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INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO TRAINING PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS: THE EXPERIENCE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

In the context of globalization and rapid technological advancement, effective project management requires a comprehensive knowledge base across various fields. For project management training, this means that curricula should include elements from disciplines such as economics, marketing, psychology, technology, resource management, and even sociology. In other words, an interdisciplinary approach to training project management professionals is becoming an essential component of educational programs. This approach helps to cultivate a broader understanding of project activities and equips future professionals with the necessary skills to thrive in a modern market economy.

The main outcomes of implementing an interdisciplinary approach in the training of project management specialists include several key aspects. First, it fosters the development of critical thinking and adaptability. This is achieved by cultivating the ability to analyze various aspects of a project. Second, it enhances soft skills, such as communication, leadership, negotiation, and teamwork. Third, it integrates innovative technologies. This is accomplished through gaining knowledge in IT, digital technologies, data analytics, and automation. Finally, it builds psychological preparedness for project management, based on a deep understanding of human behavior. Thus, an interdisciplinary approach increases the competitiveness of project management professionals in the labor market. This approach also better prepares specialists to work across industries, each with its unique project management requirements.

Although an interdisciplinary approach has numerous advantages, it also faces certain challenges. Combining knowledge from different fields requires high levels of

motivation and the ability to learn independently. Additionally, educational institutions must provide high-quality resources, develop programs that meet modern market demands, and involve specialists from various disciplines in the educational process. Despite these challenges, the prospects for developing an interdisciplinary approach in project management training are undoubtedly positive. The demand for specialists who can integrate knowledge and work effectively across different fields is increasing every year.

The European Union (EU) actively supports the integration of an interdisciplinary approach in educational programs through several initiatives and policies. A cornerstone of EU higher education development is the creation of a degree structure system at the European level, which fosters mobility, transparency, and the recognition of qualifications across countries. The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) [1] allows states to compare qualifications and promote learning. According to EQF standards, the professional training of project management specialists involves integrating knowledge from various disciplines. Training programs equip students with critical thinking, decision-making in uncertain conditions, and the ability to apply innovative technologies. This forms the foundation for developing versatile professionals who can succeed in interdisciplinary environments. Many educational institutions in EU countries are actively adopting interdisciplinary approaches in their curricula. For example, the academic programs at Copenhagen Business School (CBS) [2] provide students and professionals with comprehensive education that blends theoretical knowledge with practical application. Students work on real-world projects, developing practical skills – an essential component of modern project management training.

Another successful implementation of the interdisciplinary approach is the European Erasmus+ program, which aims to support the educational, professional, and personal development of EU and non-EU citizens. The program promotes sustainable growth, quality jobs, and social cohesion, fostering innovation and strengthening European identity and active citizenship. Erasmus+ helps future project

management professionals gain experience across different disciplines and cultural contexts, nurturing interdisciplinary thinking. At the European level, the Erasmus+ program aligns with the priorities set in the European Education Area, the Digital Education Action Plan, and the European Skills Agenda [3].

The Digital Education Action Plan for 2021–2027 focuses on developing digital skills and competencies necessary for equal access to digital infrastructure, improving job prospects, and fostering active citizenship [4]. Two strategic priorities are emphasized: creating a highly effective digital education ecosystem and improving digital skills for digital transformation [5]. Digital transformation in project management enables organizations to handle more projects due to improved data management and quicker decision-making [6]. Developing digital competencies through technologies such as data analytics, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity is crucial for an interdisciplinary approach. Project management professionals must be proficient in using modern digital tools to successfully implement projects.

A key EU program for funding research and innovation that embraces interdisciplinary approaches is Horizon Europe [7]. Through this program, the EU supports research aimed at integrating various disciplines into specialist training. This fosters the development of new methodologies and approaches to project management based on the interaction between science, business, and technology. As a result, an interdisciplinary approach to project management training in the EU has become a vital component of modern educational policy. It facilitates the integration of knowledge from different fields, the development of both technical and soft skills, and the preparation of professionals capable of adapting to contemporary challenges.

Through Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, and digital education initiatives, the EU is establishing a framework for training specialists who meet the demands of the global economy. Ukraine is actively integrating into the European community and has significant potential to adopt an interdisciplinary approach in project management training. The EU's experience demonstrates that integrating knowledge from diverse fields—such as economics, technology, social sciences, and the humanities—is

essential for developing competent professionals who can thrive in a complex, rapidly evolving environment.

The adoption of EQF-like standards will enhance the quality of project management education, enabling Ukrainian diplomas to gain international recognition and increasing the competitiveness of Ukrainian specialists. Participation by Ukrainian universities in Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, and other European initiatives will facilitate the incorporation of interdisciplinary knowledge into curricula, giving Ukrainian students access to international experience and best practices in project management. Furthermore, Ukraine should intensify collaboration between universities and businesses to create interdisciplinary, practice-oriented curricula, better preparing students for real-world work environments and fostering professional networks.

Additionally, Ukraine should continue to integrate modern information technology into project management programs. The country has many opportunities to successfully adapt European practices to its national context. The implementation of an interdisciplinary approach to project management training will represent a significant step toward improving the quality of Ukrainian education and enhancing its standing in the global labor market.

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