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“Development of the Learning Region Concept as the Foundation for Effective  
Regional Education Policy (on the example of Zaporizhzhya region)”

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The monograph describes the conceptual foundations of regional educational policy, objectified in the theoretical description of the main approaches, principles, conditions to implement the lifelong learning concept as a factor of regional development. The basic prerequisites for the development of lifelong learning concept in the world and the socio-economic results of its implementation are analyzed. The peculiarities and specifics of lifelong learning, education of adults as a part of it in the conditions of regional development (national and foreign experience) are described. The psychological peculiarities of personality development in adulthood as well as professional development of personality at different stages of adolescence are characterized. The role of non-formal adults education as a factor of learning regions development as well as mechanisms of the city development and implementation of the concept is highlighted. The results of sociological research of cultural and educational needs of Zaporizhzhya region's residents and their level of satisfaction are interpreted.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Adult education as a component of life-long learning is a determining factor in regional development, the competitiveness factor of individual territories and the state as a whole. Formation and use of competitive advantages of the region (city, region, country) contributes to accelerated growth in the economic and social spheres. At the same time, this aspect has not been adequately reflected in the theory and practice of legislative, organizational and managerial, scientific and methodological support of the regional educational policy in Ukraine. In particular, there are no interdisciplinary works, which outline the conceptual foundations for the development of regional educational policy, practical recommendations for the development and implementation of the concepts within the learning regions. The urgency of this problem is confirmed by the realities of the current socio-economic situation in the south-east of Ukraine, in particular, in Zaporizhzhya region. The whole economy of the south-eastern part of Ukraine, which was previously targeted at the eastern customer, needs to reorientate production, and, accordingly, retraining workers. The problem is aggravated by an increase in the number of temporary migrants from the East, who also need retraining and further adaptation to new living conditions. Due to the decline in production, in general in Ukraine and in Zaporizhzhya region, the situation in the labor market has become tense and unstable, unemployment is progressing, which has negative social consequences. According to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, in the first half of 2017, there were 937.8 thousand unemployed persons registered in the country, and the average unemployment rate was 1730.1 thousand people. As of October 2017, 26,936 unemployed people are registered in Zaporizhzhya region, representing 2.5% of the working-age population. The situation and socio-demographic aspects of unemployment are complicated: more than 70% of the unemployed are women, 31% are youth. A separate and very important aspect of the problem is the fact that about 40% of the unemployed are citizens with higher education, whose number is replenished with each passing year at the expense of graduates of higher educational institutions who have not been able to orient themselves in the labor market situation and have remained without their first place of work.

The conceptual foundations for the development of regional educational policy in recent years have become the subject of increased attention from the side of both international institutions and individual scholars and practitioners. In particular, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), based on an analysis of European experience, formulated its own vision and understanding of the learning regions. The monograph "Cities and Regions in the New Learning Economy OECD " [23] discloses the economic benefits of regions in the process of transforming

industrial economies into information and knowledge economy. In its turn, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, CEDEFOP, pays considerable attention to the regions that are learning in the context of assessing the role of educational institutions in terms of raising personal motivation among students and in terms of increasing the competitiveness of the region [159].

A number of European projects, in particular, PENR3L (Pascal European Network of Regions of LifeLong Learning), LONGLEARN PALLACE, LILLIPUT, INDICATORS, TELS (Towards a European Learning Society), LILARA (Learning in Local and Regional Authorities), aimed at the development of regional educational policy. The result of the studies carried out in the framework of these projects was so-called "Limerick Declaration" [152], which accumulates experience in implementing the ideas of educated communities, lists the main principles, conditions and practical tools for creating cities and regions of study.

The theoretical substantiation of the conceptual foundations of the learning cities and regions is devoted to the work of N. Longworth [78] and K. Morgan [92]. E. Nayman's publication [98] is devoted to the genesis of the regional concept that is taught in modern Western science and political practice. The emergence of the "learning region" concept is considered at the level of regional policy, empirical research and academic reflection. S. Laboda [70] in his work has analyzed the European experience of creating cities and regions of study. The monograph [151] presents contemporary research on the theory and practice of interaction between all subjects of the educational regional policy of Europe, the United States and South Africa in the context to implement the concept of learning cities and regions. L. Ovsienko's research [115] is devoted to the theoretical substantiation of the region role being studied in shaping the strategy of prosperity and social unity through the development of the human potential of all citizens.

In world practice, similar studies were carried out and their effectiveness was proved. In particular, the collections of materials of the International Forum "Study Region" (January 31-February 1, 2014, Vitebsk, Republic of Belarus) [107] provides an overview of world experience in implementing the concept of the region being studied; the concept and results of learning the educational needs of the inhabitants of Vitebsk and Minsk regions, theoretical studies of the conceptual foundations regarding implementation of the ideas in the region being studied; presentation of the results of focused interviews and surveys of residents in the respective territories; recommendations for introduction of the conceptual foundations of the learning region for the Republic of Belarus.

Consequently, existing socio-economic conditions, theoretical substantiation, development and experimental verification of the conceptual foundations of the regional educational policy in Ukraine, oriented towards the creation of a competitive

and knowledgeable potential of Zaporizhzhya region as a learning region, is an actual and timely scientific and practical task, the main results of which are presented in the monograph "Conceptual Principles of Regional Educational Policy".

The first section "***Concept of education throughout life as a response to the economic and social challenges of the present***" (authors – Y. Petrushenko, H. Konowaluk-Nikitin and A. Vorontsova) is devoted to the analysis of the basic preconditions that have contributed to the development of the education concept throughout life in the world as well as the main socio-economic implications to implement the indicated concept. The attention is paid to the main indicators which allow to determine the degree of this concept distribution.

The second section "***Education of adults as an important component of life-long learning***" (authors – O. Anishchenko and P. Rozwadowski) justifies the relevance of adult education development in Ukraine, analysis of the conceptual and terminological apparatus of the research was made, achievements and miscalculations were substantiated in the development of adult education in Ukraine as a component of education throughout the life as well as promising directions for the development of adult education in Ukraine, in particular in the context of regional educational policy.

The third section "***Education throughout life: domestic and foreign context***" (authors – P. Bouyanov and A. Kriz) is devoted to highlighting the main features of adult education as well as approaches to life-long learning in the leading countries of the world, the peculiarities of the functioning and development of adult education in a modern society.

The fourth section "***Adult person as a subject of education throughout his/her life***" (author – A. Ignatowicz and L. Lisina) describes the psychological characteristics of the individual development in adulthood and the peculiarities of the professional individual development at different stages of adolescence, analysis of the andragogical model of adult education, essence of the integrative approach to the formation of an individual in adulthood, content and forms of organization of the educational process in the system of continuous education on the basis of the principles of andragogy.

The fifth section "***Adult education as a mechanism for social involvement***" (authors – E. Brodacka-Adamowicz and K. Kuchyna) is devoted to the analysis of the peculiarities and specifics of adult education as one of the mechanisms of social involvement (on the example of adults with disabilities), the interpretation of the essence of the social exclusion / inclusion phenomenon.

The content of the sixth section "***Trends in the development of adult education systems in Ukraine***" (authors – V. Molodychenko, V. Nechyporenko, S. Nikitin and S. Pryima) visualizes the identification of trends in the formation and development

of adult education in Ukraine, identification of regularities in the trends of formation and development of adult education with the dynamics of social development, substantiates the dependence of the formation and development of adult education from the cultural and educational demands of society.

The seventh section "*System of adult education in conditions of regional development: the experience of the past and challenges of the future*" (authors – J. Bogucki and L. Lukianova) contains a brief history of adult education development and the peculiarities of its legislative provision, description of adult education target groups as well as the role of informal education of adults as a factor contributing to the development of the learning regions. The role of non-governmental organizations in the development of adult education is highlighted.

The eighth section "*Regional educational policy: from theory to practice*" (authors – S. Pryima and N. Ivanova) is devoted to the presentation of the results regarding definitions analysis of the concept "learning city / region", main characteristics of the city / region being studied and the substantiation of indicators for achieving the characteristics of the new social status region, characterization of the "minimalist" and "maximalist" concept of education development throughout the life at the regional level, analysis of the mechanisms to implement the concept of learning city / region.

The ninth section "*A study on educational needs of adults (on the example of Zaporizhzhya region residents)*" (authors – S. Pryima, A. Orlov, O. Anishchenko, E. Pozdnyakova-Kirbyateva) describes the analysis results for the sociological research carried out by the staff of the Scientific-methodical Adult Education Center and the Center for Sociological Research at the Bogdan Khmelnitsky Melitopol State Pedagogical University, aimed at identifying the level of demand for the population of the region for educational services, determining the assessment of educational services quality by the population, rationale of promising areas to develop educational space in Zaporizhzhya region.

The tenth section "*International days of adult education in Zaporizhzhya Region as a form of engagement in the education throughout the life in the region*" (authors – O. Anishchenko and U. Tylus) describes the analysis of the International Days of Adult Education in Zaporizhzhya region as an action to promote the formation of an understanding the value of education throughout Ukrainian life in Ukrainian society, personal and professional self-development of a person, the position of Zaporizhzhya region as a learning region in the context of developing an innovative regional educational policy.

## **SECTION 9**

### **A STUDY ON EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF ADULTS (ON THE EXAMPLE OF ZAPORIZHZHYA REGION RESIDENTS)**

**Statement of the problem in general and its relation to important scientific or practical tasks.** For the theoretical substantiation of the conceptual foundations of the regional education policy, it is necessary to determine the current state of the prognostic conditions for the development of the learning region; to study regularities and principles of its functioning; to determine the indicators for the region to achieve the new social status. It is important to note that the practice of implementing the conceptual foundations of the learning region demonstrates the diversity of forms and methods of its implementation – each region builds its own model, or rather, the development pathway, so that through unique and significant for it innovations to become competitive in a knowledge-based economy. In some cases, the first place takes the rise of the cultural level and the development of the civic position of people, in others – the study of information and communication technologies, in the third ones – the promotion of economic growth in the region. There are other options that contribute to the socio-economic development of the territories and lead to stimulation of individual and organizational training in order to fully disclose the human capital of the region, to focus efforts on creating educational infrastructure and conditions that will meet the educational needs of all categories of the population.

In order to identify the opinion of the inhabitants of Zaporizhzhya region regarding the most relevant educational needs, to determine the level of interest demonstrated by residents of different age groups towards participation in educational programs and in order to find the promising directions of the development of the educational services market in the region, the staff of the Scientific and Methodological Centre for Adult Education and the Centre for Sociological Studies of Bogdan Khmelnitsky Melitopol State Pedagogical University conducted a questionnaire survey "Priority directions of education development in Zaporizhzhya region" through the period from May 4 to May 8, 2016. The survey was done in the form of a standardized interview on the basis of the "face-to-face" method at the place of respondents' residence, using a specially developed toolkit (questionnaire), which included 20 main questions. The structure of the questionnaire was made according to the features of the research subject with the selection of conventional blocks that allowed to: identify the current state of the educational services market in the region and assess its strengths and weaknesses; to analyze the structure of the educational

services market in the region; to identify educational requirements and needs of the region inhabitants and, accordingly, to prioritize the potential opportunities for the development of the educational services market.

**Presentation of main material.** The survey sample is unrepeatable, multi-stage, area-specific, stratified, quota, random. The error laid down in the sample for a confidence interval of 95% does not exceed 5%. The number of respondents was 400. The sample zoning was made by analyzing and comparing statistical data in all districts of the region, the region centre and cities of regional significance with regard to the number and density of population, saturation with educational and cultural infrastructure, distance from centers of economic and social attraction (large villages and cities) and the availability of transport links with them. Thus, according to zoning, 5 enlarged conventional subdistricts of the survey were formed: north ( $n = 144$  respondents), east ( $n = 47$ ), south ( $n = 89$ ), west ( $n = 63$ ) and centre ( $n = 52$ ).

The sample stratification was carried out by distributing the sample total to the urban and rural population. Thus, respondents from urban (63%) and rural (37%) population of the region took part in the study.

The quota selection was based on the criteria of the gender of the respondents and the age group that correspond to the statistical data of the selected districts and represent the socio-demographic structure of the districts at the time of the survey. At the final stage of selection, random selection was used, which allowed to increase the representativeness of the sample, and to include as many respondents as possible in the survey without losing the quality of the outcome.

Immediately during the survey, the sample was updated according to such criteria as education (primary, secondary, secondary vocational, basic higher and complete higher education), the nature of employment (persons who work; persons learning; pensioners and non-working people), and the level of wealth (persons with a low, medium, high level of income).

According to the results of the study, it was concluded that 57.5% of Zaporizhzhya region residents are in need of educational services. At the same time, 15.5% have already decided on where they will receive them (see Figure 10).

Analyzing the educational needs of different groups of the region residents, it turned out that today 90.4% of youth, 76.7% of middle-aged people and 41.3% of the third age group representatives have such needs. These indicators are also influenced by the level of respondents' education, since getting educational services is extremely urgent for those who now have general secondary education (63.9%), half (50.5%) of respondents with secondary vocational education and 61.3% of respondents with higher education (in this case, the place of the respondents' residence does not matter). It should be noted that among low-income families, this need is slightly

lower (44.4%) compared to those who have an average (55.6%) and high (69.2%) level of income.

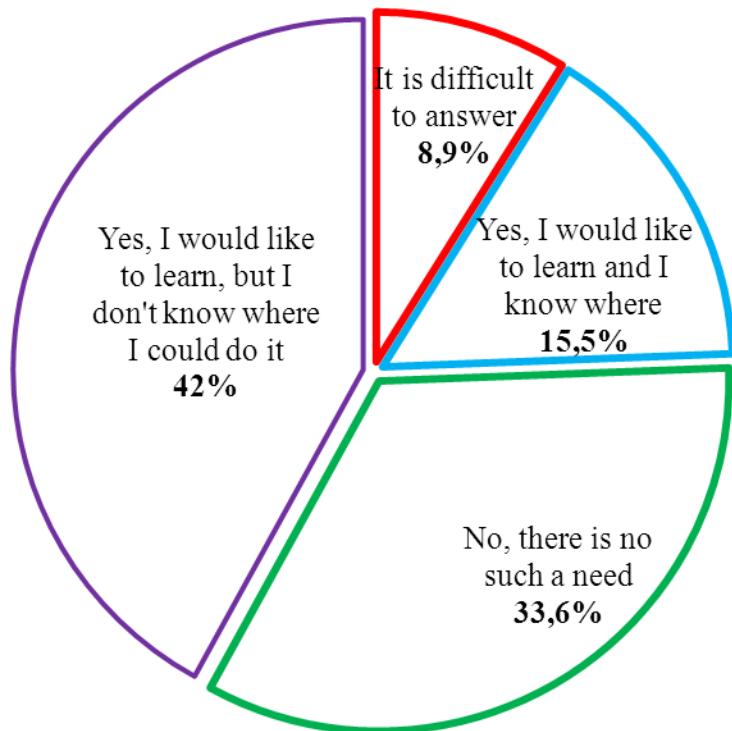


Figure 10. The need of respondents to get educational services (%), (n=400)

The most important reason indicated by the respondents is the acquisition of the knowledge necessary for achieving success in the profession (46.7%). The second place in the rating is the opportunity to get a diploma, license or certificate (30.1%). And the third place is the opportunity to increase chances in the labour market (19.2%). That is, education in this case is inextricably linked with the labour market and personal success (career). And this is a normal mechanism for the functioning of these two systems, which is explained both by the requirements of time and global trends. However, at the moment, some other motives for getting education are kept out, such as self-development and self-improvement or boosting of social activity. After all, obtaining modern knowledge and mastering functional literacy (informational, legal, economic, etc.) takes only the fourth place (16.6%) in the rating of reasons for education.

Among the less important reasons for getting educational services, respondents indicated (see Figure 11) such as: change of situation (7.4%), increase of chances in personal life (6.6%), obtaining knowledge for change of profession (6.0%) , direct demand of an employer (5.7%) and participation in entrepreneurial activity (4.9%).

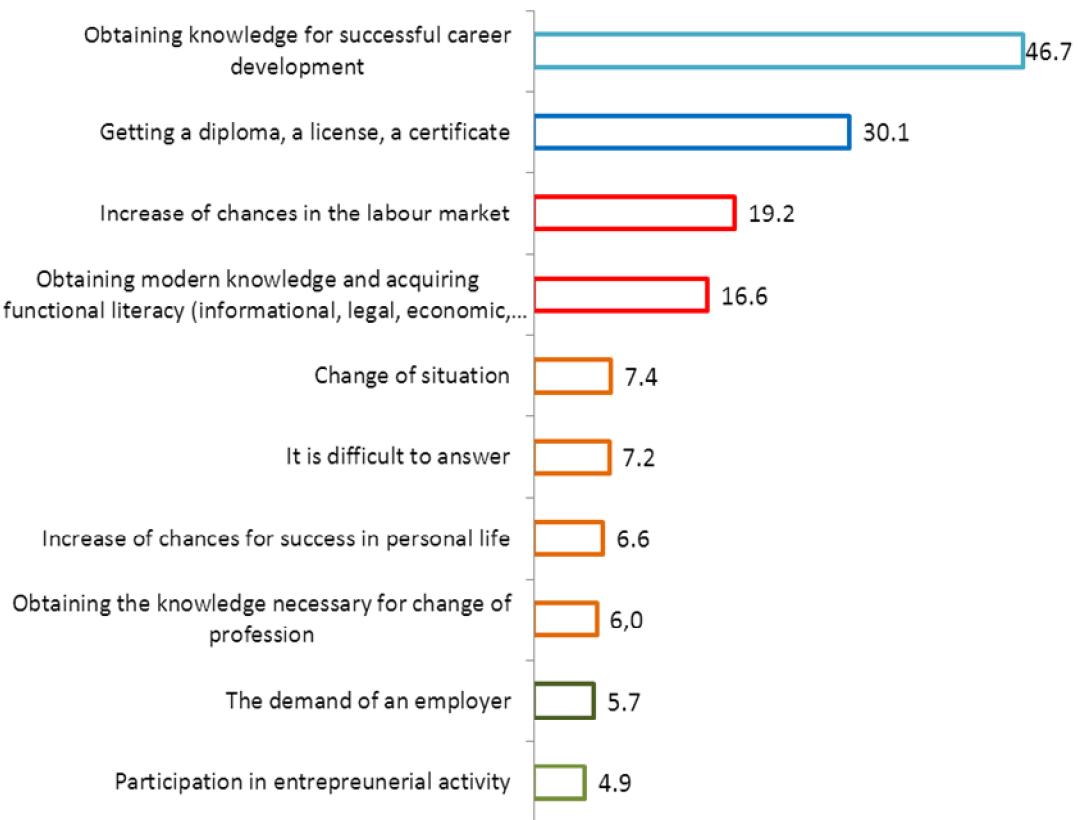


Figure 11. Reasons of getting educational services by respondents (%), (n=400)

If we analyze the data more thoroughly, one can see that such a motive as "obtaining knowledge for successful career development" is significant for all age groups, although it is mostly indicated by the middle-aged representatives (49.2%). It is updated with the increase of the level of education and income of respondents and it is of the highest importance for respondents with higher education (50.6%), with an average (47.4%) and high (47.4%) incomes, and it is more relevant for the rural citizens (50.5%).

Getting a diploma, license or certificate is a more significant reason for young people (49.5%) with secondary (36.1%) or higher (34.8%) education from families with a high level of income (42.1%).

By contrast, education as an opportunity to increase chances in the labor market is more likely to be of interest to the representatives of the middle-aged (22.0%) and third age (21.8%) groups, who predominantly have secondary vocational education (22.2%). They represent low-income families (66.7%) and mostly live in villages (22.4%).

As for obtaining modern knowledge and acquisition of functional literacy (informational, legal, economic, etc.), that is, the understanding of education as a path for self-development, this reason is mostly significant for the middle-aged (25.4%) with an average level of income (16.8 %) and is gaining importance with the growth of respondents' education in cities. Such results show: the priority of motivation for increasing the chances in the labor market since the age of 40 due to the risk of non-competitiveness; insufficient understanding of the need to acquire new knowledge for change of profession, especially through the modern reorientation of the economy; greater motivation to study among the rural population compared to the urban one; priority for educational activities regardless of age, level and profile of education, the nature of employment, length of employment, income, area of respondents' residence to obtain the knowledge necessary to succeed in a career and increase the chances in the labor market.

These results also emphasize the need to develop non-formal education systems that will be more flexible to the educational needs of the population and labor market requirements. 45.7% of respondents indicated that they were ready to receive education at non-formal education institutions (see Figure 12). At the same time, it should be noted that such an approach is acceptable for representatives of the third age group (59.3%), which is complemented by the middle-aged group (40.0%), and today they already have higher (55.1%) or secondary vocational (46.8%) education, that is, they have an occupation and certain experience.

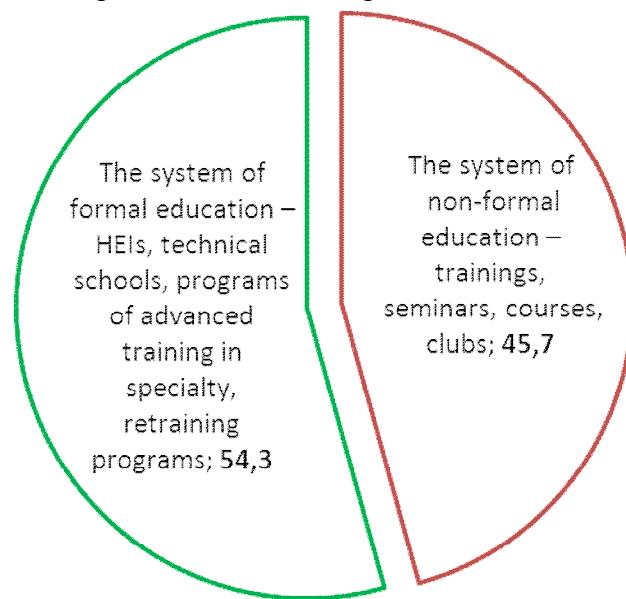


Figure 12. The level of respondents' interest in getting educational services of different formats (%), (n=400)

Non-formal education is a more acceptable option for low-income people (71.4%) and for almost half of those (49.4%) with an average level of income. However, returning to the issue of motivation for getting education, one can understand that non-formal education is a powerful mechanism for retraining in the labor market, for self-development and self-employment.

This fact was confirmed in the course of study of the ratings of thematic areas of non-formal education and programs (courses) for the formation of new skills. Among the areas of non-formal education, the first place takes sports and recreation (33.3%) (see Figure 13), which is relevant for young people (53.6%), one third of the middle-aged group (36.7%) and almost a quarter of the representatives of the third age group (22.6 %), all groups in terms of income, but mostly in rural areas (49.3%).

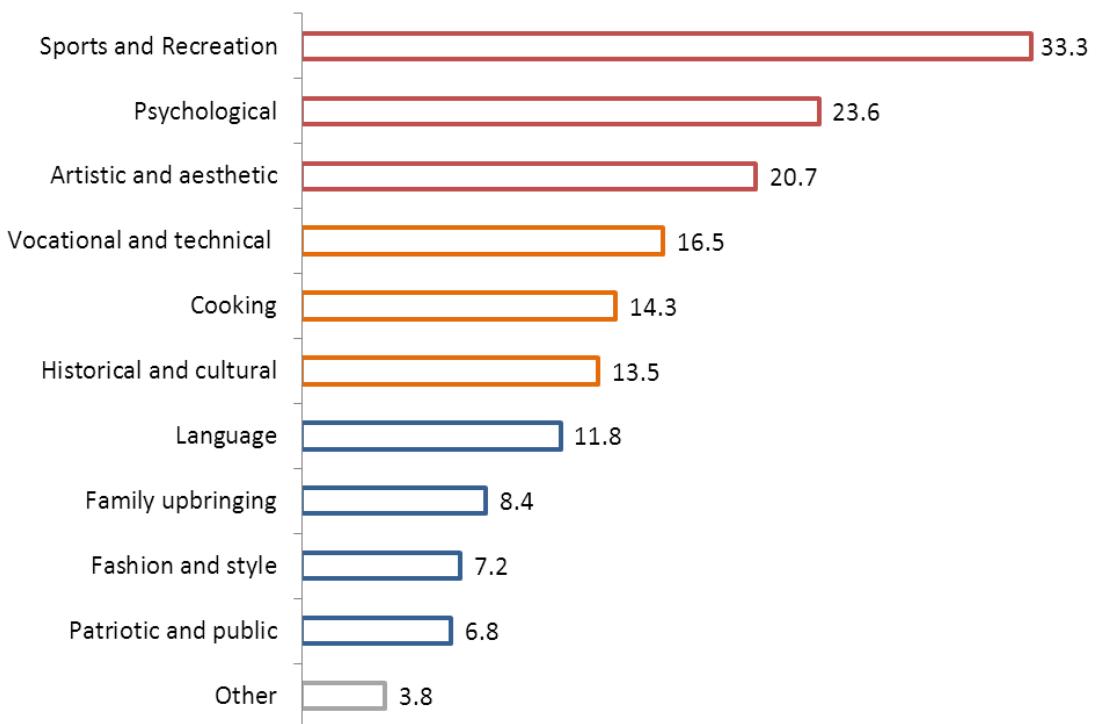


Figure 13. Relevance of non-formal education directions (%), (n=400)

The psychological direction takes the second place by its relevance for the inhabitants of the region. Almost a quarter of those polled indicated it (23.6%). This direction is especially important for middle-aged residents (50.0%) and a quarter of those of the third age (23.4%), with secondary vocational (21.8%) and higher (33.0%) education and with an average (24.7 %) and low (22.2%) income living in the cities of the region (25.9%).

The third place takes the artistic-aesthetic direction (20.7%). In this plane, there are young people (36.2%) and middle-aged people (26.7%) who have secondary

(28.6%) or higher (23.4%) education, an average (21.0 %) and high (20.6%) income and live in cities (22.9%). Although almost 15.5% of villagers have also emphasized this direction.

Further in the rating there is the vocational and technical direction (folk crafts, handicrafts) (16.5%), cooking (14.3%), historical and cultural direction (13.5%), language direction (11.8%), family upbringing (8.4%), fashion and style (7.2%). The last position in this list is unfortunately taken by the patriotic and public direction, the relevance of which was determined only by 6.8% of the polled.

As for the programs and courses on the formation of new skills, the first place among the region residents is given to language courses (29.0%) (see Figure 14). Such programs are relevant for young people (45.1%), representatives of the middle-aged group (42.9%) and one fifth of the third age group representatives (19.2%), all groups by level of education and income, regardless the place of residence.

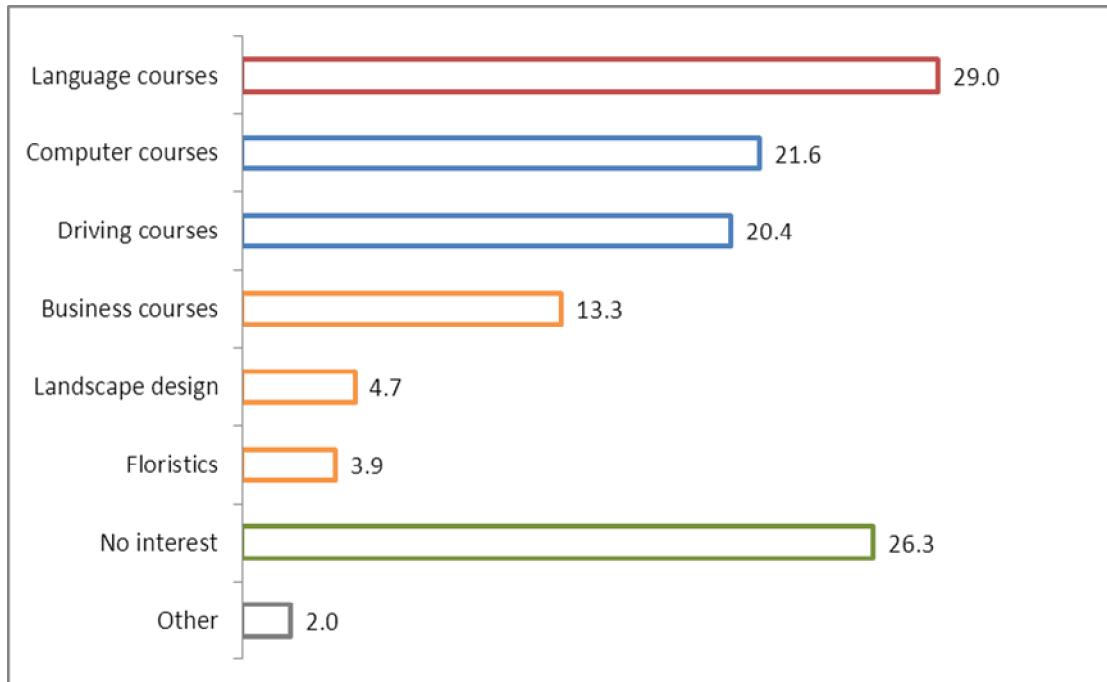


Figure 14. Relevance of programs/courses on the formation of new skills (%),  
(n=400)

The second place by relevance is taken by computer courses (21.6%). And it is clear that this direction is especially important for the middle-aged group (32.1%) and the third age group (21.2%), with the higher (27.8%) and secondary vocational (21.2%) education, an average (21.7%) and high (21.1%) level of income, living primarily in rural areas (31.2%).

Driving courses were defined by respondents as the third most relevant direction (20.4%). Mostly they are indicated by young (35.2%) and middle-aged

people (32.1%), with secondary (30.5%) education, low income (33.3%) living in rural areas (26.0%). That is, it is understandable that such programs are an additional opportunity for this category of people to acquire new skills and use them for further employment, to increase their own chances in the labour market.

Business-courses (13.3%) are relevant for respondents, and they turned out to be more interesting for the representatives of the middle-aged group (17.9%) from rural areas (18.2%). These programs also serve as an opportunity to reorient oneself in the labor market, but rather towards self-employment and starting up one's own business than hired labour.

Final positions by the level of residents' interest are taken by landscape design (4.7%) and floristics (3.9%).

The corresponding advantage of non-formal education is the fact that most of the inhabitants of the region (78.3%) are not ready to spend much time on additional training. 40.7% of residents are willing to spend on training only 1-2 hours a week, and 37.6% – no more than 2-4 hours a week. Only 15.9% of the inhabitants of the region are ready to study 3 days or more weekly (see Figure 15).

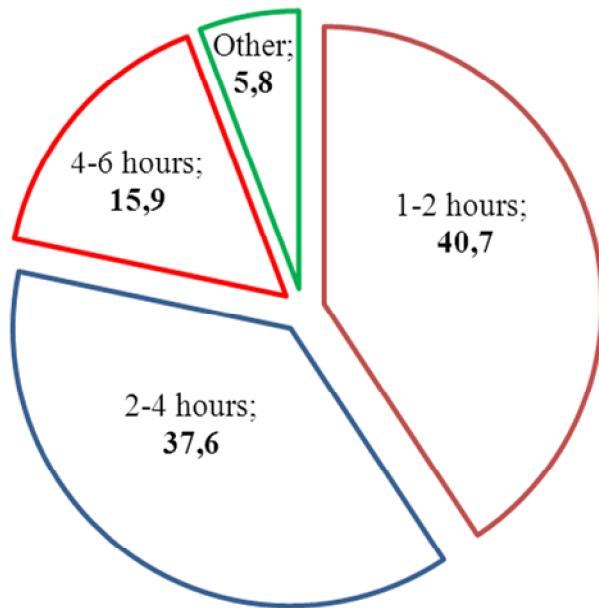


Figure 15. Amount of time (weekly) the residents of the region are willing to spend on training(%), (n=400)

At this, a consistent tendency is observed: with the growth of respondents' age, the amount of time they are willing to spend on learning is decreasing. Thus, among those who are ready to study 4-6 hours a week there are mostly young people (21.5%), and among the category "1-2 hours a week" there are prevailing representatives of the third age (50.7%). Although, it should be noted that both

representatives of young (48.4%) and middle-aged people (47.2%) mostly consider the idea of additional training in the format of 2-4 hours a week. At the same time, there was no any fundamental difference revealed between the inhabitants of the rural area and the city residents during the study.

An important indicator is the awareness of respondents about educational services. In particular, more than half (55.4%) of respondents have enough information about educational services in the region (see Figure 16).

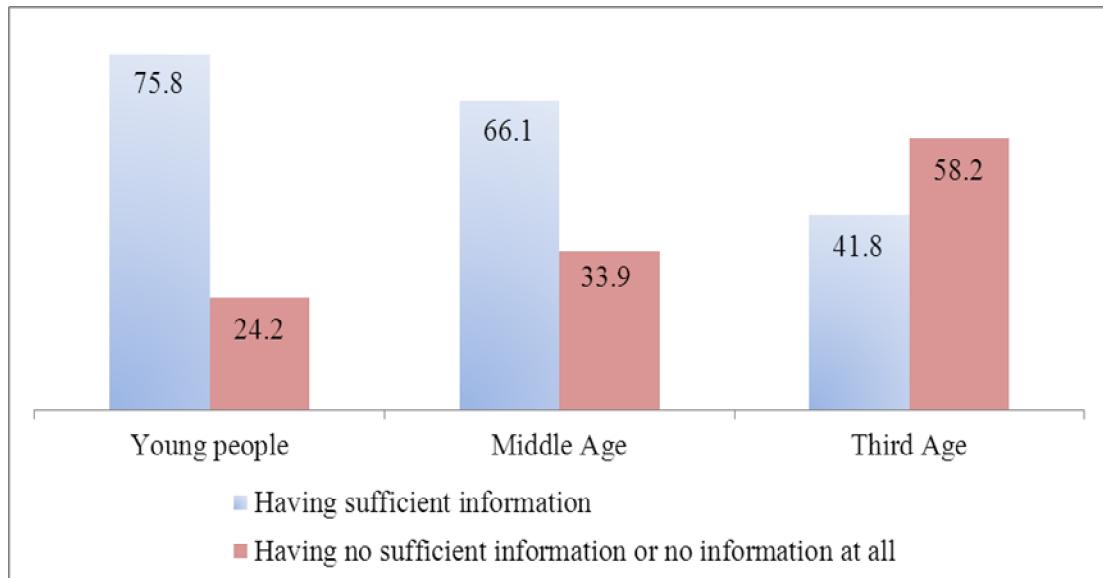


Figure 16. Level of awareness about educational services among different age groups of the region residents (%), (n=400)

In this issue there is also a tendency towards a decrease in the level of awareness with an increase in the age of respondents. Thus, among young people 75.8% have a sufficient level of information on educational services, while more than half of the third age representatives (58.2%) do not have such information. At the same time, again, the place of residence does not matter, since the level of awareness turned out to be independent of this factor.

The inhabitants of the region mostly get information from the Internet (62.0%) (see Figure 8). These are mainly young (83.7%) and middle-aged people (77.2%). But, despite the stereotypes available, this source of information is also used by 44.9% of the third age representatives. However, the main source of information for them remains the traditional means of communication (radio, television, newspapers) (43.2%). But for young people and middle-aged people traditional sources of information are no longer relevant, as they are selected by a small percentage of these age categories (16.3% and 19.3% respectively).

One of the most common sources of information is direct information sharing (colleagues, friends, acquaintances) – this way of obtaining information is relevant for all age categories (see Figure 17). Almost a quarter of the inhabitants of the region (24.4%) choose it. But direct professional orientation and advertising through the distribution of promotional products or meetings with educational institutions authorities have low popularity as a source of information. Advertising materials as a way of obtaining information are chosen by only 13.6% of respondents, and meetings with competent persons by only 6.0%. That testifies to either their insignificant efficiency and the lack of trust in them, or poor-quality preparation of materials, meetings and inadequate level of training of the specialists conducting the meetings.

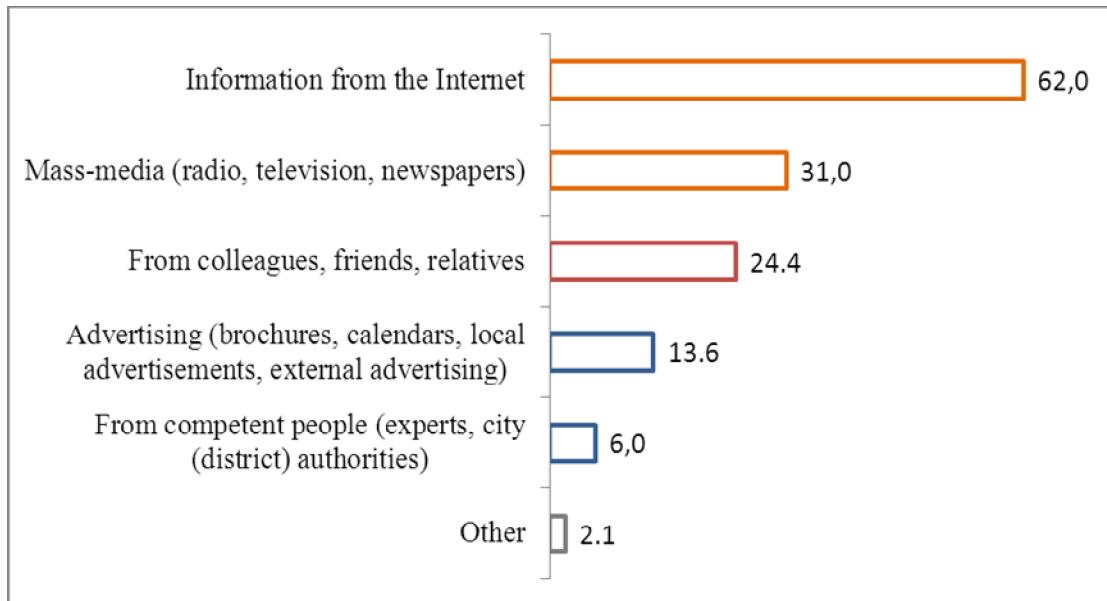


Figure 17. Ratings of sources of information on educational services among the region residents (%), (n=400)

**Conclusions and perspectives of further scientific research.** The results of the survey made it possible to draw such conclusions. First, the general tendency which is characteristic to the responses of all respondents is understanding how important the role of education throughout life is, the priority of educational activities regardless of age, level and profile of previous education, the nature of employment, work experience, income or residence area of respondents. Such understanding is equally relevant among respondents both for ensuring success in a career development, increasing the chances in the labor market, and for adapting to life after the completion of work, social inclusion. Secondly, over the past decade, the interest in getting educational services has increased among the rural population of the region.

The processes of decentralization that are taking place today in Ukraine have been the catalyst for this interest, primarily in the field of civic education, and will further shape the request of rural citizens for educational services. Thirdly, there is an urgent need to create conditions for the updating of knowledge and retraining, which is related to the risk of competitiveness in the labor market; there is a need for modern high-quality educational products, first of all among self-employed persons (entrepreneurs, persons without permanent place of work). At the same time, educational services of sports and recreation, artistic and aesthetic, historical, cultural and psychological directions are in demand.

Among the conclusions that require more attention and further research, there should be noted, firstly, the stereotypes of perception of learning by respondents of all ages and insufficient knowledge of respondents regarding modern organizational forms and teaching methods; more demand for active and practically directed teaching methods from rural residents than from urban ones and interdependence of the chosen direction of non-formal education on the nature of respondents' employment.

The sociological research carried out in the course of the project on identifying the educational needs of Zaporizhzhya region residents and the level of their satisfaction has allowed to identify the factors that influence the development of education in the region, namely: accessibility and interconnection of different levels and forms of education; the need for cooperation and partnership among all stakeholders in the process of regional development, sharing the resources; the need for constant dialogue and use of feedback mechanisms in the development and implementation of regional programs and development strategies; the need to stimulate the development of social partnership by establishing permanent links between different institutions and organizations of formal and non-formal education; the need to expand the volunteer movement in the field of non-formal education; the need to create experimental pilot projects as promising resource centers on management of regional education development. The results of the conducted sociological survey can be used by state institutions and local governments to form a regional education policy, by providers of educational services in the region in order to identify the priority areas of their own activity strategy.