SECURITY OF HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN UKRAINE: TODAY'S REALITIES

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The report examines the main issues of the security of institutions of higher education and the provision of equal, proper and safe conditions for obtaining an education and the organisation of a safe educational environment, which is especially relevant in connection with the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine
Key words*: security, institution of higher education, armed aggression, security protocols, safe physical space for stay, training.*

Security is the most important condition for the life of the state, which directly affects the development of all social institutions. Like any other, the field of education is affected by natural disasters, man-made disasters, fires, environmental and other disasters. However, the most serious and dangerous challenge today is Russia's armed attack on Ukraine and Ukraine's countermeasures against this aggression.

According to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, as of August 18, 2022, 2,300 educational institutions were damaged by bombing and shelling, of which 286 were completely destroyed [1].

The combination of these factors leads to the aggravation of extreme and emergency situations of a humanitarian and social nature (for example, a threat to

the life and health of students of higher education and employees of higher educational institutions as a result of a fire, the collapse of a building during/after bombing, bodily injuries, sexual violence by invaders, kidnapping, torture, robbery, drug distribution, terrorist threats, etc.). Therefore, the analysis of these threats and the planning based on it of carefully thought-out measures to ensure the reliable security of educational institutions is an urgent requirement of our time.

As the Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine, Oksen Lisovyi, noted, today, in connection with the state of war, the educational process depends on the security situation and takes place offline, online or in a hybrid form. The educators will continue to hold their front with dignity. There is painstaking work ahead to restore the emotional state of teachers and students, as well as to improve the educational process. The most important thing, however, is that learning is safe and that every Ukrainian child has access to quality education, and that every teacher feels secure and supported [2].

The focus needs to be on the organisation of safe educational environments and the low level of security that is faced by educational institutions in the Ukraine, which is a consequence of the following factors: insufficient number of buildings constructed as protective structures incorporating civil protection in educational institutions; the low level of compliance of buildings and of protective structures for civil protection in educational institutions with the requirements regarding the necessary capacity of such buildings and protective structures for civil protection and the number of evacuation exits, the availability of water supply, drainage, ventilation, heating, lighting, the means of communication and the Internet, access to medical care, accessibility for low-mobility population groups, as well as the possibility of organising and establishing protective structures for civil protection and the continuation of the educational process in such facilities; the low level of compliance with the requirements regarding the legislation on fire and the man-made safety of educational institutions; the outdated legal framework in the field of civil protection in terms of creating safe conditions of stay in educational institutions for students of education, pedagogical, scientific and pedagogical workers, administration and other workers; lack of an established procedure for organising the protection of educational institutions, in particular with the involvement of security police bodies (with the installation of a complex alarm systems) with connection to centralised monitoring and response points; the lack of proper organisation regarding access requirements and protocols to promote security in educational institutions (security barriers, stationary metal detectors, access control systems); the lack of external and internal video surveillance systems in educational institutions; the inaccessibility of most educational institutions and protective structures of civil protection at educational institutions for persons in need of special care and other less mobile population groups; the lack of the required number of school buses to transport students and teaching staff to/from general secondary education institutions; insufficient levels of coverage of educational institutions by proactive police services aimed at preventing the commission of offenses; the participants of the educational process have insufficient knowledge about their rights, duties and responsibilities; participants of the educational process do not know the rules of safe behaviour in everyday life and traffic rules; low level of children's awareness of cyber threats and

formation of safe behaviour on the Internet; participants of the educational process are unprepared and do not know how to act in emergency situations, hostilities; employees of educational institutions lack the skills to provide pre-medical care, to provide psychological support to students; limited access to mental health care services and psychosocial support for participants in the educational process during study and work, taking into account the impact of military aggression on their mental health; the lack of complex infrastructure of psycho-emotional support and psychological assistance for participants in the educational process; insufficient conditions for inclusive education and support in the educational process of those who need it, in accordance with the new security conditions [3].

In order to protect and ensure the safety of the educational environment, we suggest undertaking the following:

1. Create a safe physical space for students of higher education and employees of higher educational institutions (when using a mixed education format, it is necessary to minimise the clutter of the premises of the educational institution with extraneous objects, furniture, flammable materials, other objects that may become an obstacle during evacuations).

2. To implement clear procedures for behaviour and response in emergency situations in the institution of higher education, with the development of clear safety protocols.

3. Conducting regular online and face-to-face training with students of higher education on how to behave in a dangerous situation. It will be beneficial to invite relevant specialists to these meetings: explosives technicians, employees of the National Security Service, doctors of tactical medicine, psychologists, conflict specialists, etc.

4. Develop uniform requirements for officials and teaching staff of higher educational institutions to increase their level of knowledge in the field of ensuring personal safety, preserving the health and life of students, rules of action for the prevention of emergency situations and protective measures in case of their occurrence.

5. Develop/update anti-bullying measures, which is especially important in mixed- type teams (in the presence of persons with IDP status).

6. Update notification, alarm and fire safety systems.

7. Clear interaction between the management of the higher educational institution and territorial units of the National Police, the State Emergency Service, the civil- military administration, etc.

And finally, it is important to note that the complex security system of a higher educational institution should perform its main function - to create a safe and comfortable educational environment where students are unhindered by external security threats and can achieve academic excellence.

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