

Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine

Ukraine's experience in national-patriotic education of children and young people

The Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine is the main body in the system of central bodies of executive power, which ensures the formation and implementation of state policy in the field of national and patriotic education and pays strategic attention to this area. A department of national and patriotic education has been established in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, which directly carries out this activity.

For the purpose of developing national consciousness in society, forming a sense of patriotism based on spirituality and morality, popularizing the spiritual and cultural heritage of the Ukrainian people, as well as intensifying the interaction of state authorities, local self-government bodies, and public associations in matters of national and patriotic education by Decree of the President of Ukraine dated May 18, 2019 No. 286/2019 approved the Strategy of National Patriotic Education (hereafter - the Strategy).

According to the Strategy, in Ukraine national-patriotic education is one of the priority directions of the state and society for the development of national consciousness based on social-state (national) values (identity, freedom, unity, dignity), the formation of citizens' sense of patriotism, respect for the Constitution and the laws of Ukraine, social activity and responsibility for assigned state and public affairs, readiness to fulfil the duty to protect the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and adherence to European values.

The Strategy defines the priority and main directions of national-patriotic education, in particular children and youth, the development of relevant institutions of the state and society, ensuring the content of national-patriotic education, and indicators of the effectiveness of national-patriotic education.

Several regulatory and legal documents in the field of national-patriotic education have been approved for the implementation of the Strategy.

The Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 932, dated October 9, 2020, approved the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Patriotic Education Strategy for 2020-2025 (hereafter - the Action Plan), which defines several implementation measures that will ensure the achievement of the Strategy's goal.

The measures of the Action Plan provide for the improvement of the legal framework for national-patriotic education, the organization and improvement of the system of military-patriotic education, the organization, and coordination of informational and educational work in the field of national-patriotic education, ensuring the proper organization of research and methodical work in the field of national-patriotic education, ensuring coordinated activities in the said field.

Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 673, dated June 30, 2021, approved the State targeted social program of national and patriotic education for the period until 2025 (hereafter - the Program).

The purpose of the Program is to improve and develop a comprehensive national policy of national-patriotic education through the formation and affirmation of Ukrainian civic identity based on unified social-state (national) values (identity, freedom, unity, dignity) and universal human values, principles of love and pride for one's country, its history, language, and achievements in the field of culture, economy, science, sports, effective assistance to state authorities and local authorities in the protection and protection of the national statehood of the Ukrainian people, to the protection of state independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine, awareness of civic duty from the development of a successful country and ensuring one's well-being in it.

The program defines the priorities of the sphere of national and patriotic education:

- formation of Ukrainian civic identity.
- military and patriotic education.
- formation of scientific-methodological and methodical foundations of national-patriotic education.
- support and cooperation of state authorities and local self-government bodies with institutions of civil society regarding national and patriotic education.

Similar programs of national and patriotic education have been approved in each region of Ukraine.

To participate in the assessment of the effectiveness of state policy in the field of national-patriotic education, to ensure the coordination of the activities of executive authorities on issues of national-patriotic education, by Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 320 dated April 7, 2023, a consultative and advisory body of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine - the Coordination Council of the Establishment of Ukrainian National and Civic Identity which based on the previously active Interdepartmental Commission on National and Patriotic Education.

The same coordination councils have been established in each region of Ukraine at local executive bodies, and local self-government bodies to coordinate the activities of the subjects of relations in the field in the relevant territory.

Annually, for the implementation of the Program and other legal documents in the field of national-patriotic education, the Ministry of Youth and Sports approves a calendar plan of activities for the national-patriotic education of youth, following which together with the structural units for youth and sports of the regional and Kyiv city state administrations and public organizations all-Ukrainian measures of national-patriotic education are implemented.

So, for example, in 2021, 26 all-Ukrainian events of national and patriotic education were implemented, in which more than 2,000 people from different regions of Ukraine took part, the total coverage of which was more than 300,000 people.

The measures taken were aimed at the implementation of priority tasks:

- establishment of constructive interaction between the subjects of national-patriotic education.
- training of specialists in national-patriotic education and development of the system of training activists, volunteers who work in the field of national-patriotic education.
- increasing the number of young people ready to fulfil the duty of protecting the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine;
- commemoration of the heroes of the struggle of the Ukrainian people for the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine
- organization of informational and educational work in the field of national and patriotic education
- increasing the number of young people who are proud of their Ukrainian origin and citizenship
- popularization of the Ukrainian language.
- creation of favourable conditions for the activity of the Union of Ukrainian Youth, which resumed its activities in Ukraine after gaining independence.

A sociological study was also conducted on the development of the sphere of national-patriotic education and the state of formation of the civic identity of the population of Ukraine with the aim of a systematic analysis of problems in the field of national-patriotic education, the formation of well-founded priorities and strategic directions for the implementation of state policy in the field that considers the modern needs and requests of Ukrainian youth.

To provide financial support for programs (projects, activities) developed by civil society institutes, the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 1049 of October 12, 2011, approved the Procedure for conducting a competition to identify programs (projects, activities) developed by civil society institutes, for the implementation of which financial support is provided support.

One of the priority activities of the Ministry of Youth and Sports is interaction with institutions of civil society. Every year since 2018, the Ministry of Youth and Sports announces and conducts a competition for national-patriotic education projects developed by civil society institutions, for the implementation of which financial support is provided.

Thus, in 2021, civil society institutes implemented 34 projects of national-patriotic education in eight priority areas:

- to form Ukrainian civic identity based on social-state (national) values (identity, freedom, unity, dignity).
- to increase the number of young people ready to fulfil the duty to protect the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine.
- to increase the role of the Ukrainian language as a national value and an important attribute of national identity.

- to overcome the linguistic and cultural low self-worth of Ukrainians.
- to increase the level of knowledge about outstanding figures of Ukrainian state-building, and fighters for the independence of Ukraine by conducting national-patriotic activities, including public holidays.
- to popularize and preserve the cultural heritage and cultural values of Ukraine.
- to convey to Ukrainians abroad the content (essence) of Ukrainian social and state values.
- to deepen cooperation with representatives of Ukrainians abroad in the field of national-patriotic education.

More than 360,000 people from different regions of Ukraine participated in the projects of civil society institutes. Similar contests for national-patriotic education projects developed by civil society institutes, for the implementation of which financial support is provided, are announced and held in every region of Ukraine. In cooperation with the Ministry of Digital Information of Ukraine and partners, the service of electronic contests on the VzayemoDiya platform has been launched. From 2022, all stages - from the start of the competition to the selection of winners are taking place online.

In 2022, in connection with the full-scale armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and the introduction of martial law the tools for implementing the policy in the field of national and patriotic education were reformatted. The projects and events planned for the beginning of 2022 were difficult to implement during martial law with the appropriate level of safety of the participants, so the Ministry of Youth and Sports started the development of the large-scale online project "United Ukraine".

The "United Ukraine" project is aimed at the formation of Ukrainian civic identity among the population based on socio-state (national) values (identity, freedom, unity, dignity), increasing the level of knowledge about the centuries-old history of the struggle for independence and unity of Ukraine, its heroes, fathers of the Ukrainian state, overcoming post-colonial and post-totalitarian consequences in the minds of people, deepening knowledge of the recent history of Ukraine - its European choice and Ukrainians' devotion to European values.

In total, three fourteen-day marathons took place in 2022, in which about 1,000 people participated (mostly internally displaced persons from the eastern and southern regions of Ukraine, as well as Ukrainians currently living abroad) and covered a total of more than 30,000.

In the conditions of new threats caused by the military invasion of the Russian Federation in 2022, the Ministry of Youth and Sports implemented a series of All-Ukrainian events "Civil Défense" intending to increase the number of young people ready to fulfil the duty of protecting the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine, forming defence awareness, developing basic skills in providing the civilian population with pre-medical treatment in case of armed aggression and corresponding threats.

Also, one of the areas of work of the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine in the field of national-patriotic education is the improvement of the personnel training system

of specialists, activists, and volunteers who deal with issues of national-patriotic education.

In 2022, an All-Ukrainian school aimed at training specialists in national-patriotic education and developing a system of training activists and volunteers working in the field of national-patriotic education was held. In particular, the training and preparation of trainers-educators, and public activists from various regions of Ukraine for the organization and holding of national-patriotic games for young people, including the All-Ukrainian children and youth military-patriotic game "Sokil" ("Jura").

All-Ukrainian children's and youth military-patriotic game "Sokil" ("Jura») (hereafter - the Game) is a systematic form of national-patriotic education of children and youth in Ukraine, an important means of civic education, formation of national-patriotic consciousness. The Game is conducted to educate patriotic citizens, defenders of the state independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine as highly moral individuals who nurture Ukrainian traditions and spiritual values, possess relevant knowledge, abilities, and skills, able to realize their potential in the conditions of modern society.

The organizer of the Game is the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, which provides general management of the Game. The Ministry of Youth and Sports trains public activists (organizers, educators, volunteers) to organize educational work in the Game, and ensures their participation in relevant mass events. Today, because of the full-scale war with the Russian aggressor, the issue of national-patriotic education in Ukraine has become even more important.

At its meeting on December 13, 2022, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (Parliament) adopted Law of Ukraine No. 2834-IX "On the Basic Principles of State Policy in the Field of Establishing Ukrainian National and Civic Identity" (hereafter - the Law). The Law defines the purpose, tasks, principles, directions, and features of the formation and implementation of state policy in the sphere of the establishment of Ukrainian national and civil identity as a component of ensuring the national security of Ukraine, guaranteeing the participation of citizens of Ukraine, Ukrainians abroad, public associations and other institutions of civil society in its implementation, determines the powers of state authorities and local self-government bodies in this area.

The Law also provides for the development and adoption of a cycle of normative legal acts necessary for its implementation. The Ministry of Youth and Sports is defined as the central body of the executive power, which ensures the formation and implementation of state policy in the sphere of the establishment of Ukrainian national and civic identity. Therefore, with the adoption of the Law, a new stage of work in the development of the sphere of affirmation of Ukrainian national and civil identity as the basis of Ukraine's national security began.