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**INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE OF PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION OF PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

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Abstract

Educational services to support employment and professional integration of people with disabilities are provided in many countries of the world. However, the models for providing such services in various countries are different. Currently, approaches to the professional integration of people with disabilities tend to shift from a medical model of rehabilitation to a model of workforce training focused on the opportunities of people and their participation. The study aims to analyze the international practice of educational opportunities for the professional integration of people with disabilities. The article highlights the relevance of studying the problem of professional integration of people with disabilities. An analysis of the main directions of the international practice of professional integration of people with disabilities in the countries of the European Union has been carried out. Special attention is paid to the professional integration of persons with disabilities through the mechanisms of university education in European countries.

Keywords

Disability – Professional integration – Inclusion – Inclusive education – University education

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Introduction

The modern globalized information society puts forward new requirements for all branches of humanitarian activity, including education¹. The issues of implementation of fundamental human rights and freedoms, provision of social protection and self-realization come to the foreground of the educational paradigm². A separate important issue that needs to be addressed is the training, socialization and professional integration of people with disabilities. Since the 1950-60s, numerous discussions about segregated, integrated and inclusive education have been held and since the 1970s, the total restructuring of special education according to a new, inclusive paradigm has begun.

The need for more active implementation of educational inclusion is reflected in the documents that declare the basic principles of human rights policy formation: UN Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons³, Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities⁴, Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education⁵, etc.

In harsh competition, only a trained, competent, self-confident subject of new economic relations survives. Consequently, high-quality education can act as the main channel for successful social and professional integration and a factor in self-realization. Thus, the modern world recognizes the need to integrate people with disabilities into society by overcoming not only physical but also symbolic barriers in their lives. In this regard, the problem of the professional integration of people with various forms of disabilities into society is becoming especially acute, being the highest goal of their social rehabilitation.

Literature review

Numerous sociological studies show that education, especially higher education, is among the ten most important values⁶.

¹ A. Andreev; N. Shafazhinskaya; E. Aralova; O. Goltseva and K. Pisarevskiy, "Cross-Cultural Study of Russian and Chinese Students as Decision-Makers", *Revista Inclusiones*, num 6 (2019): 36-46 y E. E. Bukhteeva; M. Yu. Chernavsky; L. K. Vartanova and I. I. Gerasimenko, "Design and Technological Approach when Forming Readiness for Autonomous Learning Activities", *Revista Inclusiones*, num 6 (2019): 187-199.

² M. N. Dudin; B. V. Vasilievich; E. E. Frolova and M. V. Galkina, "Models of the higher education in Russia and the countries of Europe at the beginning of the 21st century: main directions of development", *European Journal of Contemporary Education*, Vol: 7 num 4 (2018): 653-667.

³ Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (approved by Resolution of the Thirteenth Session of the UN General Assembly 3447 (XXX) of December 9, 1975). Available at: <https://constitution.garant.ru/act/right/megdunar/2560820/>

⁴ Standard Rules for Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities / Adopted by General Assembly resolution 48/96 of December 20, 1993, https://www.un.org/en/documents/decl_conv/conventions/disabled.shtml

⁵ Salamanca Declaration of Principles, Policies and Practical Activities in the Field of Education for Persons with Special Needs. Adopted by the World Conference on Education for Special Needs: availability and quality. Salamanca, Spain, June 7-10, 1994. Available at: http://www.notabene.ru/down_syndrome/Rus/declarat.html

⁶ G. S. Sukhobskaya; E. A. Sokolovskaya and T. V. Shadrina (eds.), *Obrazovanie vzroslykh: tseli i tsennosti* (St. Petersburg: IOV RAO, 2002); A. Katılmış, "Values education as perceived by social studies teachers in objective and practice dimensions", *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, Vol: 17 num 4 (2017): 1231-1254 y M. Guglietti, "Exploring Students' Articulation of Value in a

According to researchers, for people with functional disabilities, receiving an education in a prestigious specialty, as well as decently paid work (which is facilitated by higher education), is almost the only opportunity to overcome the state of alienation and social exclusion, in which they found themselves due to objective conditions associated with the state of health⁷.

According to S.S. Lebedeva, "people with disabilities belong to one of the most socially vulnerable categories of citizens. They are not able to compete on equal terms under ordinary conditions in the labor market with healthy people. The formation of professional knowledge, skills and abilities increases the chances of a person with disabilities to get a decent job"⁸. Today, the orientation of training is needed on the development of human competence, in ensuring continuous learning and education.

Moreover, as researchers note, "the increase in the value of university education and knowledge, their transformation from an optional element of the social and economic life of society into its basic component is an important trend of our time"⁹ for all members of society, including persons with disabilities.

Understanding inclusion in education contains several key aspects. First, inclusion, as an educational concept, is constantly evolving and is important in shaping policies and strategies to address the causes and consequences of discrimination, inequality and exclusion. The main principle of the concept is the principle of participation, which makes it possible to involve persons with disabilities in society and the decision-making process and encourage their active position¹⁰. Second, inclusion is a dynamic process aimed at continuous search for effective ways to take into account the issue of the diversity of students to meet educational needs¹¹. Third, this is an activity aimed at identifying and removing barriers¹². Fourth, it is an educational technology that makes it possible for measures to ensure the presence, participation and achievements of each subject in terms of increased attention, concern and moral duty¹³.

Social Research Methods Class: Towards a Phenomenography of Value Making”, Teaching & Learning Inquiry, Vol: 3 num 2 (2015): 3–17.

⁷ V. I. Zinoveva and M. V. Bersenev, “Organizatsiya obrazovatelnoi deyatelnosti studentov s ogranichennymi vozmozhnostyami v evropeiskikh i rossiiskikh universitetakh”, Kazanskaya nauka, num 3 (2013): 238-240; A. M. O. Colón; M. A. Montoro and M. J. C., “Ruiz. Toward Inclusive Higher Education in a Global Context”, Sustainability, num 10 (2018): 2-13 y L. Thomas and H. May, Inclusive learning and teaching in higher education (Heslington: The Higher Education Academy Innovation Way, 2010).

⁸ S. S. Lebedeva, “Sotsialnaya gruppa invalidov v sisteme nepreryvnogo obrazovaniya: teoriya i pratika”, Uchenye zapiski SPbGIPSR, num 1 Vol: 21 (2014): 60.

⁹ C. Hockings; P. Brett and M. Terentjevs, “Making a difference—Inclusive learning and teaching in higher education through open educational resources”, Distance Education, Vol: 33 num 2 (2012): 237-252.

¹⁰ S. V. Alekhina, “Printsipy inklyuzii v kontekste razvitiya sovremennogo obrazovaniya”, Psikhologicheskaya nauka i obrazovanie, num 1 (2014): 5–16.

¹¹ K. D. Swain; P. D. Nordness and E. M. Leader-Janssen., “Changes in preservice teacher attitudes toward inclusion”, Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth, num 56 (2012): 75–81.

¹² D. Armstrong; A. C. Armstrong and I. Spandagou, “Inclusion: By choice or by chance?”, International Journal of Inclusive Education, Vol: 15 num 1 (2011): 29-39.

¹³ H. Forsyth and A. Cairnduff, “A scholarship of social inclusion in higher education: Why we need it and what it should look like”, Higher Education Research & Development, Vol: 34 num 1 (2015): 219-222.

Research hypothesis: the international practice of professional integration of people with disabilities brings together two main areas. The first involves their integration through inclusive education in universities, where favorable conditions are created in the learning process for full interaction and partnership with healthy people. The second is focused on the creation of special institutions, groups, educational communities and information space adapted to the state of disability for training people with disabilities.

Proposed Methodology

General description

The study used the following research methods:

- theoretical: analysis and generalization of theoretical, scientific and methodological sources on the research problem;
- empirical: expert survey aimed at determining the main directions of the international practice of professional integration of people with disabilities in the EU countries.

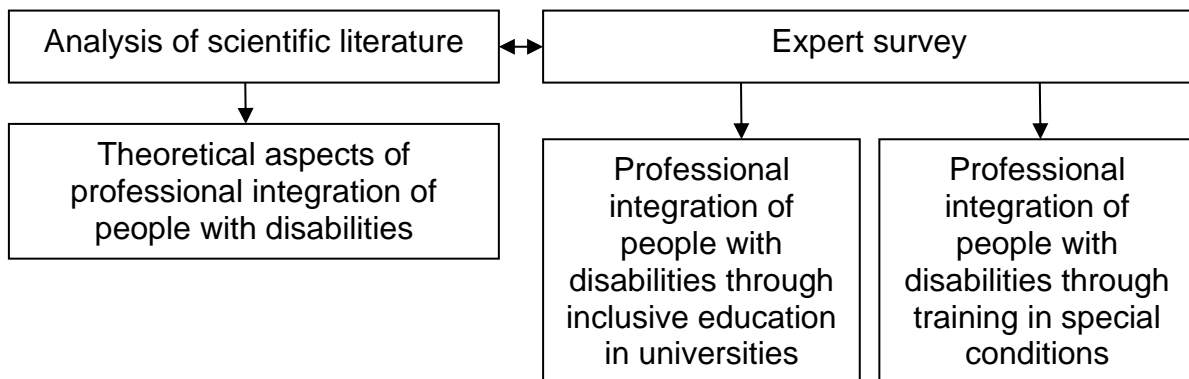
Thirty-two experts took part in the expert survey, including 10 employees of employment services, 12 specialists in the field of inclusive education and 10 members of the leadership of regional organizations of the All-Russian Society of People with Disabilities.

Algorithm

At the first stage of the study, the analysis of scientific literature on the problem of international practice of providing educational services for the professional integration of people with disabilities was carried out.

At the second stage of the study, the components of the professional integration of people with disabilities were identified through inclusive education in universities and vocational education programs for people with disabilities in special conditions adapted to the state of disability in the EU countries.

Flow chart



Result Analysis

The results of the expert survey showed that the professional integration of people with disabilities through inclusive education in EU universities includes the following main components (Table 1).

No.	Integration components	Brief description of integration components
1	Implementation of access to higher education	The Council of Europe regularly monitors the state of access to higher education and gives recommendations. The latter are consultative and encourage the adoption of national framework laws. The Council of Europe focuses on legislative and financial support for special services and conditions. EU countries in addressing the issue of access for students with disabilities to higher education are divided into a) states that focus on the human access factor (Romania, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Poland), b) countries that, in parallel with human resources, invest heavily in engineering and architectural re-equipment (France, Sweden, the Netherlands, Great Britain). The leaders of universal design and access to training are the countries of Scandinavia and the UK.
2	Psychological rehabilitation and adaptation of students with disabilities in universities	It is based on the recognition of the fact that the psychological, pedagogical and social factors of influence on a student with disabilities are highly integrated. Psychological support is based not so much on medical, social and psychological indicators as on the hierarchy of student needs and provides for the adaptation not only of the student with disabilities but also of the environment (peers, teachers, staff). Depending on traditions and legislation, psychological support in various countries can focus more on advisory, supporting, initial adaptation or problematic issues and is mainly three-level in organizational terms: work of specialists from universities, state (municipal) institutions and independent centers to support people with disabilities.
3	Didactic and methodological support of inclusive education	It is based on the appropriate distribution of responsibilities between the participants of inclusion, technical and didactic equipment and modification of the educational process. The main principle is a differentiated approach and individualized learning. It is implemented by introducing individual training schedule (individual, remote, blended learning, free entrance, attendance of basic courses), maximum number of channels of the sensory assimilation of information, constant monitoring of inclusion of students with disabilities in the process of perception, prolongation of the terms (preparation, completing training in general), as well as current, modular and semester control in the most optimal for the student form (oral questioning, tests, written survey, computer diagnostics, etc.).
4	Organizational support of training of students with disabilities	Among EU member states, it is still possible to single out states with tendencies to improve the technological component of higher inclusive education and countries that focus on the anthropological factor. Since there are excellent social and pedagogical traditions in the EU countries and a different level of financing for inclusive reforms, the latter can be implemented fragmentarily. This is facilitated by the controlling function of state bodies and the assignment of executive functions to the lowest hierarchical level (universities, municipalities). This makes the inclusive system two-circuit: intra and extra university, administrative. The human factor in the organization of inclusive education in universities is typically represented by full-time

		employees and voluntary or hired for social security students with disabilities. In an inclusive educational process, students with disabilities and teachers have separate clear rights and responsibilities (the former should show the maximum level of independence and effectiveness of instruction, the latter should promote differentiation and consideration of special needs).
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Table 1

Components of professional integration of people with disabilities through inclusive education in EU universities

Note: Compiled based on the expert survey

The results of the expert survey showed that the second direction – professional integration of people with disabilities through training in special conditions – is less common (Table 2).

No.	Country	Professional education programs
1	Ireland	With the help of state employment services, people with disabilities can attend general vocational training courses for the unemployed or those returning to the labor market, develop specific skills or undertake an internship. There are also training courses for those currently employed: they may take the form of on-the-job training or corporate training. People with disabilities are encouraged to use all of these training opportunities. Special training service providers also provide training courses for people with disabilities who may need more intensive support than is enumerated in regular training courses. The features of such special courses are the use of adapted equipment, a more individual approach and a longer duration of the course (up to 2 years).
2	Norway	Training programs in host companies. An example is the Telenor Open Mind program, a training program that offers people with physical disabilities or mental illness unique employment opportunities. The program begins with a three-month introductory period, during which participants undergo computer training and maintenance courses that allow them to feel more confident and more result-oriented. This is followed by a 21-month training course to work at Telenor. Participants work in different departments: administrative, financial, support, management, quality control and customer service. The program started in Norway and has now been introduced in Sweden and Pakistan as well. Shortly, Telenor is going to introduce this program in other countries where the company operates. Telenor Open Mind is the largest vocational training program in Norway that supports the integration of people with varying degrees of working capacity into the regular work environment. Open Mind has already begun to disseminate its experience and has also compiled a training manual for companies that want to start implementing such programs.

Table 2

Professional education programs for people with disabilities

Note: Compiled based on the expert survey

Thus, the main and most popular direction of professional integration of people with disabilities through education is the inclusive education of people with disabilities in universities.

Discussion

According to experts, the realities of access to higher education for students with disabilities in the EU should be considered on several levels: a) general recommendations of the Council of Europe, which regularly monitors the status of access and provides recommendations to member governments; b) the realities of physical access to universities in specific EU member states.

Recommendation No. R(92)6 of the Council of Europe, which deals with basic, special and higher education, states that young people should study in special institutions only if they have a degree of disability that does not allow them to be in an inclusive group and requires special medical or social care. The document also indicates the need for combining education and rehabilitation and regulates the purpose and process of special and general (inclusive) education.

As experts point out, the main recommendation of the Council of Europe for member states is a call for legislative and financial support for special services, oriented, first of all, not to methodological and didactic, but to organizational and social everyday help, in particular: a) vocational assistance; b) information service (providing information about the inclusive capacity of institutions in accordance with special needs of the student); c) assistance with admission to the university (filing documents, filling out questionnaires, individual cards); d) social and rehabilitation support during training; e) providing financial support (assistance in the appointment of scholarships, subsidies, benefits, information on grants, etc.); f) physical support (appointment of assistants and volunteers for movement, organization of orientation courses on campus, etc.); g) employment assistance.

According to experts, traditionally in the EU, higher education in the UK, France and Scandinavia is considered accessible for people with disabilities. The dynamics of access to education in these countries are almost ideal. For example, in France, in 1989, University Disability Councils were established and a course was taken to implement physical access to student campuses. The newly built campuses fully meet the requirements of universal design and the existing ones have been significantly converted.

Higher education received the highest level of access in the countries of Scandinavia. According to one expert, "the formation of a barrier-free environment has been completed in cities and universities (the presence of panic buttons in disabled toilets at the baseboard level is especially impressive – a person who has lost consciousness has the opportunity to call for help). Doors have photocells, stairs-ramps and handrails, buildings-elevators; portable defibrillators are located on the walls of Stockholm University. Work with students with disabilities is algorithmized".

As for the psychological adaptation of a young person in a European University, its main principle, according to experts, is the emphasis not on the medical component (psychotherapy), but on the social one (psychology, pedagogy). The focus is placed on improving relationships with the environment, as there are cases of negative attitudes, attacks on dignity, humiliation and infringement of the rights of a disabled student, especially from healthy peers.

According to experts, in the higher education system of the EU countries, psychological (usually integrated with pedagogical and social) support of students with disabilities is carried out by such services and professions as specialist in inclusive education, psychologist, psychiatrist, rehabilitologist, defectologist, social educator, translator (sign language interpreter, dactylologist), personal assistant, volunteer, preventive teacher, etc.

Thus, the most loyal attitude towards students with disabilities in terms of their psychological support prevails in Northern Europe (the countries of Scandinavia, Great Britain, Ireland, Iceland), while psychological counseling on the request or need of the student prevails in the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Romania and Poland.

In Ireland, in particular, psychological and social services for students with disabilities are provided by the National Educational Psychological Service at the level of local education departments. Its work is differentiated into services of full-time employees of universities, services operating outside specific educational institutions and services provided by charitable and government organizations. Thus, a disabled student has several levels of psychological support, the primary ones within the environment are full-time employees. If necessary, the young person refers to independent local bodies of psychological and social support. The latter do not compete but cooperate with similar institutions and bodies. As a result, students have three-level psychological, social and pedagogical support.

At the same time, according to experts, the issues of psychological adaptation of students with disabilities are partially solved through interaction with healthy youth. To this end, the following is introduced in the universities of Europe: a) group tutoring (mentoring), in which healthy classmates are engaged in several students with disabilities on a voluntary or paid basis. The disadvantage of this type of care is that healthy students still need some adaptation in the first year of study; b) cross-age tutoring (mainly on a paid basis) when senior students are engaged in students with disabilities from junior courses. This gives the advantage that the undergraduate student has already mastered virtually the entire program, socially adapted and has more time.

Also, according to experts, the analysis of didactic methods and techniques focused on the special needs of students remains relevant. Their adjustment begins with scheduling and adaptation to the special needs of the schedule of training, practical training, etc. According to experts, at the request of a student with disabilities, an individual training plan (free attendance, attendance of basic courses, individual, distance, mixed learning) can be developed in Germany, France, Italy and some other countries. In order to maintain the quality of training, such students are recommended to increase the duration of their studies by from six months to a year.

According to experts, the most important didactic aspects of higher inclusive education in EU universities are a) distribution of duties between participants of the inclusive educational process; b) technical and didactic equipment of inclusive educational process; c) specifics of entrance examinations, current and boundary controls of knowledge of students with disabilities. In order to improve the quality of education for students with disabilities in the EU countries, adaptation to the special needs of the training schedule, internships, etc., an individual training plan (free attendance, attendance at basic courses, individual, distance, blended learning) are adopted, as well as: lengthening the term of study; regular monitoring of the inclusion of persons with

disabilities in the perception process; conducting current, modular and mid-term control in the most optimal form, taking into account the sensory and functional capabilities of a student with disabilities: tests, recitation, written questioning, computer diagnosis and the like.

According to experts, the adaptation of the actual educational process is mainly associated with the activities and services in two directions: a) technical assistance in the study of academic disciplines; b) additional advice, prolonged time and method of reproduction of information during the exams. The first direction includes packages of educational materials in audio format, using Braille script, enlarged font, the printout of lectures, computer programs and electronic services (speech synthesizers, image enlargers, multimedia, text-to-speech converters or vice versa). Services provided by human resources include the services of stenographers, consultants, tutors, sign language interpreters, including in the socio-medical area – sociologists, physicians, psychologists.

According to experts, EU countries can be divided into two types by the type of organization of didactic conditions: countries with a focus on the technological component of an inclusive education organization and countries with a focus on the human factor of such an organization. Thus, along with the adjustment of the educational process, the main focus is on assistants who perform a wide range of powers and functions in countries with a high level of social security (France, Belgium, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Denmark). In countries where the social level of the population is average (Poland, Spain, Portugal, Czech Republic, Greece, Germany, Italy), financial support for the didactic process for students with disabilities is aimed mainly at the technological, rather than anthropological, track. Thus, universities of Krakow are more willing to spend money on software equipment, rent laptops, induction loops and other equipment. However, the number of assistants is limited; the volunteer service dominates. For example, there are only four full-time assistants at the University of Mainz, for the services of which a young disabled person needs to register in advance and get in line.

In general, as the expert survey showed, the problem of organizing the educational process for students with disabilities in Europe is solved in the following ways:

1. Introduction of innovative technologies and know-how, which not only facilitate the assimilation of the material, but also expand the horizons and increase adaptation to the environment of students with disabilities (provision of hearing aids, Braille electronic notebooks, electronic magnifiers for students with low vision, electronic navigators of barrier-free environment, broadcast generators, etc.).

2. Creation of paid or voluntary intra-university associations, cooperatives and groups to help students with disabilities.

3. Creation of inter-university reference groups uniting 5-10 specialists on various issues of inclusive education and socialization. Many of them are people with disabilities who have been able to achieve success in teaching, science, medicine and constantly exchange experiences with colleagues. Such groups plan the educational process, improve didactic and technical material, exchange experience between universities.

4. Creation of a barrier-free physical environment for students with disabilities, which provides for the development and reform of both architectural, engineering and

communication facilities, and equipment of educational buildings, classrooms, pointers, simulators, multimedia equipment and the like.

5. Introduction of paid or voluntary posts of assistants, tutors and curators, mainly from among healthy students, who are assigned to patients and help them in organizational and alimentary matters.

6. Introduction of mandatory costs of supporting students with disabilities, regulated by the laws of the country or the administration of the university, as well as the availability of opportunities to win state grants for this purpose.

7. The introduction of the personal card of a student with disabilities. Each student with disabilities in most EU universities fills out a special questionnaire, which indicates all the nuances of their special needs. The card is studied by psychologists and teachers, supplemented and corrected throughout training and, most importantly, its summary is constantly taken into account at all levels of the educational process.

8. Introduction of individual and individual-group approaches by categories of disability (vision, hearing, musculoskeletal system, etc.), which modifies the use of methods and technical means of training without reducing the overall level of requirements.

Conclusions

The results of the study confirmed the hypothesis that the international practice of professional integration of people with disabilities combines two main areas. The first involves their integration through inclusive education in universities, where favorable conditions are created in the learning process for full interaction and partnership with healthy people. The second is focused on the creation of special institutions, groups, educational communities and information space adapted to the state of disability for training people with disabilities.

At the present stage, the achievement of success in ensuring the professional integration of people with disabilities is possible only if the interaction and partnership of state bodies, non-governmental and public organizations are established. Further resolution of issues is needed: promotion of equal access to inclusive education of people with disabilities through information and educational work in society; provision of forecasting to identify abilities at the stage of career guidance of youth with disabilities, especially in early adulthood; adoption of an integrated approach using the mechanism of identification of stakeholders and responsibilities of the state in partnership with civil society organizations and providers of educational services in the field of inclusive education.

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