acts as the founder of the "Active Citizens" programme created for the youth in the field of intercultural dialogue and social development.

Likewise, actively engaged is the Victor Pinchuk Foundation, which owns two educational projects [8]:

- Scholarship programme "Zavtra.UA" which is the first private nationwide programme aimed to support talented youth. Its main goal is to promote formation and strengthening of the new generation of intellectual and business elite;
- Scholarship programme "Worldwide Studies" that provides Ukraine's best and most talented students with an opportunity to get world-class education and utilize the acquired knowledge to the benefit of the country.

In 2014-2020 a new Erasmus+ programme will be operating in the EU. It will combine seven existing European programmes in the area of education, science and sports, including Erasmus and Erasmus Mundus.

More scholarships will be granted within Erasmus+. The programme will give funding to provide greater mobility, international partnerships and joint research projects, as well as for the empowerment and personnel development in partner countries around the world [9].

The National Erasmus+ Office assists the European Commission, the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), the national authorities and higher education institutions in the implementation of the

ERASMUS+ Programme. The NEO follows closely the policy developments in Ukraine, particularly in the field of higher education but also at other levels of education, if required. Besides the EU Delegation, the NEO is a focal point in the country for all actors, potential applicants, beneficiaries and other stakeholders as regards the EU cooperation activities in (higher) education under the ERASMUS+ programme. The mandate of the National Erasmus+ Office under the ERASMUS+ programme covers all: supporting, promotion, monitoring and dissemination activities related to the Erasmus+ activities in higher education open to cooperation with partner countries (in Key Actions 1, 2 and 3) [9].

Jean Monnet Activities are designed to promote excellence in teaching and research in the field of European Union studies worldwide. The activities also foster the dialogue between the academic world and policy-makers, in particular with the aim of enhancing governance of EU policies. European Union studies comprise the study of Europe in its entirety with particular emphasis on the European integration process in both its internal and external aspects. The discipline also covers the role of the EU in a globalised world and in promoting an active European citizenship and dialogue between people and cultures [10].

Following Ukraine's attainment of independence in 1991, the country became much more open to international educational exchange programs. The Fulbright Program was opened in Ukraine at the beginning of 1992. Its goal was and remains to increase the mutual understanding between people of the United States and Ukraine through scholarly and research exchanges. Originally, the Fulbright Program was managed by the United States Information Agency (USIA) through the United States Embassy. Since the inception of the Fulbright Program in Ukraine, nearly 900 Ukrainian scholars, students, and professionals have traveled to the United States for research or study in U.S. institutions of higher education. During the same period, more than 530 U.S. scholars, students, and professionals have participated in the Fulbright Program in Ukraine as university lecturers, researchers, and consultants. Fulbright alumni in the United States are active citizens and make up a significant lobby which doesn't let the U.S. Congress forget about supporting educational programs. Funding for the Fulbright Program is designated every year by the U.S. Congress as part of the annual budget [11].

Additionally, quite a few international organizations are actively taking part in the area of education (e.g., ENACTUS, Edu Active, CFA etc.).

ENACTUS is an international non-profit organization that connects students, teachers and businesses. This organisation use the power of entrepreneurial action and improve quality of life and living standards of people with different needs. All students of ENACTUS around the

world implement projects to expand human capabilities. They act under the guidance of mentors from universities and business. This experience not only change their lives, but also develops talent [12].

## Conclusion

To date, the increase in the level of youth education and the growing desire for self-education have become a positive trend. Additional training, participation in various educational programs is constantly contributing to successful employment. Hence, many educational programmes are being founded, public organizations are also being involved in creating conditions for additional education. A "first career step" educational programme has quite recently been introduced in Ukraine that allowed to undergo internships in local authorities. This programme is effectively working in Lviv as well. Furthermore, as part of the internship, young people have the opportunity to attend trainings from leading companies and develop in the direction of their choice.

It should be noted, however, that this tendency has become a prerequisite for strengthening Ukraine's position in the global market and its economic growth, since the future level of development of Ukraine depends on the education level of young professionals in all possible aspects.

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