European Union Social Cohesion Policy and Monitoring Indicators

The questions of the nation uniting, national or social consolidation, cohesion of society have always been on the agenda of the independent Ukrainian state. An urgent need is to identify the obstacles to consolidating Ukrainian society, as well as factors that can contribute to the unification of society. The objective of the article is to summarize the results of scientific and expert discourse on social cohesion of the EU and indicators of its assessment. Methodology is analysis of the European Commission documents, studies and reports. The research of European Cohesion Policy requires the use of an interdisciplinary approach, as well as the consideration of the process in its integrity, requires the use of a systematic approach.

Social cohesion has been studied in the European Union over the past decades. During this time, many studies of theoretical and empirical question have been made. Moreover, it has already become the main concept of effective development for many societies. The mechanism of practical realization of social cohesion is the recognition of the values of pluralism, social and civil dialogue. The obligatory attribute of social cohesion of a society is the institute of social protection and social integration. Social cohesion involves the use of democratic principles for making socially significant decisions. The essence of the social cohesion of the EU is considered from the standpoint, based on social rights and the access of all citizens to their rights, and hence the real opportunity to use and protect them. At the focus of social cohesion of society is the welfare of the vast majority of citizens, harmonious and stable social relations. The condition to social cohesion is the high citizen’s credibility of governance and civil society institutions. In the
framework of developing a system of social indicators an effort was made to operationalise conceptualization of social cohesion across several life domains. There are rather broad range of indicators of social cohesion can be specified. Accordingly, the lists of exemplarily suggested indicators are rather extensive.

The subject of further analysis may be a more detailed researches of the experience of the European society cohesion mechanism for adopting and implementation it in Ukraine.

Key words: social cohesion policy; European Union; monitoring indicators.

Introduction. The questions of the nation uniting, national or social consolidation, cohesion of society have always been on the agenda of the independent Ukrainian state. An urgent need is to identify the obstacles to consolidating Ukrainian society, as well as factors that can contribute to the unification of society. In this context, an appeal to the European experience of cohesion is important for Ukraine; analysis of conceptual and theoretical developments in this field; study of mechanisms, technologies and practices of interaction around the ideas of united Europe. Due to dynamic changes, the European Cohesion Policy constantly attracts the attention of researchers to its analysis. Many studies were conducted by the independent experts at the request of the European Commission in connection with the implementation or revisions of the European Cohesion Policy, the preparation of EU strategic development programs. The problem of cohesion of the Ukrainian people is the subject of study of many Ukrainian researchers in the context of interethnic relations and national construction. However, the social component of European cohesion policy is only fragmented in some publications of specialists (A. Grinenko, T. Kitsak and V. Kiriluyk, A. Kolot, V. Khantantinov, O. Orzhel and others). Therefore, the need to study European experience in the formation and implementation of a policy of social equalization is updated.

Theoretical Bases of Research and Methodology. There are different approaches of definitions of social cohesion: 1. In its original etymological sense, cohesion is defined as the characteristic of a group all of whose parts are closely united. 2. After identifying in «shared loyalties and solidarity» the key factors of social cohesion, the sociologist Emile Durkheim also distinguished mechanical solidarity, which is based on the traditional uniformity of collective values and beliefs, from organic solidarity, which is the result of modern relationships between individuals who are able to work together while developing an autonomous and even critical personality with respect to tradition. 3. Definitions based on community bonds: social cohesion is «the promotion of stable, co-operative and sustainable communities». 4. Definitions based on shared values and a sense of belonging. These concepts are to be found in the official definitions adopted by governments. Modern societies are composed of individuals who are autonomous in their choices of lifestyle. 5. Definitions based on the ability to work together. This approach takes account from the outset of the plurality of human beings and its implications for collective responsibility as a structural element of any cohesive society. It considers the ability to work together without apparently giving any thought to the ultimate goal of this joint action, which may, in itself, entail cohesion or exclusion [3].

The objective of the article is to summarize the results of scientific and expert discourse on social cohesion of the EU and indicators of its assessment.

Methodology is analysis of the documents, studies and reports published by the European Commission constitute the main source of information. The data demonstrating the changes of the social situation are taken into account, as well as the instruments the European Commission has deployed. The European Cohesion Policy is being studied by a number of social sciences, which requires the use of an interdisciplinary approach, as well as the consideration of the process in its integrity, requires the use of a systematic approach.

Research Results. The European social model, characteristic of most Western European societies since the early 1960s, confers on its citizens a wide-ranging set of political, civil and social rights, anchored in national and supra-state legal systems and procedures. As a consequence, the European Social Model has been able to guarantee high levels of social integration and stability, while avoiding economic polarization, for the majority of its population [1]. At their 2nd Summit, the Heads of State and Government of Council of Europe member states recognized that social cohesion was «one of the foremost needs of the wider Europe and should be pursued as an essential complement to the promotion of human rights and dignity». The Council of Europe has done much to promote and develop the concept of social cohesion. It has helped to operationalise it by promoting access to social rights and has explored topics such as how to improve the quality of life together, the positive impact of public policies, and the development and use of indicators [2]. Cohesion is an ideal towards which societies have to strive continually. Social cohesion is about what binds societies together. All societies are the result of an interplay between centripetal and centrifugal forces; the
things that bring people together and the things that drive them apart: the forces of unity and the forces of division; the interests of the individual and the interests of the community. All societies have to try to arrive at a workable accommodation between these forces [4].

Through fifty years of intergovernmental cooperation, the Council of Europe has established European norms for social rights and built up a wealth of accumulated experience through the 3 supervisory mechanisms of its legal instruments as well as in the form of Recommendations and reports. In the development of the Social Cohesion Policy of the European Union, the following stages can be distinguished:

1. Towards a Strategy for Social Cohesion (1994–1998). The Human Dignity and Social Exclusion Project (HDSE Project), a pan-European initiative launched by the Council of Europe in 1994 and completed in 1998, conducted the analysis of the status of poverty and social exclusion in Europe and submitted proposals of actions, validated by the Final Conference of the Project which took place in Helsinki on 18–20 May 1998. The project proposed to tackle five major themes: health, housing, employment, social protection and education. It focused mostly on producing «alarm indicators» that record reductions in freedoms and rights, increases in unemployment, violence and conflicts, worsening of social and health care services, etc. – mapping out the presence of social exclusion.

2. The Council of Europe Second Summit of Heads of State and Governments (1998–2002). Social cohesion concerns society as a whole and all its members, and not only those who find themselves marginalized. The central issue is to give the appropriate form and substance to aspirations for a life of quality. The Council of Europe decided to review its approach and develop a strategy for social cohesion rather than a strategy for combating social exclusion. The Committee of Ministers was to set up a new intergovernmental steering committee, the European Committee for Social Cohesion 1 (CDCS), bringing together several formerly separate areas of work [1, 5]. The Committee of Ministers adopted a Social Cohesion Strategy in 2000, revising it in March 2004.

3. The Lisbon Strategy, initiated in 2000, highlighted the importance of social cohesion as a foundation for a competitive knowledge and employment-based economy. It selected as its flagship the concept of social exclusion, an approach which directs attention to inclusion and participation. Within the Secretariat, a Social Cohesion Directorate undertakes work to continually renew and update the understanding of social cohesion and identify means for «reconciling» ongoing changes and social cohesion. In effect, the Council of Europe has elaborated social cohesion as integrally linked to the Organisation’s fundamental goals: realisation of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law [5].

4. For the 2014 – 2020 period cohesion policy is closely aligned with the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy adopted by the European Council on 17 June 2010 as the successor to the Lisbon strategy.

The Europe 2020 strategy is the EU’s agenda for growth and jobs for the current decade. It emphasizes smart, sustainable and inclusive growth as a way to overcome the structural weaknesses in Europe’s economy, improve its competitiveness and productivity and underpin a sustainable social market economy [6]. Three key priorities and eight targets the Europe 2020 strategy puts forward three mutually reinforcing priorities to make Europe a smarter, more sustainable and more inclusive place to live (table 1).

Table 1

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<tr>
<th>Priorities</th>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Flagship Initiatives</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Smart growth</strong>, through the development of an economy based on knowledge, research and innovation.</td>
<td>1. Increasing combined public and private investment in R&amp;D to 3 % of GDP 2. Reducing school drop-out rates to less than 10 % 3. Increasing the share of the population aged 30–34 having completed tertiary education to at least 40 %</td>
<td>1. Innovation Union • Youth on the move (ended in December 2014) 2. A digital agenda for Europe Sustainable growth</td>
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<td><strong>Sustainable growth</strong>, through the promotion of resource-efficient, green and competitive markets.</td>
<td>1. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20 % compared to 1990 levels 2. Increasing the share of renewable energy in final energy consumption to 20 % 3. Moving towards a 20 % increase in energy efficiency</td>
<td>1. Resource efficient Europe 2. An industrial policy for the globalization era</td>
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<td><strong>Inclusive growth</strong>,</td>
<td>1. Increasing the employment rate of the</td>
<td>1. An agenda for new skills and</td>
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1 European Committee for social cohesion, human dignity and equality, which has been discontinued as of 1 January 2016.
The Council of Europe has always considered that access to social rights must be based on the following principles: equality of rights for all, without discrimination; availability of quality services affordable by all; giving special attention to the needs of the vulnerable members of society; avoiding stigmatization of those with special needs; maintenance of equitable and sustainable fiscal policies; participation of users. At the same time, everyone should be aware of the need to exercise responsibility in the way they make use of social protection and social services. The fundamental commitment of the member states of the Council of Europe is to human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. The aim of the Organization is to achieve greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding their ideals and principles and «facilitating their economic and social progress».

Social cohesion is about the capacity of society to ensure the welfare of all its members, minimizing disparities and avoiding polarization. Welfare implies not only equity and non-discrimination in access to human rights but also: the dignity of each person and the recognition of their abilities and their contribution to society, fully respecting the diversity of cultures, opinions and religious beliefs; the freedom of each individual to pursue their personal development throughout their life; the possibility for each person to participate actively as a full member of society [8].

As well as the standard-setting instruments, the Council of Europe fosters social cohesion through intergovernmental programs and policy development. The Revised Strategy for Social Cohesion is now the leading relevant policy document.

There are four main lines of policy activity to achieve social cohesion at national and international levels: refocusing on the realization of social rights, further development of a sense and set of actions around social responsibilities, strengthening mechanisms of representation and social and civic dialogue, building the conditions for a common and secure future.

Priority Objectives for Social Cohesion in 21st Century Europe are: 1. Reinvesting in social rights and in cohesive societies. 2. Building a society of responsibilities that are both shared and social. 3. Strengthening mechanisms of representation and democratic decision-making and expanding social and civic dialogue and engagement. 4. Responding to demographic change and multiculturalism by building confidence in a common and secure future for all [5].

The concepts of social cohesion and quality of life are related to each other in multiple regards. Although social cohesion represents an attribute of a society it ultimately rests on the behavior, attitudes and evaluations of its members, too. Social cohesion can be conceived as a societal quality which is experienced by individuals in their daily lives, and thus also refers to the individual quality of life. This perspective considers elements of the social cohesion of a society to form an integral part of the quality of life of the individuals belonging to that society. In this sense, quality of life represents the common overarching policy goal with social cohesion as an important component to be addressed [9].

The use of indicators in a policy whose main goal is to increase the share of people who do not «fall behind essential standards» in a multidimensional space is obviously central. It is only by measuring indicators and setting the standards that the policy can be designed, implemented and monitored.

The multidimensional nature of social inclusion calls for a measurement of both standards and inequalities with reference not only to income but to a large range of indicators representing the multiple dimensions of well-being. A system of comparable indicators across Member State has been built which aims to be «comprehensive» and «balanced» and covers the areas of: income, labor, education, material deprivation, housing and health [10].

The Council of Europe has to push forward its work on human and social rights simultaneously with that on social cohesion. As well as implementation, a key contribution of the Organization is a monitoring/evaluation or policy watch function. The Task Force recommends the progressive development and application of indicators at both national and local levels. At the national level, the indicators selected should reflect the principles or components of social cohesion: equity, dignity/recognition of diversity, participation, sense of belonging to society and sharing of responsibilities. At the local level, awareness of the local and regional dimension of social cohesion requires the development of innovative, participatory and concerted social policies with a focus on the community level [5].

| Table 2 |

| through policies aimed at fostering job creation and poverty reduction. | population aged 20–64 to at least 75 % 2. Lifting at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and social exclusion | jobs 2. European platform against poverty and social exclusion |
The Council of Europe is seeking to develop operational tools for monitoring progress in social cohesion. A Methodological Guide for the Use of Social Cohesion Indicators is currently being developed and will be presented in 2004 to member States. Work is now in progress to test out this methodology in selected countries and regions. The Social Cohesion indicators differ greatly from the indicators employed by other organizations such as the European Union and the OECD. The latter utilize more a «negative definition» of social cohesion, focusing on the concept of social exclusion and poverty, measuring therefore «alert indicators» of the dysfunction of society. The «alarm» indicators aimed at identifying the symptoms of the «pathologies of society» also serve as a common frame of reference for an even more heterogeneous group of countries. Several indicators proposed by the OECD to provide a comparative overview of developed societies are of this type.

Based on a «positive definition» of social cohesion, the Council of Europe has developed main indicators that focus on four main aspects of social life (equity, dignity, participation). Each aspect includes several dozens of sub-indicators that can be used to analyze in greater detail the situation of a particular country. These indicators are used to develop a Social Cohesion Index to measure the degree of social cohesion in countries and adapt the strategy to their. These are: 1) low income rate after transfers with low-income threshold set at 60 % of median income; 2) distribution of income (income quintile ratio); 3) persistence of low income; 4) median low income gap; 5) regional cohesion; 6) long term unemployment rate; 7) people living in jobless households; 8) early school leavers not in further education or training; 9) life expectancy at birth; 10) self perceived health status.

The 16 social cohesion indicators proposed by the OECD are: 1) divorce rate; 2) fertility rate; 3) percentage of lone-parent families; 4) membership of local associations; 5) rate of participation in elections; 6) population born abroad; 7) mixed marriages; 8) asylum-seekers; 9) suicide rate; 10) age of women at birth of first child; 11) working women with children; 12) crime rate; 13) mortality rate due to drug use; 14) work stoppages; 15) persons detained at penal establishments; 16) acquisition of nationality.

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<tr>
<th>Access to Means of Living</th>
<th>Setting and Spaces for Living</th>
<th>Governance</th>
<th>Human Relations</th>
<th>Personal and Social Balance</th>
<th>Feelings</th>
<th>Participation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Knowledge and observance of social rights</td>
<td>Relations institutions/citizens.</td>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>Family life</td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Civic sense</td>
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<td>Income</td>
<td>Management of public areas/Justice</td>
<td>Solidarity/mutual aid</td>
<td>Non stress</td>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>Capacity for commitment</td>
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<td>Housing</td>
<td>Environment pollution/transp ort</td>
<td>Institutional support and provision</td>
<td>Personal development/life project</td>
<td>Recognition</td>
<td>Participation/mutual learning</td>
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<td>Health/social security</td>
<td>Reconciliation of security and observance of rights</td>
<td>Institutional stability</td>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>Equal opportunities</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
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<td>Food</td>
<td>Civic dialogue/consultation in decision-making</td>
<td>Confidentiality</td>
<td></td>
<td>Respect for public property</td>
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<td>Education</td>
<td>Non-discrimination</td>
<td>Integration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Concern for others</td>
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<td>Culture/leisure</td>
<td>Partnership rather than patronage</td>
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<td>Information</td>
<td>Democratic practice</td>
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Through a balanced weighting formula for each indicator, the Social Cohesion Index, which is currently being developed by the Development Division of the Directorate of Social Cohesion, will duly take into account the different degrees of socio-economic development of the member states of the Council of Europe [1].

The concept of social cohesion will be operationalised and measured in the context of a European System of Social Indicators (EUSI) which is developed in the framework of a current European research project. This indicators system considers dimensions of social cohesion across a wide range of life domains. The EUSI distinguishes between a total of fourteen life domains: population; households and families; housing; transport; leisure, media and culture; social and political participation and integration; education and vocational training; labor market and working conditions; income, standard of living, and consumption patterns; health; environment; social security; public safety and crime; total life situation.

In the European System of Social Indicators, the domain-specific measurement dimensions related to the goal dimensions of social cohesion are further differentiated by firstly distinguishing subdimensions of each measurement dimension and then developing one or several indicators for each subdimension. Thus, the final result represents a list of indicators of social cohesion which can be categorized by life domain, goal dimension, measurement dimension and subdimension [9].

**Research Implications and the Subject of Further Analysis.** Social cohesion has been studied in the European Union over the past decades. During this time, many studies of theoretical and empirical question have been made. Moreover, it has already become the main concept of effective development for many societies.

The mechanism of practical realization of social cohesion is the recognition of the values of pluralism, social and civil dialogue. The obligatory attribute of social cohesion of a society is the institute of social protection and social integration. Social cohesion involves the use of democratic principles for making socially significant decisions. The essence of the social cohesion of the EU is considered from the standpoint, based on social rights and the access of all citizens to their rights, and hence the real opportunity to use and protect them. At the focus of social cohesion of society is the welfare of the vast majority of citizens, harmonious and stable social relations. The condition to social cohesion is the high citizen’s credibility of governance and civil society institutions. In the framework of developing a system of social indicators an effort was made to operationalise conceptualization of social cohesion across several life domains. There are rather broad range of indicators of social cohesion can be specified. Accordingly, the lists of exemplarily suggested indicators are rather extensive.

The subject of further analysis may be a more detailed researches of the experience of the European society cohesion mechanism for adopting and implementation it in Ukraine.

**References**


Джерела та література


Королевська Анна. Політика соціальної єдності Європейського Союзу та показники моніторингу. Питання об’єднання нації, національної або соціальної консолідації, єдності суспільства завжди були на порядку денному незалежної Української держави. Нагальні потребою є визначення перешкод на шляху до консолідації українського суспільства, а також чинників, які можуть сприяти його об’єднанню. Мета статті – узагальнення результатів науково-експертного дискурсу щодо соціальної єдності ЄС і показників його оцінки. Методологією дослідження є аналіз документів, дослідження та звітів Європейської комісії.

Дослідження європейської політики згуртування вимагає використання міждисциплінарного підходу, а також розгляду процесу в його цілісності, що потребує застосування систематичного підходу. Соціальна єдність виявилась Європейським Союзом протягом останніх десятиліть, проведено багато досліджень теоретичного та емпіричного характеру. Більше того, це стало основою концепції ефективного розвитку для багатьох суспільств. Механізмом практичної реалізації соціальної єдності є визнання цінностей плоралізму, соціального й громадянського діалогу. Обов’язковим атрибутом соціальної суспільства є інститут соціального захисту та соціальної інтеграції. Соціальна згуртованість передбачає використання демократичних принципів для прийняття суспільно значущих рішень. Сутність соціальної єдності ЄС розглядаємо, виходячи із соціальних прав і доступу всіх громадян до їхніх прав і можливості їх використання та захисту. У центрі соціальної єдності суспільства – доброту більшості громадян, гармонійній і стабільні суспільні відносини. Умовою соціальної єдності є висока довіра громадян до управління та інститутів громадянського суспільства. У межах розробки системи соціальних показників ужито зусиль, спрямованих на концептуалізацію соціальної єдності у визначних сферах життя. Існує досить широкий спектр показників соціальної єдності для моніторингу, відповідно до чого списки зразкових індикаторів досить великі.

Предметом подальшого аналізу можуть стати більш детальні дослідження досвіду механізму єдності європейського суспільства для його прийняття й упровадження в Україні.

Ключові слова: політика соціальної єдності; Європейський Союз; моніторингові показники.