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EDUCATION MANAGEMENT AND PERSONNEL RESERVE AS INSTRUMENTS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT UNDER REINTEGRATION CONDITIONS: THE CASE OF CRIMEA

Education has always been a foundational component of any state's development – this seems obvious, yet in Ukraine's current circumstances, it demands far more deliberate attention than it typically receives in policy debates. The country faces a deepening demographic crisis driven by full-scale invasion and mass emigration, and at the same time must prepare, even now, for the future reintegration of occupied territories. These two pressures are rarely analyzed together, which is itself part of the problem. Viewed through the lens of sustainable development, they are inseparable: the quality of education today directly shapes the human capital available for governance, reconstruction, and social cohesion tomorrow.

Beyond the restoration of infrastructure and legal mechanisms, the recovery of human capital – primarily through the education system and the purposeful formation of a personnel reserve – is a foundational precondition for the sustainable development of de-occupied territories. These instruments determine the state's capacity to ensure long-term social resilience and the legitimacy of public governance in post-conflict recovery settings.

The experience of reintegration in various countries – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, and Korea – confirms that educational reform and labor market stabilization are necessary preconditions for sustainable post-conflict development. In the case of Crimea, these challenges are particularly acute given the duration of the occupation (over ten years), the scale of ideological influence on the education system, and the depth of the personnel deficit resulting from forced migration and the screening of specialists.

Educational Challenges of Crimea's Reintegration

Under occupation, Crimea's education system underwent a systematic transformation aimed at replacing Ukrainian educational standards, marginalizing Ukrainian-language and Crimean Tatar-language instruction, and imposing an alternative identity. The consequences have been educational gaps and ideological distortion – factors the authors classify as a high-level risk with a significant impact on children and youth of school age [1].

The Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine Regarding the Recognition of Learning Outcomes of Persons Who Resided in the Temporarily Occupied Territory of Ukraine" (No. 3482-IX) provides the legal foundation for reintegration into the educational space. It should be noted, however, that regulatory frameworks alone have rarely been sufficient in post-conflict contexts – and this case is unlikely to be an exception. Without an adequate number of qualified educators who are oriented toward the values of an open society and capable of working under conditions of post-conflict psychosocial stress, the restoration of quality education risks remaining largely declaratory [2].

Personnel Reserve as a Management Priority for Sustainable Development

Effective reintegration governance is impossible without a critical mass of qualified and loyal specialists in public administration, healthcare, and education. Standard personnel recruitment mechanisms are

insufficient for a post-occupation environment given the trust deficit, security risks, and geographic distance. In response to this challenge, a systemic approach to personnel reserve formation is proposed, combining four blocks of incentives: economic (salary supplements under a "Crimean coefficient", one-time relocation grants, preferential mortgage lending); social and residential (service housing with a buy-out option, family health insurance); professional (accelerated service record credits, international fellowships under Erasmus+, fast-track career advancement); and institutional (individual contracts, annual KPI reviews, mentorship support) [1].

The temporal dimension here is, frankly, underappreciated in current policy discussions. Personnel reserve formation must begin *before* the moment of de-occupation – not as a reaction to it. Only this way can specialists be ready to begin work on the very first day Ukrainian control is restored. This requires preventive planning, which is a hallmark of mature, results-oriented public management rather than crisis response.

Digitalisation as an Instrument for Education and Social Service Management

In the context of European integration, the digital transformation of public governance acquires special significance for de-occupied territories. The digitalisation of educational registries, qualification verification systems, pedagogical personnel databases, and social services is a necessary condition for transparency and efficiency in reintegration processes. Integrating educational institutions into the unified digital infrastructure of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine will ensure continuity of learning trajectories for children and youth who resided in the occupied territory, as well as enable real-time monitoring of educational quality [2, 3].

The Diia portal and Pension Fund registries can serve as instruments of transitional justice, providing verification of employment records, educational documents, and property rights. This approach aligns with ESG governance principles in terms of the state's social responsibility towards vulnerable population groups – and, importantly, sends a signal of institutional presence and fairness that purely physical reconstruction cannot.

Conclusions

Education management and the purposeful formation of a personnel reserve are not peripheral but central elements of a sustainable development model for de-occupied territories. Education fulfils a dual function: it restores identity and builds the human capital necessary for institutional revival. The personnel reserve, in turn, represents the operational capacity without which no strategic document can achieve practical implementation.

The proposed approach – combining risk-based analysis, a system of differentiated incentives, and the digitalisation of governance processes – can serve as an analytical and applied framework not only for Crimea but also for other de-occupied territories of Ukraine. It is consistent with the logic of European integration, where institutional capacity and the quality of human capital are key criteria for assessing reforms. Whether Ukraine can move from declarative commitments to operational readiness in time will, to a significant degree, depend on decisions made now.

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References

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