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Problems of reception of the concept of “soft skills” in contemporary scientific discourse on professional training of police officers

Viktoriia Halchenko*

Doctor of Psychology, Associate Professor
National Academy of Internal Affairs
03035, 1 Solomianska Sq., Kyiv, Ukraine
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2865-7245>

■ **Abstract.** The relevance of the study was determined by the need for a scientifically verified theoretical and review analysis of the fragmented discourse on soft skills in the context of global transformations of police professionalism standards and the lack of agreed theoretical approaches in contemporary science. The article analysed the concept of soft skills, the stages of its development and contemporary approaches to its interpretation in the context of law enforcement, personnel management and career growth. The study was based on a theoretical and review approach and involved a systematic analysis, comparison and critical reflection on scientific publications devoted to the formation of soft skills as a component of the professionalism of future police officers. The results of the review analysis showed that in contemporary scientific discourse, soft skills are considered an integral part of the professional competence of law enforcement officers. Researchers emphasise key “soft” competencies, including communication skills, emotional intelligence, critical thinking, stress resistance, teamwork and interpersonal interaction. An analysis of scientific sources has revealed significant progress in the development of practice-oriented methods for developing soft skills, in particular through training, role-playing games, and modular educational programmes. At the same time, the review revealed some problematic aspects, in particular the insufficient systematic integration of soft skills into police training programmes, the limited number of long-term studies, and the lack of standardised assessment methods. The results obtained give reason to assert that the scientific discourse on soft skills is actively developing but requires a more systematic, conceptually consistent and empirically proven approach. The study has practical significance as a scientifically sound basis for the systematic development of soft skills in the professional training of future police officers

■ **Keywords:** professional training; cadets; stress resistance; communication skills; emotional intelligence; teamwork

■ Introduction

The relevance of this study was determined by the transformation of requirements for professional activities of police officers in Ukraine in the context of a prolonged security crisis, martial law, and growing public sensitivity to the legitimacy and communicative quality of law enforcement agencies’ actions. The national police training system actively promotes the

importance of soft skills, but there is no agreed theoretical framework, which complicates their systematic implementation in educational programmes and professional standards. At the regional and global levels, the discussion on the “soft” competencies of the police is intensifying in connection with security sector reforms, the focus on community policing, and

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■ *Corresponding author

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the spread of international standards of procedural justice. At the same time, scientific publications demonstrate a conceptual dispersion of approaches to the definition, classification and mechanisms for the formation of soft skills, which makes it impossible to correctly compare models of professional training in different jurisdictions. For legal science, this creates the problem of replacing theoretical analysis with declarative statements about the “effectiveness” of soft skills without proper conceptual justification. That is why, as of 2025, there is an urgent need for theoretical and review research aimed at dissecting the scientific discourse on the soft skills of future police officers, clarifying its boundaries and identifying conceptual gaps that are of both practical and scientific importance.

Soft skills are seen as an integral part of police officers’ professional competence, directly affecting the quality of their interactions with citizens, decision-making, and resilience to professional stress. O. Magny & N. Todak (2021) analysed interdisciplinary works in psychology, criminology and police studies and concluded that high emotional intelligence is associated with better self-control, more effective communication and the ability to de-escalate conflict situations. At the same time, the researchers emphasised that most of the works are correlative in nature, and empirical evidence of the causal impact of emotional intelligence on job performance remains limited.

A narrative review by C. Bennell *et al.* (2022) focused on the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA) required to manage potentially conflictual police-community interactions. The authors identified communication skills, self-regulation, situational awareness and teamwork as the core soft skills that shape police professionalism. In their conclusions, they emphasised that the effectiveness of these skills depends largely on the quality of professional training and the practical orientation of training programmes.

The issue of soft skills in the context of sensitive work situations was examined by A. Millar *et al.* (2019). In their work, the authors explored the role of emotional intelligence in police responses to cases of domestic violence involving children. Summarising the available research, they concluded that soft skills contribute to more ethical and balanced behaviour by police officers, but cautioned against their mechanical absolutisation. According to the authors, without adequate institutional support and clear procedures, even a high level of individual soft skills does not guarantee effective decisions.

An evaluation of training programmes aimed at developing de-escalation skills was conducted by C. Villegas (2024). In their review, the authors focused on alternative indicators of training effectiveness, such as procedural fairness, communication

style, and citizens’ subjective perceptions of police actions. The conclusions indicate that the development of soft skills in future police officers can have a positive impact on professional behaviour, but the results largely depend on the duration of training and assessment methods. The issue of psychological resilience as an element of soft skills is explored in a systematic review by A.F. Moreno *et al.* (2024) on resilience development programmes in police units. The authors conclude that such programmes contribute to reducing professional burnout and increasing adaptability to stressful conditions. At the same time, it is emphasised that most studies focus on existing police officers, leaving out the stage of professional training of future personnel. In the context of professional training, the conclusions of L. Ericsson *et al.* (2025) are important, who analysed interpersonal skills in investigative interviews in a review study. The authors noted that the development of communication and empathy skills during training improves the quality of professional interaction, but the effect is only stable if soft skills are systematically integrated into training programmes.

Thus, an analysis of review studies shows that soft skills are considered in the scientific literature to be an important component of police professionalism, particularly in the areas of communication, de-escalation, emotional self-regulation, and psychological resilience. At the same time, most authors emphasise the limited nature of review and correlative data, which does not allow for unambiguous conclusions about the causal influence of soft skills. It is this circumstance that necessitates further research and the targeted integration of soft skills development into the professional training system for future police officers.

The aim of this theoretical review study was to compare scientific approaches to the formation of soft skills of future police officers by conceptually distinguishing between the definitions used, typologising key “soft” competencies, comparing models of their formation in the professional training system, and critically evaluating the theoretical assumptions on which the respective approaches are based. The study was based on a theoretical and review approach and involves a systematic analysis, comparison and critical reflection on scientific publications devoted to the formation of soft skills as a component of the professionalism of future police officers. The work uses methods of theoretical analysis, synthesis, comparison, classification, generalisation and conceptual modelling of scientific discourse. The methodological strategy was aimed at dissecting scientific discourse by analysing definitions, typologising key soft skills, comparing conceptual models of their formation in the professional training system, and identifying theoretical limitations and existing gaps in scientific literature. This approach made it possible to clearly

define the boundaries of the research problem, identify common principles and differences between existing theoretical approaches, and direct further research towards the development of a systematic model for integrating soft skills into the training of future police officers.

■ Evolution of the concept of soft skills

The term soft skills became popular in the 1980s in the United States. It is often attributed to R. Boyatzis (1982), who systematised managerial competencies, distinguishing between technical (hard) and socio-psychological (soft) skills, and believed that soft skills are key to managerial activity, in particular communication, leadership and emotional intelligence. After that, in the field of management and business schools, soft skills began to be identified as a separate category of skills necessary for career success, regardless of technical competencies. According to L.M. Spencer & S.M. Spencer (1993), these "soft" skills are critical for communication, collaboration, and successful performance of professional functions.

D. Goleman (1995) made a significant contribution to the popularisation of soft skills through the concept of emotional intelligence, emphasising the importance of self-awareness, impulse control, perseverance, motivation, empathy and social agility, which determine the success and effectiveness of interpersonal relationships. As R.E. Boyatzis *et al.* (2005) point out in their study, soft skills play an important role in building trust within a team, maintaining motivation and developing corporate culture.

According to D. Goleman *et al.* (2002), soft skills are crucial not only for ordinary employees, but also for managers, leaders, and heads of institutions and organisations. The authors have proven that 70-90% of a manager's success depends on the presence of "soft" competencies, rather than technical knowledge. Their concept of resonant leadership demonstrates that a leader, relying on emotional intelligence, creates a positive emotional atmosphere in the team, increases motivation, reduces the risk of professional burnout and increases team effectiveness. The structure of emotional intelligence encompasses self-awareness, self-regulation, social sensitivity, and interpersonal relationship management.

F. Luthans & C.M. Youssef (2007) presented the concept of Positive Organisational Behaviour, which focused on soft skills such as optimism, psychological resilience, hope, self-efficacy, and emotional regulation. As the authors point out, developing these skills increases productivity, reduces professional stress, improves loyalty to the organisation, and contributes to the psychological well-being of staff, as well as emphasising the need for the targeted development of employees' psychological resources. This approach demonstrates the integration of soft skills with health

psychology and the prevention of professional burn-out in organisations.

According to J.J. Heckman & T. Kautz (2012), the importance of soft skills should also be assessed from the perspective of economics, education and social policy. The authors note that non-cognitive skills are no less important than intellectual abilities and include self-discipline, perseverance, responsibility, social skills and the ability to self-control. It has been proven that the formation of soft skills in childhood and youth has a long-term economic and social effect, contributing to higher incomes and lower risks of deviant behaviour and unemployment. M.M. Robles (2012) identified 10 key soft skills in a systematic review, including communication skills, teamwork, flexibility, ethics, professional responsibility, interpersonal skills, critical thinking, conflict resolution, positive attitude, and time management, emphasising that these skills are often more important than hard skills because they determine an employee's adaptability, ability to cooperate, and leadership potential. As stated in their study by M.M. Robles & D. Smith (2013), the development of soft skills also has a practical aspect in the corporate environment, where effective methods of developing them include training, coaching, mentoring and role-playing. The authors emphasise that these tools contribute to the professional growth of employees and increase their adaptability to the demands of modern work activities.

Thus, the development of the concept of soft skills in the 1980s-2010s demonstrates a gradual transition from the separation of technical and socio-psychological competencies to a comprehensive understanding of their role in professional effectiveness and leadership. Initially, the foundation was laid for identifying soft skills as key to management activities, with an emphasis on communication, leadership, and emotional intelligence, and later their critical importance for communication and cooperation in work teams was emphasised. In the 1990s and early 2000s, the concept was expanded through the introduction of emotional intelligence, which emphasised the role of soft skills in building trust, motivation and corporate culture, and it was proven that soft skills are often more important than technical knowledge for the success of managers. At the beginning of the 21st century, soft skills were integrated with health psychology and positive organisational behaviour, highlighting optimism, resilience, hope and emotional regulation as core competencies for increasing productivity and reducing stress. It was shown that the development of soft skills has economic and social effects, emphasising the importance of self-discipline, responsibility and social skills in the long term. Finally, key soft skills were systematised and effective methods for their development were identified, with an emphasis on training, mentoring and role-playing. Thus,

during this period, soft skills have transformed from additional competencies into a systemically important component of the professional and leadership potential of employees and managers, combining psychological, social and managerial aspects.

■ Reception of the concept of soft skills in Ukraine

In the Ukrainian scientific community, interest in the issue of soft skills in police training has significantly increased in the context of martial law, social crises and the growing burden on law enforcement agencies. This necessitates the systematisation of modern scientific approaches to understanding soft skills, determining their structure, functional significance and ways of developing them in the process of professional training. In this context, it is particularly important to analyse the evolution of the concept of soft skills and the results of contemporary research into their role in the professional activities of police officers.

M.I. Skrypnyk (2013) viewed soft skills as a complex integral characteristic that includes a system of value-targeted, cognitive and activity-based dominants. In particular, professionalism is determined by a high level of general culture, professional competence, the ability to creatively modify the work process, goal setting and goal achievement, scientific reflection and the introduction of innovations in the professional sphere. Particular attention is paid to the formation of soft skills that ensure the effectiveness of interpersonal interaction, adaptability to change, and the ability to make informed decisions in conditions of stress and uncertainty.

An analysis of the formation of “soft” competencies in higher education students in various fields confirms the existence of specific meta-competencies that ensure the universality of professional training (Rashkevycha, 2016). These include the ability to work in a team; creativity; the ability to formulate and solve problems; apply knowledge in practice; self-education; effective communication in spoken and written languages; independence; ethical behaviour; processing and using information; knowledge and understanding of the professional field; conflict resolution and negotiation; and a focus on achieving quality.

At the same time, a critical analysis of the reception of the concept of soft skills in Ukraine points to certain limitations. Firstly, the emphasis on formal competencies and the normative component often prevails over the development of adaptive and interpersonal skills in educational programmes, which reduces the practical readiness of graduates for complex professional situations (Boiko-Buzyl & Shvets, 2017). According to H.H. Tsvietkova & H.I. Savluk (2021), the category of soft skills should include a set of interrelated structural and content-related skills, in particular: communication, situational awareness,

flexibility, complex problem solving, critical thinking, creative abilities, people management skills, interpersonal interaction, emotional intelligence, forming one's own opinion and decision making, customer focus, negotiation skills and flexibility of thinking. V. Halchenko (2023) notes in his review that among the “soft” competencies of future educators in pre-school education institutions, creativity is distinguished as the ability to generate new ideas, communication skills for establishing friendly relationships with children, parents and colleagues, the ability to work in a team and motivate others, resourcefulness as the ability to overcome contradictions and find optimal solutions in difficult situations, frustration tolerance and pedagogical optimism, i.e. belief in one's own strengths and the potential of pupils.

Thus, in Ukrainian scientific discourse, the concept of soft skills is considered an integral part of the professionalism of law enforcement officers and higher education students in general. The analysed history of research shows that soft skills integrate psychological, social, ethical and professional competencies, ensuring effective interpersonal interaction, adaptability to change, and the ability to make informed decisions in conditions of stress and uncertainty. Analysis of the scientific literature has helped to establish that most researchers identify key soft skills such as communication, creativity, critical thinking, conflict and team management, emotional intelligence and customer focus, as well as the ability to self-educate and apply knowledge in practice.

■ The development of the concept of soft skills in the context of police training in contemporary studies.

Further research has confirmed the practical importance of developing soft skills in police training. Thus, R.O. Korotkevych (2023) and O.H. Marchenko (2023) consider communication skills, conflict management, emotional self-control and decision-making, emphasising that the development of these skills increases the effectiveness of police work and promotes conflict-free interaction with citizens. An analysis of educational programmes for police officers shows that special attention should be paid to working in stressful and crisis situations, as well as interpersonal interaction while performing official duties in difficult conditions (Molchanova, 2024; Pchelina, 2025).

Yu.Yu. Boiko-Buzyl & D.V. Shvets (2017) identified several groups of competencies, including legal (knowledge of legislation and the ability to apply it), professional and ethical (compliance with moral standards and professional ethics), psychological (emotional stability, self-regulation, working with people in stressful situations), communicative (effective communication, persuasion, establishing mutual

understanding), social (tolerance, empathy, understanding of social processes), information and digital (mastery of modern technologies and digital security), moral and volitional (responsibility, discipline, determination), leadership (team organisation, acceptance of responsibility), as well as civic and patriotic competence. This comprehensive vision allows to view soft skills not as an additional category, but as a systemic component of professionalism that integrates psychological, social and ethical aspects of activity.

In practical terms, training, role-playing games and interactive tasks that promote the development of emotional intelligence, communication skills and teamwork are important for the formation of soft skills (Tiurina *et al.*, 2024). The professionally important qualities of future police officers cover a wide range of characteristics: general and in-depth professional knowledge, developed intelligence, creative thinking, analytical and prognostic abilities, effective memory and attention, imagination and intuition, communicative competence, nervous and mental stability, adequate self-esteem, and high motivation to achieve success (Pampura & Boiko-Buzyl, 2024). At the same time, researchers emphasise that the effectiveness of performing professional tasks is determined not by individual qualities, but by a complex of interacting personality traits in a specific context of activity. For example, stress resistance, sociability, analytical thinking, and physical endurance interact and shape the overall effectiveness of a future police officer (Pampura & Boiko-Buzyl, 2024). However, it should be noted that although Ukrainian studies show a high level of awareness of the importance of soft skills, their systematic inclusion in training programmes remains incomplete. There is often a lack of clear assessment methods, standards for the development and integration of soft skills into practical training, which limits their potential to improve the professional readiness of cadets.

A study of the impact of training sessions in various service-related sports on the dynamics of cadets' psychophysical condition, conducted by I.M. Okhriomenko *et al.* (2024), showed that additional training in service-related sports has a more effective impact on the psychophysical condition of future law enforcement officers compared to traditional physical training sessions. The most pronounced effect on physical condition indicators was found in the group of cadets who practised multi-event sports, and on emotional stability indicators – in the group of cadets who practised martial arts. These results confirm the need to improve the psychophysical condition of cadets during training, which will contribute to the effectiveness of their future law enforcement activities.

It is worth noting the scientific position of D.V. Shvets *et al.* (2025). Studying the psychological readiness of future law enforcement officers for

professional activity under the influence of wartime stress factors, the researchers found that cadets who had undergone preliminary corrective psychological work demonstrated better indicators of their psycho-emotional state and stress resistance than those who had not undergone such work. Thus, it was proven that well-organised professional psychological training contributes to increasing the level of psychological readiness of future law enforcement officers for professional activity under the influence of wartime stress factors.

The development of the concept of soft skills in police training in modern studies is becoming particularly important in the context of growing demands on the professional and psychological readiness of law enforcement officers. Scientific research emphasises that effective training of future officers includes not only professional knowledge and technical skills, but also the development of communicative, analytical and emotional competencies, which are reflected in the structure of soft skills (Zadorozhnyi, 2023; Danylyuk & Nikolaesku, 2025). Project and analytical activities are considered a basic component of the competence of future officers, which shapes critical thinking, the ability to analyse information and plan actions in complex conditions (Zadorozhnyi, 2023). According to S. Danylyuk & I. Nikolaesku (2025), the development of soft skills in students in the context of martial law in Ukraine contributes to increasing their psychological resilience, adaptability and effective teamwork. Thus, the formation of analytical and socio-communicative competencies is an integral part of police training in modern studies. Particular attention is paid to psychological readiness as a component of professional training for future lawyers and police officers. This aspect includes cognitive, motivational, emotional-volitional and functional components that ensure the effectiveness of professional activity and contribute to the development of soft skills (Demkiv & Lukanova, 2019; Tsurkan-Saifulina & Stupak, 2022). Psychological training covers not only the acquisition of knowledge, but also the development of the ability to work in stressful situations, make informed decisions and maintain emotional stability, which is critically important in law enforcement practice. The formation of military professional competence and culture of future officers is also a complex process that combines knowledge, practical skills, and socio-psychological qualities. Military professional culture, as emphasised by O. Ilchenko (2023), includes value orientations, behavioural standards and motivational components that ensure readiness for action in complex socio-professional conditions. In this approach, soft skills become not only auxiliary skills, but also an important component of the professional identity of future officers.

Contemporary researchers M. Emsing *et al.* (2024) analysed a wide range of scientific works that examine typical sources of conflict between police officers and citizens, particularly during arrests, mass events, family incidents, crises and stressful situations. The researchers identified strategies of de-escalation, negotiation, communicative influence, emotional control, and behavioural regulation as key factors in reducing violence and risks for both parties. The authors pay particular attention to the role of interpersonal skills of police officers: empathy, active listening, emotional self-regulation, tolerance of uncertainty, and the ability to make quick decisions without using excessive force. At the same time, they emphasise the significant lack of research that directly analyses soft skills as an independent resource for effective and ethical conflict management in the police. The authors justify the need to integrate soft skills into police training programmes as an essential component of violence prevention, increasing public trust and ensuring the legitimacy of police actions.

A.F. Moreno *et al.* (2024) found that the development of resilience is directly related to key police soft skills – self-control, emotional intelligence, communication, the ability to recover from traumatic events, and stress resistance. At the same time, the researchers point to the uneven quality of research, the lack of long-term observations, and the need for standardised training programmes, especially for future police officers.

In view of the above, attention should be focused on developing the soft skills of future police officers, as developed soft skills help modern police officers to act effectively in risky situations, maintain public trust and preserve professional stability in crisis situations. Thus, future police officers should develop such specific “soft” competences as communicative ability, the capacity to engage in dialogue, emotional intelligence, stress resilience, self-regulation, resilience, empathy, critical thinking, teamwork skills, responsibility, flexibility in extreme situations, and the ability to resolve conflicts constructively.

Police officers have two important communication tasks: providing information, such as giving instructions or testifying in court, and obtaining or seeking information, such as interviewing witnesses and suspects. How a police officer performs these communication tasks greatly influences the judgments and feelings of those with whom they communicate and can have a significant impact on the outcome of any situation. Thus, the ability to communicate effectively is fundamental to much of police work, and modern police officers need a set of communication strategies that can be adapted to the many situations they encounter.

A practical extension of the above can be found in the research of Australian scientists M. Morgan &

C. Harfield (2025), who note that although the police often respond to people experiencing psychological crises, they often lack the communication training necessary to peacefully resolve these complex situations. The researchers proposed a three-day training programme for the police on communication and de-escalation, which was conducted by experienced police negotiators for general service officers. Using adult learning theory (andragogy) as a lens, the study found that trainee police officers valued a student-centred, active approach to learning that differed from traditional rote learning. Training participants reported long-term benefits, noting the effectiveness of the training in peaceful crisis de-escalation in practice. Limitations were also identified, including the lack of follow-up activities, advanced training, and the inaccessibility of the programme at the police academy and to all front-line officers.

Equally important in the context of communication is the intercultural competence of the modern police officers. I.J. Mihailovs (2023) found that the daily work of the police in modern conditions requires proper management and cultural awareness in communicating with residents, with the further development of intercultural competence among police officers as a prerequisite for successful work and cooperation with different communities in a multicultural society. Thus, measures to develop intercultural competence should be included in training programmes for cadets and professional development programmes for serving police officers.

In current conditions of increased turbulence, the development of another key “soft” competence – the emotional intelligence of future law enforcement officers – is becoming particularly relevant. O. Magny & N. Todak (2021) note that a police officer’s emotional intelligence plays an extremely important role in resolving issues of the use of force, minimising the influence of personal biases, and improving the use of procedural justice when interacting with the public. The researcher also points to the possible consequences of developed emotional intelligence in terms of improving the health and well-being of police officers, as well as their resilience after experiencing trauma and other challenges of professional activity. One such challenge of professional activity is the conduct of interrogations by police officers. According to P. Risan *et al.* (2016), during investigative activities, police officers may encounter interrogations in which both parties experience a wide range of emotional states. Such emotional reactions must be taken into account and controlled in order to obtain reliable information about a particular event.

A study by A. McDowall *et al.* (2019) was devoted to the development of emotional intelligence in future police officers. The researchers conducted a pilot experiment as part of a broader research

programme aimed at understanding and tracking the motivation and characteristics of cadets as they change and develop throughout the police training and education programme. In their opinion, emotional intelligence (EI), which provides the ability to recognise and work with emotions, is crucial in police work, given the complexities of interacting with the public and stressful working conditions.

K.A. Kamri *et al.* (2019) believe that creating a supportive working environment is crucial for developing police officers' ability to manage stress while performing their duties. The researchers have shown that police unit managers should pay attention to the internal factors of police officers' psychological well-being by providing conditions for their career growth and establishing positive relationships between employees and management. The results of the experimental study showed that the level of stress among police officers in the camp was moderate. This is because the police officers did not experience high levels of stress at work. Accordingly, it was found that police officers at the camp were able to cope well with eight stress factors, namely: work and working relationships; organisational structure and climate; the role of the manager; career and achievement; working relationships; working environment; personal and family problems; and disciplinary problems. Thus, it was proven that the ability to cope with stress at work is undoubtedly related to the presence of developed emotional intelligence.

Thus, all of the above confirms the need to form the foundations of professionalism in future police officers by developing important personal qualities and "SOFT SKILLS" in them during professional training. In this context, J. Thompson & B. Payne (2019) proposed expanding the range of potential measures to develop the professionalism of cadets and serving officers by conducting specialised modules in a university environment, supporting the transition from "training to education" and "from work to profession."

An analysis of current research shows a high level of awareness of the importance of soft skills in police training and a wide range of competencies that are recognised as critical to professional effectiveness. At the same time, there are certain gaps, in particular the insufficient systematic inclusion of soft skills in training programmes, the lack of standardised assessment methods and long-term studies on the effectiveness of their development. The priority of individual skills and the interaction between different components of professional qualities in a specific context of activity remain controversial. The achievements of the discourse include the integration of psychological, communicative and interpersonal aspects into police training and the development of practice-oriented methods for developing soft skills, in particular training courses, role-playing games and modular

programmes. Overall, the scientific discourse demonstrates progress in understanding the importance of soft skills, while requiring a more systematic, standardised and empirically supported approach.

■ Conclusions

The subject of this review study was to examine the concept of soft skills and analyse approaches to their development in professional training, particularly for future police officers, as well as to compare scientific definitions, typologies and models of soft skills development. The aim of the study was to systematise existing approaches, evaluate their effectiveness and identify gaps in scientific discourse, which was achieved through a comprehensive analysis of literature and practical training programmes. A historical review of the evolution of the concept of soft skills was conducted, which showed a gradual transition from the separation of technical and socio-psychological competencies to a comprehensive vision of their role in professional effectiveness and leadership. It was found that the reception of soft skills in Ukraine encompasses the integration of psychological, social, ethical and professional competencies, with an emphasis on communication, critical thinking, conflict management, emotional intelligence and the ability to self-educate and apply knowledge in practice. An analysis of current research on police training revealed a wide range of competencies that are recognised as key to professional effectiveness, including emotional intelligence, stress resistance, resilience, teamwork and intercultural competence. Certain gaps have been identified, including insufficient systematic integration of soft skills into training programmes, a lack of standardised assessment methods, and a shortage of long-term studies on the effectiveness of their development. The results of the analysis indicate significant achievements in scientific discourse: the integration of psychological, communicative and practical methods, the use of training, role-playing and modular programmes for the development of soft skills. The data obtained allow to conclude that the development of soft skills is critically important for improving the professional readiness and effectiveness of future police officers in stressful, crisis and interpersonally complex situations.

A systematic review of scientific sources has established that contemporary discourse demonstrates progress in understanding the importance of soft skills, but issues such as the standardisation of training programmes, the interaction of individual competencies in specific contexts of activity, and the assessment of their impact on professional effectiveness remain insufficiently researched. The results obtained deepen the understanding of the subject, emphasising that soft skills are not just additional

skills, but are a system-forming factor of professionalism. Promising areas for further research include the development of standardised models for the formation and assessment of soft skills, long-term empirical studies of their impact on professional effectiveness, and the study of the integration of soft skills into various professional contexts and training programmes.

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Проблеми рецепції концепту “soft skills” у сучасному науковому дискурсі щодо професійної підготовки поліцейських

Вікторія Гальченко

Доктор психологічних наук, доцент
Національна академія внутрішніх справ
03035, пл. Солом'янська, 1, м. Київ, Україна
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2865-7245>

■ **Анотація.** Актуальність дослідження зумовлена потребою в науково вивіреному теоретико-оглядовому аналізі фрагментованого дискурсу щодо soft skills в умовах глобальних трансформацій стандартів поліцейського професіоналізму й відсутності узгоджених теоретичних підходів у сучасній науці. У статті проаналізовано концепцію soft skills, етапи її становлення та сучасні підходи до трактування в контексті правоохоронної діяльності, управління персоналом і кар'єрного зростання. Дослідження ґрунтується на теоретико-оглядовому підході й передбачає систематичний аналіз, порівняння і критичне осмислення наукових публікацій, присвячених формуванню soft skills як складової професіоналізму майбутніх поліцейських. Результати оглядового аналізу засвідчили, що в сучасному науковому дискурсі soft skills розглядають як невіддільну складову професійної компетентності працівників правоохоронних органів. Дослідники акцентують на ключових «м'яких» компетентностях, зокрема комунікативних навичках, емоційному інтелекті, критичному мисленні, стресостійкості, здатності до командної роботи й міжособистісної взаємодії. Аналіз наукових джерел засвідчив наявність значних напрацювань у формуванні практично орієнтованих методик розвитку soft skills, зокрема через тренінги, рольові ігри й модульні освітні програми. Водночас огляд виявив проблемні аспекти, зокрема недостатню системність інтеграції soft skills в освітні програми підготовки поліцейських, обмежену кількість довгострокових досліджень і відсутність стандартизованих методик оцінювання. Отримані результати дають підстави стверджувати, що науковий дискурс щодо soft skills активно розвивається, але потребує системнішого, концептуально узгодженого й емпірично підтвердженого підходу. Дослідження має практичне значення як науково обґрунтована база для системного розвитку soft skills у професійній підготовці майбутніх поліцейських

■ **Ключові слова:** професійна підготовка; курсанти; стресостійкість; комунікативність; емоційний інтелект; командна робота