

LEGAL REGULATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION: PROBLEMS AND WAYS OF IMPROVEMENT

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Annotation. The article studies the institute of environmental education and analyzes the problems of its legal regulation in the context of adapting the norms of Ukrainian legislation to EU legislation and in the context of compliance with the goals of sustainable development.

It is noted that environmental education is one of the significant factors in ensuring human safety and forming its environmental awareness. The article defines the goal of environmental education, which is to form an ecological culture, ecological thinking and the formation of environmental awareness, based on the attitude towards nature as a unique value.

The features of the institute of environmental education in Ukraine and the EU countries and its legal regulation are studied. It is proved that in the EU countries, environmental education is one of the priority areas, developing in accordance with the provisions of the “European Green Deal”.

It is noted that environmental education in Ukraine is part of the national education system and aimed at harmonization with EU norms and in accordance with the goals of sustainable development. It was concluded that the institution of environmental education is not sufficiently regulated by national legislation, is fragmentary in nature and requires improvement through the adoption of a separate regulatory legal act: the Law of Ukraine “On Environmental Education”.

Key words: environmental education, institute of environmental education in Ukraine, legal regulation of environmental education, environmental awareness, environmental culture, environment, ecology.

1. Introduction.

The rapid development of industry, the use of vehicles, dangerous technologies, natural and man-made emergencies, military conflicts and other negative factors significantly affect the state of the environment and threaten the health of citizens and their safety.

Every year the problem of environmental pollution, both at the national and global levels, becomes more acute, and the question of finding ways to solve it becomes more urgent. As studies by a number of international and non-governmental organizations show, every sixth premature death in the world is associated with environmental pollution. According to estimates by domestic experts, in Ukraine about 17 million people, or 34% of the total population, are negatively affected, for example, by atmospheric pollution. Malformations in children in cities with a polluted environment occur 3-4 times more often than in relatively clean ones, respiratory diseases are registered twice as often, the general level of morbidity of the population is 25-40% higher, the level of allergic, oncological, cardiovascular, genetic and other diseases is also higher [1, p. 248].

One of the significant factors in ensuring human safety is a developed institute of environmental education, environmental awareness and its legal regulation.

The goal of environmental education is to form an ecological culture, ecological thinking and the formation of consciousness, based on the attitude towards nature as a unique value and the use of knowledge to ensure human safety and health.

Environmental education in Ukraine is actively harmonized with European standards, moving from theoretical knowledge to the formation of a “green” consciousness. In EU countries, the priority is the integration of sustainable development into all educational levels, Ukraine also introduces environmental initiatives, eco-universities and European practices, in particular within the framework of the “European Green Deal”.

Environmental education plays a key role in the formation of a conscious society, eco-centric thinking and a responsible attitude towards nature, which is fundamental for the sustainable development of the country. It is aimed at fostering a culture of nature use, reducing environmental risks, harmonizing Ukrainian legislation with EU norms and forming skills for a careful attitude towards the environment.

Environmental education in Ukraine is part of the national education system, which operates on the basis of legislation aimed at harmonization with EU norms and implementation of sustainable development goals.

Environmental education has acquired particular importance in the context of the European Green Deal, which is a roadmap of measures that will transform the EU into an efficient, sustainable and competitive economy, identify means to transform Europe into the world’s first climate-neutral continent by 2050, stimulating economic development, improving people’s health and quality of life, and transforming climate and environmental challenges into opportunities in all areas and policies of the EU, guaranteeing a fair and inclusive nature of the green transition [2]. In particular, Directives 2003/4/EC and 2008/99/EC emphasize the need to ensure citizens’ access to environmental information and establish liability for environmental damage.

Environmental education in the EU countries is based on the Resolution of the Council of Ministers (1988), aimed at educational environmental protection activities among the population, establishing information to society about environmental problems and ways to solve them, involving broad segments of the population in environmental activities; on the Resolution of the European Parliament (1993), which provides for the implementation of environmental education in school subjects. In addition, environmental education is based on the European Green Deal (The European Green Deal, 2019), which provides for a set of measures for educational environmental protection activities, in particular, involving students in working in the natural environment. The ideas of the Green Deal are aimed at “not borrowing” natural resources from future generations, but taking care of their preservation today, providing descendants with a decent ecologically clean environment [3].

Thus, in the EU countries, programs and concepts for the development of environmental education, programs and plans for training modern-level environmental specialists have been developed and are being improved, recommendations on ecological and educational content have been developed. Thus, in European countries, ecology has become a mandatory subject in all schools and higher educational institutions, departments and faculties of an ecological profile have been created.

An important condition for the development of environmental education in Ukraine is the gradual harmonization of Ukrainian environmental legislation with EU law standards in accordance with the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement and environmental reforms in Ukraine. Also, the development of environmental education is one of the components of the Sustainable Development Goals. At the same time, the regulatory and legal regulation of such an important institution as environmental education is not sufficiently regulated by national legislation and is fragmentary. In order to improve the legal regulation of environmental education, it is advisable to adopt a separate regulatory and legal act, the Law of Ukraine “On Environmental Education”, which would contain provisions on the levels of environmental education, its components, and also to supplement the existing regulatory acts with provisions on the implementation of environmental education provisions.

2. Analysis of scientific publications.

Analysis of legal literature allows us to conclude that there is a significant number of scientific works by Ukrainian scientists devoted to the issues of legal aspects of environmental education in the field of ecology. Among the researchers of the problems of legal support of environmental education, the following domestic scientists can be distinguished, namely: O.M. Mandryk, M.S. Malovany, M.M. Orfanova, K.O. Pysanka, I.V. Perkun, T. Perga, V.G. Pogrebnyak, M. Shved, T.M. Yatsishyn.

3. The purpose of the article is to study the institution of environmental education, the features of its legal regulation, and to establish ways to improve the legal regulation of environmental education in Ukraine.

4. Presenting main material.

The current environmental situation encourages a rapid restructuring of the thinking of humanity and each individual person, the formation of environmental awareness and environmental culture, in this regard, environmental education is becoming a new priority area of education. The experience of EU countries shows that based on the principles of the country's environmental policy, a high level of environmental culture and an active position of man in environmental protection activities, it is possible to improve the state of the environment. At the same time, a high level of environmental culture is not possible without environmental education, which should be carried out on the basis of comprehensiveness and continuity of education [4, p. 131].

Environmental education is an important component of increasing the level of public awareness of the environment, the impact of humanity on it, expanding awareness of environmental issues and supporting a sustainable lifestyle.

The formation of the Institute of Environmental Education in Ukraine is associated with the holding of the Stockholm Conference of the UN on the Environment (1972), where for the first time legislative acts were adopted aimed at organizing the protection and control of the environment and ensuring human safety [5, p. 65].

In independent Ukraine, the issue of legal regulation of environmental education is specified in the Law of Ukraine "On Environmental Protection" dated 25.06.1991 No. 1264-XII, which defines the right to environmental education as one of the important environmental rights of citizens (Part 8, Article 9) [6]. Also, the Law of Ukraine "On the Basic Principles (Strategy) of the State Environmental Policy of Ukraine for the Period until 2030" dated 28.02.2019 No. 2697-VIII states that education in the interests of balanced (sustainable) development is one of the main instruments for implementing the state environmental policy, which is aimed at introducing continuous environmental education. That is, the implementation of education in the interests of balanced (sustainable) development, including environmental education and upbringing, educational activities, is carried out with the aim of forming environmental values in society and increasing its environmental awareness, access to environmental information [7].

The regulatory legal act that directly regulates the specifics of the implementation of environmental education in Ukraine is the Concept of Environmental Education of Ukraine, approved by the Decision of the Board of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 13/6-19 of 20.12. 2001 - (hereinafter - the Concept) [8]. The Concept was drawn up with the aim of restructuring the content of education and upbringing in accordance with the requirements of the time and the main provisions of the National Doctrine of Education Development in the 21st Century and is based on the strategy of sustainable development of Ukraine formulated in the Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine "Ukraine: Progress in the 21st Century. Strategy of Economic and Social Policy for 2000-2004" (276a/2000). At the same time, the Concept as a document adopted in 2001 no longer reflects all the realities and problems of the present and requires significant changes.

It is worth noting that the legal regulation of environmental education in the legislation of Ukraine is fragmentary and needs to be improved. In this context, it seems appropriate to supplement the Law of Ukraine "On Environmental Protection" dated 25.06.1991 No. 1264-XII, with a separate section - "Environmental Education", as well as to provide the concept of "environmental education". It is also necessary to improve the provisions of the Concept of Environmental Education in Ukraine in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals, the European Green Deal and in the context of adapting legislation to EU legislation.

Also, in order to improve the provisions of environmental education and increase its role in education and society, it seems appropriate to adopt a separate regulatory legal act, the Law of Ukraine "On Environmental Education", which contained provisions on the levels of environmental education, its components.

The implementation of environmental education should include clearly structured stages aimed at all age, social and professional groups of the population [9, p. 23]. It can be distinguished into two main areas of education: formal and informal. Formal education covers all links of the general education system that exists in Ukraine: preschool, school, extracurricular, vocational, higher and postgraduate. The second area - informal education - has an educational nature and is aimed at forming the ecological culture of the population through the church, mass media, public environmental organizations, parties, etc. Informal education is a process of forming environmental knowledge that occurs in compliance with the principles of accessibility and practicality. At the same time, environmental education is not possible without practical environmental activities and public environmental movements.

Also, public environmental organizations play a significant role in implementing environmental education. Thus, in Ukraine there are a large number of public environmental organizations (All-Ukrainian Ecological League, Green World, Eco-Law, Ukrainian Society for Nature Conservation, Voice of Nature, All-Ukrainian Ecological Public Organization MAMA86, All-Ukrainian Committee for Support of the United Nations Environment Program (UkrUNEPcom) and many others [10, p. 69].

Thus, it is appropriate to note that environmental education in Ukraine is the foundation for the formation of new values, where man interacts with nature harmoniously, ensuring a sustainable future.

The Institute of Environmental Education is appropriate to consider a key process that helps to increase the level of awareness of environmental protection and ensuring the safety of the population, countering modern challenges in the field of ensuring the ecological security of the state. Modern environmental education is a systemic component of the national education system, the main goal of which is the formation of a new type of worldview based on the relationship between man and the environment in the system "nature - "man is society".

5. Conclusions.

Taking into account the above, it is advisable to draw the following conclusions. Environmental education as part of the national education system of Ukraine plays a key role in the formation of a conscious society, a responsible attitude towards the environment and is one of the fundamental components of the country's sustainable development. It is aimed at fostering a culture of environmental protection, reducing environmental risks, harmonizing Ukrainian legislation with EU norms and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Environmental education has acquired particular importance in the context of adapting the norms of Ukrainian environmental legislation to EU legislation, the European Green Deal and compliance with the Sustainable Development Goals.

At the same time, the regulatory and legal regulation of environmental education is not sufficiently regulated by national legislation and is fragmentary. In order to improve the legal regulation of environmental education, it is advisable to adopt a separate regulatory act, the Law of Ukraine "On Environmental Education", which would contain provisions on the levels of environmental education, its components, as well as to supplement the current regulatory acts with provisions on environmental education, namely: the Law of Ukraine "On Environmental Protection" dated 25.06.1991 No. 1264-XII, to supplement with a separate section - "Environmental Education", to improve the provisions of the Concept of Environmental

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