

## **TRANSFORMATION OF KAZAKHSTAN SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION**

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**Abstract.** This article discusses a 20-year period of development of higher education in the new independent state Kazakhstan (arisen in the post-Soviet space). At the beginning of this article the historical data on the prototypes of higher education in Kazakhstan is given. The dynamics of expansion of the educational space of universities in Kazakhstan for 20 years of independence, the three generations of the laws on education are considered, defined stages of the reform with illustration of significant changes in higher education, a vision of educational strategies in Kazakhstan in the logic of world trends of education, the strengths and weaknesses of the reforms Kazakhstan's higher education are set out.

**Keywords:** education system, educational policy, educational strategies, higher education, globalization of education, the world educational space

### **Introduction**

The development of higher education in the late XX - early XXI centuries differs with its powerful dynamics. Beginning in the 90's of the XX century UNESCO as the coordinator of the development of Education in the world drew attention to the higher education systems of the countries of the world and to the training of professional personnel on a global scale.

The international world community began to pay more attention to the issues of the development of higher education. For example, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) conducts an annual forum of Ministers of Education of the OECD countries. The competition between higher education systems in Europe and the United States has stimulated the emergence of the Bologna process.

In addition to the institutional - territorial structure of the world educational space is actively formed in the world. A.P. Liferov, N.V. Bordovskaya and A.A. Rean take as criterion for dividing to the types of regions rapprochement and cooperation of educational systems.

*1<sup>st</sup> type of regions* - the generators of the integration processes. Western Europe (from 90s), the U.S. and Canada, Asia-Pacific region (Asia-Pacific - South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia).

*2<sup>nd</sup> type of regions* – that respond positively to the integration processes. Latin America. Brazil and Argentina are oriented towards the American model; Mexico and Costa Rica are based on close contact with Europe. Latin American countries carry out “major project of the UNESCO on Education for countries of Latin America and the Caribbean”.

*3<sup>rd</sup> type of regions* - the countries that are inert to the integration of educational processes. This is a major part of Africa, to the south of the Sahara (excluding South Africa), a number of South and Southeast Asia, small island states in the pool of Pacific and Atlantic oceans. Duration of school education is below the minimum - 4 years. Mainly, illiterate population is dominant.

By the end of XX century regions where the sequence of educational and integration processes is broken stood out. These are the Arabian countries, Eastern Europe, CIS countries. Arabian countries are divided into 4 sub-regions, which tend to internal integration. Maghreb Region (including Libya), the Middle East (Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan), the Persian Gulf (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain), Countries of the Red Sea coast and Mauritania (Bordovskaya & Rean, 2001: 132-133).

At present, we can say that the countries of Eastern Europe in the early twenty-first century entered the first type of regions, and many CIS countries can be attributed to the second type of regions.

In the former Soviet Union reforms have been complicated by the establishment of independence, economic and social crisis of the 90's. On the one hand, it facilitated the selection of orientations and goals of education, on the other - the education system itself has become an obvious attribute of state policy.

*The purpose of this article* - review of higher education development in Kazakhstan in the context of globalization processes, the periodization of the development of higher education of stage of Kazakhstan's independence in the context of global development and demonstration of the vector of the educational strategy of Kazakhstan.

The relevance of this study lies in the fact that the parallels of trends in the development of education in the leading countries of the world and in new independent state of Kazakhstan, as well as the achievements and shortcomings of the educational policy of our republic can be seen.

The research methodology is based on a systematic approach and new approaches to the development of historiography of F.Cambi, on a study of educational policy and the transformation of pedagogy in the “theory of education.”

The processes of globalization of society and a new stage of development of the methodology of science has led to changes from the closed method of constructing the history of education to open, enriched in different areas of

research science education and a variety of methods and tools for a complete presentation.

According to F. Cambi there were three major revolutions of modern historiography (Cambi F., 2005):

- of methods, adopted liberalization of techniques and radical pluralism;
- of time, gave birth to the multiple and dialectical view of historical time;
- of documents, has expanded the concept, complicating and developing new perceptions of the sources and new organization of the archives.

From the three revolutions a critical way of history is formed, which brought to light the complexity of the pluralism of approaches and appearance, as well as the dialectical type of research.

## **Main part**

### **Brief historical information**

The development of higher education in Kazakhstan counts nearly only one century. Prototypes of the universities were *medieval madrasas*, where famous philosophers of Central Asia were taught at that time. In the IX century in the medieval town of Otrar that was situated on the territory of modern Kazakhstan existed madrassas, where famous philosopher of the East Abu Nasir al-Farabi studied. As wrote academician A.Mashanov, one of the madrasa students also were Korkyt (Mashanov A., 1970).

We believe that before the revolution there were prerequisites for the organization of the university in the territory of Kazakhstan, but because of the educational policy of the Russian Empire, the backwardness of Russian education system as a whole, the weak economic development of Kazakhstan and its fragmented administrative-territorial division the emergence of universities has not been implemented.

The first institution of higher education was the Kazakh Pedagogical Institute, which was founded in 1928. Soviet period of development of higher education was characterized by intense dynamics of the organization of professional *higher education*, mostly institutes. In the 1990s University sector had only two universities (Kazakh State University and Karaganda State University). The total number of universities in Kazakhstan to the collapse of the Soviet Union was 55 higher education institutions.

The new historical period of development of higher education came with the acquisition of Kazakhstan's independence. Kazakhstan has built a national system of education that has its distinctive and recognizable face.

The main results of the reforms of higher education for 20 years of independence of Kazakhstan:

- Creation of a national system of education as an attribute of independence of Kazakhstan;
- Expanding the number of universities and an increasing number of students;

- Along with the state sector, the private sector of higher education has appeared, the emergence of the phenomenon of “educational services” and the education market;

- The transition from Five-year education to three-cycled system of education “Bachelor - Master - Doctorate PhD”;

- Implemented credit system of education;

- Dissemination of academic mobility of students and teachers: students increasingly go abroad; foreign professors are invited to Kazakhstan;

- Accession to the Bologna Process in 2010, our republic has declared the accession to the European educational space, and the European educational values;

- Implementation of the program “Intelligent Nation” of President of Kazakhtsan Nursultan Nazarbayev. It reflects the state idea of the development of human capital, in other words, the public, the social side of the construction of industrial-innovative economy of Kazakhstan;

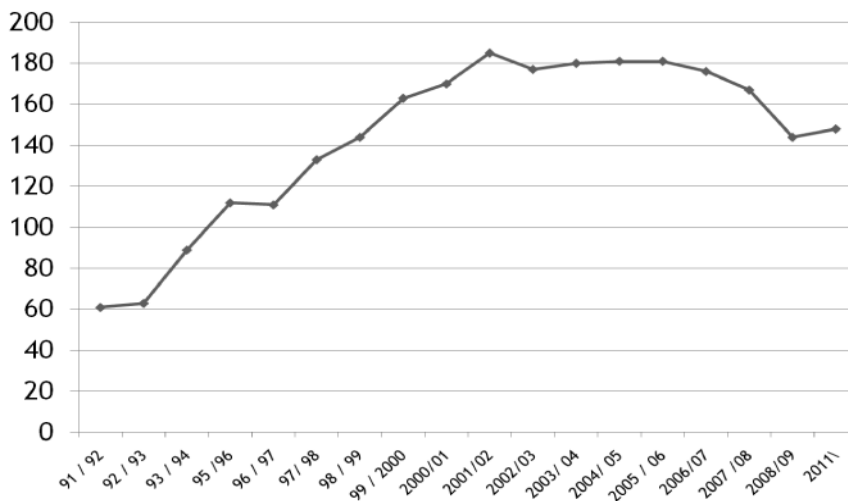
- The emergence of universities in Kazakhstan in regional and world rankings of universities;

- Completed the transformation of “aspirantura” and “doctorantura” (the Soviet system) to doctoral PhD, thus, introduced the world system of scientific training, etc.

### **The dynamics of growth of the number of universities in Kazakhstan**

Further, let’s take a closer look at reforms. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the acquisition of Kazakhstan’s independence were held in a difficult economic period. Statehood necessitated the creation of a national system of education and science. They are characterized by considerable quantitative and qualitative changes in the system.

The transition to a market economy, a departure from the planned economic system is actually lifted restrictions on the establishment of universities. In the early 90’s took place a rapid growth of the appearance of higher education institutions, including universities. We represent the data on the growth of universities in the period from 1993 to 2008. As seen in Figure 1, the number of universities has grown from 55 in 1990/91 academic year to 181 in 2004/2005 academic year, i.e. more than 3 times, and decreased in 2008/2009 to 144. The dynamics of expansion of the university sector in the late 80’s – 90’s according to the State Statistics Committee of Kazakhstan (Statistical Yearbook, 2007) is also significant: increases from 1993/94 school year - 8 Universities, 1994/95 academic year - 13. In 2008, according to the MES in Kazakhstan, there were 144 higher education institutions, among them 83 were universities.



**Figure 1** - Dynamics of the expansion of universities in Kazakhstan

In the mid-90's (1994) in Kazakhstan takes place consolidation, integration of regional universities and their transfer to the status of State universities. Thus, in each regional center of Kazakhstan (Kazakhstan's administrative unit) State University was created.

Since the early 90s of the twentieth century sector of private higher education institutions has appeared. The most famous private universities in Kazakhstan are "Kainar" and "Turan", International Academy of Business and others.

A new feature of higher education becomes a significant expansion of the structure, diversification - a variety of types of universities, funding sources and others, the transition to a market of educational services.

### **The development of the legal framework of higher education in Kazakhstan**

In Kazakhstan, for the period of independence three generations of the laws on education was adopted:

- First generation - in 1992 - the Law of RK "On education" and in 1993 - the Law of RK "On Higher Education";
- The second generation of the law - in 1999 - the Law of RK "On education", which replaced both of the law, and
- In 2007 - the new Law "On Education".

The peculiarity of the first generation of laws was an attempt to preserve all the positive experience of the Soviet system of higher education in the decade of crisis and filling of the national part of education. It should be noted that the Law “On Higher Education” largely duplicated the Law on Higher Education of the Soviet period.

In accordance with the Law “*On Education*” (1999) in order to unification and match of structure of higher education to the international standards enshrined in law has the following structure of higher education:

Higher basic education (bachelor’s) with a term of four years of training and awarding the degree of “Bachelor”;

Higher professional education for a period of not less than four years, with the qualification of “specialist with higher education”;

Higher scientific and pedagogical education (master) with a training period on the basis of higher basic education for two years based on the highest one-year special education with qualification and academic degree “Master”.

Changed the basic principle of finance training: grant or loan funds are given to students, not university, as it was before the reform, i.e. the transition from the principle of “funding the object of education” to a “funding the subject of education”.

In accordance with the Law “*On Education*” in 2007 legislatively defined transition to 12-year secondary education; secured a three-stage model of training, higher and postgraduate education (bachelor - master - doctor PhD), Master level is bred in the level of postgraduate education introduced institutional and specialized accreditation, etc. All levels of education are accompanied by educational programs, which provide the ability to monitor system from pre-school to postgraduate and complementary education.

Conventionally traced periods: the construction of the national education system in Kazakhstan, the reform of the education system to prepare for the integration process, the intensification of entering of Kazakhstan to the world educational space.

October 24, 2011 the Law “On education” amended and supplemented, corresponding to the further reform of the system dynamic. In fact, the new version of the law changes 56 articles of the 68 available, some of the articles are derived and listed new articles. In particular, the notions of “University with a special status,” “research university” are introduced. It is planned to give greater autonomy to universities with special status for the development of educational programs.

It is to note that all the reforms are taking place in the context of national policy and strengthening of the global trends in education, as well as trends in the development of our state, defined by the industrial-innovative development of society.

### **Stages of development of higher education during the period of independence of Kazakhstan**

The analysis and periodization of the development of education in Kazakhstan in 2005 were conducted by teachers-researchers Z.A. Isaeva and G.K. Akhmetova. We suggest a periodization of the well-known scientists in Kazakhstan and will extend it by our thoughts.

*The first phase (1991-1994). The formation of the legislative and regulatory framework of higher education.*

The main objectives of this phase was to create a network of institutions of higher education and updating of specialties of higher education in order to ensure the independence of the republic in the training needs of the market economy, provinces and regions. Ongoing measures of this period found the legislative consolidation of the Republic of Kazakhstan Law "On Higher Education" (1993).

In 1994, approved by the State Standard of Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Basic Provisions), who first identified the introduction of multi-level structure of higher education in the country, the academic degrees of bachelor's and master's degrees.

*The second phase (1995-1998). The modernization of higher education, update of its content.*

This stage is characterized by a conceptual definition of the higher education system, which is reflected in the Concept of state policy in the field of education, approved by the National Council of State Policy under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan on 4 August 1995, by the adoption of new legal provisions regulating the activities of institutions of higher education. From 1995 to 1997, the first Kazakh educational standards are accepted for 310 professions of higher education. In 1996 a new version of the classifier (the list) specialties of Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, providing 342 specialties were approved. The non-state sector of education is actively developing.

*The third phase (1999-2000). Decentralization of governance and financing of education, the expansion of academic freedom of educational institutions.*

At this stage there is a real decentralization of system of education organizations management. Fundamentally changed the principles of admission to institutions of higher education, the transition to the training of specialists with higher professional education on the basis of the state educational order. Since 1999, a new model of forming of students contingent of institutions of higher education was, introduced by providing applicants on a competitive basis, the state education grants and state education loans.

*The fourth stage (the beginning of 2001 - 2010). The strategic development of higher and secondary education.*

The main directions of the progressive development of higher education in the XXI century. In 2000 State Program "Education", was adopted, which determined

the development of education for 5 years. In February 2004 the government of Kazakhstan has approved the concept of development of education system of Republic of Kazakhstan to 2015 (Akhmetova & Isaeva, 2006: 69-70). Based on the Concept, State Program for the Development of Education in the Republic of Kazakhstan till 2010 was developed.

The program defines education as a national priority, composes the organizational framework of the implementation the educational policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for a long period and is the basis for amending the legislation, the system of financing, educational content, the structure of the education system, a system of education management, human resources and social policy. The program includes the following main areas of development:

Transition to 12-year general secondary education. Creating a system profile and profession-oriented education of senior school students;

Create a new level - post-secondary professional education;

Providing a three-tier system of professional training: Bachelor - Master - Doctorate (PhD), based on a system of academic credits;

Creation of a national system of quality assessment (National Program for the Development of Education in the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2010; 2005).

Conventionally, in 2010 began a new phase of strategic development of higher education, aimed at strengthening the position of Kazakhstan in the world educational space. Kazakhstan joined the Bologna process. A new state program of development of education till 2020 is accepted. The purpose of the program is - increasing the competitiveness of education, human capital development by providing access to quality education for sustainable economic growth (National Program for Education Development of Kazakhstan till 2020). A new world-class University, University of Nazarbayev is created. Kazakh universities have entered into the world rankings of universities. In 2011, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University took 402 place in the QS world ranking among 700 universities in the world.

In 2010 there was a complete switch to three cycles of study: Bachelor - Master - Doctorate PhD. The defenses of doctoral and candidate's theses of the Soviet system are terminated. The system of training scientific and scientific-pedagogical staff is completely transformed.

In front of Kazakhstani teachers of higher education stand the tasks of the active scientific integration and joint research. Academic mobility of teachers and students is expanded. Kazakh government funds the program of inviting foreign professors to give lectures and conduct classes in the national universities of Kazakhstan.

In our view, in Kazakhstan following key features of *globalization of education* are being traced:

– “*localization*” - the penetration and adaptation of Western methods and techniques, technologies and forms of education. However, the internal contents



remains the same or suffers a serious adaptation processes (e.g., the credit system of education);

- “*horizontal communication*” - the introduction of forms of Western universities in the education system Republic of Kazakhstan (e.g., KIMEP), the emergence of international institutions on the basis of two states and financed by them (for example, Kazakh-British Technical University, Kazakh-Russian University, etc.);

- Implementation of *joint scientific and educational projects*;

- *Openness of the education system*, promoting an increase in the number of foreign students, as well as the existing capability of citizens of the RK to study, to improve their qualifications abroad, and the percentage of such students is gradually increasing (for example, the state program “Bolashak”, the number of young people going on it has grown from 785 students in 1994 -2004 years to 3000 to 2005). In other words - it is the mobility of students and teachers, researchers. At the same time, the expansion of educational content by “transnational knowledge” (new theories of different sciences);

- The establishment of distance learning;

- desire to enter into the international educational space, joining the Bologna process promotes harmonization of levels of training (Bachelor - Master - Doctorate PhD) in international educational standards, recognition of educational documents, degrees, etc., as well as the introduction of credit system of education;

- Standardization of training specialties according to the International Standard Classification of Education (UNESCO);

- Entering universities and colleges in the international and regional associations;

- International accreditation of educational programs in foreign accreditation centers, etc. (Mynbayeva, 2010: 171).

### **The educational strategies of Kazakhstan in the context of globalization**

Strategies define the priorities of the entire education system, they determine the mobility planning for the long term.

Analysis of pedagogical literature permit to identify two directions of understanding strategies: a general description of trends in education and as a characteristic of global principles for the development of education. Thus, the strategy reflects the principles and trends in the industry.

On the one hand, tendencies and principles are related to the particular national education system, its development priorities. On the other hand, in the context of globalization of education - they are determined by global trends of development.

In our opinion, Kazakhstan continues to improve traditions and strategy of public education, preserving and enhancing them.

Let us consider the most well-known educational principles and concepts in the world. In fact, they define the world’s educational strategies. After a

global crisis of education in late 60s of the twentieth century, we turn to the paradigm from “Learning not for life” to “learning through life” “learning during life” - “lifelong learning” (LLL)”. This paradigm began to emerge in the late 60s of the twentieth century. It is based on the concept of continuous education. It was first presented at a conference of UNESCO in 1965 by P. Lengrand. Since the mid-70s, the idea of lifelong learning is supported by almost all countries, and becomes the basic principle of educational reforms.

The European Union adopted a Memorandum of Continuous Education (2000). It determines that the “doctrine of a lifelong learning” in the European Employment Strategy is the educational activities carried out on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and professional competencies.” Two main goals of continuous learning are active citizen position and competitiveness in the labor market.

In addition to the term Lifelong learning – LLL in the memorandum the concept of “(Life wide learning ”) is indicated which is accents attention to the diversity of education forms - formal, non-formal and informal. Formal education ends with a diploma or certificate. Non-formal education is not accompanied by the issuance of the document, but it happens in educational institutions, clubs, study groups, as well as during individual tutoring. Informal education is a cognitive activity of the person that accompanies the person every day, not necessarily having the character of purposeful activity.

Thus, in Europe the strategy of continuous education “Lifelong learning” (LLL) and “Life wide learning” (LWL) is cultivated.

Other principles that underpin the social system of education in Europe can be called - the principle of equal opportunities of education, employment principle, the principle of social solidarity and social adequacy, etc.

In Soviet and Russian pedagogical literature the following strategies, intersecting with both Megatrends of development and educational principles: humanism and democracy, globalization and internationalization, informatization and etc. are distinguished.

These educational strategies are clearly traced in Kazakhstan’s educational space. To summarize, in Kazakhstan can be traced implementation of the following educational strategies: public education, continuous education, “lifelong and life wide learning” (LLL+LWL), humanization, democratization, globalization and internationalization, informatization and computerization etc.

### **The credit system of education**

In the context of megatrends of globalization of education, Kazakhstani high School was significantly reformed over the past 20 years. In addition to the transition

to three cycles of study: Bachelor - Master - Doctorate PhD, the credit system of education has been introduced.

The introduction of credit technology in higher education system of Kazakhstan has brought many qualitative changes in the educational process, and yet was a condition of becoming independent for future specialists. In 2001, Kazakhstan introduced a credit system of education that corresponds to the American education system.

The reasons for the introduction of the American system of credits according to the reformers (Omirbaev, Turmahanbetova et al., 2009: 69) are:

- The American educational system is a world leader today. U.S. universities occupy leading positions in the world ranking. The “weight” of the American diploma on the world labor market does not yet have competitors.

- Huge selection of training programs that as a total have more than 1000.

- Strong scientific base. American universities – are not just higher education institutions. Each of them is a Centre for Scientific Research, which conducts leading-edge developments in all the areas of knowledge and loud discoveries are committed.

- A recognized reputation of the teaching staff.

- Well-developed infrastructure. Technical equipment of the university laboratories, the organization of educational process, as well as household and leisure of the students meet the highest requirements. American higher education system is very flexible.

In 2010, the accession to the Bologna Process Kazakhstan has developed a system of credit transfer for the harmonization with ECTS.

### **Findings and Conclusion**

Kazakhstan is one of the leaders of the former Soviet Union in the reforming of higher education. It connected and experienced traditions of the Soviet system of higher education and the impact of global trends in education. Historically, the prevailing policy of professionalisation and mass higher education, established during the Soviet era is for the national universities of Kazakhstan transformed and harmonized with the world's traditions - the unity of research and teaching, university autonomy, social responsibility, etc.

Among the strengths of higher and postgraduate education by foreign experts at the moment called:

- Compliance of the structure of Kazakhstan's education system with the International system of Classification of Education, UNESCO;

- Introduction of a three-cycle of education “Bachelor - Master - Doctorate”;

- Approval of the Classifier of specialties of higher and postgraduate education of RK containing a consolidated group of specialties;

- Entry into the European educational space;
- Expanding the academic freedom of universities to determine the content of educational programs: elective component is extended - Bachelor from 40% to 50% Master - from 50% to 60% Doctorate - from 70% to 80%.

Weaknesses identified by experts:

- Teachers of Kazakhstani universities are poorly trained for functioning in the new educational environment;
- Master's and doctoral students are not sufficiently involved in the implementation of research projects;
- Insufficient access to current scientific information of the faculty;
- Not enough proficiency in foreign languages of teaching staff and students, and others

The traditions of higher education in Kazakhstan are rich, because are based on the domestic national and Soviet experience, and actively enriched by the traditions of the world development of education.

Specified strategic vector of education in a context of an open society and transparency of educational policy, as well as a constant reflection of the results of performance of the education system permits to Kazakhstan to move gradually to new achievements.

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## **ТРАНСФОРМАЦИЯ НА СИСТЕМАТА НА ВИШЕТО ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ В КАЗАХСТАН В УСЛОВИЯТА НА ГЛОБАЛИЗАЦИЯ**

**Резюме.** Статията разглежда 20-годишния период от развитието на висшето образование в независимата казахстанска държава, възникнала в постсъветското пространство. В началото са дадени исторически сведения за модела на висшето образование в Казахстан. Представени са динамиката на разрастване на образователното университетско пространство в Казахстан за периода на 20-годишна независимост, трите поколения закони в областта на образованието и различните етапи на реформите, илюстрирани с примери за значимите промени във висшето образование. Разгледани са визията за образователните стратегии в Казахстан във връзка със световните тенденции в образователните политики, както и силните и слабите страни на реформите в казахстанското висше образование.

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