

Hanna TSYHANOK

*PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) in Philology,
Associate Professor of the Department of Foreign Languages,
Biotechnological Faculty,
Sumy National Agrarian University*

THE EVOLUTION OF MEDIA LITERACY IN UKRAINE'S HIGHER EDUCATION: EUROPEAN INSIGHTS

During Russia's unprovoked war against Ukraine, the development of critical thinking is crucial for people to evaluate media, Internet, and telecommunications influence, distinguish disinformation, resist manipulation, and engage constructively in a multicultural community. Therefore, HEIs of Ukraine can supplement the initiatives of state authorities and public organizations with measures that contribute to the involvement of the general public in the EU media space on the ground of strengthening democracy and European values.

First of all, it should be noted that the European Parliament defined media literacy as “an essential key qualification in the information and communication society”, emphasizing that it promotes the political maturity of citizens, underpins a democratic society, gives people a deeper insight into their rights and duties as well as the principles and values of ethical demeanor (*Media literacy in a digital world European Parliament resolution of December 16, 2008*). Besides, the development of media literacy is vital for protecting audiences, ensuring pluralism in the digital environment, as well as for struggling with social threats posed by disinformation (*Council conclusions on media literacy in an ever- changing world, 2020*). *European Digital Rights and Principles* (2022) define 6 basic principles of the future digital society, namely: putting people and their rights at the center of the digital transformation; supporting solidarity and inclusion; ensuring freedom of choice online; fostering participation in the digital public space; increasing safety, security and empowerment of individuals; promoting the sustainability of the digital future.

In summary, the ongoing challenges posed by Russia's unprovoked war against Ukraine underscore the urgent need to strengthen critical thinking and media literacy across society. As the analysis shows, media literacy is recognized at the European level as a fundamental competence that supports democratic development, civic awareness, and ethical engagement. It also plays a decisive role in countering disinformation, ensuring digital pluralism, and safeguarding societal resilience. By aligning with the European Parliament's vision, the Council's recommendations, and the Digital Rights and Principles of the EU, Ukrainian higher education institutions can become key actors in promoting democratic values and empowering citizens within the evolving European media landscape. Through sustained educational initiatives and broader public engagement, HEIs can effectively contribute to building an informed, inclusive, and secure digital society grounded in European principles.