THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE UKRAINIAN UNIVERSITY TEACHERS IN TERMS OF THE CURRENT EUROPEAN EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Abstract. *Since the restoration of independence in Ukraine in 1991, much has changed with regard to higher education. Radical social and economic developments took place in the early 1990s and in subsequent years, university education was significantly influenced by the educational policy of the European Union. University teachers are viewed as key actors in implementing changes, solving problems and achieving goals in higher education. The focus of this research is how university teachers themselves experience and interpret changes in their work and how they cope with changes. A qualitative research strategy is adopted along with a phenomenological approach. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten long-serving university teachers.*

In the study, eight main themes of change and various activities for coping with change were identified. One of the most significant changes relates to the students.

It can be concluded that the work of Ukrainian university teachers has become increasingly complex, as the variety of tasks and what is required of them primarily relates to growing societal changes, globalization and Europeanization. Although it must be admitted that the investigation sample is limited and its results cannot be generalised for all Ukrainian university teachers, the emerging patterns of professional development indicates the most substantial trends. In addition, these findings can help foster future research in this area.

Introduction. It has been acknowledged worldwide that the work of teachers is becoming increasingly complex. Traditional boundaries in educational fields between occupations, institutions, work roles and duties – being of great importance in the determination of teachers' professionai development – are being reconstructed, blurred and even disappearing. At the same time, new boundaries in professional fields are emerging. Furthermore, globalization and Europeanization create integrative trends that influence the work of teachers and manifest themselves through the "global governance of teacher professionalism", as well as through

standardized policy instruments, implemented through national education policies, and comparative data sets among others (Seddon; Ozga; Levin 2013).

Growing cultural diversity is creating differentiation tendencies at the micro level that become obvious in the case of students, as well as teachers. The manifestation of growing differentiation in student populations can be seen in terms of their learning motivation and skills, socio-economic background, age and previous education (Cort and Rolls; Kats 2010). At the same time, one can see differentiation tendencies in teacher communities in terms of their reactions to policy regulations in the context of university education. For example, university teachers respond to policy regulations differently and they have various attitudes towards the change process (Rekkor 2013). University teachers have perceived their teaching profession as being subject to pressure. On the one hand, what societal actors expect from teachers has been growing and expanding considerably. The professional roles of teachers have expanded and new roles such as supervisor, mentor, counsellor, adult trainer and, in some cases, "a substitute for parents" or even "social worker" have been assigned to them. This trend has followed the demand for new competences and can lead to the transformation of the professional identity of teachers. Furthermore, the requirement for more communication and cooperation with colleagues and communities, including companies and other societal institutions and actors is growing substantially. Teaching methods have changed and transformed to become learner-centred, and the learning environment has widened to include e-learning, virtual learning, etc. Ukrainian university teachers are faced with an increasing scope of learning, social and behavioural problems faced by their students and the teachers often deal with the students' social, psychological and personal problems. In some cases, teachers are not ready to cope with these problems (Cort and Rolls 2010). On the other hand, some teachers perceive a decreased level of independence and autonomy because they have to follow educational policy standards and requirements. For example, teaching performance has become highly visible, classroom work is inspected and teaching has to be strictly based on the national curriculum . Some teachers work under a tight regime of accountability for improving the academic results of students (Müller 2010). This is followed by growing

educational bureaucracy and increased administrative burden (Hughes and Attwell 2010). It has been argued that the abovementioned global trends, generally tend to merchandise or de-professionalise and cut down the professional autonomy and power of teachers (Hoyle and Wallace 2009).

The purpose of this research is to understand what kinds of meanings university teachers attribute to the multiple changes that have occurred in the sphere of the Ukrainian higher education over the last decades, how they have responded to them (which activities they have implemented to cope with changes) and what are the consequences for their professional development.

As it has been discussed before, university teachers in Ukraine have contradictory positions in the implementation of new educational reforms, being simultaneously a subject and an object of the changes arising from the reforms. As subjects of change, university teachers are the agents who carry out changes in higher education. As objects of change, they have to continuously improve their knowledge and skills to meet the expectations that stem from the changes in higher education and its context. As a consequence, teachers feel that they are over worked and their work has become more stressful (Cort and Rolls 2010). Their methods in the classroom have changed because of new technology and the implementation of e-learning. Changes in teaching, emerging from new target groups and the growing diversity of student populations (e.g. increasing numbers of students with special needs), have also brought new roles. University teachers have had different experiences and attitudes regarding the national curriculum development and implementation process in their work. Therefore, some teachers have adopted the changes more easily than others. Furthermore, university teachers in Ukraine have realised that their work requires better professional, pedagogical, social and computer skills.

Against the background of continuous change, the work of university teachers has become increasingly more complex, coupled with growing societal demands and expectations upon them. On the one hand, this requires a transformed/modernised understanding of the concept of professionality among teachers. On the other hand, in order to cope with the changing nature of the work in a changing context, teachers

have to apply various effective coping activities. Sometimes the professional developmet of teachers is not in accordance with the changing demands on their work and they may lack the resources to cope with changing expectations

In Ukraine numerous changes have taken place in the sphere of higher education. Since the last decade of the 20th century higher education globally has been a highlight of many governments with the strategic goals of quality and efficiency, accessibility in a lifelong learning perspective, and openness to the society and world (Pepin 2011). The European Bologna Process has turned into the platform for the countries to transform collaboration to reach these goals into multi-actor governance course of education renewal (Huisman 2012, p. 81). After signing the Bologna Declaration in 2005, Ukraine became part of the renewal process. However, numerous reforms and legislative attempts to modernize its higher education system did not result in deep changes turning the notion of renewal more to a buzzword than an outcome of the reforms.

September 6, 2014 might become a turning point for the higher education system in Ukraine for Higher Education Law of Ukraine was finally enacted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (Supreme Council of Ukraine, Ukrainian parliament). It is not the first law the country tries to implement to modernize the system; however, it is viewed as 'one of the first systemic reforms that in fact draws us closer to integration with Europe' (Hrynevych 2014). The law complies with the guidelines of the Bologna process about European Higher Education Area.

The current reform of higher education reflects the challenges and targets described in major documents of the Bologna Process and Tempus (the European Union's program which supports the modernization of higher education in the partner countries of Eastern Europe and other regions). The requirements of the modernization of higher education with the provisions of the Higher Education Law included the following items: development of academic and financial autonomy of higher education institutions; development of the National Quality Assurance system for higher education, in compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance and its full membership of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and inclusion in the European Quality

Assurance Register (EQAR); completion of a three-cycle system; alignment of university curricula with the Bologna structure; curricula reform with a view to employers' needs; further development of the mechanism for equal access to higher education; professional development of research and educational staff according to modern requirements with a view to ensuring sustainable development of to higher education system; development and introduction of new educational standards (curricula reform) with a view to improving the quality of the content of education and in order to facilitate employability of graduates; establishment of programs for foreign students and further internationalization of Ukraine's higher education; increasing the outward and inward mobilityof students and academic and administrative staff of higher education institutions (Hrynevych 2014; Kvit 2015). Among the most imperative provisions of the law was the establishment of the National Quality Assurance Agency. While the provisions of the law are viewed as revolutionary and promising, the educators share criticism and doubts as far as procedural and implementation mechanisms of those provisions. National Quality Assurance Agency is perceived as basically a new structure. It is assumed that the representation of different stakeholders (employers, academicians, research community, non-profits and students) will warrant the acclaimed changes and goals. However, it is not clear yet how this agency is going to influence the quality. Financial autonomy of the universities may be hindered by discrepancies between the law and the Budget Code as it was the case with the 2001 Law (Chernovol 2014). Some practitioners express their doubts about inability of the law to fight corruption in HE locally and call for the control over the government in developing by-laws and additional regulations specifying implementation steps on the provisions (Prakh 2014; Spivakovsky 2014).

The incongruities of Ukrainian education such as Soviet stereotypes and disconnect with new realities; and the resistance to change at many levels rooted in the system structure and reluctance of individuals impeded all modernization efforts. Dramatic developments accompanied Ukraine's transition from the Soviet regime to become a democratic society, and therefore, the university teachers' professional developmet took place in the context of a very dynamic transition. The previous

Soviet educational system was highly centralised and closely linked to the planned industrial system. In addition, the system of education and training was weakened and changed considerably by the comprehensive restructuring during the reorientation from Eastern to Western markets and the privatisation process. The state was too weak to support reforms in the educational system. Overall, according to Tempus report Ukraine has not made any advance yet in the attempt to booster the reforms. We are at Stage 2 with National Qualification framework: committee is established and currently discussions and consultations are taking place to promote the process. So far only claims about changes in regulations for recognition of foreign qualifications have been made; no practical steps have been implemented (Chernovol 2014).

During discussions about the concept of professionalism, many scholars have emphasised that the concept is socially constructed, depending much on the social and historical context, and therefore, is contested. The emergence of the 'new professionalism' in various occupational fields must involve a change of professional practice, and hence also, the professional development of teachers (Evans 2008; Evetts 2008). However, professionalism is directly related to the concept of profession, which determines what kinds of activities belong to the responsibilities of the specific occupational/professional group and what do not. The concept of professional development embeds two distinctive aspects of the professional lives of teachers – social and individual – along with professionalism and professionality. Teachers' professionalism as a sociological concept concerns the occupational group of teachers, being related to the status of the teaching profession in society and the ability of the occupational group to self-regulate and the strategies and rhetoric employed by members of an occupation to improve status, salary and conditions. Professionality can be viewed as an individual aspect of the work of teachers, related to such elements of their work as knowledge, skills, procedures, and how they implement them in their practice (Hoyle 1974; Evans 2008). Therefore, professionalism is concerned with the profession as well as the practice of teaching and the best ways teachers pursue "…the art and craft of teaching" (Goodson 2003).

Furthermore, two models of professionality can be distinguished: restricted and extended. A "restricted" professional is guided by a narrow, classroom-based perspective, which is related to the day-to-day practicalities of teaching. They are mainly based on experience and intuition. The "extended" professional model has a much wider vision or understanding of what education is and involves valuing the theoretical principles and knowledge of pedagogy, working creatively and taking care of students (Hoyle, 2008). University teachers may have a different orientation of professionality on the "restricted-extended" continuum. For example, the following essential aspects pertain to teacher professionality: pedagogical beliefs, classroom teaching practices, cooperation, class and school climate, occupational commitment and general work-related attitudes, self-efficacy and job satisfaction, but also motivation, knowledge, skills, and the procedures teachers implement in their practical work (Evans 2008). Furthermore, E. Hoyle provided an analytical framework for analysing teacher professionality on the scale of "restricted-extended" professionality and the following features have been attributed to it: skills derived from experience vs. those derived from a mediation between experience and theory; perspectives limited to the classroom context vs. perspectives embracing the broader social context of education; workplace events perceived in isolation vs. workplace events perceived in relation to policies and goals; introspective with regard to methods vs. methods compared with those of colleagues and with reports of practice; value placed on autonomy vs. value placed on professional collaboration; limited vs. high involvement in non-immediate professional activities (e.g. networks, RandD, professional associations); professional development limited and confined to practical courses vs. considerable involvement in professional development that includes learning of a theoretical nature; work seen as an intuitive activity vs. work seen as a rational activity.

The opinions of the educators, about the law vary from very supportive and optimistic to critical and pessimistic.Taking the above into consideration, a university teacher's professional development has to be regarded from two interconnected perspectives. On the one hand, new European educational requirements, standards and policies are increasing. One point which everyone agrees on is that the law sends

a very important political message to the public and higher education. On the other hand, it is important to understand, how university teachers themselves perceive the changes in their daily work, what is essential for them and how they cope with the changes. These personal aspects of university teachers professional development are the focus of this study.

This study applies a qualitative research strategy, based on a phenomenological approach, relying upon Husserl's view that all knowledge is based on personal experience. It implies that any objective knowledge can be found in experience, and that subjective experience is the source of truth (Smith 2009; Moustakas 1994).

To collect the data, a semi-structured interview guide was developed that contained six main topics: becoming a university teacher including the duties; major changes in the sphere of higher education over the last two decades as seen by university teachers; the effect of the changes on the work of university teachers; necessary competences for university teachers to cope with the changes and their work; university teachers' strategies for coping with the changes; university teachers' vision of their work as a university teacher in the future.

Ten interviewees (university teachers) from such universities as Vinnytsia National Technical University, Vinnytsia State Teachers' Training University named after M. Kotsiubynskyi and Vinnytsia National Medical University named after M. Pyrohov were asked to take part in the investigation. The sample consisted of teachers who had been teaching both theoretical and applied subjects. The interviewees had different pedagogical experience (four of them with more than 20 years which was very important for the construction of our sample in order to understand the long-term effect of the changes on university teachers' professional developmet), age (between the ages of 27 and 56); three of them were men. Three teachers started to teach during the Soviet era and the subsequent trasition period. The interviews were conducted individually with each interviewee, and lasted from 1 to 2 hours.

The data-driven thematic analysis process was used to analyse the data which included six phases (Braun and Clarke 2006). First, all recorded interviews were transcribed, read and initial ideas noted. Next, initial codes were generated regarding

the phenomenon of changes and coping. In the third phase, the different codes were sorted into potential sub-themes and themes (categories). Subsequently, the content of the created sub-themes and main themes were checked. In the fifth phase, all sub-themes and main themes were refined and named. In the last phase, the final analysis was written. To ensure validity, triangulation was used to analyse the interview data (Creswell 2009).

The analysis of the interviews revealed eight main themes in the changes with sub-themes to which university teachers had attributed different meanings: university teachers' daily duties, teaching process, student population of the university, learning environment at universities, communication and cooperation, organisational changes, curricula status of the university, status in the society.

While talking about changes in university teachers' daily duties the teachers interviewed highlighted four aspects: more administrative work (new time-consuming duties have been added to the teaching work. The excessive amount of new computer-based administrative work takes too much attention and time and requires better computer skills. Teachers have to use an electronic study information system to draw up work plans, e-courses and so on. Some teachers perceive that a disturbing amount of administrative work has been added and they perceive that teaching has become of secondary importance); more variety in the duties of the group supervisor (teachers noted that the work of a group supervisor has become more time-consuming, since the volume of such tasks as monitoring student absences, interacting with students and their parents, making academic progress shortlists, and informing students about the different grants and benefits have considerably increased. For that reason teachers need to have up-to-date information about various social benefits, to be able to communicate with different parents, and when necessary, take over the parenting role); preparing students for participation in scientific conferences or skills competitions (the amount of time and work required to accomplish this task is difficult to measure and teachers often have to do it on a voluntary basis and get paid a bonus only if the student achieves a high ranking or recognition); increased independent student work (the proportion of independent student work has increased, which requires more work from teachers in the

preparation of tasks and giving feedback. However, the amount of time this work requires has not been planned into the professional duties).

While speaking about changes in the teaching process over the last years, teachers highlighted different aspects and three sub-themes were identified: complex content of teaching (it has become more integrated, complex and oriented towards learning outcomes. The redefinition of the teaching profession has meant the elimination of separate positions for teaching theory and practice. Therefore, the teaching of theoretical topics and practical skills has become more integrated and understandable for learners and has facilitated the teachers' work. In addition, the teaching has become more goal-oriented and more stringent, because it must be based on the curriculum. The content of education has become more complex due to the rapid development of technologies and tools, information overload, which is also due to the demands of the labour market, and pressure from employers. Now, teachers believe that the content of training is better aligned to the work done in companies. Teachers understand their responsibility in ensuring that their students are able to meet their employers' expectations); changed teaching strategies (university teachers talked about the changed teaching strategies they use. They apply more inclusive methods that better involve, activate and motivate students, encourage cooperation and help develop general competences in students. Some teachers have perceived that there is an increased need to explain and illustrate the educational content. If possible, teachers teach new specialist knowledge through practical tasks and activities, which ensure that the students understand the material they learn better. However, some teachers have argued that teaching has not inherently changed much. One teacher emphasised that in pedagogy, greater changes have happened on paper because more attention is paid to how to "write things down". Great changes have taken place in the technology and equipment used for teaching); work habits are no longer developed (some interviewed teachers have noticed that the development of work habits at the university premises has disappeared. Before, students were engaged in housekeeping tasks (e.g. wiping the board, putting desks and chairs in order, etc.).

All the interviewed university teachers emphasised that the student population has changed a lot at the educational establishments of higher learning and that has

had an effect on teachers' professional development. During the analysis, three sub-themes were created: weakened family support for students (the students' social background has changed due to the internationalisation of the economy and the free movement of labour within the EU. Many students come from broken families, parents are working abroad and often are not interested in their child's studies. Communicating with such families has become an unpleasant obligation for teachers, requiring both good social skills and extra time); diversified student population (the student population has diversified by age, nationality, motivation, existing experience, learning skills and capabilities). Specialized groups for foreign students with selected courses foreign language instruction have been established and it had an impact on university teachers' professional development. Teachers have argued that the number of motivated students has decreased. Therefore, university teachers try to motivate the students through their own professionality and making the learning process interesting. But sometimes, unmotivated students may decrease the teachers' motivation and desire to work in this profession. The teachers explained that the levels of basic knowledge and elementary working and learning skills among students had weakened considerably. Many students are unable to independently plan their learning and time, and have problems with focusing their attention. Oral and written self-expression and communication skills of students have deteriorated and they are afraid of direct interaction with teachers and prefer using passive channels for communication (Facebook, e-mail, messaging). Nevertheless, teachers feel responsible for the development of student communication skills during the learning process. Although today's students are skilled in using digital devices, but these skills are not applied to learning. Students do not utilize the web-based learning environment or learning materials on e-learning environments); changed student attitudes (general societal changes have affected students and they became more indifferent and lazy. They lack a sense of duty and discipline, which is expressed by not adhering to the established attendance times and assignment deadlines. University teachers also feel that they have few options for disciplining them or supporting changes in their behavioural patterns. One teacher noted that students were physically more active before and that was promoted by the academic requirements. Other

teachers mentioned that students are tired and their primary needs (sleep, food) have not been fulfilled, which reduces their performance both academically and physically.

Many educational establishments of higher learning have been modernized today. The teachers interviewed have noticed changes in the universities e-learning environment. First of all it should be mentioned that a new mechanism of electronic admission for the University (starting in 2016) and automatic placement of state order was introduced and it was a new challenge for educators.. On the other hand there are many new electronic materials and devices that simplify the teachers' work. Also, there is an increase in pressure to utilize e-learning environments, which supports student learning. Teachers have observed that students are reluctant to adjust to a computer-based experience and students prefer traditional instructional materials on paper. Students use various social networking environments (Facebook), but they do not visit the web-based environments that support their learning. Teachers are frustrated with their inability to do anything about this situation.

University teachers have noticed that the patterns of cooperation and communication with the other institutions, managerial stuff, colleagues and students have changed. Cooperation between other institutions, universities, vocational schools has improved. For example, teachers can share their pedagogical experience at scientific conferences, practical seminars, interships and so on more easily. But after-work communication and interaction with colleagues has decreased due to the increased demands on their time. Interpersonal interaction between university teachers and students has become less structured and restricted which some students may abuse and this requires the educators to improve their assertiveness skills.

Over the last years, the university teachers interviewed have experienced changes in the university networking. Teachers have had different experiences from the reorganisation of the university network. Some teachers have been affected by this change and felt insecure because of the uncertainty regarding the future of their institute/faculty, chair, e.g. whether the faculty or chair will survive, whether the chair is going to be merged with another chair or whether somebody else will be merged with that other chair.

All the university teachers interviewed have experienced new curriculum changes: completion of a three-cycle system (elimination of young specialist degree during the transition phase and introduction of young bachelor's degree as an accelerated way to get a bachelor's degree); alignment of university curricula with the Bologna structure; curricula reform with a view to employers' needs; development and introduction of new educational standards with a view to improving the quality of the content of education actually implying the simplifying the standard system: education-qualification characteristics, education- occupational programs, education quality diagnostic tools. Generally, the introduction of the curricula reform has remained somewhat unclear to the teachers. The earlier standards were sufficient and had just been fully understood when they were replaced by the new ones. Some educators have been confused by the new curriculum changes. Both positive and negative aspects can be observed. On the negative side, the teachers experienced initial difficulties in understanding the last phase of curricular changes, and they were implemented with excessive haste. The university teachers also felt that the curriculum development had not been sufficiently tested. Due to curriculum development, the length of study has shortened and the volume has increased. This has influenced the formation of professional skills.

All teachers interviewed emphasized their status in society and the position of a teacher in higher education. Long-serving teachers perceived that the status of a university teacher in society has not changed in spite of years of active work going on to improve it. Some of the teachers interviewed believe the status of university teachers in society has diminished compared to the other professions. At the end of the Soviet period, educators had more rights and there was a greater respect for their job. Now, university teachers must have assertive personalities in order to be respected by their students.

It may be concluded from the analysis of the interviews with experienced university teachers that their work has been affected by the changes that have taken place at different levels within the system of higher education in Ukraine. These changes require university teachers to cope in different ways. In the following, an

overview will be given of the activities that experienced teachers reported using over the years to cope with the changes.

The interviewed teachers have described how they managed the stress caused by changes and diversified daily duties. They have used the following activities: recreation, doing work at home and looking for help from close friends. Teachers highlighted activities such as playing sport, walking in the evenings, talking about their problems with friends or close colleagues, and taking time off or just staying away from work. One of the most frequently mentioned opportunities for restoring one's strength was the official long summer holiday. Sometimes, in order to cope with all the tasks, teachers reported taking work home and doing it in their free time. When the need arose, they also asked their families for help in fulfilling administrative duties. There have been situations, where younger teachers, who were unable to cope with the administrative tasks, have chosen inappropriate activities (e.g. drinking alcohol), which resulted in them leaving the teaching profession. It was important for the teachers to maintain an optimistic state of mind and find something important and positive in every change. Otherwise, the interfering aspect may be the teacher's negative mentality and attitude towards work.

Teachers noted that fulfilling various duties at work requires a whole set of different competences and skills, such as rational time planning, an increasingly greater demand for foreign language proficiency (especially those who prepare students for international activities), IT competence, communication skills, and general educational knowledge. To acquire such different competences the teachers use the following activities: learning from students (independent learning based on information received from their students), learning from previous experience (coping with different tasks also greatly depended on what tasks the teacher has fulfilled before or is fulfilling at the moment, similar previous experiences simplify the completion of a task and decrease the resistance to change), learning from examples (to cope with curriculum changes some teachers have relied on the examples given in the textbooks and have adapted these to their own situation. However, university teachers noted the fact that in the implementation of changes there are no overarching agreements that have created a situation where they fill in the required documents

according to the given guidelines and it appears that the format does not suit other officials), acquiring work experience in the professional field (teachers have improved their professional knowledge and skills in an official practical placement in a company or by watching professional TV-programmes. Some teachers have been working part-time in the field that they teach), acquiring new knowledge in training (different pedagogical as well as professional training is provided, which supports the university teachers' ability to cope with new challenges.

To cope with the changes the interviewed teachers exchanged experiences and shared their teaching materials or best practices with colleagues or during events specifically organised for that purpose.

The diversified student population has meant that the teachers have to implement a student-centred approach, various activities in the learning process. Some teachers said that coping with students of various backgrounds required them to prepare a selection of different teaching materials and individual tasks within the lesson when the need arises. Poor communication skills of the students have made teachers use different approaches in the teaching process to develop the necessary communication skills in students. The limited knowledge base of students has required university teachers to explain more when teaching them. One of the teachers believed that there is no point in repeating an explanation more than ten times because at some point you have to accept that the student is not able to understand what is being taught. In addition, two wood processing teachers emphasised that the weaker independent learning abilities of post-basic school students have required the use of traditional methods in the learning process. Some teachers noted that occasionally, they should take on the role of a student, because this would help them to better see and interpret the role of a teacher in the learning process and gain a better understanding of its effect on students. Teachers should also be motivated and inspired by their students' achievements. Interactions with students have made university teachers explore better ways of making contact with their students. For that purpose, teachers have to be in the social networking environments that young people use, and communicate with them on an equal footing.

The low position of university teachers has changed teacher behaviour and they try to show their professionalism in a positive and proud way. The low status of teachers in society demands a stronger and more self-assertive character. One teacher said in his interview that the more his profession was being criticized, the more he straightened himself.

Conclusions. The aim of this study was to understand the meanings university teachers have attributed to the changes that have occurred in the sphere of higher education in Ukraine over the last decades, and to understand how university teachers have experienced and responded to the changes in their work and how the changes have affected teacher professionality - the beliefs, procedures, methods, work practices and other attributes of their professionality.

The work of the university teachers in this study includes various positive and negative time-consuming tasks, and the results indicated that additional duties have been added to their previous workload. Therefore, detailed workload assessments are missing to provide the ideal amount of time necessary for each task and reduce the risk of burnout. In addition, it is essential to develop stronger and more effective support systems for university teachers to prevent them from leaving the profession.

While implementing reforms it is also essential to involve more university teachers in the entire change and development process, not just the implementation phase because a previous experience and knowledge of the planned changes helps them adapt to the new situation. Therefore, one can conclude that more participation and optimal time should be offered to university teachers to understand and discuss questions that arise in the context of changes.

It can be concluded that the changing requirements for professionality demand that university teachers also display particular personality characteristics like strong internal motivation, positive thinking, assertiveness, personal commitment and mission consciousness. According to the teachers in the interviews there is long list of knowledge, skills and competences that have become an essential part of their professionality: comprehensive skills for using computers and other technical tools or equipment; better time management and work planning skills; foreign language skills; better general educational knowledge; good communication and cooperation

skills with different parties (parents, students, colleagues, companies); better integration of theoretical and practical skills in teaching; implementation of learner-centred methods; knowledge to motivate and understand students; knowledge and skills to manage and teach students that possess various levels of knowledge and experience in the same classroom. Furthermore, changes in the student population have created several difficulties for university teachers, which demand more effort than only teaching. In particular, providing support and help so students can solve their personal problems has become one of the most important requirements and part of the professionality of teachers. In spite of this, experienced university teachers emphasize more continuous development in their specialist field, which is related to teaching their subject and also pedagogical skills.

The study findings have helped understand the factors that have changed the work of educators and influenced their professionality. It is not possible to generalise the results for all Ukrainian university teachers because of the limitations of the sample, but these findings can indicate important trends in the changing the professionality of university teachers and help inform future research on university teachers.

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