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## PECULIARITIES OF INFORMAL EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION FOR FUTURE BORDER GUARD BACHELORS OF PHILOLOGY IN THE PROCESS OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

*The purpose of this article is to analyze the peculiarities of implementation and provide a practical demonstration of the procedure for recognizing the results of informal education in the process of training future border guard officers specializing in philology at the Bohdan Khmelnytskyi National Academy of Border Guard Service of Ukraine (NASBGSU).*

*Research methods are based on search, analysis, comparison, evaluation, justification, generalization, as well as systematization of theoretical and practical material on the recognition of informal education results, as well as the presentation and the implementation of the procedure for crediting the results of international internships.*

*Research results. A successful procedure for recognizing the results of international language internships of cadets at the Secondary Vocational School of the Police Corps in Košice (Slovak Republic) is presented. The cadets acquired specialized professional competencies corresponding to the topics of the educational component «Linguistics and Country Studies of Slovakia». The certification took the form of an oral exam, based on the results of which the acquired knowledge was recognized and credited with a grade of «excellent» (100 points, ECTS – A).*

*Scientific novelty: Practical demonstration of the procedure for recognizing the results of informal education obtained during international internships in the specific conditions of a departmental higher military education institution in the security and defense sector.*

*Practical significance of the research. The experience of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine confirms the effectiveness of the developed internal mechanism for recognizing the results of informal education, ensuring compliance with ECTS requirements and global practices for the validation of learning outcomes (VNFI). This improves the quality of officer training, their academic mobility, and readiness for cross-border cooperation.*

*Conclusions and prospects for further research. The analysis shows the successful implementation of the procedure for recognizing the results of informal education in the process of training future border guard officers specializing in philology at the NASBGSU. Prospects for further research include extending the practice of recognition of informal education to other educational components (operational and service activities, legal disciplines), studying the long-term impact of mobility on the career growth of graduates, and developing unified criteria for assessing competencies in informal learning environments.*

**Keywords:** *informal education; bachelor; foreign language training; professional training; sociocultural measures.*

**Problem Statement.** The internationalization of informal education is a key element of the modern global educational paradigm, promoting academic mobility and intercultural dialogue. The recognition of competences acquired abroad through courses, training, or internships allows higher education students to integrate international practical experience into national education programs. This significantly increases the competitiveness of specialists and meets the requirements of the concept of lifelong learning.

In Ukraine's civilian higher education institutions, informal education is actively implemented through the mechanisms of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), ensuring the recognition of results achieved outside the traditional educational process. However, for departmental higher military education institutions in the security and defense sector, in particular the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the State Border Service of Ukraine (SBGSU), informal education takes on a special significance. It is critically important for combining theoretical training with international practical experience in the context of cross-border challenges and border security.

Ukraine's integration into the European educational space, which is based on the principles of the Bologna Process, raises the issue of modernizing the system of higher military education. One of the key aspects of this transformation is the recognition of learning outcomes achieved not only in formal but also in non-formal and informal environments. The concept of lifelong learning is becoming central, requiring higher education institutions to be flexible and open to alternative ways of acquiring knowledge and competencies.

In its methodological recommendations, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine has repeatedly emphasized the importance of implementing the provisions of the ECTS, which provides for the recognition of periods of study abroad and results obtained outside the traditional educational process. For departmental higher education institutions that train specialists for the security and defense sector, this opens up unique opportunities to combine theoretical training with practical international experience, which is extremely important for the effective performance of official duties in the context of globalization and cross-border challenges.

**Analysis of Recent Research and Publications.** The issue of recognizing the results of non-formal education is the subject of active scientific debate at both the international and national levels.

Global experience in the internationalization of non-formal education focuses on mechanisms for the validation of non-formal and informal learning (VN FIL), which allow the integration of acquired competencies into the formal education system. In European Union countries, this is regulated by a key document – the 2012 Council Recommendation on the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, the significance of which in the context of mobility was studied by

scholars such as Souto-Otero M., Villalba-Garcia E. in 2015 [4]. In the United States and other developed OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries, the report Recognizing Non-Formal and Informal Learning [5] emphasized the importance of non-formal education as a rich source of human capital. In Asia, particularly in Indonesia, researchers such as E. S. Bahri, M. M. Mohammad Aslam and Y. Hermawan [2] are studying innovations in non-formal education for human resource development. China, as a member of the E-9 group, focuses on the role of non-formal education in improving literacy levels. These international studies serve as a basis for the formation of transparent national qualification systems.

These processes were studied by scholars such as S. Adam, T. Farrell, J. Holland [1], who analyzed the relationship between learning outcomes and the Bologna Process, and D. Kolarin, E. Bjornavold [3], who studied transparency and recognition tools for qualifications in Europe.

In Ukrainian scientific discourse, leading scholars highlighted this issue. The works of V. Kremen, et all [8] are devoted to the philosophy of human-centeredness in education, which is the ideological basis for the recognition of individual educational trajectories. O. Kupina [9; 10] and S. Alekseeva [6] studied non-formal education in the Ukrainian education system. The publications of M. Viter and O. Derzhuk [7], who analyzed the current process of introducing and recognizing types of education in Ukraine that involve learning outside of educational institutions, deserve special attention. The researchers emphasize that, despite legislative regulation, the practical implementation of recognition procedures requires the development of clear internal policies and assessment tools at the level of each educational institution.

**Purpose of the Article.** The objective of this article is to analyze the specifics of implementation and provide a practical demonstration of the procedure for recognizing the results of informal education in the process of training future border guard officers majoring in philology at the Bohdan Khmelnytskyi National Academy of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine (NASBGSU).

**Research Methods** are based on search, analysis, comparison, evaluation, justification, generalization, as well as systematization of theoretical and practical material on the recognition of informal education results, as well as the presentation and the implementation of the procedure for crediting the results of international internships.

**Presentation of the Main Material.** The Bohdan Khmelnytskyi National Academy of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine is systematically working on integration into the international military educational environment, developing cooperation with foreign educational institutions and international institutions. The Academy maintains close ties with the Representative Office of the International Organization for Migration, the diplomatic missions of key partner countries (the United States, Germany, France, and the Republic of Poland), as well as with NATO, European Union (OSCE, EUBAM, EUAM) structures, and the International

Committee of the Red Cross. A significant achievement was the Academy's entry in 2019 into the international network of European partner academies of the FRONTEX Agency as the 40th associate member, which opens access to online courses and international training. Bilateral cooperation is developing with the German Federal Police Academy (Lübeck), the Border Guard Centers of the Republic of Poland and the Romanian Border Police School (Oradea). Within the framework of the Erasmus+ program, inter-institutional mobility agreements were concluded with the Warsaw University of Tourism and Foreign Languages and the College of the State Border Guard of the Republic of Latvia. In addition to international cooperation, the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine has signed more than 70 cooperation agreements with Ukrainian higher education and scientific institutions, which strengthens inter-university cooperation and expands opportunities for informal education of cadets [11].

Responding to current educational challenges, the NASBGSU has developed and implemented the «Regulations on the Procedure for Recognizing Learning Outcomes Achieved in Non-Formal and/or Informal Education». This document regulates the procedure for crediting competencies acquired by cadets outside the main educational process, for example, during internships, courses, trainings, or seminars. The purpose of the regulations is to encourage applicants to engage in scientific and creative activities, deepen their professional development, and increase their competitiveness in the labor market.

The recognition procedure begins with the cadet submitting a report, to which supporting documents (certificates, diplomas, etc.) are attached. A professional commission was created to consider the case, consisting of representatives of the faculty, department, educational and methodological center and the guarantor of the educational program. The commission analyzes the materials provided, conducts an interview, and decides whether to recognize the results or to assign additional certification. This ensures objectivity and compliance of the acquired competencies with the program outcomes of the relevant educational program.

Within the framework of the educational and professional program «Philology» (tactical level of military education), cadets of the NASBGSU study a set of disciplines aimed at developing their foreign language communication, translation, and professionally oriented competencies [12].

In addition to compulsory English and German languages studies, the program includes the study of a third foreign language, with Slovak, Polish, Turkish, and Romanian offered.

Slovak occupies a special place among the third languages, as cadets have the opportunity to undergo practical training at departmental educational institutions in the Slovak Republic, which requires a high level of linguistic, linguistic-country studies, and professional training specifically in the Slovak language.

To develop a full range of competencies, the program includes the following Slovak-language disciplines: «Practical Course in Slovak» [13], «Linguistics and

Country Studies of Slovakia» [14], «Practical Translation from Slovak» [15], «Slovak Language for Professional Purposes» [16;17].

These components ensure the gradual development of linguistic, sociocultural, professional, and translation competencies – from basic phonetic, lexical, and grammatical skills to the free use of Slovak in work situations, including during border control, interaction with the Slovak border police, and translation of official documents (Tab. 1).

*Table 1*

**Table of academic disciplines and content modules in Slovak language**

Name of the academic discipline	List and titles of topics	List of practical classes
Linguistics and Country Studies of Slovakia	Slovakia today	General information about the country, Social and political life, Population of the SR (Slovak Republic), Slovakia and the World
	Historical overview of the political and economic development of the SR	The emergence of the modern Slovak people. Separation from Hungary, World War I and the emergence of Czechoslovakia, the Slovak National Uprising, the restoration of Czechoslovakia after World War II, The fall of communism. The division of Czechoslovakia, the history of the SR border police.
	Slovak literature	From the history of literature, Literature of the Romantic period, Literature of the Realist period, Literature of the post-1945 period
	Slovak culture	Theater and cinema, Art, Music, UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Slovakia, Tourism, Holidays, traditions, customs

Source: compiled by the authors

In this regard, over the past five years, we have taken into account the unique experience gained by academy cadets during their language internship in the Slovak Republic and decided to recognize its results as informal education. From October 28 to 31, 2024, seven third- and fourth-year cadets, with their instructor, underwent an internship at the Secondary Vocational School of the Police Corps in Košice. The purpose of the event was to deepen their knowledge of the Slovak language and special terminology in the field of border security.

During the internship, cadets not only improved their language skills, but also gained a number of professional competencies. They familiarized themselves with the activities of the Bureau of Border and Foreign Police of the Presidium of the Police Corps of the SR, the specifics of the video surveillance system at the border, first and second line control technologies at the railway BCP, as well as the peculiarities of detecting forged documents. In addition to the professional component, the program included socio-cultural events: a tour of the historic part of Košice and an excursion to Lubovniansky Castle. Thus, the cadets comprehensively mastered the material corresponding to topic 4, «Culture of Slovakia», within the

educational component «Linguistic and Country Studies of Slovakia». In general, during the internship, higher education students were able to:

master the specialized vocabulary and language structures necessary for border control;

observe real dialogue and monologue situations related to the detection of offenses, document verification, and asking clarifying questions;

obtain and analyze information about crime on the Slovak-Ukrainian border and the structure of the Slovak police;

use the Slovak language in everyday and professional communication in a foreign language environment.

This ensured the formation of integrated professional competence, combining linguistic, communicative, legal, and operational components.

Upon returning to the academy, the cadets initiated the procedure for recognition of their learning outcomes. They submitted reports requesting that they be credited with 6 hours on the topic «Culture of Slovakia» (lesson 4 «UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Slovakia»; lesson 5 «Tourism»; lesson 6 «Holidays, traditions, customs»). For an objective assessment of the knowledge acquired, an attestation was conducted in the form of a defense of the internship results.

The attestation took the form of an oral exam based on exam cards. The questions were formulated in such a way as to test not only factual knowledge, but also the ability to conduct a professional discussion in Slovak on relevant topics. For example, card No. 3 required talking about UNESCO sites in Slovakia and national dishes, and card No. 4 required talking about Slovak traditions and customs, as well as the castle in the city of Stará Ľubovňa.

In addition to faculty members, the commission included specialists who had participated in the internship program. The commission evaluated the completeness, logic, lexical and grammatical correctness of the answers, as well as the speed of response in free conversation. All cadets demonstrated a high level of preparation, freely mastered the material, and confidently answered additional questions from the commission members. Based on the results of the assessment, the commission decided to recognize the results and award the corresponding practical classes with a grade of «excellent» (100 points, ECTS – A).

It is important to note that, in addition to the officially credited topic in linguistics and country studies, the cadets acquired knowledge and skills that are components of another important discipline – «Slovak Language for Professional Purposes». The topics of the internship (border control procedures, crime prevention, activities of the Slovak police) directly correlate with the topics covered in the syllabus of this discipline.

This is an example of so-called «deferred assessment»: although these competencies were not the subject of the current assessment, they formed a solid practical foundation that would be implemented and tested during the study of the relevant course in the next semester.

**Conclusions and prospects for further research.** The analysis shows that the procedure for recognizing informal education results was successfully implemented at the NASBGSU. The practical case of crediting international internship results demonstrated the effectiveness, transparency, and objectivity of the developed mechanism. This experience has made it possible not only to formally transfer ECTS credits, but also to significantly increase the motivation of cadets to study foreign languages and deepen their professional training.

The European integration vector of development of Ukraine and departmental higher military education institutions in the security sector requires not only the formal implementation of EU standards, but also the deep internationalization of the educational process. The successful recognition of the results of informal education obtained by cadets during international internships is a direct confirmation of the compliance of the NASBGSU mechanisms with the requirements of the ECTS and global practices of validation of learning outcomes. This practical experience demonstrates that the integration of international competencies improves the quality of officer training, ensuring their academic mobility and readiness for effective cross-border cooperation. Thus, informal education becomes a strategic tool on the path to harmonizing Ukrainian military education with the European educational space.

Prospects for further research include: extending the practice of transferring the results of informal education to other educational components, in particular those related to operational and service activities and legal disciplines; researching the long-term impact of international internships and academic mobility programs on the career growth of graduates; developing unified criteria and tools for assessing competencies acquired in informal learning environments, taking into account the specifics of border guard officer training; implementation of the proposals made in the internship report, in particular regarding the organization of similar events twice a year and the introduction of internships for scientific and teaching staff with the aim of exchanging methodological experience.

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## ОСОБЛИВОСТІ РЕАЛІЗАЦІЇ НЕФОРМАЛЬНОЇ ОСВІТИ МАЙБУТНІХ БАКАЛАВРІВ-ФІЛОЛОГІВ В ПРОЦЕСІ ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ ПІДГОТОВКИ ПРИКОРДОННИКІВ

**Метою статті** є аналіз особливостей імплементації та практична демонстрація процедури визнання результатів неформальної освіти у процесі підготовки майбутніх офіцерів-прикордонників за спеціальністю «Філологія» в Національній академії Державної прикордонної служби України імені Богдана Хмельницького.

**Методи дослідження.** Для досягнення поставленої мети були використані такі наукові методи, як: пошук, аналіз, порівняння, оцінювання, обґрунтування, узагальнення, а також систематизація теоретичного та практичного матеріалу щодо визнання результатів неформальної освіти та здійснення процедури зарахування результатів міжнародного стажування.

**Результати дослідження.** Представлено успішну процедуру визнання результатів міжнародного мовного стажування семи курсантів у Середній професійній школі Поліцейського корпусу в Кошице (Словачка Республіка). Курсанти опанували спеціальні фахові компетентності, що відповідають темам освітньої компоненти «Лінгвокраїнознавство Словаччини». Атестація відбулася у формі усного іспиту, за результатами якого набуті знання було визнано та зараховано відповідні практичні заняття з оцінкою «відмінно» (100 балів, ECTS – A).

**Наукова новизна.** Практична демонстрація процедури визнання результатів неформальної освіти, здобутих під час міжнародного стажування, у специфічних умовах відомчого військового закладу вищої освіти безпеки та оборони.

**Практичне значення дослідження.** Досвід НАДПСУ підтверджує ефективність розробленого внутрішнього механізму визнання результатів неформальної освіти, забезпечуючи відповідність вимогам ЄКТС та світовим практикам валідації результатів навчання (VN FIL). Це підвищує якість підготовки офіцерів, їхню академічну мобільність і готовність до транскордонної співпраці.

**Висновки та перспективи подальших наукових досліджень.** Проведений аналіз свідчить про успішну імплементацію процедури визнання результатів неформальної освіти майбутніх офіцерів-прикордонників за спеціальністю «Філологія» в НАДПСУ. Перспективи подальших розвідок включають розширення практики визнання результатів неформальної освіти на інші освітні компоненти (оперативно-службова діяльність, правові дисципліни), дослідження довгострокового впливу мобільності на кар'єрне зростання випускників та розробку уніфікованих критеріїв оцінювання компетентностей в умовах неформального навчання.

**Ключові слова:** неформальна освіта; бакалавр; навчання іноземної мови; професійна підготовка; соціокультурні заходи.