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PROBLEMS OF ENSURING THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION: UKRAINIAN EXPERIENCE

The modern world faces various challenges in the field of functional limitations and health.

The World Health Organization estimates that more than 1 billion people, approximately 15% of the world's population, live with some form of disability. Between 110 and 190 million adults face severe difficulties in their daily lives. Disability rates are rising due to factors such as an aging population and an increase in chronic diseases.

As of January 1, 2021, there were 2.7 million disabled people in Ukraine. Among them, there are 222,300 people with disabilities in the first category, 900,800 people with disabilities in the second category, and 1.4 million people with disabilities in the third category. According to the Office for National Statistics, 163,900 children are disabled [1].

In Ukraine, all people with disabilities have the right to quality education, which is enshrined in the legislation of all levels. Here are some key legal issues regarding education for people with disabilities in Ukraine.

According to the constitutional law of Ukraine and directly to Article 24 «Citizens have equal constitutional rights and freedoms and are equal before the law» [2].

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Article 24: Education «People with disabilities have a right to education without discrimination. Countries must ensure that people with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary and secondary education in their own community. Countries must also provide reasonable accommodation and individualised support to maximise academic and social development». [3]

According to the Law of Ukraine "On the basics of social protection of persons with disabilities in Ukraine" Article 22. For the realization of the right to professional (vocational), professional pre-higher and higher education by persons with disabilities, institutions of professional (vocational), professional pre-higher and higher education create the necessary conditions for them to obtain appropriate education. [4]

In all developed countries around the world, there is support for students with physical limitations. It began with the "light program for the disabled," adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in resolution in accordance with the "Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities." First, they take into account the demands of unselfish work in a university city -

society as well as domestic institutions - and the incapacitated provide educational facilities, counselors and service assistants, mental health and social support [5].

Admission to higher and professional pre-higher education institutions of persons with disabilities is carried out on a competitive basis in accordance with the Conditions for admission to higher and professional pre-higher education institutions approved by the central executive body, which ensures the formation of state policy in the field of education and science.

The legislative framework of Ukraine on the rights of people with disabilities meets international standards, but its implementation and control are problematic. Laws and regulations are not always effectively controlled and enforced.

The issue of accessibility of educational institutions for students with disabilities is really an important problem in Ukraine. Below is a detailed consideration of this problem and ways to solve it in accordance with the legislation of Ukraine.

Many Ukrainian higher education institutions do not have adapted conditions for students with disabilities, including the lack of ramps, special classrooms and elevators. This creates significant barriers to the physical access of persons with disabilities to education and the use of teaching facilities.

Due to physical or mental impairments, adapted teaching materials such as audio or text versions of textbooks may be required. However, such adapted educational materials are not always provided in Ukrainian higher education institutions, which creates a barrier to studies performance with disability.

Financial support from the state for higher education institutions in order to ensure accessibility for students with disabilities is indeed an important component in ensuring equal opportunities in higher education. Let's look at this aspect in more detail.

Financial support from the state can be directed to the construction of ramps for physical access for students with disabilities, as well as the adaptation of classrooms and infrastructure to ensure unhindered learning and movement.

Funds can be allocated for the purchase of technological equipment that facilitates the training of students with different types of limitations, for example, computer programs for blind students or special hearing aids.

Support for students with special needs: State support may also include the allocation of funds for scholarships, grants and other types of financial assistance for students with disabilities.

For example, students with disabilities of Vinnytsia Social and Economic University "Ukraine" made a video appeal to the authorities, in which they ask to give students with disabilities the opportunity to study, to allocate and adapt new buildings for training.

Let's consider concrete steps to solve problems related to the rights of persons with disabilities in higher education in accordance with the legislation of Ukraine, together with examples:

1. A higher education institution installs special ramps and lifts for students with disabilities to ensure their physical access to all educational premises. This helps students with disabilities to move freely around the campus.

2. The faculty of the university organizes training courses for teachers to work with students with disabilities. Teachers receive the necessary training that helps them create adaptive learning materials and work with the different needs of students.

3. The University establishes a scholarship program for students with disabilities that helps them financially secure their education and lifecooperates with local public organizations of disabled people to organize seminars and trainings on the rights and needs of students with disabilities.

A higher education institution conducts annual monitoring of the accessibility of its infrastructure and services for students with disabilities and submits a report to the authorities and the public.

4. The University offers individual study plans and support for students with different types of limitations, including extra time on exams or individual consultations with teachers.

In conclusion, the challenges of ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities in higher education in Ukraine are a pressing issue that requires immediate attention and action. As we have explored in this article, a significant percentage of the population in Ukraine lives with disabilities, and it is imperative to provide them with equal opportunities for education and social inclusion.

In light of these considerations, it is evident that addressing the rights of persons with disabilities in higher education in Ukraine requires a concerted effort from both government bodies and educational institutions. It is crucial to translate the legal framework into tangible actions that eliminate barriers and promote inclusivity.

Ensuring inclusivity and equal access to education for all, regardless of physical or cognitive limitations, is not only a legal obligation but also a moral imperative that can contribute to a more equitable and prosperous society. It is incumbent upon all stakeholders to collaborate and work diligently towards this goal.

References:

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