



**WP2**  
**DESK REVIEW PANEL SUMMARY REPORT**  
**Curriculum Audit Team**  
**Lead Organisation — Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv**

**1. List of Members of the Panel**

	<b>Partner Organisation</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
1	P1   Bath Spa University (BSU)	Paul Hyland
2	P2   Adam Mickiewicz University (AMU)	Tomasz Branka
3	P3   Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT)	David Quin
4	P4   Linnaeus University (LNU)	Veronika Menjoun
5	P5   World University Service (WUS)	Veronika Nitsche Marc Schwaerzli
6	P6   Ethnical Journalism Network (EJN)	Danica Illic
7	P7   European Journalism Training Association (EJTA)	Nico Drok
8	P8   Bohdan Khmelnytsky National University of Cherkasy (BKNUC)	Tetiana Bondarenko
9	P9   A.S.D. International University of Economics and Humanities (IUEH)	Olha Mitchuk
10	P10   Ivan Franko National University of Lviv (IFNUL)	Yuliana Lavrysh
11	P11   Mariupol State University (MSU)	Svitlana Bezchotnikova
12	P12   Sumy State University (SSU)	Olena Tkachenko
13	P13   Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (TSNUK)	Volodymyr Rizun
14	P14   Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU)	Iurii Opoka
15	P15   Uzhhorod National University (UZHNU)	Yuriy Bidzilya
16	P16   Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University (CHNU)	Liubov Vasylyk

17	P17   Zaporizhzhia National University (ZNU)	Viktor Kostiuk
18	P18   Ukrainian Students Association (UAS)	Lidiia Fesenko
19	P19   Hromadske Radio (HR)	Nataliia Klochun

## 2. List of Documents Received

A desk review of programmes of the Ukrainian universities is based on the analysis of the following documents:

1. Curricula which comprise the list of subjects for Bachelor's and Master's programmes.
2. Analytical form with the programme description filled in by the representatives from the partner universities.
3. Student views on the programmes
4. Graduate views.
5. Employer views on the quality of student training provided by universities.

The data have been entered in the electronic forms and based on the forms the program generated the summary data for analysis. Reporting documents have been sent to the DRP members.

## 3. Curriculum Data: observations on findings

The received data, the survey findings, quantitative and qualitative assessment of the programmes including the curricula in different universities provide the basis for conclusions and recommendations on the current state of journalists' training in Ukraine. The report will outline the overall trends which reflect the characteristics of higher journalism education in Ukraine.

### 3.1. Summary Data (Questions 1-8)

We summarize the data on Bachelor's and Master's programmes in the following conclusions.

1. The Bachelor's degree programmes equate to 240 credits earned by students over 4 years (3 years and 10 months). A year of study comprises a total of 60 credits. Master's degree programmes largely equate to 90 credits over 18 months of study. Taking into account the fact that one credit represents 30 hours of class-time and private study time, many course descriptions contain mistakes of purely technical nature made during the data entry, when the number of class hours and private study hours is different from 1800 (60 credits, 30 hours each). It can be a technical mistake or a demonstration of the specially organised educational process, which involves the unequal distribution of study hours and therefore students' time. It's quite possible that during the data entry, work placements and orientation practice were counted separately. However, they should not be separated from the educational process.

2. Another important observation relates to the number of students on the programmes: generally, the number tends to be shortening, especially on Master's programmes. Therefore, it's essential to revise the curricula and take fresh approaches to designing a new concept of journalism education in Ukraine enhancing the attractiveness of Bachelor's, and more importantly, Master's journalism programmes.
3. The third conclusion is related to the proportion of students' class hours and private study hours. It is different which shows different approaches of higher education institutions to the proportion of private study and class hours. All disciplines in the curriculum have a stable correlation between class hours and private study time. That proportion is not always reasonable for certain disciplines. It should be noted that students' views on studies suggest that there's a need for a more systematic control over the use of time given for private study.

### ***3.2. Curriculum Questions (Questions 1-12)***

Based on the findings we can conclude that most programmes have no external accreditation. Some programmes are accredited by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, but the Ministry does not provide professional accreditation, i.e. does not decide a correlation between the educational process and the needs of professional sphere as the main client for the graduates' competencies.

An important general conclusion from a desk review of curricula is that the Bachelor's programmes are designed to form professional competences, while Master's programmes are additionally focused on scientific research and, sometimes, on teaching in the field. In addition, we should mention that a list of competencies, built by programmes mainly correlates with the draft standard for education which is currently going through the approval process in departments of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and the National Commission for Higher Education Quality. It should be stressed that most programmes have specializations and provide a narrow range of professional skills, typically chosen by a student.

Most programmes allow students to choose disciplines in curricula of other academic programmes. Some universities can provide this opportunity using a special instrument – the Catalogue of Optional Programmes and different electronic resources at the university level, which clearly demonstrates the implementation of the European approach to organizing the process of discipline selection. Simultaneously, it worth noting that curricula don't always comply with the provision of the Law of Ukraine "On Education" on the 25% minimum of selective disciplines comprising 60 credits out of 240 for the Bachelor's curriculum and 22.5 out of 90 or 30 out of 120 credits for the Master's curriculum. In addition, a large number of academic programmes limit one way or another students' choice e.g. by recommending specific disciplines.

Coordination of programmes in the environment of clients and consumers of education services, which is generally not systematic, is based on the initiatives on

the part of some teachers or the university administration. The same goes for keeping the records of graduates' successful performance, their high employability and participation in programmes revision. We should mention that for the full implementation of these processes, the universities need to develop and adopt some academic policy procedures not only for formal but also for a real participation of students and graduates, employers and trade unions in creating the best possible educational programmes, especially taking into account experience of other universities', both national and foreign. No programme exists outside of the society, and our survey has shown that Ukrainian universities have already made first steps in this direction. However, it's too early to speak about systematic results.

The description of the programme was meant to show how departments, institutes and universities envision the results of their participation in the DESTIN project. Having analyzed the answers, we can see the overall orientation towards optimizing the educational programmes from the perspective of the European education standards, using national and international experience in journalism education, improving professional communication of media educators for developing new, effective approaches to training journalists.

#### **4. Student and Employer Views: observations on findings**

The views of students, graduates and employers were collected for the purpose of evaluation of the programmes to be optimized by the DESTIN project. It should be noted that not all planned questionnaires were completed at the time of compiling the report, specifically, the survey of students and graduates has not been closed yet, students are still adding their questionnaires, so are the employers. Nevertheless, the data received so far are illustrative enough to outline the key trends in the evaluation of educational programmes from the point of view of direct participants as well as employers.

##### ***4.1. Summary Data (Qs 1-6)***

At the time of preparing the report 534 students, 369 graduates and 89 employers completed the questionnaire. We should point out that students from not all universities were willing to take part in the survey in equal proportions. The available data, however, indicate common problems arising in Ukrainian universities while training journalists.

##### ***4.2 Curriculum (Qs 7-14)***

Students rank high the opportunities offered to them by the academic programmes. On average, 75-80% of students think that current programmes help to develop their creative, intellectual and leadership skills and form professional competences.

Training facilities, especially for studying new media, television and radio were assessed as average. Such results are understandable and expected in most Ukrainian universities.

It should be noted that the rating clearly indicates students' limited right of choice of disciplines or formal recognition of these rights. Whether students take

into account the requirements of current legislation related to the number of students in a group, the student-teacher ratio etc. we don't know, but these views are representative and require special attention of the DESTIN projects members.

#### ***4.3. Assessment (Qs 15-21)***

In our survey findings we observe a curious paradox – the system of assessment criteria is thought to be clear, students' competencies are mostly evaluated as objective, students find ways to get a feedback from teachers but the assessment system and the overall impression about the programme generally received low ratings.

An important students' request relating to the revision of programmes was to increase the amount of practical training and teaching more practical job-related skills. At the same time, the increased amount of practical training is not a very clear recommendation. Student and graduate views suggest that our student audience is not willing to make the most of their studies, to take active participation in planning the academic process, to learn competences required for further employment. This audience sticks to the serve-it-all-to-me principle: practice, more practice, even more practice, new forms of learning, new projects, meeting with practitioners etc. This, however, does not guarantee a successful professional career.

Also we safely assume that students do not see the system in education, because we do not hear them talking about changes in concept or approaches, maybe, because they are not ready to realize that they need them. At least administrations of departments and universities should pay attention and take appropriate measures: publish the concept, revise the system's learning outcomes and competences of graduates, provide flexibility of studying (e.g. individual learning plans)

#### ***4.4. Summary of Views (Qs. 22-23)***

Students' views on the level of knowledge are mostly positive. The acquired skills, opportunities for development provided by the academic programmes give a chance to fulfill every student's potential. The number of negative responses from students is relatively small and as a rule the main problems lie in the assessment system, the opportunities to select disciplines, training facilities in the academic process. The content of training and programmes does not provoke negative response from students and graduates but the students' views on the quality of programmes show that we need to shift the focus onto the competence development.

### **5. Employer Views and Advice: observations on findings**

Employers' recommendations are quite homogenous, and this homogeneity is representative for the evaluation of the work of all Ukrainian universities which, in turn, shows common grounds for organizing journalism training in Ukraine.

It should be noted that universities actively try to cooperate with employers engaging practitioners into the academic process, organizing and giving practical trainings, participating in media projects aimed to develop professional skills of students and teachers.

Over 92% of employers who took part in the survey employed university graduates. The total evaluation of students' workplace preparedness on a scale from one to ten, where 1 means "absolutely unprepared", whereas 10 means "perfectly prepared" is quite representative: 69% of respondents rated "8", "9" and "10".

Employers' recommendations on improving the academic programmes coincide with students' requests: more practice, practical assignments and practical classes. At the same time it should be stressed that employers' recommendations are more specific, aimed at filling the gaps in professional competences essential for working in journalism.

## **6. SWOT Analysis: observations on findings**

The desk review of the programmes which takes into account student, graduate and employer views was summarized into categories that are more or less typical for all journalism programmes in Ukraine. Of course, there can be some differences and the need for clarifications but the report fully reflects the overall trends in the journalism education in Ukraine.

### **6.1. Strengths**

1. Journalism training is based on general systematic principles of organizing the academic process – 240 credits for BA qualification and 90-120 credits for Master's.
2. General and professional competencies outlined in educational programmes lie within the sphere of practical needs of professional field and therefore are thought after.
3. Graduates show high employment rates in their professional field (at least in those universities which keep such records).
4. The quality of graduates' training is highly rated by employers.
5. Competencies developed on journalism programmes generally correlate with the EQF.

### **6.2. Weaknesses**

1. While having some differences in different universities, journalism programmes still have much in common but it doesn't give reason to say that there are some unique specialized programmes. This is particularly true for Master's programmes, chosen by students with the basic Bachelor's degree in other specializations. Universalisation reduces competition of such programmes on the market of education services.
2. Ukrainian journalism programmes have a problem with practical training – students and graduates stress its absence, but the curricula show a sufficient number of such disciplines.
3. Not active cooperation between the university and employers in designing and delivering educational programmes.
4. Lack of clear standards in training and approaches to creating a professional competences profile of a graduate.

### **6.3. Threats**

1. The growing competitiveness of European universities, mostly Polish and German.
2. Decrease in the number of students, especially on Master's programmes.
3. The quality of practical training of graduates does not correlate with the number of practical disciplines (in title and content).
4. The implementation of European education standards can be declaratory.
5. Studying in Ukrainian universities does not train for cooperation with international broadcasters (except for some specialized programmes).
6. Lack of professional standard and a lengthy process of educational standard approval blur the lines of students' professional training: between purely linguistic training focused on producing texts and clearly technological, focused on working with the form of the information delivery not with creating new information products.

### **6.4. Opportunities**

1. Development of educational programmes in the context of the European Qualifications Framework.
2. Building a system of competences which will correlate with the European academic and professional standards.
3. Optimizing cooperation between students and teachers, creating an atmosphere of cooperation.
4. Improving the assessment system and ensuring transparency in using criteria for such assessment.
5. Laying the groundwork for systematic collaboration with graduates, employers and trade unions.
6. Designing new concepts for student training based on the right correlation between theoretical and practical components of the academic process.
7. Developing a balanced personnel policy in Ukrainian universities, particularly, in such areas as training and professional development of teachers from Journalism departments.

## **7. Key Findings and Recommendations**

The following report is subject to further discussion, clarification and reflection upon the phenomena in current media education observed during the implementation of the project. The research data, reviews and recommendations will be material for further extensive academic research since they reflect the specifics of the current stage of journalism education development. More importantly though, these findings will help to create new approaches and concepts of studying journalism in the system of European Higher Education Area.

We think that the most important result of the desk review of the programmes in the DESTIN project is the realization that communication carried out on different levels in journalism education process needs substantial upgrading. What we mean

is the improvement of communication between teachers and students, the university administration, graduates and employers, professional field and universities. It is not so much about the potential and possibilities of communication – they already exist and are realized from time to time and the representatives of these groups in an academic process are more or less open for communication – we talk about the right systematic initiatives based on the needs of professional environment and the training for it.

The lack of such initiatives demonstrates indifference of professional field to professional standards of a journalist and this, in turn, allows people without proper education, training and practical experience, without the right competences and knowledge to work in the field. And lack of systematic communication with employers (at the level of programme approval and types of students' training) deepens the indifferent attitude of professional field to career training even more.

This leads to 2 serious conclusions. 1. Lack of communication between institutions of higher education and the media always means lack of communication between administrations of both structures, particularly among people who make decisions; therefore, it's urgent in the process of implementation of the DESTIN project to make every effort to improve the situation. 2. Graduate and employer views suggest that in the hiring, students undergo additional training to get practical job-related techniques and skills. Basically, we talk about integration of employees with the media field, structuring their activities according to the editorial policy, internal, often classified standards, which is not always fair in the context of quality training of students and sufficient practical and theoretical training of students for professional activity. Often such 're-training' can go beyond the limits of common journalism standards. On the other hand, demand for re-training can be a hidden reason of indifference of professional environment to what's going on within the walls of departments and universities.

The implementation of the DESTIN project provides plenty of serious, objective solutions to challenges facing the today's journalism education in Ukraine. Simultaneously, this project is the best way to integrate Ukrainian media education with the European education space.

This project has been co-funded with support from the European Commission. This information reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.