Integrity in Education and Research: The Ukrainian Case

Mychailo Wynnyckyj Ph.D.

Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and Lviv Business School

Erasmus+ Higher Education Reform Experts (HERE)Team

Head of the Secretariat of the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance

Higher Education in Ukraine: Facts and Figures

- Higher Education Institutions – 287
  - Public – 209, Private – 78
  - Number has decreased by 20% since 2014
- Students – 1 370 thousand
- Academic staff – 110 thousand

- National Academy of Sciences
  - 160 research institutes
  - 29 870 staff, incl. 15 530 researchers
  - 260 coop agreements with HEIs

- 5 Specialized Academies of Science
  - Law, Medicine, Agrarian, Education, Art

- National Agency for Quality Assurance
  - New paradigm of accreditation (2019): from verification to consultancy
    - Expert training / compliance framework development / capacity building in HEIs

Integrity: a cultural issue

- 2016 survey of students in 10 universities (N=3000**)**
  - Buying ghostwritten papers – 43,8% sometimes OK / 10,8% OK
  - Copying from others during exams – 42,8% sometimes OK / 8,5% OK
  - Using cheatsheets during exams – 47,1% sometimes OK / 25,7% OK

- SAIUP has made an impact – focused on 15 universities (of 300)
  - Popularization of integrity issues through publications, teaching materials

- "Dissergate" - activist group uncovering plagiarism in dissertations
  - 53 cases submitted to MinEdu / 15 degrees revoked / 7 defenses cancelled
  - High profile cases "stuck" in procedural quagmire

Political dimension

- Real implementation of integrity provisions delayed due to proliferation of possible infraction cases among "high profile"
  - Kateryna Kyrylenko – wife of current Deputy Prime Minister
  - Volodymyr Lytvyn – former Parl. Speaker & current Member of Education Com.
  - Serhiy Babak – Number 11 on "Servant of the People" list / advisor to President Zelensky on education

- Lack of political will to "prosecute" academic integrity cases
  - Procedural norms enacted so as to avoid requirement to investigate cases or to make investigation/revocation of degrees virtually impossible

- Ukrainian courts do not recognize "academic plagiarism" - ruling only in cases of "plagiarism" – i.e. after author complaint

Key Reforms since 2014 (legal dimension):

Law on Higher Education (2014):

- Completion of Bologna
  - 3 cycles – Jnr BA + BA/MA/PhD + DSc
  - ECTS – mobility & joint programs
- University autonomy
  - Academic but not yet financial
- New QA system
  - National Quality Assurance Agency
- "Academic plagiarism" introduced into legal vocabulary
  - Personal and institutional sanctions for violators, incl. thesis supervisors & opponents

Law "On Education" (2017):

- "New Ukrainian School"
- Competence-based programming
- 12 year school trajectory

- First legal definition of "academic integrity"
  - incl. "academic plagiarism" and "fabrication"
- Faculty and students obliged to conform to "ethical norms of academic integrity"
  - Ethical codes adopted by approx. 20% of HEIs

Integrity: Institutional solution

- Greater HEI autonomy = greater responsibility (Codes of Ethics)
  - Shift to reputational paradigm = HEI's to grant degrees rather than state
  - Introduction of internal QA systems (ESG is the new "Bologna")

- National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance (naqa.gov.ua)
  - Accreditation of programmes, institutions, indep. accreditation agencies
  - Unique "court" for integrity cases (Ethics Committee + Collective Decision)
  - Draft "Procedures for Cancelling the Decisions of Defense Committees"
    - Pre-1991 – amnesty
    - 1991-2014 – referral to MinEdu
    - 2014-2019 – review process to begin 1 January 2020
  - Provisions for "self-withdrawal" of degrees without sanction
  - Persons with revoked degrees banned from teaching (affects prog. accreditation), administration, research supervision.

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