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## **ПОЛІТИКА КРАЇН ЄВРОСОЮЗУ В ГАЛУЗІ ДОШКІЛЬНОЇ ОСВІТИ**

**Анотація.** Освітня політика кожної держави визначає пріоритетні напрями розвитку різних освітніх галузей, зокрема й дошкільної. Стаття присвячена розкриттю характерних особливостей становлення та розвитку систем дошкільної освіти окремих країн Євросоюзу – Німеччини, Франції та Болгарії. Акцентовано увагу на пріоритетах освітньої політики: якість, ефективність, рівність. Зазначено, що пріоритети освіти визначено в багатьох політичних документах і різними способами; іноді вони викладені у формі великих завдань, найважливіших для певної країни або регіону.

Показано, що система дошкільної освіти зародилася в Німеччині, звідки і пішов термін – дитячий садок. Запропоновано перелік різних типів закладів дошкільної освіти, які існують у Німеччині; зазначено, що основні концептуальні засади виховання дітей реалізуються в дитячих садках вільного і відкритого типів; найпоширеніший тип вільного дитячого садка – штейнерівські дитячі садки і дитячі садки Марії Монтесорі. Схарактеризовано особливості дошкільної освіти Франції: найбільш поширеним у Франції закладом для дітей дошкільного віку була і залишається материнська школа. Підкреслено, що у Франції ухвалено закон про школу, який передбачає заходи щодо забезпечення наступності між дошкільним вихованням і шкільним навчанням; діє єдина, обов'язкова для всіх навчальних закладів державна освітня програма. Головне завдання різних типів закладів дошкільної освіти – соціалізація; загальна мета дошкільного виховання – розвиток фізичних, соціальних, поведінкових та інтелектуальних навичок, необхідних для формування умінь жити в сучасному суспільстві. Описано систему дошкільної освіти Республіки Болгарії, яка має розроблену та апробовану чітку державну програму роботи з дітьми дошкільного віку. Система дошкільної освіти зосереджена на фізичному вихованні; існує державна програма виховання дітей в дошкільних закладах освіти. Дошкільне виховання є частиною системи народної освіти, її первинною ланкою.

**Ключові слова:** освітня політика, система дошкільної освіти, материнська школа, національна програма, заклад дошкільної освіти.

## **POLICY OF THE COUNTRIES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION IN THE FIELD OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION**

**Abstract.** The educational policy of each state determines the priority directions for the development of various educational branches, including preschool education. The article is devoted to the disclosure of the characteristic features of the formation and development of preschool education systems of individual countries of the European Union - Germany, France, and Bulgaria. The author focuses on the priorities of educational policy: quality, efficiency, equality. It is noted that education priorities are defined in many political documents and in different ways; sometimes they are presented in the form of large tasks, the most important for a certain country or region.

It is shown that the system of preschool education was created in Germany, where the term kindergarten came from. A list of different types of preschool education institutions that exist in Germany is offered; it is stated that the main conceptual principles of raising children are implemented in kindergartens of free and open types; the most common type of free kindergarten is Steiner kindergartens and Maria Montessori kindergartens.

The article characterizes the peculiarities of preschool education in France: the most common institution for preschool children in France was and remains the nursery school. It is emphasized that France has adopted a school law, which provides for measures to ensure continuity between preschool education and school education; there is a single state educational program that is mandatory for all educational institutions. The main task of various types of preschool education institutions is socialization; the general goal of preschool education is the development of physical, social, behavioral and intellectual skills necessary for the formation of the ability to live in modern society.

The author describes the preschool education system of the Republic of Bulgaria, which has a developed and tested clear state program for working with preschool children. The preschool education system is focused on physical education; there is a state program for raising children in preschool educational institutions. Preschool education is part of the public education system, its primary link.

**Keywords:** educational policy, preschool education system, nursery school, national program, preschool education institution.



## INTRODUCTION

In many countries of the world, much attention is paid to the development of preschool institutions and the improvement of the process of raising children. As in Ukraine, preschool education abroad is the initial link of a unified system of education and training. It is taken care of by local authorities, industrial and agricultural enterprises, religious and public organizations, and private individuals. The following types of preschools have become widespread in various settlements, such as:

- stationary and seasonal crèches and kindergartens with different duration of work.
- preschool departments for primary classes.
- nursery schools or playgrounds, etc.

**The problem formulation.** Each country has a system of training teachers (courses, special secondary schools, or institutions of higher education). Each national system of education (in particular, preschool education) has certain features and its own pedagogical experience. Let's try to highlight the peculiarities of the preschool education system in some countries of the European Union.

**PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:** to single out the characteristic features of the system of preschool education in Germany, France, and Bulgaria through the prism of the educational policy of these countries.

### RESEARCH METHODS:

generalization of psychological-pedagogical and scientific-methodical literature, educational sites using methods of retrospective, comparative and systematic analysis.

### RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

The national system of education, in particular preschool education, is determined by the educational policy of each state. State educational policy is a systematically organized activity and, accordingly, a coherent, comprehensive system of measures of state institutions regarding purposeful management of the educational sector with the aim of its optimization, full functioning, and development (Nohas, 2020).

State educational policy is an officially defined, organized and purposeful activity of the state and its subordinate institutions, aimed at the functioning and further development of the education system as a leading institution of a democratic society (Shulha, 2019).

State educational policy is a component of state policy aimed at solving problems in the field of education, providing for the needs of individuals in the field of education, and staffing state bodies with qualified personnel for the purpose of spiritual and ideological enrichment of society and socio-economic development of the state (Nohas, 2020).

#### Priorities of educational policy

There are three priorities of educational policy: quality, efficiency, equality.

Quality is one of the main problems of modern educational policy. This problem is quite new for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The main aspects that are investigated in the context of the specified problem: how to define quality and quality education; how to monitor, evaluate and measure quality; what are the quality indicators, etc. Reforms to increase competitiveness and other practical political steps in the context of the educational policy of each state are carried out to solve the problem of the quality of education and educational services.

Efficiency is another important priority. Modern educational systems are becoming more and more expensive. As a rule, the question of efficiency is among the main reasons for justifying financial reforms: how the investments made in the education system are returned; what the sources of income for investments in education are; the optimal ratio between public and private investments and user investments - how to calculate it; ways of increasing the effectiveness of education, etc.

Equality and social justice. Social integration is considered one of the main goals of education: ensuring equal conditions for all children at the beginning of education; organization of support for students from "risk" groups throughout the entire period of study; availability of "second chance" opportunities for those who dropped out of school; support for children with special educational needs; integration of national minorities and immigrants into society; providing access to higher and professional education for the unemployed, military, prisoners, etc.

Education priorities are defined in many policy documents and in different ways. Sometimes they are presented in the form of large tasks, the most important for a certain country or region.

For example, let's analyze the educational policy of the European Union. Based on the proposals of the European Commission and the contributions of the member states in 2001, the Council adopted the "Report on specific future tasks of educational systems". In fact, it is the first document that defines a specific general approach to national education policy in the context of the European Union, based on three tasks:

- improving the quality and efficiency of education and training systems in the European Union.
- make lifelong education accessible to everyone.
- to make national education systems to a greater extent directed outwards, to the surrounding world.

In the context of the above, we will analyze the peculiarities of the system of preschool education in individual countries of the European Union.

**GERMANY.** It is considered that Germany is the homeland of kindergartens. In 1837, the German educator Friedrich Froebel opened an institution in Blankenburg (Harz), which marked the beginning of a new type of educational institution for preschool children. In 1840, he gave it the name "kindergarten". According to the idea of F. Froebel, this institution



"was not only supposed to provide care for children of preschool age, but also conduct classes corresponding to their essence and needs, strengthen their bodies, exercise their sense organs, thoroughly familiarize them with nature and humanity, guide their hearts and soul". Since 1957, Germany has had a law on free access to kindergartens, of which 20% is maintained by the state, 80% belongs to church communities, trade unions, the German Red Cross, the youth service, and other charitable societies. Parents pay 50% of fee, the second half of the costs is paid by the owner of the preschool.

It should be noted the variety of types of preschool institutions in Germany. There are the following types of preschools in the country:

- kindergartens with a full or part-time day, intended for children 3-6 years old.
- single-group preschools (mainly for children of older preschool age).
- preschool groups (for five-year-old children).
- preparatory classes of the primary school, where five-year-old children are raised and taught.
- 24-hour boarding schools for healthy children aged 3 to 6 years.
- boarding schools for children with health and developmental problems.
- mothering centers, where mothers and children engage in interesting and useful activities, communicate with each other and specialists in pedagogy and psychology.
- "departmental" kindergartens - for example, university kindergartens (to get a place there, you need to be a student or employee of the university).

However, it should be noted that the network of preschool education institutions in Germany is poorly developed. Kindergartens are mostly privately owned and are attended by children aged 3 to 5 years. Preschool is optional, but at age 5 it covers almost the entire age group

There are three main types of preschool education institutions in Germany:

1. municipal (in German: "kommunale kita").
2. kindergartens from the employer (in German: "betriebliche kita").
3. private (in German: "private kita") (Besarabchyk, 2019).

The main conceptual principles of children's education are implemented in free and open kindergartens. The most common type of free kindergarten is Steiner kindergartens and Maria Montessori kindergartens.

The analysis of educational sites and scientific achievements of domestic and foreign researchers makes it possible to state the following leading directions of German educational policy in the field of preschool education, in particular:

1. At the beginning of the XXI century. in Germany, academic standards for preschool education have been approved, which are unified considering the types of primary schools and the primary education system.

2. The preschool education institution – regardless of the type – is built on a situationally oriented concept of preschool education, which is characterized by:

- a. open planning in which children participate (Anna Tristan) (Chomu v nimetskykh dytsadkakh ditiam dozvoliaut hratsia v boloti).
- b. learning based on real life connections.
- c. unity of play and learning.
- d. multi-age organization of life and activity.
- e. communication with the public.
- f. cooperation between parents and preschool education institution.

3. The main requirement for an educator: the ability to make systematic and long-term observations, analyze the results of pedagogical activities, predict possible options. The method of working with preschoolers uses a rich subject-didactic environment, a variety of game and art material, specially developed educational situations, and classes.

4. There is practically no preparation for school in kindergartens in Germany. Children spend a lot of time playing, communicating, and being creative. A year before the end of kindergarten, they begin to visit the school class once a week to get used to the atmosphere prevailing in the school. But even here, future schoolchildren mostly play and draw.

5. Leading principles of preschool education (Hromovi; Uliukaieva, 2018):

- a. Freedom of choice and independence (children are given the opportunity to make informed choices and independently organize their own lives; the boundaries of freedom expand according to the child's development; children can independently walk in the yard or choose a location for this or that activity. "Help me do it myself" — the key slogan of Maria Montessori's education and training methodology).
- b. Trust (the kindergarten teacher calmly leaves the children unattended during the walk; "We trust them!").
- c. Respect for individuality, tolerance for "otherness" (Hromovi; Chomu v nimetskykh dytsadkakh ditiam dozvoliaut hratsia v boloti) (in the process of organizing the educational process in ZDO Adults take into account the age and gender of the child; Observing the child, they study his preferences, interests, possibilities, abilities and inclinations; the bad is always taken into account emotional well-being of the child; "All children are different, so you can't plan work for tomorrow, taking the "golden mean" of the group").

FRANCE. France, which has a two-hundred-year history of this system, occupies one of the leading places in the world in terms of coverage of children by public preschool education. French preschool pedagogy absorbed all the best educational theories of both domestic (P. Kergomar, S. Frenet) and foreign teachers (M. Montessori, O. Decroly, J. Piaget).



The most common institution for preschool children in France was and remains the nursery school. The beginning of nursery schools was laid by the French pastor Oberlini, who in 1771 opened an asylum for small children (in French: "salle d'asile") in the village of Voguehaz. In this institution, children spent time in games, singing, praying, they were taught manual labor, primarily weaving, as well as reading and writing (Prezentatsiia frantsuzkoi systemy osvity).

The main types of preschool institutions that educate children from 2 to 6 years old are nursery schools, preschool classes at primary schools, and kindergartens. The general goal of preschool education is to ensure the comprehensive development of the child. In 1975, a school law was adopted in France, which provided for measures to ensure continuity between preschool education and schooling. It is worth noting that today France is one of the few countries in the European Union, where the obligation to ensure continuity between preschool and primary levels of education is determined at the legislative level.

Of special interest are French preschools, called mother schools - they are the pride of the French education system, they have no analogues in the world. Being, in fact, neither nurseries nor kindergartens, they are guided in their activities by a special pedagogical principle. "This is not just a school in the usual sense of the word. It represents a transition from the family world to the school, preserving the heart and condescending softness of the family, at the same time, teaching to work and strict observance of school rules" (XIX century. general inspector of mother schools Polina Kergomar (quoted from Kozak L.) There are also alternative options of private kindergartens that have a complete subject environment. France ranks first in terms of the number of children involved in the system of public preschool education (Kozak, 2017).

In France, there is a single state education program that is mandatory for all educational institutions, thanks to which all 5-6-year-old children (approximately 90% of preschoolers) study in nursery schools and preschool classes at schools. Younger children are provided with preschool institutions by 75%. The task of these institutions is not only the general development of the child, but also preparation for school. Their graduates can count, read, and even write. There is a direct connection between the content, forms, and methods of activity of "classes for babies" and primary school (Sysoieva, Krystopchuk, 2012; Uliukaieva, 2018).

Children in preschool are divided into three age groups:

1. The first group from 2 to 4 years old - children just play.
2. Second (secondary) from 4 to 5 years old - children learn sculpting, drawing and other practical skills, as well as oral communication.
3. The third (senior) from 5 to 6 years old - children prepare to learn reading, writing and numbers.

Based on the analysis of educational sites and scientific achievements of domestic and foreign researchers, we single out the following leading directions of French educational policy in the field of preschool education:

1. The main tasks of various types of preschool institutions are to introduce the child to the life of a team, to develop various types of activities, to form a desire for knowledge, to teach to work, to study, to establish relationships with other children.
2. The role of the educator consists in organizing children's leisure time, directing their development, creating a developmental environment, studying behavior and psychology.
3. In the country, there is a unique experience of teaching children in nursery and primary schools by one teacher. Although it is not a system, such examples indicate the possibility of strengthening the connection between preschool and school education. Thanks to measures in this direction, all 5-6-year-old preschoolers' study in nursery schools and classes for toddlers, and 75% of younger children are provided with preschool facilities. Policy in the field of preschool education in recent decades has been characterized by the desire to democratize its content, integrate international experience and direct preschools to inculcate fundamental life skills.
4. The general goal of preschool education is the development of physical, social, behavioral, and intellectual skills necessary for the formation of the ability to live in modern society.
5. In the educational process, priority is not given to the accumulation of knowledge, but to the development of children's initiative, the education of social competence. Preschoolers must acquire appropriate motor skills, acquire a certain level of intellectual and speech development, master drawing and other types of visual activity.

Education specialists are trained according to the national program called "L'îcôle maternelle", which defines the goals and foundations of preschool education and its general orientation and expectations regarding the subjects and skills that will be taught in preschool institutions (Zvit za rezultatsy osnovnoho etapu polovoho doslidzhennia otsinky yakosti osvithnoho protsesu v zakladakh doshkilnoi osvity za metodykoiu ECERS-3, 2022).

**BULGARIA.** The system of state preschool education in Bulgaria was formed in the post-war period. The main types of preschool education institutions in the country are preschool institutions and nursery schools with full and partial stay of children (kindergartens attached to schools). In addition, the following public holidays are also common: annual, seasonal, if necessary for parents - 24 hours a day; all are characterized by a small payment for the stay of the child.

Preschools are attended by almost all children. There is a state program for the education of preschool children, where considerable attention is paid to their physical education (holding sports holidays, learning to swim, hardening). At the current stage, reforming of public preschool education, as well as the entire system of public education, is underway. Preschool education covers children aged 3 to 6-7 years, for whom attendance at preschool is optional. However, there is a requirement: before starting school, children must complete two years of preschool education, which can be provided by kindergartens or preparatory groups of primary schools (Kozak, 2017; Uliukaieva, 2018).



The Republic of Bulgaria has developed and tested a clear state program for working with children of preschool age, which is mainly focused on physical education. It is also characterized by:

- a wide network of preschool education institutions, the presence of special standards for their design and construction;
- the state nature of the system of preschool education and training of pedagogical personnel;
- recognition of preschool education as part of the public education system, its primary link;
- the state program for educating children in preschool institutions;
- the state nature of the training of pedagogical personnel.

### CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

The analysis of the legislation on education of the EU member states shows the heterogeneity of the legal regulation of preschool education. Meanwhile, the system of preschool education, including compulsory education, has existed in the EU countries for a long time, where an extensive system of educational institutions has been created. In the most developed countries, early (1-3 years) and preschool (3-7 years) childhood is considered a special national resource that provides an opportunity to solve complex problems of social and economic development.

Problems of management of the educational sector in Ukraine can be grouped into problems of an organizational nature, problems of financing and problems of the quality of educational services. Significant theoretical work of European scientists and accumulated practical experience in this area are valuable for the further formation of Ukrainian legislation in the field of education in the context of European integration. We see the prospects for further scientific research in the development of possible directions of implementation of the characteristic features of preschool education systems in the practice of domestic preschool education institutions.

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