

EDUCATIONAL RISKS AS AN ACTUALIZATION FACTOR OF THE UKRAINIAN STUDENTSHIP'S PROFESSIONAL SELF-REALIZATION RISKS

Liudmyla Sokurianska

*Doctor of Science (Sociology), Full Professor, Head of the Department of Sociology
V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, 4 Svobody Sq., Kharkiv, 61022, Ukraine,
e-mail: sokuryanska@karazin.ua; ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4097-952X>*

Людмила Сокурянська

*доктор соціологічних наук, професор, завідувачка кафедри соціології Харківського національного
університету імені В. Н. Каразіна, майдан Свободи, 4, Харків, 61022, Україна,
e-mail: sokuryanska@karazin.ua; ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4097-952X>*

Aleksandra Deineko

*PhD of Sociology, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, 4
Svobody Sq., Kharkiv, 61022, Ukraine,
e-mail: snosocio@gmail.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3659-0861>*

Олександра Дейнеко

*кандидат соціологічних наук, доцент кафедри соціології Харківського національного університету
імені В. Н. Каразіна, майдан Свободи, 4, Харків, 61022, Україна,
e-mail: snosocio@gmail.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3659-0861>*

The article analyzes the factors of actualization and possible ways of minimizing / overcoming the national university graduates' risks of professional self-realization. Particular attention is paid to analyzing the role of educational risks in reproducing the Ukrainian students' risks of professional self-realization. Authors' definitions of concepts such as «risk», «educational risks», «risks of professional self-realization», «social subjectness of the person» are given. There are three levels of factors and manifestation the Ukrainian students' risks of professional self-realization (macro-, meso-, micro-). Based on the results of sociological research carried out by the Department of Sociology V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University during 2000 – 2016, including those obtained through the use of methods of intellectual data analysis, the authors analyze three models of risk strategies (strategy of minimizing, strategy of transferring and a risk-avoidance strategy), the basis for the selection of which are socio-professional plans of Ukrainian students. The social-cultural portraits of students who have chosen one or another strategy to minimize the risks of professional self-fulfillment are depicted. It turns out that the complex capitalization of the agent (cultural, educational, professional, economic, social, identification) and his own subjectness are necessary components of successful coping with the risks of different levels. At the macro-social level, the authors analyze the phenomenon of the «situation of scissors,» which creates an institutional imbalance between the labor market in Ukraine and the system of higher education. There are two strategies for minimizing professional self-realization risks at the national level – paternalistic, which involves active state intervention in solving this problem, and a liberal one aimed at increasing academic freedoms of higher education, expanding their ability to respond promptly to the challenges of the contemporary labor market. The authors draw attention to the need of improving the state educational and economic policy taking into account the actual risks of professional self-actualization of graduates of the national higher education.

Keywords: risk, educational risks, risks of professional self-realization, students, social subjectness, risk-strategy, «situation of scissors», labor market.

У статті аналізуються чинники актуалізації та можливі шляхи мінімізації / подолання ризиків професійної самореалізації випускників вітчизняної вищої школи. Особлива увага приділяється аналізу ролі освітніх ризиків у відтворенні ризиків професійної самореалізації українського студентства. Надаються авторські визначення таких понять, як «ризик», «освітні ризики», «ризики професійної самореалізації», «соціальна суб'єктність особистості». Визначаються три рівні факторів та прояву ризиків професійної самореалізації вихованців українських вишів (макро-, мезо-, мікро-). Спираючись на результати соціологічних досліджень, здійснених кафедрою соціології Харківського національного університету імені В. Н. Каразіна протягом 2000 – 2016 р.р., у тому числі отримані завдяки використанню методів інтелектуального аналізу даних, авторки аналізують три моделі ризик-стратегій (стратегія протистояння, стратегія страхування і стратегія ігнорування), основою для виокремлення яких є соціально-професійні плани українського студентства. Змальовуються соціокультурні портрети студентів, які обрали ту чи іншу стратегію мінімізації ризиків професійної самореалізації. Доводиться, що комплексна капіталізація агента (культурна, освітня, професійна, економічна, соціальна, ідентифікаційна) і його власна суб'єктність є необхідними складовими успішного протистояння ризикам різних рівнів. На макросоціальному рівні автори аналізують феномен «ситуації ножиць», що створює інституційний дисбаланс між ринком праці в Україні і системою вищої освіти. Пропонуються дві стратегії мінімізації ризиків професійної самореалізації на загальнодержавному рівні – патерналістська, яка передбачає активне втручання держави у вирішення цієї проблеми, та ліберальна, що спрямована на збільшення академічних свобод вишів, розширення їхніх можливостей оперативного реагувати на виклики сучасного ринку праці. Автори звертають увагу на необхідність удосконалення державної освітньої та економічної політики з урахуванням актуальних ризиків професійної самореалізації випускників вітчизняної вищої школи.

Ключові слова: ризик, освітні ризики, ризики професійної самореалізації, студентство, соціальна суб'єктність, ризик-стратегії, «ситуація ножиць», ринок праці.

В статье проанализированы факторы актуализации и возможные пути минимизации/преодоления рисков профессиональной самореализации выпускников отечественной высшей школы. Особое внимание уделено анализу роли образовательных рисков в воспроизведении рисков профессиональной самореализации украинского студенчества. Предоставлены авторские определения таких понятий, как «риск», «образовательные риски», «риски профессиональной самореализации», «социальная субъектность личности». Определены три уровня факторов и проявления рисков профессиональной самореализации воспитанников украинских вузов (макро-, мезо-, микро-). Опираясь на результаты социологических исследований, проведенных кафедрой социологии Харьковского национального университета имени В. Н. Каразина в течение 2000 – 2016 г.г., в том числе полученные благодаря использованию методов интеллектуального анализа данных, авторы анализируют три модели риск-стратегий (стратегия противостояния, стратегия страхования и стратегия игнорирования), основой для выделения которых является социально-профессиональные планы украинского студенчества. Изображены социокультурные портреты студентов, выбравших ту или иную стратегию минимизации рисков профессиональной самореализации. Доказано, что комплексная капитализация агента (культурная, образовательная, профессиональная, экономическая, социальная, идентификационная) и его собственная субъектность являются необходимыми составляющими успешного противостояния рискам различных уровней. На макросоциальном уровне авторы анализируют феномен «ситуации ножниц», которая создает институциональный дисбаланс между рынком труда в Украине и системой высшего образования. Предлагаются две стратегии минимизации рисков профессиональной самореализации на общегосударственном уровне – патерналистская, которая предусматривает активное вмешательство государства в решение этой проблемы, и либеральная, направленная на увеличение академических свобод вузов, расширение их возможностей оперативно реагировать на вызовы современного рынка труда. Авторы обращают внимание на необходимость усовершенствования государственной образовательной и экономической политики с учетом актуальных рисков профессиональной самореализации выпускников отечественной высшей школы.

Ключевые слова: риск, образовательные риски, риски профессиональной самореализации, студенчество, социальная субъектность, риск-стратегии, «ситуация ножниц», рынок труда.

According to numerous sociological studies, including those carried out by V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University Sociological Department during 2000-2016¹, the processes of postmodernization of contemporary societies, in particular Ukrainian, put forward the value of self-realization on leading positions in the structure of value orientations of student youth. Research and social practice indicate a contradiction between the high level of orientation of contemporary students for self-realization, including the professional, and his available resources for implementing this value at home in the Motherland, forcing graduates to look for work abroad. This problematic situation highlights the need for a special study aimed at identifying possible ways of overcoming / mitigating this contradiction both at the individual and national level.

Consequently, the relevance of the study of the problem we have chosen is due to the fact that the risks of professional self-actualization of higher educational institutions graduates activate the processes of «brain drain», that significantly weakens the intellectual potential of our country, as well as provokes social tension.

Determining the degree of elaboration of the chosen problem, we note that the analysis of foreign studies shows that the problem of the self-actualization risks of higher education graduates is global. Among the European researchers, our attention was attracted by V. Cuzzocrea, who, studying the problems of professional self-realization of youth, presents two professional strategies - the strategy of «youth squeezing» and the strategy of «youth prolonging». Among the factors influencing the formation of these strategies, V. Cuzzocrea suggests such as a family pattern and the peculiarities of youth upbringing in different European countries [1]. The theoretical and empirical studies of such Russian scientists as O. Omelchenko, Y. Zubok, V. Chuprov, P. Borisova, M. Bulanova deserve special attention within the framework of research of these problems etc. (read, for example: [2,3,4,5]). Thus, O. Omelchenko, using the sociocultural approach and methodology of qualitative research, emphasizes the role of youth subcultures as the basis for self-realization of youth [2]. Y. Zubok and V. Chuprov, us-

ing an institutional approach to studying the social development of young people, analyze the impact on young professional's employment the factors related to the risks in the field of youth education, with its vocational training, with conflicts in the labor market [3, 4].

The *purpose* of this publication is to determine the role of educational risks in restoring the risks of professional self-realization of contemporary Ukrainian students, as well as possible strategies for their minimization on the macro- and microsocial level.

Realizing this goal, first of all we will turn to the definition of the main concepts of our study: «educational risks», «risks of professional self-realization», «risk-strategy», «social subjectness of the person».

Trying to formulate the author's definition of the concept of «educational risks», we, of course, relied on the interpretation of the category «risk» by contemporary researchers (N. Louman, E. Giddens, W. Beck etc.), whose works form the basis of such a branch of scientific knowledge as sociology of risk (see more details: [6]). *We define a risk as the choice of a particular algorithm in the situation of uncertainty due to its possible outcomes.*

Applying to such concept as «risk environment» (E. Giddens) [7, p. 102], which is commonly used in its broad sense (as an environment in which the natural, man-made and social risks are inextricably linked [6, p. 29]), in the context of this publication, we narrow its meaning, focusing on education as an environment that produces various risks at the level of society as a whole, its individual institutions, including the institution of education itself, and the personal level.

In view of this, we *define educational risks as a choice (state, institution of education, individual) of a certain algorithm of educational activity (provision and reception of educational services) in the situation of uncertainty due to its possible outcomes.* Educational risks provoke risks of professional self-realization of the person, whose we understand as *a choice of a professional trajectory that can both help and hinder the realization of his abilities, talents, professional knowledge and skills.*

Regarding the concept of «risk strategy», we understand it as *a long-term project of responding to risks (in this case, future professional risks), embodied in the values-behavioral characteristics of the subjects* (in particular, in value orientations, life positions, everyday practices, identification models etc.), defining the potential of their social subjectness.

In this context, we emphasize that the conditions of the risk society contribute to the

¹ It is about such national and international research as «Contemporary Universities as the Areas of the Intellectual Elite Formation in Ukrainian Society» (2000-2001); «Higher education as a factor of socio-structural changes: a comparative study of postcommunist societies» (2005-2007); «Problems of Formation of the Citizen Identity of Youth: the Role of Education as a Factor for the Society Consolidation» (2008-2009); «Students of the frontiers of Central and Eastern Europe: identities, values, life plans» (2015-2016).

formation of the *social subjectness* the person, which we define as *its (peculiarities) the ability to act independently and actively, solving problems of their own life, and also influence their activities on other social actors (individuals, groups, etc.)* [8]. Depending on the value orientations and life attitudes of the person, the social subjectness can be both forced (externally conditioned) and natural (internally conditioned). As for university graduates, their social subjectness in the context of self-realization depends on such internal characteristics as perception of the self-realization risks; value orientations; life strategies; motivation for higher education; professional, linguistic and digital competences etc., and from external factors, namely, the socio-economic situation in the country, the state educational policy, the social, economic and cultural capital of parents, etc.

In view of the above, the main hypothesis of our study is the assumption that the main factor in minimizing the risks of professional self-realization of higher educational institutions graduates at an individual level is not only the available resources (educational, economic, somatic, etc.), but also subjective perception of the risks of self-realization, as well the mood and the actual actions to overcome them, that is, the level of social subjectness of future specialists. Therefore, the search for a strategy for minimizing the risks of professional self-realization at the individual and state levels is relevance to us.

Determining the factors of educational risks actualization, which, in turn, predetermine the risks of professional self-actualization of national higher education graduates, we analyzed them at different levels of social - macro, meso- and micro. The factors of the macro level include:

- national reforms that act as a factor in increasing the state of uncertainty in society (the speed of legislative changes makes it impossible to forecast the professional future);
- strategic uncertainty in the reform of education, including higher education;
- falling prestige of higher education;
- masodization and commercialization of higher education (increasing the number of universities of all levels of accreditation and ownership, and thus increasing the number of students (especially those, who receive education on prestigious specialties today) and simultaneously reducing the quality of educational services provided by the Ukrainian higher school);
- «the situation of scissors» (inconsistency between the areas of graduates training and the relevant trends in the development of the labor market);

- «educational polarization» of society, which finds its manifestation as inequality of the starting conditions for higher education, as well as in the employment of graduates of higher education;

- education as a translator of a politics of identity, etc.

The main expenses of the national level caused by the above-mentioned factors of actualization of educational risks are, as already noted, the spread of the phenomenon of «brain drain», which is manifested in the increasing number of Ukrainian school and university graduates who go abroad to continue their studies or employment, as well as in the ineffectiveness of the use of the state budget: only a small part of graduates who were studying at public expense are recruited at state-owned enterprises, giving preference private firms or work abroad.

The meso-level risks of professional self-fulfillment are caused by factors such as the opening of new specialties/educational programs at higher educational levels (which are associated with the risks of lack of applicants) and the reduction of the quality of educational services provided by them. The latter leads to the so-called reputational risks of higher education (it means their academic responsibility for their graduates, including foreigners, whose actual level of training is far from always consistent with state and international educational standards and the requirements of employers). In addition, in contemporary conditions, institutions of higher education face the risks of self-reproduction – the competition of universities and the lack of students cast doubt on the prospects of employment of teaching staff of contemporary Ukrainian universities and the existence of certain areas of student training.

Of course, during getting higher education all these risks are «felt» by contemporary Ukrainian students. This is also about the risks of the «entrant» (when the future students chooses not the direction they want, but the one they were able to enter), and the subsequent unmotivated teaching that results in academic failure, and even the economic risks of the family, which «loses» the money to prepare a student for a specialty that does not guarantee employment after graduating from a higher educational establishment. The reform of the higher education system also puts the student at risk of a second educational level – whether to acquire a master's degree or to restrict the educational level of «bachelor»? The point is that the state in some way devalued the value of the master's degree, legislatively defining the bachelor's degree as sufficient for, for example,

employment of a civil servant position (Section 2 of Article 19 of the Ukrainian Law «About Civil Service»). In addition to the above, the educational risks of contemporary students as determinants of the risks of their professional self-realization are associated with the rapid obsolete knowledge transmitted by the higher school, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, with the broad availability and redundancy of Internet information in the field of the chosen specialty, which is far away not always contributes to the deepening of knowledge, skills and abilities of future specialists with higher education; with the need to combine higher education with work that is more likely not to correspond to the specialty that is received, which provokes professional marginalization and even deprofessionalization of high school students and leads to non-linearity of their professional trajectories [10].

Examining the factors of overcoming/minimizing the risks of Ukrainian students self-realization in the professional sphere, in addition to the macro-social factors mentioned above, we turned to the analysis of such a micro-social factor as the risk-strategy of student youth.

The basis for the selection of risk-strategy models was the social-professional plans of student youth. The empirical method for verifying the typology of risk strategies is the results of such intelligent data analysis (IAD) procedures as multidimensional scaling and the classification tree method (according to the research 2008-2009) [11]. Due to this we have identified three types of risk-strategies for youth.

Our first empirically identified risk strategy is a strategy of risk minimization (risk aversion) aimed at achieving a «success» situation in combating professional risks through planning a professional future, cultural capitalization, academic success, professional competence development, etc. This strategy was first chosen by students who planned to do business after graduation [11].

The analysis of the socio-cultural portrait of future businessmen as representatives of the *strategy of minimizing professional risks* has shown that the strategy of confronting professional risks (risk minimization strategy) manifests itself in the successes in learning, studying foreign languages (cultural capitalization) and in more widespread economic practices. This group demonstrates a rather high potential of subjectness at the value-practical level, and sees future business activity as a professional self-realization. The peculiarities of the value and moral orientations of future businessmen undermine many of the stereotypes of the ethi-

cal portrait of this group formed in the 1990's and may indicate the launch of such new foundations for the future of Ukrainian business as social responsibility, competence, innovation, education etc. (more details of socio-cultural portrait of this group is presented in [11]).

The *strategy of transferring professional risks* was revealed by us on the example of analysis of that group of students who chose the alternative «no matter what to do to pay money». By choosing this alternative, students exhibit maximum readiness for mobility in the field of professional self-realization, which minimizes their potential inclination to professional risks through their «transfer» to the economic plane. However, we note that this is only partial insurance (in particular on economic risks), which does not always guarantee the entity security from the impact of risks of deprofessionalization.

At the value-practical level for this student group (according to the research results), the most actualized is all that is connected with the growth of own economic capital (economic practices, materialistic values orientations, individualistic moral positions, higher education as instrumental value, etc.). It should be noted that this student group is willing to change its professional identity, status and competence that is why its «professional mobility» can be considered rather as «professional betrayal» [11].

The *risk-avoidance strategy* is the most vulnerable to occupational risks. Marker among the alternatives of socially-professional plans to designate this strategy, we have chosen the option of «no clear plans». The lack of planning for a professional future, which is reflected in the absence of appropriate practices for professional capitalization, case-orientation, situational thinking and action, give grounds for positioning this group as potentially the most «professionally risk-generating» [11].

The analysis of the socio-cultural portrait of a «professionally risky» student group has shown that risk and uncertainty «paralyze» the potential of the agent's subjectness and the very subjectness acts as the only option for confronting a risk-generative environment. In today's socio-economic situation the conditions of competition for access to resources (including professional ones), the described group of students is exposed to great danger not only because of professional risks, but also the risks of different orders and nature.

Consequently, our study made it possible to conclude that the important components of the contemporary student strategy, which will help them to withstand professional risks at the activity level, is the complex capitalization of

the agent (cultural, educational, professional, economic, social, identification) as a way to deal with the risks of different levels and the development of its own subjectness as a universal and effective means of confronting the risky environment.

With regard to possible strategies to overcome the «scissors issue» on the Ukrainian labor market (that is, the gap between the directions of graduates training and the actual needs of the labor market), we believe that such strategies may be two - paternalistic and liberal.

As part of the paternalistic strategy, it is about active state involvement in solving this problem. We see the need for the development of a cross-sectoral government policy that is in the sphere of authority of the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science, the Ukrainian Ministry of Social Policy, the Ukrainian State Employment Service, the Ukrainian State Statistics Service. In order to harmonize the matrices of training young specialists and relevant trends in the development of the labor market, it is expedient to establish an interdepartmental coordination body (with participation of the above-mentioned state authorities) with the aim of monitoring, reorienting and improving the interaction between higher education institutions and the contemporary labor market. Numerous educational and occupational risks (both at the environmental and activity levels) require state regulation and problem-solving by the program-specific method through the development of a relevant state program. The

main subjects of this program (apart from the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science, the Ukrainian Ministry of Social Policy, the Ukrainian State Employment Service, the Ukrainian State Statistics Service) should be institutions of higher education, united territorial communities, public organizations and representatives of business at the local level. This strategy of minimizing the risks of professional self-realization of young specialists, in our opinion, is state-oriented and most relevant for the conditions of contemporary Ukrainian society.

The liberal approach aims at opposing logic about the role of the state in solving this problem. It is oriented on deregulation of the activities of higher education institutions and the abolition of multiple bureaucratic procedures in the vertical «the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science – institutions of higher education». The increasing of the academic freedoms of higher education will provide an opportunity to respond promptly to the current challenges of the labor market, which will help to reduce the gap between the pace of development of the latter and the areas of training young professionals in higher education institutions. The disadvantage of this approach is that it actually puts all responsibility for regulating the «situation of scissors» precisely on higher education, which, in our opinion, makes it impossible for an integrated approach to solve this problem.

Bibliography

1. Cuzzocrea V. Squeezing or blurring: young adulthood in the career strategies of professionals based in Italy and England. *Journal of Youth Studies*. – Vol. 14, No 6, September 2011, p. 657-674.
2. Омельченко Е. Л. Молодежный вопрос в пространстве современности. *Журнал исследований социальной политики*. 2006. Т. 4. № 2. С. 149-150.
3. Зубок Ю. А., Чупров В. И. Риск в сфере образования молодежи: институциональные и саморегуляционные механизмы. *Вопросы образования*. 2008. № 4. С. 31-55.
4. Зубок Ю. А., Чупров В. И. Отношение молодежи к образованию как фактор повышения эффективности подготовки высококвалифицированных кадров. *Социс*, 2012. №8. С. 103-111.
5. Борисова П. А., Буланова М. Б. Риски, связанные с особенностями выбора абитуриентами специальности при поступлении в вуз. *Мониторинг общественного мнения: экономические и социальные проблемы*. 2013. № 4 (116). URL: http://wciom.ru/fileadmin/Monitoring/2013/4/2013_116_10_Borisova.pdf.
6. Яницкий О. Н. Социология риска: ключевые идеи. *Мир России*. 2003. № 1. С. 3-35.
7. Giddens A. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity. 1990. 186 p.
8. Сокурянская Л. Г. Социальная субъектность как социологическое понятие и социальный феномен. *Методология, теория та практика соціологічного аналізу сучасного суспільства: збірник наукових праць*. Х.: ХНУ імені В. Н. Каразіна. 2001. С. 36-41.
9. Sokurianska L. Educational reform in Ukraine: the risks of irresponsibility actualization. *Studia nad wiedza*. Tom. VI. *Wiedza a instytucjonalizacja nieodpowiedzialności* / Redakcja Mariusz Zemlo, Arkadiusz Jablonski, Jan Szymczyk. Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL. 2014. P. 379-388.
10. Головченко Т. Нелінійні професійні траєкторії студентства: конструювання, практики, наслідки. *Соціологія у (пост) сучасності: збірник тез доповідей XVI Міжнародної наукової конференції студентів та аспірантів* (м. Харків, 15 березня-16 березня 2018 р.). Х.: ХНУ імені В. Н. Каразіна, 2018. С. 124-125.
11. Дейнеко О. О. Соціально-професійні плани сучасного українського студентства в контексті ризик-стратегій: перспективи емпіричної розвідки. *Вісник Харківського національного університету імені В. Н. Каразіна: Серія: «Соціологічні дослідження сучасного суспільства: методологія, теорія, методи»*. 2012. № 993. Випуск 29. С. 168-176.