



# TRENDS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROFESSIONAL PRE-HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE MODERN CONDITIONS

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## Abstract.

The *relevance* of the study is predetermined by the need to define the place of professional pre-higher education in the domestic educational system and the prospects for the development of this newly formed link of professional education.

*Aim:* to outline the main directions of development of professional pre-higher education in the modern conditions of reforming the educational activity in Ukraine.

*Methods:* theoretical analysis of scientific sources – to determine the level of research of the problem; comparison – in order to study scientific approaches to solving the problem.

*Results:* It is proved that today the state of training applicants of professional education does not fully meet the modern needs of the labor market. The main factors that negatively affect the state of training these specialists were identified, namely: the long process of forming the system of professional pre-higher education and structural changes in the activities of the educational institutions of such type; incompleted legislative and legal regulation of this educational level; insufficient funding of the sphere; imperfect mechanism of forming the state order, which does not fully reflect the needs of the labor market; insufficient participation of employers in forming the content of education, solving problems of professional pre-higher education; insufficient personnel potential and imperfect system of professional development and internship of pedagogical staff etc.

*Conclusions:* the scientific article outlines the main directions of developing professional pre-higher education: completing the process of its legal framework forming; standardization of training applicants of the educational and professional degree of “junior bachelor”; consolidating the principles of student-oriented learning in the educational process; expanding the network of institutions with modern training and production infrastructure and forming the single system of professional education, which would combine professional-technical and professional pre-higher education; implementing new decentralized model of management and financing of the sphere; improving the quality of pedagogical staff who train applicants of education on this level.

**Keywords:** *professional pre-higher education, trends of development, student-oriented education, pedagogical staff, postgraduate education.*

**Introduction.** Reforming the education system of Ukraine is due to the integration aspirations of the country to the European community, as well as the need to improve the level and quality of the educational services, which should increase the competitiveness of graduates in the domestic and international labour markets. The consequence of this is introducing new legislation into educational activities,  
*Professional Pedagogics*/1(22)'2021

changing the established approaches to the organization and implementation of the educational process, developing modern standards for training specialists in various fields, introducing new levels and types of education, forms of obtaining it, etc.

It should be noted that the consequences of reforming the educational space involved all the educational institutions of Ukraine, however, it is lokely

the sphere of vocational education underwent the most profound changes.

The scientific community considers that the system of the vocational education includes vocational (vocational-technical) training (or vocational pre-higher education) and higher professional education (Luhovyi and Talanova, 2017). At the same time, it should be noted that a person may acquire certain professional competencies at other levels of education.

The two-tier system of the vocational education existed until 2017 when after the adoption of the Law of Ukraine “On Education” the professional pre-higher education was singled out the system of higher education as a separate integral part of the education system in Ukraine. The event gave grounds to assert the expansion of the vocational education system, the formation of its third link, the professional pre-higher education.

**Sources.** Topical issues of functioning and developing the vocational education in Ukraine, training skilled workers for various sectors of the economy were the subject of research of many scientists, including: V. Andrushchenko, S. Honcharenko, M. Zhurovsky, I. Zyazyun, A. Kalensky, O. Kovalenko, L. Korotkova, V. Kremin, N. Kuzmina, V. Kurok, M. Lazaryev, V. Luhovy, P. Luzan, L. Lukyanova, N. Nychkalo, V. Radkevych, O. Radkevych, L. Pukhovska, S. Sysoyeva and others.

V. Suprun and V. Maksymchuk studied the issues of decentralization and optimization of managing professional (vocational and technical) and professional pre-higher education in the modern socio-economic conditions; organizing the educational process in the institutions of the professional pre-higher education was researched by T. Ravchyna and H. Shemelyuk (2019); introducing the information technologies into the vocational training was investigated by M. Horikhovsky, Y. Zhuravel, Y. Tsykalyuk, I. Tarasyuk; the main directions of the legislative support of the professional pre-higher education were studied by V. Zeleny and others. However, given the short period of time that passed since the professional pre-higher education was singled out into the separate component of the education system, there are still insufficiently studied questions about determining its place in the national educational space, as well as the promising areas for its further development.

**Aim:** is to identify the problem issues of functioning the system of the professional pre-higher education and trends in its development in the current

conditions of reforming the education system in Ukraine.

**Methods:** theoretical analysis of scientific sources – to determine the level of research of the problem; comparison – in order to study scientific approaches to solving the problem.

**Results and discussion.** According to Article 16 of the Law of Ukraine “On Education”, “professional higher education is aimed at forming and developing educational qualifications and it confirms the ability of a person to perform typical specialized tasks in the particular field of the professional activity related to performing tasks of the increased complexity and/or limited management functions characterized by some uncertainty of conditions and require applying the provisions and methods of the relevant science field, and ends with the acquisition of the appropriate educational and/or professional qualifications” (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Legislation of Ukraine, 2017).

In the pedagogical science, the concept of “trend” means a priority area in which the development of the particular phenomenon is carried out. Therefore, in the study the main directions of the development of the professional pre-higher education in terms of reforming the educational activities in Ukraine will be analyzed.

One of the trends in the development of the professional pre-higher education at the present stage is completing the process of its legal definition and implementing the new legislation in the educational activities in order to bring the functioning of the professional pre-higher education institutions to the requirements of the national and European educational space.

As it was noted earlier, in accordance with the provisions of the new version of the Law of Ukraine “On Education”, professional pre-higher education was singled out into the independent integral part of the education system. It led to the situation when technical schools and colleges that trained specialists at the educational and qualification level of “junior specialist”, were deprived of the status of higher education institutions of 1st–2nd levels of accreditation.

These steps at the state level have led to some uncertainty among teachers and students of technical schools and colleges as for the prospects for the further development of this area of education, as the loss of the status of higher education institutions along with the other unsolved problems may significantly reduce the number of the potential applicants and, as a consequence, to the decline of this part in the vocational education.

In order to reform the system of training of junior specialists, bringing it to the requirements of the national and international regulations, solving the current problems and increasing the level of the educational services suggested by technical schools and colleges, as well as complying the norm of the second paragraph of subpoint 2 of paragraph 6 of Chapter XII of the Law of Ukraine “On Education”, the draft Law of Ukraine “On the Professional Pre-Higher Education” was prepared and adopted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in June 2019.

This law regulates “the procedure, conditions, forms and peculiarities of obtaining professional pre-higher education and regulates public relations arising in the process of realizing the citizen’s constitutional right to education, rights and obligations of individuals and legal entities involved in exercising this right, it also determines the competence of the state bodies and local self-government bodies in the field of the professional pre-higher education”. In addition, it “establishes the basic legal, organizational, financial principles of the professional pre-higher education system, creates the conditions for combining education with production in order to train competitive professionals to meet the needs of the society, labour market and the state” (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Legislation of Ukraine, 2019).

According to the provisions of the law, technical schools and colleges, which previously had the status of higher educational institutions of the 1st and 2nd levels of accreditation, must be reorganized and “professional colleges – institutions of the professional pre-higher education or structural subdivisions of higher education institutions, other legal entities, which conduct educational activities related to obtaining professional pre-higher education, may conduct research and/or creative artistic and/or sports activities, provide the combination of theoretical training with job training” must be organised on their basis (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Legislation of Ukraine, 2019). The other types of institutions of the professional pre-higher education are military colleges for sergeants and vocational colleges with specific training conditions.

Training specialists of the educational degree “professional junior Bachelor” (instead of the current educational level “junior specialist”) able to effectively carry out practical activities in various sectors of the economy and to meet employers’ demands in the domestic and international labour markets must become the main result of the educational activity of institutions of professional pre-higher education. At the same time, the possibility of training professional junior Bachelors by some institutions

of the professional (vocational) education is provided, in case of obtaining the appropriate license and compliance with the standards of the professional pre-higher education.

The above mentioned legislative changes make an important step in the process of reforming the professional pre-higher education which will introduce the conceptual framework of the competence approach in the educational activities of vocational colleges. The dominant idea of competence-based learning is to shift the emphasis from the process of obtaining relevant knowledge, skills and abilities in the particular field to achieving specific learning outcomes (competences) that determine the ability of the specialist to effectively perform tasks of the future professional activity. Therefore, one of the trends in the further development of the professional pre-higher education which will achieve the set aim, is improving the quality of the educational services by standardizing students training of the educational and professional degree of “junior Bachelor”.

At the same time, one should agree with the opinion of scientists that at the present stage “standardizing competence education in terms of justification of aims, content, evaluation of competences of students and graduates of vocational education is still carried out at an intuitive level” (Kalens’ky et al., 2018, p. 15). The development of standards of the professional pre-higher education will solve these problems.

Nowadays, in this country standards for training professionals of various specialties at various levels of education, including the professional pre-higher education, are actively developed. The standard of the professional pre-higher education defines the set of requirements for the educational and professional programmes of the professional pre-higher education that are common to all the educational and professional programmes within the certain specialty (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Legislation of Ukraine, 2019). It determines the content of the educational activities, competences and final learning outcomes that must be achieved by students during training in the specialty within the educational-professional programme.

The standard of the professional pre-higher education defines the following requirements to the educational-professional programme: the list of obligatory general and special competences and results of training students of the professional pre-higher education; requirements for the prior education of persons who can start training under this programme; the amount of ECTS credits required to obtain the professional Bachelor degree in the

relevant specialty; forms of certification of students of the professional pre-higher education; requirements for the internal quality providing system; requirements of the professional standards (if any). These provisions are contained in the Guidelines for the development of the standards of the professional pre-higher education approved by the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine of July 13, 2020, No. 918. This normative document also defines the procedure of developing and asserting the standards of the professional pre-higher education, the structure and the recommendations for their developing. It was designed to assist stakeholders in developing standards and unifying approaches to defining the content requirements.

The next direction of developing the professional pre-higher education to ensure the implementation of the competence paradigm, is the humanization of the education. Its essence is in reorienting the educational process from the traditional knowledge based approach consisting in transmitting the necessary knowledge and forming skills within the relevant specialty to the student-centred educational process where the student's personality, educational needs and necessary social skills prevail and they will allow him to effectively carry out the professional activities and successfully socialize in the society.

It should be noted that for the first time at the legislative level the Law of Ukraine "On Professional Pre-higher Education" formulates the concept of the "student-oriented teaching" and defines it as "the approach to the educational process, which includes: encouraging students of the professional pre-higher education to the role of the autonomous and responsible entities of the educational process; creating the educational environment focused on meeting the needs and interests of students of the professional pre-higher education, including providing opportunities for forming individual educational plan; building the educational process on the basis of mutual respect and partnership of students of the professional higher education and administration, pedagogical (scientific and pedagogical) and other employees of the institution of the professional pre-higher education" (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Legislation of Ukraine, 2019).

Among the main principles of the student-oriented educational activities there are the following: learning as a teacher-student interaction; mutual understanding in the relationship between them (the presence of mutual trust, respect; desire to work together); relying on students' cognitive activity (expression of their own thoughts; searching for new

ideas, solutions; constructing their own understanding of the objective phenomena and processes; acquiring new skills, etc.); expanding student's autonomy, granting the right to choose; reflective approach of teachers and students to the processes of teaching and learning; teachers' and students' mutual satisfaction with the educational process (Ravchyna and Shemelyuk, 2019, p. 201). This will allow students to be active participants in the educational process and independently choose their own educational plan.

Creating the extensive network of institutions based on the currently functioning colleges and technical schools and forming the united system of the professional vocational education, which would combine vocational and professional pre-higher education is an important trend in the further development of the professional pre-higher education.

According to the data of the Strategy for the development of higher education for 2021–2031, as of the beginning of the 2019–2020 academic year, the number of universities, institutes and academies increased compared to the 2014–2015 academic year by 1.4% (to 281 institutions) while the number of technical schools, colleges and vocational schools decreased by 12.7% (338 institutions), and compared to 1991 – by 51.1% (Strategy for the Development of Higher Education for 2021–2031, p. 9). This indicates the continuing trend of increasing the number of higher education institutions and reducing the number of institutions of the professional pre-higher and vocational education. The main reason for this phenomenon, in the author's opinion, is the low prestige of working professions in the society and the desire of applicants for higher education and their parents to obtain university diploma.

Thus, according to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine in 2019, 14.7% of graduates of basic secondary education in Ukraine chose to study in the system of the vocational (technical) education, 64.8% continued their studies to complete the secondary education in general secondary education institutions (schools) and 19.6% school graduates in the institutions of higher (currently professional pre-higher – the author's note) education (colleges, technical schools) (Strategy for the development of higher education for 2021–2031, p. 9).

Such situation leads to the shortage of skilled workers in the country and oversaturation of the labour market with higher education institutions graduates, who have to hold jobs and perform the functions of specialists, whose training should be carried out by vocational (technical) education institutions, colleges and technical schools. Given the above

mentioned, it is important to take appropriate measures to change the correlation towards increasing the share of graduates entering vocational pre-higher education institutions, compared with those who choose to enter higher education institutions.

Therefore, in the author's opinion, there is an urgent need of creating the network of the educational institutions with modern training and production infrastructure, which would unite institutions of the professional pre-higher and vocational education in the unified system of the vocational education and take into account the needs of regional labour markets for skilled workers. At the same time, it is necessary to promote at the state level the need to obtain working specialties and create decent working conditions and payment for vocational education institutions graduates.

Improving the teaching staff quality of the professional pre-higher education institutions is a current trend in the development of this component of education, as one of the main factors influencing the quality of training is the staffing of educational institutions. The effectiveness of the educational process, the implementation of the ideas of the competence approach education, the use of the new teaching and learning technologies directly depends on the personality of the teacher, their professional and other competences, motivation to teach in the new conditions, awareness of the need for continuous self-development and self-improvement. It is the teacher who creates the favourable atmosphere for learning, awakens students' interest in the cognitive activities, motivates them to acquire competences and future professional activities, helps to meet students' educational needs and forms them as self-sufficient, enterprising and creative personalities.

However, there also exists a negative trend that was observed in the last several years – the transition of qualified teachers from colleges and technical schools to institutions of higher education or other working places. Among the main reasons for this phenomenon are the following: unsatisfactory working conditions, outdated material and technical base, low wages, low authority of the teacher in the society, etc. Therefore, the state policy in the field of the professional pre-higher education should be aimed at raising the interest of teachers of colleges and technical schools in keeping their positions and involving highly qualified professionals by way of creating favourable working conditions for them, ensuring the necessary level of social and legal protection, wages and opportunities for their further professional development.

Many institutions of the professional pre-higher education are characterized by the high level of the scientific and/or practical experience of most teachers and by the insufficient level of their pedagogical skills. For example, in the institutions of the professional pre-higher education, most teachers are qualified professionals with the extensive experience in enterprise or production, but they are not sufficiently aware of the modern approaches to the organization of the educational process or pedagogical interaction with students, colleagues, etc. (Ravchina and Shemelyuk, 2019, p. 205).

For solving this and the other issues related to the development of the professional competences of teachers of the vocational higher education institutions in Ukraine, there is a system of postgraduate education, which is an integral part of the system of continuing adult education.

Researchers see the main tasks of the system of postgraduate education of the scientific and pedagogical employees as follows:

- improvement of the normative-legal provision of the system of postgraduate pedagogical education;
- development of the standards of postgraduate pedagogical education, focused on the modernization of the system of in-service training, advanced training and internships of teachers, research and teaching staff and heads of educational institutions;
- introduction of innovative technologies of pedagogical support and advanced training of pedagogical employees, scientific and pedagogical staff and managers of the education system taking into account modern tendencies of reforming and modernizing the Ukrainian education system;
- promoting the use of the perspective training during in-service training of teachers, research and teaching staff and educational managers in accordance with the requirements of the society and the development of the state (Tolochko, 2019, p. 45).

According to the relevant law, pedagogical staff of the professional pre-higher education institutions must improve their skills annually. At the same time, the total amount of the academic hours for advanced training for five years cannot be less than 120 hours, of which a certain number of hours must be aimed at improving knowledge, skills and practical skills in working with students with special educational needs and adult students. The results of the professional development must be taken into account when attesting teachers and appointing them to the position or making the employment contract (Law of Ukraine, 2019).

**Conclusions.** The state of training students of the professional education does not fully meet the modern needs of the labour market. Factors that negatively affect the state of training relevant professionals are as follows: the long process of forming the system of the professional pre-higher education and structural changes in the activities of the relevant educational institutions; incomplete legislative and departmental legal regulation of the level of education; insufficient funding for the industry; imperfect mechanism of forming the state order, which does not fully reflect the needs of the labour market; insufficient participation of employers in shaping the content of education, solving the problems of the professional pre-higher education; insufficient personnel potential and imperfection of the system of advanced training and internship of teachers, etc.

At the same time, government agencies, educational institutions and other stakeholders take measures to bring the situation in line with the needs of the society and the requirements of the domestic and international regulations in the field of education. This concerns, first of all, developing and improving the legal framework for providing educational services in the field of the professional pre-higher education, introducing the competence-based approach to education, standardiz-

ing training, involving business entities in the development of educational standards. The positive aspect is that the expert community and scientists are actively involved in the process. However, some of the outlined issues need further solving.

Based on the analyzed state of functioning the system of the professional pre-higher education in the modern conditions, the main trends in the development of this education component can be defined, namely: completion of the process forming its regulatory framework; standardization of training students of the educational and professional degree “junior Bachelor”; consolidation of the principles of student-oriented learning in the educational process; expansion of the network of institutions with modern training and production infrastructure and the formation of the united system of the professional education, which would combine vocational (vocational and technical) and professional pre-higher education; improving the quality of teachers involved in training students. The identified trends do not cover all the prognostic areas of developing the system of the professional pre-higher education, they can be expanded and supplemented in accordance with the implementation of measures to reform this component of education and research in the field of the educational activities..

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УДК 377/378]-043.86

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## ТЕНДЕНЦІЇ РОЗВИТКУ ФАХОВОЇ ПЕРЕДВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ В СУЧАСНИХ УМОВАХ

### Роман Курок 1

<sup>1</sup> кандидат юридичних наук, доцент, молодший науковий співробітник лабораторії науково-методичного супроводу підготовки фахівців у коледжах і технікумах Інституту професійно-технічної освіти Національної академії педагогічних наук України, Україна, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6855-3830>, e-mail: [romaku2010@gmail.com](mailto:romaku2010@gmail.com)

### Реферат.

Актуальність дослідження зумовлена необхідністю визначення місця фахової передвищої освіти у вітчизняній освітянській системі та перспектив розвитку цієї новоутвореної ланки професійної освіти.

*Мета:* окреслити основні тенденції розвитку фахової передвищої освіти в умовах реформування освітньої системи України.

*Методи:* теоретичний аналіз наукових джерел – для з'ясування рівня дослідженості проблеми; порівняння – з метою вивчення наукових підходів до розв'язання проблеми.

*Результати:* доведено, що сучасний стан підготовки здобувачів професійної освіти не повною мірою відповідає актуальним потребам ринку праці; виокремлено основні чинники негативного впливу на стан підготовки відповідних фахівців (тривалий процес формування системи фахової передвищої освіти та структурні зміни в діяльності відповідних освітніх закладів; незавершеність законодавчого та відомчого нормативно-правового регулювання даного рівня освіти; недостатнє фінансування галузі; недосконалий механізм формування державного замовлення, що не повною мірою відображає потреби ринку праці; недостатня участь роботодавців у формуванні змісту освіти, розв'язанні проблем фахової передвищої освіти; недостатній кадровий потенціал та недосконалість системи підвищення кваліфікації та стажування педагогічних працівників тощо).

*Висновки:* основними тенденціями розвитку фахової передвищої освіти є: завершення процесу формування нормативно-правової бази; стандартизація підготовки здобувачів за освітньо-професійним ступенем «молодший бакалавр»; закріплення принципів студентоорієнтованого навчання в освітньому процесі; розширення мережі закладів із сучасною навчально-виробничою інфраструктурою та формування єдиної системи професійної освіти, яка б поєднувала професійно-технічну та фахову передвищу освіту; реалізація нової децентралізованої моделі управління та фінансування галузі; вдосконалення якісного складу педагогічних працівників, які здійснюють підготовку здобувачів освіти.

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**Ключові слова:** *фахова передвища освіта, тенденції розвитку, студентоорієнтоване навчання, педагогічні працівники, післядипломна освіта.*

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Received: 27 April 2021

Accept: 30 June 2021