

PUBLIC SECTOR YOUTH INITIATIVES IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

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Abstract. The public sector is an important part of modern society. Important and great work in all spheres of activity is traced from the public sector. Youth initiatives, youth work are initiated and implemented by public organizations, unions, and associations. The purpose of the article: to theoretically and practically substantiate the peculiarities of youth initiatives of the public sector in non-formal education. The following methods are used in the research: analysis, comparison and generalization of sources from the researched problem. The article reveals the peculiarities of the implementation of youth policy at the regional and local levels; the need and purpose of the formation and development of youth in accordance with the National Youth Strategy is specified; according to the Laws of Ukraine "On the Basic Principles of Youth Policy", "On Public Associations" the concepts of "public organization" and "youth public organization" are defined; the personal and professional development program "State Creator" and others were analyzed; features of the activities of the Association of Youth Centers of Ukraine, the Association of Youth Workers of Ukraine, the All-Ukrainian Youth Center and the implementation of their non-formal education projects are presented; scientific sources on the problems of development of various types of non-formal education were analyzed; the conclusions of the study are summarized. Informal education as a youth initiative of the public sector is an open opportunity for professional and personal development of young people. This best experience is implemented by the All-Ukrainian Youth Center, the Association of Youth Workers of Ukraine, regional and local youth centers, spaces, hubs, public organizations and associations through the programs "Youth Worker", "Management of Youth Centers", "Prokachay", "Active Citizens" etc.

Keywords: youth initiatives, young people, youth work, youth worker, youth organizations, centers.

JEL Classification: I29, J13, P49

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Introduction. Youth is an important subject of state policy. In Ukraine, youth policy is implemented at the regional and local levels, work is carried out with youth in territorial communities, youth participation in decision-making processes is expanding, youth centers of various levels, youth consultative and advisory bodies, numerous programs, competitions and projects for self-realization and sustainable development have been formed youth, financial support is provided for the projects of youth and children's public organizations, international youth cooperation is developing [14].

In order to create additional opportunities for the formation, development and improvement of the level of competitiveness of young people, the realization of their constitutional rights and freedoms, the establishment of a healthy lifestyle in the youth environment, the promotion of the initiative and activity of young citizens in all spheres of the life of society and the state, the decree of the President of Ukraine approved the "National Youth strategy until 2030" [14]. It is determined that there is

an urgent need to strengthen partnerships between state authorities, local self-government bodies and civil society institutions working with children and youth, to spread the tools of youth participation in decision-making, in particular through the development of youth consultative and advisory bodies, student bodies and student self-government. It is also necessary to increase the level of competences of both young people and specialists who work with children and young people, in particular, youth workers, representatives of youth centers, and public organizations. It is important to develop a network of youth centers, since the most effective work is carried out precisely through institutions that work with young people [14].

Literature review. The Law of Ukraine "On the Basic Principles of Youth Policy" (2021) provides two definitions of the concept of "public organizations", in particular "a children's public organization is a public association whose members (participants) are natural persons aged 6 to 18, and whose founders are natural persons who have reached the age of 14" and "a youth public organization is a public association, the founders and members (participants) of which are natural persons from 14 to 35 years old" [18].

Youth and children's public organizations have the right to: receive grants for the implementation of youth projects; to be involved in the implementation of state targeted, regional and local programs in the field of youth policy, as well as to be providers of social services; participate in the formation and implementation of youth policy; to form youth centers, to train youth workers in accordance with the criteria and requirements determined by the central body of executive power, which ensures the formation and implementation of youth policy; to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the youth policy; to delegate their representatives to participate in the selection of members of youth councils, the National Council on Youth Affairs, other consultative and advisory bodies that are formed to resolve issues related to youth; in agreement with institutions of education, health care, culture, social protection, physical culture and sports, youth centers, other institutions that work with children and youth and provide them with services, participate in the preparation and implementation of programs (projects, events) on the basis of such institutions or outside them; carry out other activities to fulfill their statutory tasks, not prohibited by legislation [18].

According to the Law of Ukraine "On Public Associations" (2013, as amended in 2022) "a public organization is a public association whose founders and members (participants) are natural persons", and "a public association is voluntary association of individuals and/or legal entities of private law for the exercise and protection of rights and freedoms, satisfaction of public, in particular economic, social, cultural, ecological and other interests" [17].

Public associations are formed according to the principles of: voluntariness; self-government; free choice of the area of activity; equality before the law; lack of property interest of their members (participants); transparency, openness and publicity [17].

In 2017, more than 25,000 governing bodies of public organizations already had been functioning in Ukraine, in particular in the following regions: Vinnytsia Oblast

– 1,087, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast – 1,567, Zakarpattia Oblast – 1,589, Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast – 1,478, Lviv Oblast – 2,210, Mykolaiv Oblast – 1,291, Odessa Oblast – 1,629, Poltava – 1,165, Kharkiv – 1,083, Kyiv – 1,538, in all other regions the number of public organizations ranged from 300 to 1,000.

At the national level, effective forms of non-formal education include programs such as "Youth Worker", "State Creator", etc. In our opinion, each program contributes to the personal and professional development of young people by acquiring relevant competencies; raise their level of awareness and contribute to their education [11].

Aims. The purpose of the article: to theoretically and practically substantiate the peculiarities of youth initiatives of the public sector in non-formal education.

Methodology. The following methods are used in the research: analysis, comparison and generalization of sources from the researched problem.

Results. On the initiative of the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine and the Ukrainian Academy of Leadership [16], the program of personal and professional development of youth "State Maker" operates at the state level. This program has been in effect since 2018, its goal is to create a system of personal and professional development of youth aged 18 to 25 in Ukraine, to develop responsible leadership and to increase the level of civic activity of young people. In 2020, 8 regions of Ukraine (Chernivetska, Ternopil, Sumy, Kharkiv, Lviv, Cherkassy (Uman), Rivne, Kirovohrad) are involved in this program. The program is aimed at student youth who have the motivation and desire to implement projects for their community, participate in educational programs and internships, in public activities, social and volunteer projects, etc.

Tasks of the "State Creator" program: to promote the personal, professional and social development of young people; to increase the level of awareness among young people about the activities of the public, private and public sectors; to acquaint young people with the basics and importance of state formation; promote the development of leadership skills of program participants; attracting young people to internships and entry into public service, service in local self-government bodies; provide Ukrainian youth with information about anti-corruption mechanisms and acquaint them with anti-corruption tools in Ukraine; to visit the anti-corruption institutions of Ukraine, in particular, NACP, NABU, and others; promote the education of Ukrainian youth in the values of integrity and transparency. The program consists of three components: educational (lectures, trainings, seminars); practical (familiarization visits to local self-government bodies, mass media, private companies and public associations, creation of project teams, writing and pitching of projects to the jury); formative (reflections, team building, mentoring) [11].

One of the important focuses of the 2020 program was the involvement in mentoring of graduates of "State Creator" of past years, who realized themselves in state authorities. International institutions, mass media, public organizations. The curriculum of the program in 2020 consisted of three modules: "Creating ourselves and forming a team", "Exploring the community", "Building the state" (total number - 60 hours). The main topics considered by the participants are leadership, the

formation of leadership skills, the functions of a leader, leadership in working with young people; emotional intelligence; active listening; goal setting; the art of decision-making; personal reflection; building a career in public service; team building and roles, team group dynamics, team motivation; the art of feedback; reflection in the team; game team exercises and tasks; main functions and tasks of local self-government; project management; effective attraction of financial resources for projects in one's community: cooperation with business and local self-government bodies; creation and management of local communities; combating corruption and fostering the values of integrity and transparency among Ukrainian youth; writing project applications for social action projects; pitching of social action projects on key topics (education and upbringing; national culture and identity; healthy lifestyle; state building).

Based on the results of the program, the best graduates are offered internships and internships in state authorities during 2020–2021.

The all-Ukrainian program "Healthy Challenge" to promote a healthy lifestyle among young people in the conditions of quarantine caused by the spread of COVID-19, continued its work in 2020 and covered 42 institutions of professional higher and vocational education in Zakarpattia, Lviv, Volyn, Poltava, Rivne, Sumy, Khmelnytskyi, Chernihiv and Cherkasy regions of Ukraine, a total of 12,000 young people and more than 32,000 teachers and residents of these regions [21].

Vocational and technical education institutions competed with each other, presenting their mini-projects and activities aimed at supporting a healthy lifestyle. All projects provided for the protection of mental and physical health, prevention of infectious diseases, including COVID-19 [21].

As part of the program, a 21-day All-Ukrainian online marathon for young people #HealthyChallenge2020 was also held (more than 4,500 young people from different regions of Ukraine were involved); 3-week All-Ukrainian challenge-marathon for youth "Dream. Plan. And don't slow down!" (579 participants were involved) [21].

The "Proskills of the future" program is an educational and creative training program aimed at the formation of youth of the 21st century, extra-professional skills related to creative and critical thinking, awareness of the future, the ability to create individual and collective strategies, as well as the development of co-creation, cross-cultural and peacekeeping. The program is approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and is designed for extracurricular, extracurricular, optional work of teacher-organizers, psychologists, social pedagogues with adolescents aged 14–17 years in children's health and recreation facilities, vocational education institutions, general education and extracurricular educational institutions [21].

In 2020, as part of the "PRO skills of the future" program, 2 trainings were held for 62 counselors, psychologists, teachers and methodical workers of summer camps, youth centers and out-of-school education institutions from Donetsk, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia regions. The trained trainers continued their work in their camps in online and offline formats, reaching more than 200 adolescents, a significant number

of whom are adolescents from vulnerable categories, including those living near the contact line [21].

"Skills Labs" are innovative training on career development and self-employment skills aimed at strengthening the career competencies of young people and increasing the level of youth employment in Ukraine. This year, "Laboratories of skills" were held in 13 regions of Ukraine and involved more than 300 young people [21].

In times of new challenges, including the pandemic, to ensure sustainability, the Skills Lab: Skills for a Successful Career program was launched through the Impactorium online platform. More than 1,200 young people from all over Ukraine registered for the course [21].

In 2020, with the support of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, a comprehensive course on improving career skills was also developed, the basis of which are the training programs "Skills Lab: a successful career and your own business", aimed at forming skills among graduates of vocational training professional growth and development of competencies for building one's own business [21].

At the state level in Ukraine, the following are active in the public sector, implementing their activities through non-formal education:

The Association of Youth Centers of Ukraine (AYCU), the purpose of which is to support and support existing youth centers of all forms of ownership and help in the development of new ones in order to ensure favorable conditions for the comprehensive development of youth and increase youth participation in the process of making socially important decisions [26].

The principles of the Association's work: public education of youth through participation in social activities, national-patriotic education, development of youth volunteerism and mobility, development of the creative potential of young people, promotion of a healthy lifestyle, employment in free time, youth entrepreneurship. The association submitted its definition: "Youth center is an institution that provides high-quality informal education and meaningful leisure time for young people". The association provides various services: strategizing, planning, mentoring, monitoring, analysis, evaluation and improvement of the center's activities, training on open youth work, training on inclusiveness in the youth center, open discussions on the implementation of civic education [23].

The association implements the online course "Volunteer teams: dream or reality?" its goal is to help representatives of youth centers gain knowledge and skills in building systematic work with volunteers. The course is designed for representatives, employees and volunteers of youth centers. Course topics: "What is volunteering and classification"; "Legislation in the field of volunteering"; "Search for volunteers"; "Features of volunteer work in youth centers"; "Team building"; "Motivation of volunteers"; "Management of a volunteer in a project". The results of the course are expected: the formation of a unified vision of the concept of «volunteering», understanding the characteristics of volunteers in youth centers and creating a plan for further work [30].

The association unites more than 300 youth centers and spaces in Ukraine. In the Cherkasy region, there are 11 youth centers (the city of Zolotonosha – "ArtProstir", "Chill out Zolo Youth Space"; the city of Smila – the Youth Space "Vsi Svoi", Public Space; the village of Drabivtsi – the Youth Space "Atmosphere"; the village of Martynivka – Art space "Martynivka treasure"; Stepantsi village – "STEPHUB" personality development center, Uman city – Youth center "START" of Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University; Chigyrin city – Free space "HATA – HAB" city; Kam city Yanka – Youth Space "Same Chas"; Cherkasy – Cherkasy Regional Youth Resource Center) [26].

The website of the Association presents advisory information for the creation and operation of youth centers (resources for maintaining and filling the youth center) and methodological support ("Where to start creating a youth information center", "Good practices of youth centers", "National quality mark and quality criteria for youth centers", "Support and development of youth centers at the level of local self-government in Poland", "System of open work with youth: challenges of the time (Republic of Lithuania)", "Youth centers in Ukraine", "Youth spaces in libraries", "Step-by-step instructions on the creation of co-working spaces", "GURT" [6], European space [4]) [26].

Youth Workers Association of Ukraine (YWAU) – it is a community of people who are engaged in youth work and want to share experiences to strengthen each other's capacities [31]. The main goal of YWAU is advocacy and social and political recognition of youth work and youth workers in Ukraine [31].

The organization was created for networking and cooperation between youth workers of Ukraine and their organizations or projects, for the exchange of experience and establishment of partnerships and international relations, representation of youth workers of Ukraine on the world map of youth work, development of professional competences of youth workers of Ukraine, creation of opportunities for their professional growth [31]. The Association operates on the basis of the Charter. To join the Association of Youth Workers of Ukraine in accordance with the provision "On membership of the NGO", «Youth Workers Association of Ukraine», [22] you need to submit an application [8] with confirmation of passing the Basic Training of the "Youth Worker" program [28], two letters of recommendation from active members of the Association [12] and consent to the processing of personal data.

YWAU provides the following services: consulting and mentoring support, involvement of a coach or facilitator at the organizer's event. Youth workers, youth leaders, specialists who work with youth can use the online course "Online training for youth workers" on the following topics: "Working with inclusive youth" (O. Shelest, developer, speaker); "Benefit of the regional government for youth development in small communities" (V. Yatsuk, developer, speaker); "Activation of youth in the community" (O. Salivonchyk, developer, speaker); "Youth legislation" (I. Belyaeva, developer, speaker) [19]. Methodical support "Advocacy for youth councils" has been developed for methodical support [1].

All-Ukrainian Youth Center of Ukraine – expert resource center for youth work, which works every day for the development of youth infrastructure and youth work throughout Ukraine [2]. The mission of the center is to actualize youth work, developing youth centers in accordance with the needs of young people and best international practices, that is, to make sure that youth centers create opportunities for young people, taking into account their needs and best international practices [2]. The center's activities are aimed at forming a unified policy of working with young people in youth centers of different cities; creation of opportunities for development and networking of youth workers throughout Ukraine; development of methodological materials for the work of youth centers; youth infrastructure development advocacy; creation of educational events for youth workers; taking into account current opportunities and developing ways to improve work with young people, etc.

The main areas of work of the All-Ukrainian Youth Center are the development of a three-level system of interaction of youth centers, the development of youth infrastructure, and the dissemination of successful practices of youth work.

Over the years, the center has implemented the following projects: "Social cohesion through youth participation". The content of the program includes the following topics: "Diversity and social cohesion", "Impact of youth participation", "Media literacy", "Effective communication and work with conflict" [24]. Educational program "Effective management of youth centers" [3]. The Forum "From Initiative to Action" is an annual international project that gathers youth workers of institutions working with youth in different regions of Ukraine for one event for their networking and discussion of topical issues in the field of youth policy. As part of the event, together with the Council of Europe, the CivicLab methodology was implemented, thanks to which detailed recommendations were formed based on the results of the forum in 3 blocks: "Structure and work of the youth center", "Education: new knowledge and practical skills", "Innovative tools for the effective work of youth centers" [5]. The international program of exchange of workers of youth centers "Building friendship: Ukrainian and Lithuanian Centres" is a joint program of exchange of workers of youth centers of Ukraine and Lithuania. [5].

The All-Ukrainian Youth Center made a selection of methodical, practical and educational materials for youth workers, specialists of youth centers and spaces, members of youth councils: "Black methodical. The same methodology on the communication of youth centers during the war", "Communication of the youth council during the war", "Report on the involvement, interaction and creation of opportunities for youth in Ukraine", "Best practices and lessons on the development of youth partnerships, synergies and cohesion", "Youth center during the war. Recommendations for youth centers", "Mentoring in youth work", "Representative sociological research on the situation of youth in Ukraine (2021)", "Public management tools in the field of youth policy", Educational and methodological manual «Sociological research in youth work", Sociological study "Position of the youth of Ukraine – 2021", Guide for trainers "Social cohesion through youth participation", "Council of Europe quality mark for youth centers. The role, value and influence of youth centers", "Council of Europe quality mark for youth centers.

Quality management in youth centers", Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe "Access of young people from disadvantaged areas to social rights", "Glossary of terms used by the Council of Europe in the fields of youth policy, human rights and non-formal education", "Self-assessment tool of youth policy", Training manual of the Basic training under the program "Youth worker", "Catalog of best practices of youth work (2020) ", Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe "Access of young people to rights", Manual on human rights education with the participation of youth "Compass", "Council of Europe quality mark for youth centers. Good practices in youth centers" [2].

Discussion. Today, the problems of the development of various types of informal education in Ukraine and abroad are the object of study by Ukrainian scientists, namely: the basics of formal professional education – N. Vasylenko, N. Nychkalo [29; 15]; informal education of adults as a problem of theory and practice of educational activity, education of adults and its informal forms abroad, development of informal education as a component of lifelong education – A. Honcharuk, L. Lukyanova [7; 13]; theoretical and practical aspects of the organization of informal education in Ukraine – N. Pavlyk, N. Teryokhina, T. Tkach, I. Pesh, N. Kolyada, O. Kravchenko and others [20; 25; 27; 9; 10].

Conclusion. The conducted research confirmed that an effective way of implementing youth initiatives of the public sector is informal education of members of youth centers, spaces, Associations of youth centers and youth workers. In this context, the national-level programs "Youth Worker", "State Creator", "Healthy Challenge", "Proskills of the Future" and others, which were created both for the development of youth and for the training of specialists who work with young people, also deserve attention.

So, the best experience of youth work in Ukraine can be summarized in the following forms: the activities of the All-Ukrainian Youth Center, the Association of Youth Workers, the Association of Youth Centers, regional youth centers, youth centers and spaces, hubs, camps, clubs and associations at the place of residence, youth clubs, youth councils, youth cafes, youth organizations, tent camping, youth projects, youth programs ("Youth worker", "Management of youth centers", "Prokachay", "Youth worker in amalgamated territorial community", "State creator", "Effective management of youth centers", "Active citizens", international programs), the public organization "Youth Platform", the "SpivDiya" platform, the all-Ukrainian program for popularizing a healthy lifestyle among young people "Healthy Challenge", the program "PRO skills of the future" and others.

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