

## ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN THE US AND WESTERN EUROPE

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*The experience of environmental training for future teachers in the USA, Great Britain, Germany, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands is analyzed. A comparative analysis of university curricula helps to determine their environmental content. Conclusions are drawn about the greening of the educational process of higher education institutions through the inclusion of environmental material in various academic disciplines, the implementation of separate environmental disciplines, and various special courses of environmental and pedagogical orientation, the latter being typical for US universities.*

**Key words:** *environmentalization, higher education, environmental awareness, environmental training, environmental education, curricula.*

The current rhythm and style of life dictate the need for the environmentalization of thinking and human activity, especially the professional one. The objective of modern high school is not so much to provide students with theoretical environmental knowledge but rather to foster a culture of relationships with the environment and develop sustainable environmental beliefs. That is why a system of training and retraining of personnel for both compulsory and additional, including extracurricular, environmental education is needed. The requirements for the training of teachers whose pedagogical activities will be directly related to the implementation of environmental education and upbringing at school include in-depth scientific knowledge of environmental science and methods of teaching it, the ability to work with scientific and methodological literature, to independently conduct research on ecology, pedagogy, and psychology, and to organize and conduct environmental work and environmental education activities [5].

Considering the systems of higher education in the developed countries of Western Europe and the United States.

In US universities, future teachers are taught a large number of environmental education courses, including «Introduction to Environmental Education», «Fundamentals of Environmental Education», «Methods of Environmental Education», «Development of Educational Materials and Curricula for Environmental Education», «Extracurricular (Additional) Environmental Education» and others. In addition, attention is paid to theoretical training. For example, the University of Portland teaches such special courses as Sustainability in Ecosystems, Population Ecology, Biological Transformations in Natural Ecosystems, The Role of Aquatic Ecosystems in the Environment, Health and the Environment, Ecology of Old Growth Forest Ecosystems, Ecology of Northwest US Wetlands, Ecological Problems of Urbanized Areas in the Northwest US, etc, as well as special courses of environmental and pedagogical orientation – «Ecofeminism», «Environmental Ethics», «Social and Technological Foundations of Environmental Education», «Global Environmental Education», «Nature and Art in Out-of-School Education», «The Role of Telecommunications in Environmental Education», etc. In many Western European countries and the United States, environmental education centers are being established, particularly in the United States. They operate on the basis of museums and libraries, some of which even have international status. Although there is no federal standard for environmental education in the United States, it is mandatory in many states. Nevertheless, environmental education is not seen as an abstract phenomenon but as a concrete activity with a particular focus on regional and local history. Preference is given to research work and the study of environmental problems in the local area rather than theoretical material [2]. At the University of Michigan (USA), in the process of training teachers specializing in environmental protection,

attention is initially paid to the formation of theoretical knowledge, and before graduation, students have the opportunity to complete a pedagogical practice. Students, together with their future students, learn to find solutions to specific environmental problems. Attention is focused on practical methods and forms of work, such as practical work, field workshops, waste management, landscaping, and animal rescue. In the United States, environmental education is aimed not so much at accumulating a system of knowledge about the relationship between humans and nature but rather at finding ways to optimize it, protect it, and preserve it [5].

There are more than 2,500 four-year colleges (bachelor's degrees) and universities in the United States. Along with private higher education, there is public higher education. The US higher education system is also decentralized. Each state has the authority to implement its own educational policy in accordance with the federal education law. Each university has its own system of knowledge assessment and diploma. Students are attracted primarily by the possibility of choosing academic disciplines and the practical orientation of education. Over the past 10 years, the United States has been focusing on the scientific activities of universities, relying on the development of the country's scientific potential [1].

In the UK, teacher training pays attention to the environmentalization of the educational process. In addition, the curricula provide for separate environmental disciplines. For example, students who are future biology teachers at Roehampton University study the following disciplines: ecology, forest ecology, environmental physiology, ecosystems, human protection (19% of the total number of hours provided for in the curriculum); at Leeds University, ecology, ecological development, environmental science, environmental protection (21% of the total number of hours); at Glasgow University, ecology, forest ecology, environmental science, molecular ecology, ecology and environmental protection, environmental analysis, environmental management (35% hour) [3].

In Germany, scholars have different views on how to achieve the goal of environmental education. The supporters of traditional pedagogy (Umwelterziehung) argue that environmental education should be carried out within one academic discipline or included in the content of all academic subjects. There is also an alternative approach, or eco-pedagogy (Oekopaedagogik), whose supporters oppose instrumental thinking and advocate awareness of environmental perception. They prefer socio-ecological training of teachers, the essence of which is seen in the formation of ecological culture, that is, the culture of attitude towards the environment [5]. In Germany, for example, there are 345 educational institutions, most of which are public (98%). Universities form the basis of the education system. Non-university higher education institutions include professional higher education institutions in the fields of business, economics, services, and agriculture. The most prestigious university in Germany is the University of Heidelberg, founded in 1386. At the regional level, universities are subordinate to the regional ministries. Each of the lands has its own law on higher education, based on the Federal Law on Higher Education. In general, higher education in Germany is free of charge. The main principle of higher education is «academic freedom», which allows students to choose their own academic disciplines [1].

In France, Belgium, and the Netherlands, the epistemological-activity model has become widespread, which, in addition to cognitive activity, includes elements of practical work on environmental protection. Leading Western experts in the field of environmental education emphasize the expediency of an interdisciplinary approach, as it provides for mutual coherence of the content and methods of disclosing the laws, principles, and methods of optimal interaction between society and nature at all levels of environmental knowledge [4].

The structure of higher education in modern France is flexible and variable. It is distinguished by a variety of higher education institutions: along with the university sector and the higher schools, there are specialized ones, such as university technological institutes and university vocational institutes; short-term and long-term study programs. Higher education in France is characterized by continuity of education, variability of specialties, and «regionalization» of education. The current stage of modernization of higher education in France

is determined by the principles of the Bologna Process, but with the preservation of the identity and high competitiveness of the French education system through further professionalization of the university sector. This is achieved through the opening of new specialties of interdisciplinary and «technological» types, the launch of new professionally oriented areas of training, the maximum possible integration of the educational process, research, and the conditionality of their funding by the results of the scientific activities of teachers and students, and ensuring a high level of quality education through the improvement of procedures, mechanisms, and incentives in the control system [4].

The experience of foreign countries is also important for Ukrainian education, which is trying to preserve its own pedagogical achievements, make them understandable to other nations, and combine them with the pedagogical achievements of the world's leading countries.

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## ANALYSIS OF THE FORMATION OF THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

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*The publication analyzes the formation of the foundations of environmental policy as an adequate response of humanity to the challenges posed by globalization and social transformation since the second half of the twentieth century. The chronology of the adoption of major international agreements on environmental issues is elucidated. The main provisions of the adopted international agreements in the field of environmental protection, conservation and restoration of natural resources, conservation of biological diversity, etc. are specified.*

**Key words:** environment, environmental protection, international government program, environmental policy.