Appendix C.

from 15 May 2025

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

Interview with Roman Petiur, Director of the Department of International Affairs

(Translated from Ukrainian)

Form of data collection: Google Form

Strategic impact and institutional priorities

Q: How has Russia's full-scale invasion affected your university's international priorities and strategies?

A: The full-scale Russian invasion shifted the university's international priorities toward developing partnerships with institutions from friendly countries, focusing more on support programs for the university, faculty, researchers, and students, expanding Ukrainian studies abroad, broadening the geographic scope and number of partners, and intensifying efforts to finalize the Internationalization Strategy.

Q: Has the role of internationalization at your university fundamentally changed since the beginning of the war?

A: Yes, the role of internationalization fundamentally changed after the war began, as it was recognized as a key tool for overcoming crisis, and many departments reassessed its importance for their development.

Alternative pathways and adaptation

Q: What alternative forms of international activity (virtual mobility, online collaboration, twinning projects, international research) have been implemented at your university? How effective have they been?

A: The university implemented virtual exchange programs, VIR, inbound and outbound distance mobility, COIL, twinning, strategic partnerships, and virtual laboratories, which proved to be quite effective — becoming a regular practice, reaching a wide audience, and contributing to both individual outcomes and institutional transformation.

Resilience and psychological support

Q: How has internationalization contributed to the psychological resilience of students and staff (through support networks, symbolic or material solidarity, mental health)?

A: Internationalization supported psychological resilience by maintaining motivation and engagement through participation in projects, travel, communication, and the formation of support networks that stimulated professional and personal development.

Q: Can you share an example of flexibility or resilience shown by your team or students in supporting international activity during the war?

A: Every day offered an example — one colleague continued full Erasmus+ mobility coordination while under occupation in March–April, working solely from a mobile phone.

International solidarity and partnerships

Q: What support has your university received from international partners or global educational networks during the war (resources, advocacy, technical assistance)?

A: International partners and global education networks provided financial support, equipment, assistance with project activities, and waived membership or participation fees for events during the war.

Q: How has participation in consortia (e.g., the Alliance of Ukrainian Universities) contributed to international cooperation and collective response to the challenges of war?

A: Participation in consortia like the Alliance of Ukrainian Universities facilitated international cooperation and collective wartime response through sharing information and experiences and pooling resources.

Q: How have international partnerships supported physical or infrastructural resilience (humanitarian aid, equipment, campus support)?

A: International partnerships supported physical and infrastructural resilience through humanitarian aid, equipment, and campus support, including specialized furniture for the university clinic and defibrillators for staff.

Educational and cultural diplomacy

Q: How has your university implemented cultural and educational diplomacy strategies through internationalization during the war (promotion of Ukrainian culture, international events, media participation)?

A: The university implemented cultural and educational diplomacy through joint events with partners on Ukrainian themes, held both online and in person, as well as through interviews and media publications.

Post-war recovery planning

Q: Does your university plan for post-war recovery in the context of internationalization? What strategies are being developed to restore international partnerships and projects?

A: Yes, a comprehensive development strategy is currently being developed, with a separate section dedicated to internationalization.

Lessons and recommendations

Q: What key lessons has your university learned about supporting internationalization in times of crisis?

A: The university learned that internationalization helps minimize losses during crises, drives educational and research development, supports staff retention and recruitment, and requires ongoing investment even in difficult times.

Q: What recommendations would you give to other educational institutions affected by war or crisis?

A: Actively seek opportunities to join international and national networks to learn from others' experiences and adopt best practices.

Forms of internationalization

Q: How has the war affected the physical mobility of students and staff?

A: The war led to a several-fold increase in mobility figures, while objective restrictions stimulated the search for new forms of mobility.

Q: What types of virtual mobility were implemented (COIL, virtual Erasmus programs)? How effective were they compared to physical mobility?

A: COIL and BIP have been implemented and have become standard formats for many colleagues and departments; they offer distinct advantages and serve as an excellent complement to physical mobility.

Q: How have academic programs been adapted to preserve or strengthen the international component (new English-taught programs, joint/double degrees)?

A: Double degree programs were preserved, with some gaining new momentum due to increased student interest in physical mobility, while others had to adopt a hybrid format due to mobility restrictions for male students.

Q: Has your university implemented elements of “Internationalization at Home” during the full-scale invasion? How exactly?

A: Yes, the university implemented internationalization at home through guest lecturers and virtual programs during the full-scale invasion.

Q: Have international research projects been preserved or expanded? Has the war affected their topic or format?

A: Research projects were expanded, including in areas where Ukraine is gaining unique expertise such as ecology, urban studies, and mental health.

Q: Which form of internationalization proved to be the most resilient at your university during the war? Which was the least resilient? Please rank the forms of internationalization in your institution from most resilient (5) to most vulnerable (1) and explain your choice.

A: Resilience directly depended on the university’s starting position as of February 24, 2022, the motivation of participants, and the ability to retain staff and attract new talent.

Institutional partnerships – 5

Internationalization at home – 4

International research – 5

Internationalization of the curriculum – 3

Physical mobility – 5

Virtual mobility – 4