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## **Yaroslav KICHUK**

Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Full Professor,

Rector of Izmil State University of Humanities.

Author of about 200 scientific works.

He has been working at Izmil State University of Humanities since 2000.

Research interests: the problems of the formation of youth's active civic position, legal competence and legal education of future teachers, legal pedagogy for lawyers, topical issues of vocational education and training of socio-economic profession specialists in the context of European integration processes.

**E-mail:** izmayil@ukr.net

### **STUDENT PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

#### **IN THE PARAMETERS OF THE SOCIAL LEADERSHIP PROBLEM**

*In the context of modern humanitarian knowledge, some aspects of the problem of the development of social leadership are comprehended, especially among students. The resources of the project activities of the individual as a factor in stimulating social behavior and the form of manifestation of the ability to social leadership during adulthood are detailed. The experience of the initiation by society of the Izmil State Humanitarian University, an innovative institution of higher education of the Ukrainian Subnavia, of regional projects as a progressive approach to the development of social leadership among students is highlighted.*

**Key words:** youth, students, personality, academic consortium.

In today's context, the whole range of problematic issues related to the humanitarianization of our society – an important prerequisite for the development of civil society as a form of collective cultural dimensions of the development of civilization processes – is actualized.

In search of constructive mechanisms for enriching the humanistic foundations of youth's socialization and deepening democratic transformations in our society, the issue of stimulating the prosocial behavior of student youth is brought up to date.

The phenomenology of prosocial behavior is one that has been the subject of the scientific debate and active debate since the 1960s in the context of different scientific approaches and scientific schools. For example, in the field of philosophical and

psychological knowledge, the socially useful pole of personality behavior and the approximate interpretation of the construct «prosocial behavior» to fill the concept of «altruism» are revealed. E. Ilyin believes that altruistic (prosocial) behaviour should be understood as that which is aimed at the benefit of others but not for any external reward. It leads more to the well-being of the other person than of the own benefit of the individual, and is conditioned not by external social pressure or by the presence of a person capable of assessing the gentleness of the individual's actions (*Ilyin, 2003: 28*). Among the domestic (L. Kalashnykova, V. Pavelkov, V. Sukhomlinskiy) and foreign researchers (J. Green, J. Masters, D. Feldstein), dominates the position regarding the appropriateness to understand prosocial behavior as the attainment of a person's philanthropic goal. There is even a strong belief that «a prosocial action is an activity to achieve a philanthropic goal» (*Kalashnykova, 2009: 133*). This is why the organic association of prosocial behavior with «personality spirituality is recognized as a quality that manifests the «highest desire»«. This connection is obvious if one interprets the category of spirituality «as a permanent work on change and improvement of the subjectively existing, constant attention to the surrounding social being» (*Bilodid, 2003: 165*); the marker of spirituality affects the meaning of a person's life, the manifestation of his/her need to «act for others» and «be useful to society». Topical is N. Konechna's scientific position, where prosocial behavior is defined as «co-existence», which aims at «the growth of good» not only in the internal sense but also in the interpersonal space of the individual (*Konechna, 2016: 32*). Social behavior is intended to benefit society as a whole (*Myers, 2010: 69*). For example, E. Aronson, interprets prosocial behavior as «any action taken to benefit another being» (*E. Aronson, 2002: 363*). Active civic position, assistance, cooperation, volunteering, social leadership, responsibility, community initiatives, projects and other activities are considered to be the factors of prosocial behavior, altruistic actions for the benefit of others. Many of the patterns of prosocial behavior that seem to be altruistic at first seem to be motivated by the norm of reciprocity, which is an obligation to respond for the benefit of the good. As domestic researchers (O. Bukovska, O. Girchenko) point out, the prosocial orientation of the individual is an integral property, which contains all manifestations of social human nature: needs, desires, appeals, attitudes, interests, inclinations, ideals, beliefs, values, outlook, life goals. The social orientation of the individual includes the desire for moral and personal self-improvement, it determines the desire of the individual to be useful to people, to help them, and integrates emotional, cognitive, motivational, and value and semantic components. The prosocial orientation of the individual, first of all, has an external manifestation in its prosocial behavior (*Bukovska, Girchenko, 2019: 127*).

The self-importance of the prosocial behavior of the individual at a peculiar age stage of adulthood, of civic maturity, which coincides with period when a young person acquires a status of student, is obvious. During this period, the health of the individual presents an actual social and psychological problem related to the deepening of scientific ideas about the emotional features of the psychological health of modern students in order to develop their ability to emotional self-regulation at the most essential stage of personal and professional formation – in the context of university education (*Kichuk 2019: 60*.) This leads to a rethinking of the social functions of higher education and the multifaceted importance of the educational process and social and development environment of the modern institution of higher education, university free space. The process of forming productive prosocial behavior of student youth is significantly influenced by guided socialization, since it «demonstrates a dual mechanism of regulation of socially beneficial behavior and reflects the specifics of subjective-objective relationships in this field» (*Kalashnykova, 2019: 137*).

Subjectivity is a qualitative peculiarity of a student's personality. Philosophical science interprets the subjectivity of a person in terms of his/her ability to be a carrier, a source of activity directed at the object of activity (I. Frolova). Psychologists (A. Kichuk, N. Shurkova) argue that subjectivity is the ability of individuals to consciously and purposefully not only establish appropriate connections with others, but also to build them «free will», to anticipate the consequences and to assume social responsibility for the results of their actions.

Productivity as an important parameter not only of the individual, but also of his/her educational and professional activity, is understood to be close to the marker of «creativity», because it is a reflection of everything that makes a person self-sufficient, since for a creative personality «true success is not a social assessment but the process of solving the problem» (Klimenko, 2006: 196).

The self-reflection of the experience in this perspective allows us to outline some possibilities of the most recognized scientific approaches in the professional pedagogy. The systematic approach (through its ability to detail invariant elements of the system as a whole) allows to specify those features that contribute to the identification of integrated and systemic relationships whose involvement provides the predicted result. If one understands the importance of students' forming a coherent, non-linear thinking which is the precondition for flexibility and mobility, then the power of a synergistic scientific approach becomes clear. The constructiveness of the resource approach lies in the idea embedded in it – to harness the potential of the individual in the educational process of higher education. And the acmeological scientific approach appeals to the «acme» of the student in his/her personal and professional growth. An axiological approach, as we know, is aimed at facilitating the process of establishing a personality hierarchy of professionally significant values in order to develop the intrinsic motivation of the professional activity. As the leading idea of an anthropological approach is the imperative of teamwork of a future specialist, this should be taken into account when developing a practice and oriented technology of the development of students' ability to prosocial behavior in professionally important educational and professional situations. The resource-based personality-oriented approach is obvious both as a benchmark for the implementation of the student-centricity principle in high school, and as a basis for the individual to define productive technologies as the individual trajectory of «entering the profession». The ability of a dialogical approach to the positive dynamics of the process of developing the creative personality of the future specialist is already widely recognized in the university education. In our opinion, the pedagogical expediency of this approach in the development of the individual's readiness for the future specialist's prosocial behavior needs to be specified in detail.

In professional pedagogy, a career-oriented approach to professional training has already emerged (D. Winter, W. Moser, A. Rowe). The career choice theory is also considered to be constructive (J. Holland), where the key point is the importance of building a strategy for personal career development, taking into account the imperative of social interaction on the basis of leadership, self-worth, the role of youth participation in influencing important decisions. Since any personality and professional quality (and the ability to social leadership in adulthood is not an exception) is most effectively formed as a result of self-development (because it focuses on the possibility and implementation of «I-concept», and self-affirmation, and self-realization), it is important to form the competence of students' self-development in the educational process of higher education.

The value component of the content of higher education in the context of activation of European integration processes is studied in detail by domestic scientists (E. Bidenko, V. Lugovyi, N. Postrigach, N. Tkachova). It is about the process and awareness, acceptance and internalization of the students' values of the multi-vector plan – socio-cultural,

professional, personal, values of self-development, self-realization, self-improvement, competitiveness (*Zhelanov, 2019: 59*). In our view, the under-appreciated by the scientific community remains a special group of values of social cohesion on the basis of community, the imperative of prosocial activity and behavior. And also this indicator of the value component of modern higher education – the protection of student youth from demoralization through stimulation of their prosocial activity – is being actualized .

The analysis of the scientific foundation on current trends of student youth's prosocial behavior development (I. Beh, E. Bidenko, A. Dubaseniuk, V. Suprun) showed the pro-integration vector of its substantive characteristics, which has already been comprehended at the level of fundamental scientific development (*Shcherbakova, 2014*). This is the focus of the social sciences because of the self-worth for the university community – the carrier of appropriate transformational changes in society to find answers to European societal challenges, globalization processes that significantly affect the development of the educational sphere.

The term «globalization» is relatively new, because it appeared in the scientific literature in the 60-70s of the twentieth century, due to T. Levitt's fundamental work «Globalization of Markets». Researchers (M. Deliagin, S. Cunningham, L. Kline, A. Sbruieva, etc.) understand this phenomenon as complex, where there are both positive and negative points. Globalization is projected to exacerbate conflicts both at the level of individuals and countries. In globalization, it is advisable to see the convergence of the educational policies of national states by the parameters and goals, strategies, content, methods and criteria of evaluating the effectiveness of educational systems (*Sbruieva, 2018*). At present, it is relevant to refer to the common and divergent concepts of «globalization» and «internationalization» in the perspective of building a modern higher education information space. Internationalization is understood as a multidimensional and manifold process that promotes the development of a special strategy, which, according to A. Sbruieva, is characterized by the adaptation of higher education institutions to the newly created conditions of globalization, as well as to the development of the «knowledge economy» and information technologies. Therefore, taking into account the dynamics of the positive features of the social behavior of student youth, it is also important to think about the impact of globalization, internationalization processes, which are particularly sensitive to the educational sphere and higher education as a social institution.

The analysis of professional literature (A. Dobryanskyi, L. Tovchygrechka) shows the importance of the regional vector of any social system; this dimension of citizens' initiatives of the student community has both an objective and a subjective character. Thinking about the problems of prosocial student behavior, along with European integration characteristics and internationalization (which is now considered by modern scholars to be a «feature of higher education» (*Debych, 2019*), the whole mosaic of social and educational needs of the region is a kind of the platform for expressing youth's pro-social initiatives, which under certain conditions are transformed into prosocial actions, cultivating the advancing development of both social and civic competences, and the development of the individual's social responsibility. Based on the dimensions of responsibility established by psychologists as a social phenomenon (in the context of a person's life path), related to the correlation of personal motives and goals and living facilities – «the responsibility for what is done» (a retrospective aspect), «the responsibility for what needs to be done» ( a perspective aspect), «the responsibility here and now» (the present aspect), responsible leadership emerges.

The scientific semantics of the concept of leadership is related to the accents of different theories (situational, functional, behavioral). The genesis of the idea of leadership begins with the historical and cultural heritage of humanity from Plato and Plutarch, F. Galton to the «theory of traits» (or «the theory of great men»). F. Fiedler's development

within the context of the situational theory, as well as the ideas of combining formal and informal leadership, the introduction of the concept of «a corporate leader», and others, is decisive. Modern scientific research on the phenomenology of leadership (V. Bezruk, V. Kudin, N. Kuchinska, K. Marchenko) is characterized by the definition of a typology of leaders – an emotional leader, a leader-critic, a leader-intellectual, a leader-organizer, a leader-executor. Usually, the term «leader» refers to both managerial qualities and the potential for leadership capacity of the individual. Topical is L. Cheng's research position on the model view of «strong leadership» (the ability to support others, the presence of purpose and logical reasoning, the ability to develop cooperation, a charismatic, prognostic and strategic approach to activity). Higher education resources in the aspect of developing students' responsible social leadership are still at the periphery of researchers' investigation.

Of particular relevance is the resource of higher education in the field of intensifying the expression of not only student youth's prosocial initiative, which would be implemented in prosocial behavior, but more importantly of social leadership, which is responsible for carrying out social actions. We understand the value not only of the educational but also of the whole social space in the aspect of the development of the student's personality, that is, the importance of realizing the ideas of regionalization of the project activity of the subjects of institutions of higher education. Research into the problems of project activity of modern youth in the context of university training of socionomists (*Bila, 2019*) contains preserved signs of the ancient meaning of the word «project» (i.e. in the sense of «obstacles, tasks, questions»); a kind of intellectual activity aimed at changing the state of a particular object through the coordinated execution of project activities, which are determined by a limited time and resources (information, human, financial), the result of which is different in originality and constructiveness.

The educational space of higher education, optimizes the efforts of the individual aimed at identifying his/her prosocial initiatives, including project activities, animation as an innovation process (*Lesina, 2015*). The content of education allows students to be prepared for project activities. The architecture of the educational process creates conditions that are necessary and sufficient for the students' understanding at the level of conviction of the expediency of immersion in social projects of regional importance. Through student-centered study at the institution of higher education, it is possible to deepen the student's ideas about multiculturalism as a state of society and interculturality as a process of interaction between cultures, which leads to the formation of transculture. In this way, a new generation of social partnership is being formed within European programs.

The development of civic activity of student youth, social leadership in the youth environment is defined by the main priorities in the basic European documents (Charter of Fundamental Rights, European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, European Youth Pact, European Union Youth Strategy, etc.).

A recognized factor in promoting project activity in the parameters of social leadership and student mobility is the European program «Erasmus +». In the context of programmatic activities, a comprehensive approach is prominent, representing the integration of the efforts of key institutions of the European Union to stimulate projects in such priority sectors as education, youth policy, sport.

We can distinguish the following basic aspects of the positive impact of this factor:

1) strengthening the international dimension in the Erasmus + program (the dominant idea is an exchange of experience and know-how);

2) moral and material encouragement of the students to mobility in the sphere of designing on the basis of partnership and participation in international exchanges (the dominant idea is credit and step mobility and cooperation for innovation);

3) systematic stimulation of student mobility through online collaboration (the dominant idea is the acquisition of «soft skills» and competencies through the links with the eTwinning labor market).

The European Community has found a constructive mechanism to support dialogue on the development of effective youth policy in the partner countries regarding the promotion of project activities aimed at the development of European integration processes.

Project activity, like any other, can contribute to the development of the «inner world» of the individual, if motivated by an active and at the same time, creative attitude to this kind of work. It is important for higher education to facilitate student centering, for example by means of priority social projects that are of fundamental importance to the region.

The implementation of students' initiatives to participate in project activities can enhance their social activity, developing creativity and historical memory and respect for the virtues that characterize citizens of the rule of law, as well as ensure the need for the emergence of a multicultural competent personality. This contributes to the positive dynamics of the process of the formation of student youth's active citizenship.

Activation of youth participation, in particular that of students, on the one hand, is the basis for the development of civil society, public initiatives, on the other hand, is a form of teaching democracy, and provides for effective student self-government, youth centers, support and development of social youth leadership, legal and democratic leadership education of student youth, popularization of the role and importance of youth participation and activity of civil society institutions, prosocial behavior of students, which is one of the most progressive and organized categories of youth. As E. Borodin and O. Yarema point out, participation of student youth means having the right, means, space, opportunities and, if necessary, support to influence the decisions concerning the life of students and to be responsible for the decisions and actions taken. Unlike participation, the involvement of student youth is the inclusion of youth in the life of the university, the community in the areas that affect its life. Engaging is not participation, as it does not necessarily make it possible to influence decisions on resource allocation and priority selection.

Under the current conditions of new social prospects unfolding, it is legitimate to consider the establishment of the multicultural imperative in the the Lower Danube Euroregion as an effective way of intensifying international projects. It is a significant resource and enrichment of cross-border cooperation, activation of youth mobility, and practical implementation of youth initiatives that contribute to the development of European integration values, in particular, in the activities of the subjects of the Lower Danube Euroregion. We should also note such exceptional constructiveness as enriching cross-border cooperation, enhancing youth mobility, internships and student exchanges, organizing joint civic activities of higher education applicants and practical implementation of youth initiatives that promote the development of Eurointegration activities, particularly in the subjects of the Lower Danube Euroregion. These activities were put into action within the framework of bilateral agreements on cooperation with Ismail State University of Humanities (Ukraine) and Galati «Lower Danube» State University (Romania), Comrat State University (Republic of Moldova), The Braille Museum of King I (Romania), The Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu State University (Republic of Moldova), Danubius University (Romania), etc.

An important marker of the formation of students' social behavior should be considered the successful practice of Izmail State University of Humanities (hereinafter referred to as ISUH). In the process of organizing and stimulating the project activity of ISUH students, the following task was set – to enrich the 80-year-old traditions of the only state institution of higher education of the Ukrainian Danube region. As has already been mentioned, in order to accentuate the students' social activity, it is of fundamental

importance to take into account the factor of geopolitical role and geographical transborder location of the institution of higher education.

Understanding the importance of social consolidation, promoting interethnic harmony in a multicultural environment, promoting the pro-social activity of ISUH-based youth, the effective functioning of the Center for Civic Education, the Center for National Cultures of the Ukrainian Danube Region and the Center for Continuing Education. In order to enhance pro-Ukrainian initiatives and develop national and patriotic education, the Center for Civic Education was established at the University. For the sake of the sustainable development of public education and popularization of Ukrainian culture, the ISUH Rectorate initiated the organization of a civic education system in educational establishments in the south of Odessa region and the opening of Ukrainian university information and cultural centers and pro-Ukrainian Internet resources in Bulgaria, Moldova, and Romania. This initiative contributes to the dissemination of objective information about current events in Ukraine among the university communities of these countries.

The Center for National Cultures of the Ukrainian Danube Region was established on the basis of the University in order to harmonize and understand the interethnic relations of representatives of different nationalities. The practice of stimulating the participation of the student community in the activities of relevant information centers of friendly to Ukraine foreign states, implementation of local projects aimed at enhancing regional content for national and cultural societies of Odesa (Albanian, Bulgarian, Gagauz, Greek, German, Jewish, Polish, Romanian, etc.). In recent years, in the context of the development of the multicultural space of Odesa region, the ISUH student body has become an official partner of 19 international and regional projects. It is important to emphasize the constructive influence on the prosocial activity of students, which, either directly or indirectly, refers to the propaedeutics of the problem focus related to the migration of domestic youth abroad through the proximity to the border with Romania, an EU country. In order to reduce the number of young people from the Ukrainian Danube region who go to study and later emigrate to other countries for permanent residence, a free international university education program, dual diploma system and advanced training as well as progressive educational projects were implemented at the Center of Continuing Education at ISUH. All the above mentioned centers are subdivisions of ISUH and are fully funded by the special fund of the University. Our experience demonstrates the importance of prioritizing the strategic role of university centers in developing social leadership in the student community.

Taking into account this public request for activization of student youth participation, in December 2020 it is planned to establish and officially register 9 profile student public organizations (legal entities) on the constructive initiative of student leaders of Ismail State University of Humanities. This initiative was presented at a session of the European Youth Parliament at the University and aims to promote the development of social leadership among student youth and ensure the organizational and financial independence of students' project activities, the participation of students in making appropriate strategies, involving students in making important decisions about the development of the university community. The Rectorate of ISUH, in the framework of joint cooperation, will provide free of charge equipped offices for solving the issues of education and life, protection of students' rights and interests. In addition, it is planned to provide funding for student self-government bodies and these 9 already registered student organizations in the amount of at least 5 percent of the university's own source revenues next year.

The self-reflection of our experience in engaging future professionals in social and project activities, the development of the volunteer movement among students and teachers significantly contribute to the formation of a culture of social responsibility as an important personal and professional quality. This forms the basis of a future productive professional

activity, enhancing the civic dimension of their social responsibility. Therefore, the phenomenon of volunteerism is also understood by us in the context of social leadership.

In the scientific context, the notion of volunteering was approved in the following parameters:

1) «personality» (manifestation of will, altruism, self-improvement, acceptance of volunteering as prestigious in society, the need for social connections, spirituality);

2) «society» (the desire to unite like-minded people in order to achieve prosocial goals, awareness of social responsibility, display of civic maturity, serving the society);

3) «value» (the need to affirm terminal values, that is freedom, solidarity). The Volunteer Youth Center was established on the basis of ISUH, within the framework of which the efforts of higher education institutions in the south of Odesa region to form a culture of volunteering among student youth are unified. With the support of the student social service at the University is held «Training School of Social Leader». The Student Resource Center is organized at ISUH. With the support of the social and psychological service, an «office of trust» offers consultations and training courses are held at the university.

We consider it important to detail some of the practice and oriented activities that have become contextual for young researchers and teachers in such socially important projects: «Danube Strategy: Synergy of Youth Initiatives», «Trans-Danube Cross-Border Center of Excellence: Collaboration for Innovation», «Education in a Multicultural Society of the Danube Region»: Regional Vector», «Ecology of Childhood in a Multicultural Society: Social and Recreational Technologies», «Ukraine – Moldova: a Common Historical Memory, Lessons and Perspectives», «Portraits of Teachers» – AGIRO», «Description and Mapping of the Dniester and Danube Rivers – a New European Model of Conflict-Free Interaction of Different Languages and Dialects», «Material Culture of the German Population of Southern Bessarabia», «Perspectives of the Cross-Border Cooperation of the Lower Danube Euroregion in the Process of Enlargement of the European Union: Cluster Strategy», «Lakes of the Danube River». «Continuous Restoration and Conservation of Ecosystem Natural State», «Enhancing the Education Ombudsman's Innovation Activities», «Transnational Cooperation for the Transformation of Knowledge into Marketing Products and Services for the Sustainable Development of the Danube Community in the Future», «Improving Public Online Access to Monitoring Environmental and the Black Sea Data», «Origin and Homeland». «Historical Memory is the Future of Europe», «Transnational Cluster Cooperation in the Agri-Food Sector (based on the smart specialization method in the Danube region)», «Features of the Ethnic Identity and Tolerance of the Danube Region Youth», «Bessarabian Startup School», «SOUP – An Innovative Approach to Self-Organizing Learning», «Danube European Studios», «Ancient Romanic Trail Development Strategy – Trajan's Wall: Cultural Resources for Cooperation and Sustainable Cross-Border Development», «The Danube Axis of European Culture and Arts Identity».

We think it necessary to detail some of the practice and oriented activities that have become contextual in the educational process for university students. The results of the partnership project of promoting academic integrity are successfully implemented on the basis of ISUH – an initiative aimed at systemic changes and improving the image of the university: enhancing the quality of education, creating conditions for successful self-realization of the most gifted students, developing academic culture and writing academic skills. This project is being implemented by the American Councils for International Education in conjunction with the Ministry of Education and Science with the support of the United States Embassy in Ukraine. Also, in the context of subject specificity of the normative disciplines, ISUH higher education receivers are acquainted with the best innovative practices that are implemented for the sustainable socio-economic and cultural



development of the Danube region. Regarding the content of the training courses, the corresponding elective disciplines «European Outlines of Pedagogy of Socialization», «Risk Management in Project Activity», «Management of Innovative Projects» are introduced. Within the framework of their own project activity, the students of ISUH developed projects in the context of the criteria such as «the most rated project», «a project on topical issues», «the most viable project», «the most creative project» and so on. Students are involved in the exchange of methodological approaches aimed at the development of networks of civil society institutions (Moldova, Romania, Ukraine) in terms of intensifying mechanisms for involving citizens in setting priorities, developing and implementing local development strategies (SolveNet). During the period of organizing a variety of educational and production practice, students are encouraged to participate in the entrepreneurial environment, as well as to optimize local and regional approaches to the development of public and private partnerships.

In this aspect, at the present stage of the development of public initiatives, social leadership, first of all, among the students of the south of Odesa region, the role of civil society institutions, in particular the public organization «Bessarabia Development Center», is essential. This organization, by promoting the revitalization of spiritual values, multicultural heritage, traditions and attracting direct investment for the dynamic innovative development of human capital and infrastructure, is capable, as evidenced by the practice, to provide sustainable support for socio-economic and educational and cultural projects, to combine active efforts of different nationalities. One of the real examples of public and private partnership is investing in the development of ISUH educational and scientific projects of the public organization «Bessarabia Development Center» with the support of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (a state partner) and Metropolia group of companies (a private partner). This is the opening of an innovative IT center and creative coworking space at the university, holding educational forums, scientific conferences and archeological expeditions, initiating the participation of students and teachers in cross-border social and economic projects, providing advisory and financial support to prospective university students and university students. For example, starting in 2018, the project that provides scholarships and free internships for over 500 talented youth from the South of Odesa region at the UNIT City Innovation Complex (Kyiv) is being implemented. UNIT Factory employs an innovative Peer-to-Peer (P2P) training method that is based on team-based learning that helps showcase the students' creative abilities when working on projects. Self-study and professional development skills are imparted to the students. Participation in this project promotes students' personal effectiveness, interpersonal skills, and soft skills.

For the successful development of culture and social and humanitarian knowledge, it is extremely important to use an effective social partnership tool. We understand social partnership as a means of resolving contradictions in society, as a source of social and educational potential of the region. As L. Chernyshov notes, there are such characteristics of social partnership as the systematic organization of the performance of certain functions (integrative, regulatory, developmental, protective, compensatory, corrective, rehabilitative), social and cultural resource of higher education institution which facilitates the integration of innovative educational partnerships. It is one of the effective mechanisms for the development of social and innovation processes at the university (M. Chvanova).

Through the organization of competent project activity, student youth acquires the ability to self-organize, «build bridges», show creativity and critical thinking, readiness to compromise, learn to maintain «I – position» and justify «its multiplicity on the basis of critical self-reflection», to distinguish and interpret.

In our understanding, the basic concept of «project» is organically linked to the phenomenon of «innovation». According to M. Kagan, for example, it is a result of the spiritual and transforming activity of the individual; other scholars have argued that the project is essentially a technology for change management (*Kagan, 1991: 4*). Therefore, the ability of the future higher education receiver to pursue the purposeful qualitative transformation of existing imperfect realities through his or her own activities is an important parameter of his/her competitiveness. Since no unified project classification has yet been created, the greater social and professional attractiveness of the changes planned in the course of the project is still characterized by innovative ones. At the same time, understanding the innovative project in modern interpretation (O. Artyukh, O. Bezpalko, O. Dychkivska, O. Yaremenko, etc.) will focus our attention on such results. And they can make sense of changes in perspective as subsystems «innovation – process», where innovation occurs in stages (creation, implementation, dissemination), and «innovation – product» (a new approach, technology, tool, etc.).

According to N. Rud, in shaping the model of the innovation system, one of the key roles is played by the innovation infrastructure, which provides horizontal and vertical connections between the subjects of innovation activity. And the main elements of this infrastructure, including innovation universities, can be a network of such structures as innovation centers, science parks and technopoles, centers of innovative entrepreneurship, innovation funds, centers of technology transfer, IT clusters and more.

According to experts (K. Leontovich, O. Mironets, I. Sovershenna) one of the most important tasks of innovative IT clusters for the development of advanced information technologies is the infrastructure construction on the basis of innovative universities for the implementation of start-ups and IT projects. In fact, these clusters are communication platforms where good practices are exchanged, communication with local authorities, business representatives, progressive higher education institutions and joint innovation projects are implemented. For example, students and young teachers of ISUH have developed a regional project «The Development of the Danube Valley Ecosystem, an Innovative IT Cluster of the Lower Danube Euroregion». This project is planned to be implemented through the support of the IT start-up system by business angels who invest in the development of IT projects, infrastructure based on the regional innovation universities.

Modern universities are becoming a progressive tool for social modeling, effectively using the mechanism of social partnership, in particular public and private partnership. Within the framework of the development of public and private partnerships, regional innovation universities are becoming drivers of a positive change, incubators of innovation, through which educational and research consortia, various educational and scientific networks, start-up schools, and industry clusters are formed.

According to the experts of the Ukrainian Institute of the Future (S. Babak, M. Skiba), such a partnership stimulates the development of a dual education system by attracting business investments in the material and technical base of universities, joint development of curricula, projects and further successful employment of graduates.

ISUH becomes a regional leader in the development of innovative ecosystems in the south of Odesa region. Based on the modern methodological foundation, which is grounded on the idea of openness to innovation and dialogue of cultures, the university community initiated a public discussion on modernization of the development strategy of ISUH as an innovative university. Within the framework of the innovative project «Bessarabian University of the Future», it is planned to create a Euroregional educational consortium and South Ukrainian educational hub. At ISUH, an innovative social ordering system (in the format of open competitions for social projects) is being created, which allows to activate community initiatives and mobilize the resources of the university community. Thanks to an

organized system of ensuring high quality of education, corporate culture and academic integrity, the University organizes an effective Smart-environment, conducts applied research and pedagogical experiments, established systematic work to support innovative cross-border projects and community initiatives.

In this regard, the implementation of two new cross-border partnership projects by the Office of International Projects of ISUH proved to be effective. The international agreement under which these projects are implemented is the agreement on the financing of the Joint Operational Program of Ukraine-Romania Border Cooperation between the Government of Ukraine and the European Union, represented by the European Commission. According to the current legislation, these projects are registered with the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, and the beneficiary from Odesa region is the Odesa Regional State Administration.

The overall objective of the CBC-Practice Firms project is an innovative methodology for vocational training and educational cooperation at the bilateral level Romania-Ukraine aimed at improving the accessibility of innovative forms of education, employment opportunities for students and pupils from schools in Romania and Ukraine through the development of professional competences required for the modern labor market inter-institutional cooperation in the field of cross-border education. The project budget is 330,000.00 euros, the implementation period is 18 months (December 10, 2019 – June 9, 2021). The overall objective of the second project «CBC-DEBUS – Innovative Development of Entrepreneurial Education and Promoting New Business Development in the Cross-Border Region» is to promote innovative forms of entrepreneurial culture among young people, improve access, including student youth, to modern entrepreneurial education through the development and implementation of programs. The budget of the project is 331,137,80 euros, the implementation period is 12 months (March 24, 2020 – March 23, 2021).

In the experience of participating in the project activity of students and graduates of ISUH who are the members of public organizations «Goodwill» and «New European Generation» is the project «JOBS4Youth – Common Business Opportunities for Young People» (under the cross-border program) cooperation «Moldova – Ukraine»), which was realized in 2019. The overall purpose of this project was to support young entrepreneurs, student youth representatives in developing appropriate strategies, business plans, business events with strong social and economic cross-border impact, participation in international Seed forums, implementation of innovative technology «E-business platform», providing new opportunities for international financing of cross-border cooperation projects. The project budget was 263,535.65 euros.

It should be noted on the specifics of the organization of such project activity that will contribute to the formation of social leadership among students in the format of an effective ecosystem of academic entrepreneurship. And it must be formed on the basis of understanding of the processes of innovative activity of the University. Partnership in the format of cross-border design emerges as an innovative activity of its subjects.

These aspects will be addressed at the international scientific conference «Danube – the Axis of European Identity», which will be held at Ismail State University of Humanities on June 29, 2020. This initiative brought together scientists and practitioners from Austria, Bulgaria, Moldova, Germany, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Hungary, Ukraine, Croatia. According to the rector of the Romanian Danubius University, Professor A. Pushka, the purpose of this conference is to create a forum for the exchange of ideas and results of innovative university research. Within the framework of this conference, the participants of the Danube Academic Consortium will present innovative projects that are planned to be implemented in the Lower Danube region.

In fact, ISUH plays the role of Ukrainian ambassador in cross-border cooperation through active cultural, scientific, educational diplomacy, strategic research on international topics, academic exchanges, projects.

In today's fast-paced European integration processes, it is important to strengthen the civic dimension of social responsibility of future specialists, social leadership of students, to mobilize innovative resources of the modern university in terms of prioritizing the education of active citizens.

Taking care of the positive dynamics of prosocial activity among today's student youth, the ability to constantly learn throughout life, and a deeper understanding of the key role of leadership in the European social model, and the idea of creating a «Europe of Knowledge», the attention is drawn to the available practical orientations (Adizes, 2020). Particularly relevant is the problem of educating young people about the value of the imperative of becoming social process active persons. In this construct, some researchers (O. Malinovska, G. Shefer) distinguish the following components: problematization, goal setting, theoretical and methodological justification of the method of solving the problem, forecasting, modeling, designing personnel-technologies to achieve predictable results, programming, planning. Taking into consideration the progressive European identity experience, it thus seems to be predictable to achieve lasting positive results in changing behaviors, freedom of thought, critical thinking and social responsibility through sustainable development, self-education, self-organization, youth participation and youth policy-making, responsible actions, immersion in the project activity of innovative universities in the parameters of social leadership.

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