

SECTION 3. INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROCESSES IN UKRAINIAN LAW

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INTERNATIONALISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONALS WITH SPECIFIC CONDITIONS OF STUDY

Bidniak H. S., Pakulova T. V., Strilets K. Yr.

INTRODUCTION

In the modern globalised world, internationalisation has become one of the key trends in the development of higher education. It promotes the integration of national educational systems into the European and global space, ensures the quality of educational services, forms competitive specialists and strengthens the academic reputation of universities. In this context, special attention should be paid to the category of higher education institutions with specific conditions of study (hereinafter referred to as the 'HEIs with SCS'), which include military, law enforcement, intelligence and other specialised institutions whose activities are closely related to the national security of the state.

Unlike classical universities, HEIs with SCS operate under specific regulatory, organisational and ethical constraints. This leads to a number of challenges, including the exercise of cadets' academic freedom, opportunities for academic mobility, international cooperation and the introduction of innovative educational practices. However, internationalisation can become an effective tool for modernising such institutions, contributing to improving the quality of training and harmonising internal educational processes with European standards.

The Law of Ukraine 'On Higher Education' defines academic freedom as "the autonomy and independence of participants in the educational process in the conduct of pedagogical, scientific and pedagogical, scientific and/or innovative activities, which is carried out on the principles of freedom of speech and creativity, dissemination of knowledge and information, conducting research and use of their results and is implemented subject to the

restrictions established by law”¹. However, in the HEIs with SCS, this concept has specific boundaries due to the service subordination of cadet², Recent Ukrainian and European publications (e.g., Zghurovskiy; Malynovskyi & Melnyk; National Erasmus+ Office in Ukraine)^{3, 4, 5}, show a clear shift from mobility-only projects to comprehensive institutional strategies that integrate international, intercultural and global dimensions across teaching, research and governance. That is why it is important to investigate how internationalisation can be implemented under conditions of limited academic freedom, what strategies are appropriate for such institutions and how they meet the modern requirements of university education.⁶

Scientific works of researchers, namely: Tsareva I., Maksymenko O. & Kalko R. (2024)⁷, Zgurovsky M. (2020)⁸, Malynovsky V. & Melnyk V. (2020)⁹, Zinchenko S. (2019)¹⁰, Surmin Y. & Bieliaiev D. (2020)¹¹ are devoted to the problems of internationalisation of higher educational institutions, its benefits and how they can be adapted to the needs of national security, defence capability development and training of personnel. They clearly outline that modern higher education operates in the context of globalisation, technological transformations and growing demands on the quality of specialist training. Accordingly, universities – including those with specific conditions of study – must meet the universal criteria of efficiency, openness and academic mobility formulated by the Bologna

¹ Про вищу освіту: Закон України від 01.07.2014 № 1556-VII. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1556-18>

² Про затвердження порядку організації освітнього процесу у ЗВО з особливими умовами навчання:Резолюція Кабінету міністрів України № 673 від 29.08.2018. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/673-2018-p>

³ Згуровський М.З. (2020). Інтернаціоналізація вищої освіти України в умовах глобалізації. *Вища освіта України*, 3. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18372/2410-6365.66.14410>

⁴ Малиновський В.Я., Мельник В.М. (2020). Інтернаціоналізація вищої освіти в умовах європейської інтеграції. *Публічне управління: теорія та практика*, 3(27).

⁵ Національний Еразмус+ офіс в Україні (2023). Міжнародна діяльність ЗВО України в умовах війни: виклики і рішення. URL: <https://erasmusplus.org.ua/?p=17213>. URL: <https://erasmusplus.org.ua/?p=17213>

⁶ Міністерство освіти і науки України. Рекомендації щодо інтернаціоналізації ЗВО (2020). URL: <https://mon.gov.ua/ua/news>

⁷ Tsareva I., Maksymenko O., Kalko R. (2024). Philosophical aspect of information warfare. *Philosophy, Economics and Law Review*, 4(1), 57–66.

⁸ Згуровський М.З. (2020). Інтернаціоналізація вищої освіти України в умовах глобалізації. *Вища освіта України*, 3. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18372/2410-6365.66.14410>

⁹ Малиновський В.Я., Мельник В.М. (2020). Інтернаціоналізація вищої освіти в умовах європейської інтеграції. *Публічне управління: теорія та практика*, 3(27).

¹⁰ Зінченко С.М. (2019). Академічна свобода у сучасному вищому навчальному закладі: проблеми реалізації. *Вісник Національної академії правових наук України*, 1(96).

¹¹ Сурмін Ю.П., Беляєв Д.С. (2020). Свобода регламентація у системі вищої військової освіти. *Військово-науковий вісник*, (33).

Process, recommendations of UNESCO, the European Union and the national strategies.

Thus, the purpose of the article is to analyse the theoretical foundations of the internationalisation of higher education, outline the features of academic freedom in the context of HEIs with SCS, identify current requirements for university education and propose practical strategies for internationalisation adapted to the specifics of the mentioned educational environment.

Materials and Methods. The research design combines comparative legal analysis of Ukrainian regulatory acts governing higher education and HEIs with SCS, and a structured review of policy and scholarly sources (2019–2024), including the Bologna Process documents, Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec, and sectoral reports of the National Erasmus+ Office in Ukraine. The systemic approach was used to map the interrelations between academic freedom, security-driven limitations and institutional internationalisation policies. Additionally, elements of case study methodology were applied to typical cooperation formats, focusing on feasibility under security constraints. The methodological triangulation increases the validity of the conclusions and ensures their applicability to HEIs with SCS.

1. The problem's prerequisites emergence and the problem's formulation

Internationalisation of higher education is the process of integrating the international dimension into teaching, learning, research and organisational development of universities. The most widespread academic definition was given by Jane Knight, who defined internationalisation as: “The process of integrating the international, intercultural or global dimension into the aims, functions and delivery of higher education”.¹²

This approach emphasises the complexity of internationalisation, covering not only the mobility of students and lecturers, but also the modernisation of educational content, participation in international research projects, development of partnerships, implementation of joint double degree programmes, and so on.

The scientific literature distinguishes two main approaches to internationalisation:

¹² Knight, J. (2004). Internationalization remodeled: Definition, approaches, and rationales. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 8(1), 5–31. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315303260832>

- institutional – focuses on the development of internal policies, strategies and procedures that facilitate the university's participation in the global education space;

- functional (academic/programmatic) – refers to specific forms of international activity: academic mobility, foreign language courses, international research, faculty exchange, recognition of qualifications.

For HEIs with SCS, the institutional approach is of particular importance, as it allows for systematic consideration of security, service regulations, secrecy, restrictions, while fostering openness to external educational practices.

Higher education institutions with specific conditions of study are educational institutions where the organisation of the educational process is subject to special requirements due to the performance of functions in the field of national security, defence, law enforcement or intelligence. In Ukrainian legislation, these institutions usually operate as part of ministries and departments.

The internationalisation of higher education has several strategic functions:

- improving the quality of education and research through access to the latest knowledge, participation in international projects, and exchange of experience;

- developing global competence of students and lecturers, including intercultural communication, critical thinking, and language skills;

- expanding employment opportunities for graduates in both the national and international markets;

- strengthening the university's reputation at the international level;

- support for democratic values, intercultural dialogue, and sustainable development.

In the context of HEIs with SCS, these benefits can be adapted to the needs of national security, defence capability development and training of personnel to work in the face of globalised threats.

According to the analytical report of the National Erasmus+ Office in Ukraine, internationalisation in the context of security challenges requires new approaches to mobility, partnerships and secure knowledge exchange.¹³

The cadets of the HEIs with SCS are both students and military personnel/persons with special status. They are subject to strict internal regulations, have restrictions on movement, communication and use of personal devices. This creates serious obstacles to: academic mobility,

¹³ Національний Еразмус+ офіс в Україні (2023). Міжнародна діяльність ЗВО України в умовах війни: виклики і рішення. URL: <https://erasmusplus.org.ua/?p=17213>

participation in open international exchange programmes, access to foreign information resources, and public scientific communication.

Under conditions of official subordination, standardised curricula and disciplinary regulations, cadets do not have full autonomy in choosing disciplines, lecturers, forms of work or participation in research activities, which limits the concept of academic freedom, defined in Article 1 of the Law of Ukraine “On Higher Education” as “autonomy and independence of participants in the educational process in the implementation of educational, scientific and creative activities...”¹⁴.

The HEIs with SCS often work with special curricula that contain classified or sensitive information, in particular in the areas of military technology, tactics, intelligence, and cybersecurity. This limits the possibility of open scientific publication, joint teaching with foreign partners or participation in public international conferences.

Often, international educational initiatives (e.g., Erasmus+, Horizon Europe) do not take into account the specifics of HEIs with SCS: the need for state support, restrictions on cadets’ travel abroad, and the complexity of legal procedures. As a result, the participation of such institutions in international projects remains minimal, despite the high need for experience exchange and standardisation of training within NATO and the EU.

Academic freedom is a fundamental principle of university autonomy and personal development in higher education. Academic freedom is: “autonomy and independence of participants in the educational process in the implementation of educational, scientific and/or creative activities...”¹⁵.

This principle has a deep philosophical basis in the idea of the university as a space for the free search for truth (Humboldt, Jaspers). In democratic societies, academic freedom is interpreted as: freedom of teaching and learning; freedom to choose research topics; freedom to publish results; autonomy of participants in the choice of methods and means of education; the right to participate in university governance. Academic freedom is not only a right, but also an obligation: its implementation should be consistent with the principles of academic integrity, respect for the rights of other participants in the educational process and responsibility for the results of activities.

Academic freedom is not denied in HEIs with SCS (military, police, intelligence academies, and so on), but it is significantly limited by the nature of the service and regulations established by the state. They are: limited choice of academic disciplines – the programs are mostly fixed,

¹⁴ Про вищу освіту: Закон України від 01.07.2014 № 1556-VII. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1556-18>

¹⁵ Про вищу освіту: Закон України від 01.07.2014 № 1556-VII. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1556-18>

without elements of electivity; lack of mobility (study abroad or at civilian universities is not allowed without approval); limited access to open scientific publicity (some research results have limited access); strict control over the behaviour of cadets and subordination to disciplinary regulations.

Such conditions do not contradict academic freedom in the general sense, but form its narrow, functional format, subordinated to the goals of service and defence. It goes without saying that the main task of the administrations of HEIs with SCS is to ensure a balance between academic freedom and official discipline. This means: introducing elements of choice into the curriculum (e.g., additional courses in foreign languages, digital security, law); encouraging cadets to participate in internal research activities; developing a system of rewards for scientific activity; creating an environment of trust and respect for academic opinion.

In the international context, such approaches are in line with the principles of the Bologna Process, where respect for academic freedom is combined with responsibility for its limits.

According to the Council of Europe¹⁶, even in institutions with restricted status, students should retain the right to participate in academic life, and restrictions on freedom should be clearly defined, necessary and proportionate.

As modern higher education operates in the context of globalisation, technological transformation and growing demands on the quality of specialist training, universities – including HEIs with SCS – must meet the universal criteria of efficiency, openness and academic mobility formulated by the Bologna Process, UNESCO, European Union and national strategies.

The leading paradigm of modern education is the competence-based approach, which focuses the learning process not only on the acquisition of knowledge but also on developing the ability to apply it in real life and professional situations. For HEIs with SCS, it means that educational programs should not only prepare for a highly specialised service, but also provide a wide range of general and professional competences (leadership, digital, language, analytical). For example, in addition to knowledge of tactics and statutes, a law enforcement officer should have tools for psychological support of subordinates, foreign language skills, and the ability to analyse large amounts of information in a digital environment. Since Ukraine officially joined the Bologna Process in 2005, all higher education institutions, including HEIs with SCS, must be guided by unified European standards. The HEIs with SCS use digital platforms, but due to

¹⁶ Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)7 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the responsibility of public authorities for academic freedom and institutional autonomy. URL: <https://rm.coe.int/168070c7c7>

security restrictions, cadets' access to external resources is controlled. At the same time, they are developing their own internal information and educational environments.

2. The analysis of existing methods for solving the problem and formulating a task for the optimal technique development

A comprehensive approach to training a specialist requires a combination of knowledge from several fields. For example, the training of a cybersecurity specialist includes technical disciplines (computer science, encryption), law (international and military), psychology (human factor in cyber threats), language training (for international interaction). Thus, interdisciplinarity is a tool for developing critical thinking and creativity, which are the key to solving non-standard situations in the military or law enforcement service.

The internationalisation of higher education is a purposeful process of integrating the international, intercultural and global dimension into the goals, functions and processes of educational institutions. It can take place at the following levels: institutional – through the creation of international departments, double degree programs, and the involvement of foreign lecturers; individual – through academic mobility of students and academic staff; virtual – through online courses, joint research platforms, digital collaboration. Ukraine's current educational policy has several key strategic directions:

Academic mobility.

This is a temporary study or internship of a student in another institution. Mobility can be: internal (between Ukrainian higher educational institutions), external (within the framework of the Erasmus+, NATO DEEP, KA1/KA2, and so on programs)¹⁷. External mobility is often limited for HEIs with SCS, but can be implemented within the framework of: training missions within NATO; participation in international military simulations; short-term internships under intergovernmental agreements.

Joint educational programs.

This is the creation of bilateral or multilateral training programmes where the curriculum is agreed between institutions and the graduate receives a joint or double degree. It can be carried out at the postgraduate level (e.g., courses with the participation of NATO member states); in language training programs (including with the participation of foreign instructors); in the field of cyber security and law enforcement management.

¹⁷ Національний Еразмус+ офіс в Україні (2023). Міжнародна діяльність ЗВО України в умовах війни: виклики і рішення. URL: <https://erasmusplus.org.ua/?p=17213>

Internationalisation of educational content.

This approach does not require physical mobility, but instead involves teaching certain disciplines in English; studying professional vocabulary in the context of international terminology; analysis of international experience within the courses; integration of UN, EU, NATO cases into the curriculum.

In order to implement the internationalisation policy, a modern higher educational institution should: develop an internal internationalisation strategy; create responsible structural units (international relations department, internationalisation coordinator); establish cooperation with foreign partners (embassies, attachés, international educational agencies); ensure the quality and compatibility of educational programmes with international standards; conduct internal trainings for staff on international cooperation practices. It is important for the HEIs with SCS to take into account the need for security, confidentiality and political neutrality, especially in wartime. Therefore, international cooperation should be conducted through state channels or in coordination with the relevant ministries.

Of course, there are certain challenges and limitations for the HEIs with SCS. Namely, limited access to open international platforms due to security protocols; inability to participate in long-term exchange programmes; language barriers among staff and cadets; limited funding for non-profit educational projects. However, there are opportunities to participate in international projects on digital security, medicine, crisis response; develop remote international cooperation; improve language training for participation in international operations (peacekeeping, humanitarian missions); strengthen the image of Ukrainian HEIs with SCS as partners in the joint defence of European values.

The results indicate that while HEIs with SCS face structural constraints (service subordination, classified curricula, restricted mobility), internationalisation remains both feasible and beneficial when tailored to security conditions. A balanced model combines: (a) virtual and blended mobility; (b) cooperation in non-sensitive domains (e.g., humanitarian law, cyber hygiene, crisis response); (c) English-medium instruction for selected modules; and (d) secure data-sharing protocols for joint research. This alignment reduces the risks of uncontrolled information flows while keeping educational quality on par with European benchmarks.

From the perspective of academic freedom, the functional format characteristic of HEIs with SCS can be widened without undermining discipline: elective micro-modules, supervised participation in closed research groups, and incentive systems for academic writing improve agency and responsibility. Internationally, these measures resonate with the Bologna Process and the Council of Europe's proportionality principle. Importantly,

wartime experience shows the symbolic dimension of internationalisation: presenting Ukraine's defence of democratic values through academic cooperation reinforces institutional reputation and supports staff and cadet resilience.

Implementation requires governance instruments: an institutional internationalisation roadmap; risk assessment and mitigation procedures; staff development in EMI (English-medium instruction) and academic writing; and clear coordination with the responsible ministries. Monitoring should use mixed indicators (quality of learning outcomes, language proficiency gains, secure collaboration instances, and graduate employability in international contexts).

CONCLUSIONS

The prospects for the internationalisation of HEIs with SCS are obvious and strategically important. At the same time, they should be implemented through adapted mechanisms that take into account national security, confidentiality and the specifics of training. Only a targeted government policy and institutional initiative can ensure the gradual but effective entry of such institutions into the global educational space. Internationalisation is a key factor in the development of the modern higher education system aimed at ensuring the competitiveness of graduates, updating educational programmes and integration into the global educational space. In the context of HEIs with SCS, this process is particularly relevant, as it is related not only to academic needs, but also to the requirements of national security, international partnership and adaptation to wartime conditions.

The modernisation of HEIs with SCS should be based on the introduction of a competence-based approach, the use of digital technologies, the preservation of interdisciplinarity and the adaptation of curricula to international standards. This will ensure the quality of training for defence, security, law enforcement and other strategically important sectors. Security restrictions, imperfect infrastructure for international cooperation, language barriers and organisational difficulties in implementing joint programmes remain among the main challenges to the internationalisation of HEIs with SCS. At the same time, new opportunities are opening up the development of digital cooperation, participation in specialised international missions, and enhancing the language and professional training of cadets to perform tasks in an international environment. Thus, effective internationalisation of HEIs with SCS should be implemented with a balance between openness to global educational processes and maintaining of national security. It is possible with an integrated approach, strategic planning, support at the level of public policy and the initiative of the educational institutions themselves. Future

research should develop typologies of secure internationalisation practices and evaluate their impact on learning outcomes and institutional resilience.

SUMMARY

The purpose of the article is to analyse the notion of internationalisation of higher educational institutions with specific conditions of study (HEIs with SCS), identify current requirements for higher education and put forward practical strategies for internationalisation adapted to the specifics of such institutions. Internationalisation is a key factor in the development of the modern higher education system aimed at ensuring the competitiveness of graduates, updating educational programmes and integration into the global educational space. In the context of HEIs with SCS, this process is of particular relevance, as it is linked not only to academic needs but also to the requirements of national security, international partnership and adaptation to wartime conditions. Methodologically, the article applies comparative legal and educational analysis supplemented by a targeted review of scholarly and policy sources (2019–2024), which enables the identification of feasible models of international cooperation under security constraints. Modernisation of education in institutions with specific conditions of study should be based on the introduction of a competence approach, the use of digital technologies, the maintaining of interdisciplinarity and the adaptation of curricula to international standards. The findings suggest that balanced internationalisation—combining virtual mobility, adapted joint activities and secure knowledge exchange—can enhance quality, preserve academic freedom within functional limits and strengthen institutional resilience in line with European benchmarks.

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Information about the authors:

Bidniak Hanna Sergiivna,

PhD in Law, Associate Professor,

Head of Department of Forensic Science and Pre-Medical Training

Dnipro State University of Internal Affairs

26, Nauky Ave., Dnipro, 49005, Ukraine;

Dnipro State Institute of Forensic Expertise of the Ministry of Justice

17, Sicheslavskya Naberezhna Str., Dnipro, 49005, Ukraine

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0515-9761>

Pakulova Tetiana Vasiliivna,

Senior Lecturer

Dnipro State University of Internal Affairs

26, Nauky Ave., Dnipro, 49005, Ukraine

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0251-684X>

Strilets Ksenia Yriivna,

Lecturer

Communal Establishment “Dnipro Higher Vocational

School of Construction”

of the Dnipro City Council

3-A, B. Khmelnytskoho Str., Dnipro, 49051, Ukraine

<https://orcid.org/0009-0003-6000-2809>