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FORMATION OF ACADEMIC CULTURE AND INTEGRITY AS KEY EUROPEAN VALUES

The article examines the significance of academic culture and integrity as key factors in Ukraine’s integration into the European Higher Education Area. It is demonstrated that successful European integration necessitates not only institutional reforms but also a transformation of the value orientations within the academic community. The main challenges in implementing the principles of academic integrity are identified, and possible ways to address them are outlined with regard to European standards and practices.

Keywords: *academic culture, academic integrity, European Higher Education Area, Bologna Process, ethical standards.*

The integration of Ukraine into the European Higher Education Area requires not only structural reforms, but also a shift in the value orientations of the academic community. In the context of globalisation, academic culture and integrity become

indicators of the maturity of the university environment and trust in the outcomes of education and science. The problem is that while these principles are widely declared, they are not always consistently followed in practice.

Academic culture is understood as a system of norms, traditions, values, and behavioural models that regulate educational and research activities. It covers ethical standards, communicative norms, academic language practices, and patterns of interaction among faculty, students, and administrators. In the European context, the concept of academic culture is closely linked to the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers [1], as well as the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area [2], which emphasise that educational quality is impossible without adherence to ethical norms and mutual trust. Thus, academic culture functions not only as a moral guideline but also as a mechanism for ensuring academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and the social responsibility of science.

Academic integrity refers to a set of moral and ethical principles and rules that all participants in the educational process are expected to observe, ensuring honesty, trust, respect, fairness, and responsibility. European standards of academic integrity are reflected in the Council of Europe's Code of Ethics for Universities [3], the documents of the European Network for Academic Integrity [4], and recommendations of the European University Association (EUA). These sources share the understanding that academic integrity is not merely compliance with rules, but a conscious personal stance.

In Ukrainian legislation, the principles of academic integrity are defined in Article 42 of the Law of Ukraine "On Education" [5], which establishes responsibility for plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, and other forms of academic misconduct. Key challenges to integrity include insufficient awareness of academic ethics among students and faculty, limited systematic instruction in academic writing, underdeveloped citation culture and research ethics, and the influence of the commercialisation of education, which can lower ethical standards. However, positive developments can be observed: the establishment of ethics committees, the introduction of courses on academic culture, and the implementation of plagiarism detection systems. Participation in Erasmus+

Programme and ENAI Integrity Labs supports the dissemination of European best practices.

The Bologna Process defines not only the structural compatibility of educational systems but also a shared set of values centred on academic freedom, mobility, trust, quality, and social responsibility. Academic culture ensures the practical implementation of these principles: without it, university autonomy loses meaning, and academic mobility becomes merely formal. Academic integrity is essential for the mutual recognition of degrees and qualifications, since educational and research outcomes cannot be accepted in the European academic space without guarantees of honesty. Thus, integrity functions as a practical tool for building trust among institutions across countries.

The formation of academic culture requires a deliberate socialisation process: involving students in research and volunteer activities and creating an environment where ethical behaviour is the norm. The example set by educators plays a crucial role, as they shape students' critical thinking, respect for authorship, and understanding of knowledge as a public good.

The development of academic culture must take place on several levels:

- *Institutional* (establishing academic culture centres, drafting codes of ethics, offering training for faculty),
- *Individual* (developing academic writing skills, source citation competence, awareness of the consequences of integrity violations),
- *National and international* (harmonising standards and participating in global academic networks).

Conclusions. Academic culture and integrity are not only moral categories but strategic factors in Ukraine's integration into the European Education Area. Their development requires coordinated regulatory measures, educational policy efforts, internal university culture, and personal responsibility among all participants in the academic process. The level of integrity is an indicator of a society's maturity, its capacity for critical thinking, responsible action, and equal partnership within the European academic community.

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