Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries

Central Asia

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This document has been produced within the framework of the European Union’s Tempus programme, which is funded by the EuropeAid Development and Co-operation Directorate-General and the Directorate-General for Enlargement.

It has been prepared by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) on the basis of contributions from the Tempus Offices and the authorities concerned.

The approach and data collection have been implemented in collaboration with Eurydice, the network on education systems and policies in Europe.
Preface

The Tempus programme, launched in 1990, is one of the longest standing EU-funded programmes in the field of education. During more than 20 years of its existence, Tempus has supported the modernisation of higher education in the Partner Countries outside the European Union, namely in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Western Balkans and in the Southern Mediterranean.

In order to carry out Tempus projects with higher education institutions in the Tempus Partner Countries, the knowledge of the system in which the institutions operate is crucial for the success of project activities. The higher education systems of the Partners Countries operate in different contexts and have different historical backgrounds. For this reason, the definition of the needs and the objectives of the projects should be based on knowledge of the reality in the country concerned and should take into account the existing policies and legislative developments.

In 2010, the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), which is responsible for the management of the Tempus programme, prepared a series of four regional publications, describing the higher education systems in all Tempus Partner Countries. These reports have proved to be a useful and valuable tool for all beneficiaries and future applicants, planning to submit Tempus project proposals.

Considering the fact that since 2010 many countries have faced numerous changes and reforms affecting the structure of their higher education systems, revised reports were deemed necessary. Therefore these new publications represent an update of the previous reports, providing the public with a description of the current reality of the higher education systems in the Tempus Partner Countries.

No particular change has been made to the structure of these descriptions. They contain a general presentation of the higher education system in each country, information on current challenges and trends, information on the implementation of the Bologna Process and on participation in the Tempus and Erasmus Mundus programmes until 2012.

This document forms therefore part of a series of four new regional publications. The descriptions have been drafted by the National Tempus Offices in the Partner Countries, in cooperation with the National Authorities and the EU Delegations. The collection of data on the implementation of the Bologna Process was carried out in close collaboration with Eurydice, the network on education systems and policies in Europe. The overall exercise was managed by the Tempus Unit of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency.

I am convinced that these new documents will continue to help current and future beneficiaries of Tempus projects to develop and carry out their activities and that they will also serve as an informative tool for any other actors, interested in higher education in the Tempus Partner Countries.

Brian Holmes
Acting Director
Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, Brussels
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1 The individual overviews of the higher education systems of the Tempus Partner Countries are also available on the Tempus website: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus/tools/publications_en.php

Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries: Central Asia
Brief overview of the Tempus programme

Tempus is the EU’s external cooperation programme that has been supporting the modernisation of higher education systems in the European Union’s neighbouring countries for over 20 years. The number of Partner Countries involved has changed during this time. At present, the programme covers the 27 countries in the Western Balkans, Central Asia, Eastern Europe, Northern Africa and the Middle East2.

Since its creation, Tempus has contributed to promoting cooperation between higher education institutions in the European Union and the Partner Countries, through various capacity building activities. It also promotes the voluntary convergence of higher education systems in these countries with EU policies and processes in higher education, including the Bologna Process. Indeed, the Bologna Process has become a reference for most of Tempus Partner Countries, by setting in motion a series of reforms, to modernise higher education systems and to make them more compatible and comparable.

Background

Initially covering countries in Central and Eastern Europe, the first phase of the programme was launched in 1990 and lasted until 1993. During this period, Tempus sought to contribute to socio-economic reforms, through cooperation in higher education. These countries were later to join the EU itself.

The second phase of the programme, Tempus II, covered the next six years (1994-2000). During this period, the programme was extended to certain countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. National priorities for the Programme, defined by national authorities were introduced for the first time.

The third phase of Tempus was implemented from 2000 to 2006. The concept of cooperation between different countries in the same region was introduced during this time. In the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, Tempus III was extended to North Africa and the Middle East, with a view to contributing to promoting socio-economic development of this region. The programme also aimed at promoting inter-cultural understanding as a means of sustainable growth, peace and reinforced the 'intercultural' and 'civil society' dimension of the EU's policies in these regions.

Since 2007, Tempus has entered its fourth phase, which runs until 2013. It puts emphasis on regional and cross-regional cooperation and reinforcing links between higher education and society. The programme currently covers 27 Partner Countries and territories. The programme is integrated into the European Union’s ‘Neighbourhood’, ‘Enlargement’ and ‘Development’ policies, which aim to promote prosperity, stability and security.

Tempus is funded by three financial instruments: the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI).

2 Tempus partners (2012): Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, the occupied Palestinian territory, Russia, Serbia, Syria, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Kosovo*.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.
Main characteristics of Tempus

Tempus was designed to contribute to reforming and upgrading the higher education institutions and systems in the Tempus Partner Countries’. Through cooperation at higher education level, the programme also aims to strengthen civil society, promote democracy, as well as enhancing mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue between the EU and its partners. It promotes a "bottom-up" approach, since the content and methodology of the projects are left to project beneficiaries to define (within the priorities set by the Call). However, the Programme can also be described as "top-down", since the national and regional priorities are established by the national authorities in each Partner Country, to maximise the impact of the Programme on the higher education reform process.

Tempus IV supports three types of projects:

- **Joint Projects** target higher education institutions and fund multilateral partnerships between these EU and Partner Country institutions, to develop, modernise and disseminate new curricula, teaching methods and teaching materials. They also aim to enhance quality assurance mechanisms in institutions, modernise the governance and management of higher education institutions and strengthen their contribution to lifelong learning and the ‘knowledge triangle’ of ‘education-research-innovation’.

- **Structural Measures** aim to reform higher education systems in the Partner Countries and to enhance their quality and relevance to the world of work and society at large. They promote further convergence with EU developments in the field of higher education. They focus on issues linked to the reform of governance in higher education institutions (qualification systems, quality assurance mechanisms, autonomy of institutions…) and foster links between higher education, the world of work and other sectors of education. They can also include studies and research, the organisation of national, regional and thematic conferences and seminars, the provision of training, policy advice and the dissemination of information.

Both Joint Projects and Structural Measures are funded through Calls for Proposal. The grant awarded varies between 0.5 to 1.5 million EUR.

- **Accompanying Measures** are funded through Calls for Tender or Framework Contracts. They comprise of dissemination and information activities such as thematic conferences, studies and activities which aim to identify and highlight good practice or consultation of stakeholders. They are also used to fund the National Tempus Offices and the activities of the group of ‘Higher Education Reform Experts’ in the Tempus Partner Countries.

Management of Tempus

The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) is responsible for both the management and the implementation of Tempus, under powers delegated by the European Commission. The Directorate-General for Development and Co-Operation - EuropeAid and the Directorate-General for Enlargement allocate funds directly to the Executive Agency to manage the Programme and thus have the formal responsibility for supervising its activities. The Directorate-General for Education and Culture brings its expertise and facilitates links with the European Union's internal higher education reform policies. The European External Action Service contributes to the strategic orientations of the Programme.

I. Overall description
II. Current challenges and needs
   – Trends and challenges
   – The Bologna Process
III. Participation in EU programmes
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Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries: Central Asia
I. Overall description

1. Major characteristics of tertiary education in the country

Legislation covering the field of tertiary education

The three main pillars of State Policy in the field of tertiary education in Kazakhstan are the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan (RK), the 'Law on Education (2007), and the State Programme of Education Development for 2011-2020. The main law providing a general framework for defining the strategy of higher education development in Kazakhstan, shaping the new national model of the system of education and principles of state policy in the area is the 'Law on Education (1999). In July 2004, a Law 'On introducing amendments and changes to the Law on Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan’ was adopted. It marked an important step in strengthening and improving the legislative and normative provisions of higher and post-higher education. It considerably tightened qualification requirements for the operation of higher education institutions (HEIs) and affiliated branches (restricted to social sciences, humanities and scientific disciplines). New standards were introduced for full-time staff members.

The requirements related to the material and technical base of HEIs and the availability of their own facilities were increased. A compulsory requirement for implementing Ph.D programmes was the availability of foreign teachers and researchers with Ph.D degrees. New principles of university management were adopted based on strategic planning and corporate governance, quality management and enhancing autonomy of HEIs.

The Law on Education adopted in 2007 reflects issues related to integration of Kazakh higher education system with the Bologna Process. To adapt the norms of education legislation to the international standards new amendments and changes related to all levels of education were introduced in October 2011. Among them, we could find aspects such as regulating the transition to 12-year education, defining the legal status of 'profile' school, enhancing requirements to the quality of textbooks etc. Unified centralised controls and the monitoring of education quality in education institutions were introduced. Voucher-modular principle based system of funding the in-service teacher training is to be implemented aimed at cardinal improvement of the status of teachers. A new article was included in the Law on the individual activity of teachers. In addition, new types of higher education institutions have been introduced (i.e. National Research Universities, National Higher Education Institutions, Research Universities).

The State Programme of Education Development for the period of 2011-2020 is in charge of implementing the state policy in the field of education, providing support and continuity in the ongoing process of modernisation of the Kazakh system of education, shaping the national model of competitive multi-level higher and post-graduate education, and its integration with the world education area.

Types of tertiary education programmes and qualifications

Higher education is open to citizens who have completed general secondary, technical and vocational education or further education.

In accordance with the Law on Education (2007) the following levels and qualifications have been set up:

1. Bachelor programme (Bakalavriat). Duration of study is determined by the State Compulsory Standard of higher education and must be not less than four years. Individuals completing a Bachelor programme and successfully passing the final attestation are awarded the academic degree of Bachelor and can work on a position for which higher education is required.

2. Master programmes and doctoral studies (Magistratura and Doctorantura) can be obtained by citizens who have completed a Bachelor programme. Moreover, these two programmes can also be accessed by holders of ‘Bolashak’ scholarships through full-time study at leading international universities in line with the approved priority specialties. Higher military education programmes are implemented in

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3 In Kazakh law, the term "post-higher education" is used. It means that Bachelor level is the level when a graduate is viewed as an individual having completed higher education. Before, the understanding was that Bachelor level is incomplete higher education. Thus the law indicates two levels: higher (Bachelor - undergraduate) and post-higher (Master and doctoral programmes - post-graduate).

4 A scholarship programme ensuring mobility for talented students who can study abroad in leading institutions.
post-graduate military academies and colleges (adjunctura).

3. Magistratura (Master degree) is based on Bachelor studies plus a Master programme in two areas:
   - Scientific-pedagogic education with a duration of two years of study;
   - Profile with a duration of a minimum of one year of studies.

Those who have passed the final attestation and publicly defended their Master dissertation are awarded the academic degree of a Master in the relevant discipline.

4. Doctoral studies comprise preparing a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) and doctoral studies in selected disciplines (Doctorantura) upon completion of a Master programme. The duration of study is a minimum of three years.

Higher medical and pharmaceutical education includes resident, Master and doctoral studies. Resident programmes include in-depth training in clinical specialties with a duration of two-to-four years of study depending on the specialisation.

**Types of tertiary education institutions**

Higher education institutions in Kazakhstan are national research universities, national higher education institutions, research universities, universities, academies or institutes. Conservatories, higher schools and higher colleges have a similar status.

The type of higher education institution is determined at the licensing stage and depends on the number of programmes and orientation of the research work.

- **Institute** (Institut) - an institution that implements professional educational programmes of higher education.
- **Academy** (Akademia) - an educational institution that implements educational programmes of higher education in one or two groups of specialties.
- **University** (Universitet) - a higher education institution that implements educational programmes of higher education, Master and doctoral programmes in three and more groups of specialties, carries out pure and applied research, and is a scientific and methodological centre;
- **National Research University** - a higher education institution which has a special status and programme of development for five years approved by the Government, independently developed educational training programmes of higher education in three and more groups of specialties, using the outcome of pure and applied studies for generating, and in the transfer of, new knowledge;
- **National Higher Education Institution** - a higher education institution which is a leading scientific and methodological centre in the country with a special status.
- **Research University** - higher education institution which implements programmes of development for five years, approved by the Government and educational training programmes of higher education, in three and more groups of specialties. It uses the outcome of pure and applied studies for generating, and in the transfer of, new knowledge.

Between 1993 and 2001, the number of HEIs had increased dramatically due to the setting up of non-state (private) universities.

At the beginning of the academic year 2011/2012, there were 146 higher education institutions.

Of those, nine were national, one international, 33 state, 16 JSCs (joint stock company), one JSC ‘Nazarbaev University’ with a special status, 73 private, and 13 non-civic academies.

According to the statistics there are around 610 000 students studying in HEIs, 320 000 of them in state HEIs and 290 000 in private institutions. Around 170 000 new students are admitted to HEIs each year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of HEIs (in academic year 2011/2012)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>146</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of students (in academic year 2011/2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>320 000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2. Distribution of responsibilities

The education system is regulated by the Government.

The aim is to ensure the implementation of constitutional rights for education and provide quality in education.

The Government is responsible for the development and implementation of state education policy, strategic plans, development of state programmes, regular monitoring of labour market needs, approval of rules on state licensing of education institutions, qualification requirements in education, state compulsory education standards, defining staff lists for state education institutions, lists of teaching staff positions, setting up, reorganisation and closure of state education institutions which are funded by the public budget, defining the procedure of education monitoring, and the development and approval of standard rules of practice for education institutions.

The rectors of national HEIs are nominated by the President of the RK. The rectors of state HEIs are nominated by the Government based on the proposal of the Ministry of Education and Science (MES).

The competency of the central authorised body in the field of education (MES) comprises the implementation of state education development policy and scientific-methodological guidance of all education institutions. The MES develops and approves legislative acts to regulate the activities of education institutions. In particular, the MES issues licences for the education activity of HEIs, conducts state attestation of HEIs, sets the requirements for recognition of accreditation bodies -including foreign ones- and establishes a register of recognised accreditation bodies, accredited education institutions and education programmes. Furthermore, the MES supervises the development and approval of rules for the allocation of state education in the training of specialists. The MES also sets up the quota and standard rules of admission to HEIs, transfer and reinstatement of learners depending on the type of education institutions, arranges the development of state compulsory standards, approves standard education programmes, etc.

Such regulations ensure equal conditions and rights for all players in the field of education.

Measures are being taken towards broadening the rights of HEIs, so that they can independently organise the teaching and learning process, select and nominate staff members, in implementing scientific, financial and economic activity within the framework set up by legislation. HEIs have autonomy to set up the structure, fix numbers and establish the admission procedure. HEIs are also responsible for the:

- Development and approval of internal regulations;
- Development and approval of work programmes, except for military specialties;
- Setting up salary scales, additional payments, premiums and bonuses, other payments to staff of state education institutions within the limits of their own financial resources;
- Material and technical provision, facilities and equipment of education institutions;
- Provision of goods and services in line with the licence on a fee-basis;
- Sourcing additional financial and material resources to implement the activity within the terms of the licence.

The head of a higher education institution operates on behalf of the institution and represents its interests in all areas: signs agreements, issues warrants, opens bank accounts, etc. Heads of institutions can recruit and dismiss staff members and teachers, adopt incentive measures and impose penalties.

In general, the deputy heads are nominated by the heads of HEIs upon approval of the authorised body (MES) or its founders. The roles of deputy heads, and other administrative staff, are determined by the heads of HEI.

In accordance with the legislation, public and private education institutions operate on equal terms in most cases. All HEIs can establish direct links with national and international partners and conclude contracts on mutual cooperation in various fields.

Compared to public universities, private HEIs have more operational autonomy and greater management flexibility in some areas. State HEIs do not own their land and buildings whereas private universities can.

While public higher education institutions have their own budget and freedom to use it within the parameters set by the Ministry, private institutions have more flexibility. They can also pay teaching staff better salaries than the public HEIs, and they are free to choose which subjects to teach.

At present, neither type of institution has autonomy over curricula or admissions. They have to implement state standards related to the content of education, examination and graduation standards and quality assurance procedures. Student entry standards are also
set by the MES through UNT (Unified National Test) pass scores.

In accordance with the State Programme of education development for 2011-2020, it is planned to revise the system of education governance based on involving the wider community. Specific attention will be given to enhancing the role of Boards of Trustees through involving employers, public bodies, parents and learners. The principles of corporate management will be implemented in HEIs.

In 2013, it is expected that the procedure of nominating rectors of state HEIs will be revised. Rectors will then be elected in all accredited HEIs.

3. Governing bodies of the higher education institutions

The Head of a higher education institution is responsible for its daily management. The governing body of a higher education institution is the Academic (Scientific) Council which is a collegial body. Its membership is confined to representatives of the academic staff, students and public bodies, as well as of the administrative staff of the higher education institution.

The procedure for forming Councils is defined by specific rules issued by the MES. Members of the Academic Council are elected for three years at a general meeting by secret ballot; the exact procedure depends on the institution. The general rule is that all subdivisions should be represented. The average number of members is 65-70 per university. In big universities it can go up to around 100.

The subdivisions of HEIs are set up by the institution itself and operate according to the Charter of the higher education institution. Their number and activities are defined by the Council based on the specialties and specialisations of the higher education institution, as well as on the number of students and teachers.

All members of the Academic Council have the right to vote. Voting by secret ballot is carried out when issues are considered sensitive (election of teachers for competitive positions, awarding professorship status, etc.). When the issues considered refer to approving the curricula, methodological documents, etc., the voting is open.

The chairperson of the Academic Council is the rector. The responsibilities of the Academic Council are:

1. Creating conditions for learners and academic staff to enable them to participate in professional education programmes;
2. Providing financial support, strengthening the material and technical bases of HEI;
3. Contributing to the further development of HEI.

The competences of the Academic Council are quite numerous, and they include:

1. Approving the structure of HEI;
2. Introducing amendments and supplementing the HEI Charter (Statute);
3. Creating, reorganising and terminating HEI training and other subdivisions (laboratories, chairs, faculties, etc.);
4. Determining the direction of the HEI development;
5. Making decisions on fundamental matters of HEI operations (e.g. teaching, research and economic activities);
6. Evaluating the reports of the rector, deputy rectors and heads of structural subdivisions on various aspects of HEI operations.

4. Financing

The financial provisions of the education system are determined by Articles 61-64 of the 'Financial provision of the system of education' (part of the Law on Education).

Kazakh citizens can receive free higher education on a competitive basis within the framework of state education if education at each of these levels is received for the first time. Kazakhstan has introduced public educational grants which provide selected students a better access to the institution of their choice. The main share of funding is allocated to state education institutions. In order to regulate the training of specialists, the state (through the MES) draws up an order each year. It is funded by the state and covers the number of training specialists in the most demanded fields to satisfy the needs of the economy.

The government annually allocates budgetary funds for education in respect of its priorities along with various budget programmes (approximately 11) within the overall budget. These priorities depend on specific national programmes. Those who would like to choose prestigious careers or which are not urgently needed on the labour market, have to cover the cost education and training on their own.

Allocation of education grants among HEIs is based on the decision of the Republican Commission. It consists of rectors of HEIs, representatives of Ministries and trade unions.
The funding procedure depends mainly on the form of ownership. The State is responsible for funding state higher education implemented in the frame of the State Education Order. Selected private HEIs meeting the criteria set by MES can also receive funding from the State Education Order. In 2011, 85 institutions were awarded the State Education Grants out of the 146 HEIs.

State expenditure per student in higher education is annually increasing. The amount established and allocated to state HEIs (with a national status) is higher than for other HEIs.

Education grants are awarded on a competitive basis in concrete specialties, language and forms of education in accordance with the points indicated in the Certificate. Certificates are issued as a result of the Unified National Test or Comprehensive Test in accordance with the priority specialty indicated by the graduate.

All types of HEIs can raise funds through providing paid services which are not in conflict with legislation as well as through loans, sponsoring, charity assistance and grants, etc. Private HEIs can use income from paid services at their own consideration. The legislation stipulates that the expenditure of HEIs implementing higher education programmes per student on a self-financed basis cannot be less than the amount of the state education grant.

At present, 20 % of the students receive state grants. Thus, the share of private fees is rather high and makes up around 80 % in the overall budget of HEIs.

According to the State Education Programme by 2015, the government will be able to establish the funding levels per capita at all levels of education.\(^5\) The funding per capita has proved to be efficient. Consequently, the government is considering its implementation at other levels too. Students are free to choose a HEI depending on their preferences. This provides equal access to state funding for all HEIs disregarding the form of ownership.

An important measure towards state support of the system of higher education is preferential taxation. At present, the income of HEIs from licensed activities is exempt from corporate income tax and VAT. These measures contribute to stimulating competition on the market of education services.

Along with funding through state education order (grants) public HEIs also receive funds for implementing specific projects. For instance, for inviting foreign professors and equipping new laboratories, etc. In 2011, allocations from the public budget were made for inviting 1 493 foreign researchers and teachers in 27 HEIs.

Overall, a sustainable tendency towards increasing state funding of education is observed. During the last five years, public allocations for education have increased more than threefold. In 2011, compared to 2010, it increased by KZT 203 billion and made up over KZT 1 trillion thus reaching 3.8 % of the GDP. However, the share of state funding of higher education is still not high and makes up less than 10 % of the overall education budget.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>State education order (number of grants)</th>
<th>Average expenditure for education per student, KZT thousand Tenge(^6)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>By correspondence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/2010</td>
<td>33840</td>
<td>1 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/2011</td>
<td>34425</td>
<td>1 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/2012</td>
<td>35046</td>
<td>1 000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 The rate of Tenge (KZT) to US Dollar is about 148:1
6 Funding per capita means that the state defines the minimum amount that a student has to pay to the higher education institution of his/her choice – be it private or public. Either the student receives the grant or he/she pays the tuition fee.
7 The minimum amount of grant and of tuition fee should be the same and is decided by the government. The amount can vary but the minimum remains the same throughout the country and should be respected.
government money is allocated to grant beneficiaries who themselves decide what institution to choose – irrespective of whether it is public or private. Grants are mainly available for priority fields (selected centrally and determined by employment projections).

The students who score highest in the UNT and take courses defined by the government as national priorities receive public grants. Those students who do not receive government grants can find sponsorship or have to pay tuition fees on their own.

In addition to the education grant scheme, the Government has adopted a package of measures aimed at the social support of students, including scholarships (stipends).

Among the incentives available for students there are state scholarships, increased scholarships and personalised scholarships. Presidential specialised scholarships are awarded to full-time students of public and private HEIs based on their overall academic performance. If they qualify, education grant holders are eligible to receive state scholarships in addition to their grants. A reduction of travel expenses is also available for students (for daily public transport and twice a year they can have a reduced travel ticket for railway and intercity bus communication).

There are a number of privileges for students at the level of individual HEIs. To support and encourage students, HEIs have set up their own grants for various selected groups of students. For example, a reduction of fees by 15-50 % for those students with high academic performance, for two students and more from the same family, students from disadvantaged families, married students, disabled students, students who have children and prominent sportsmen, etc.

In many universities (e.g. Kazakh Satpaev National Technical University, Kazakh-American Free University, Kazakh University of Management and Economic Planning), it has become a tradition that enterprises allocate grants to students. In addition, many universities award their own internal grants. For instance, Kazakh-British Technical University annually carries out a competition called ‘Win KBTU grant’. As a result of the competition, winners receive either a full grant or pay a reduced tuition fee.

A system of education loans is being implemented in Kazakhstan - both preferential and general. Preferential loans are available for those students who are paying tuition fees. Bachelor students of the 1st year should have received high points in the UNT and Comprehensive Test (CT), students of other years – good academic achievements during the previous academic period. Master students also can obtain education loans.

Since 2012 to improve access to education a new mechanism – the state education accumulation system - has been developed. It is assumed that any citizen of Kazakhstan would be able to accumulate funds to cover tuition fees for their children.

6. Licensing, quality assurance and accreditation of institutions and/or programmes

In Kazakhstan a comprehensive legal framework has been developed to address issues of higher education quality. Among them the Law on Education, the Law on Licensing enacted on 11 January 2007 (# 214-III) and various normative documents regulating the process of external assessment:

- Rules on licensing education activity and qualification requirements approved by the Government Decree (2007) with changes and amendments as of 5 December 2009;
- Regulation on state attestation of education institutions – Government Decree (# 1270) of December 2007;

In addition, there are a number of supporting documents (instructions, methodological recommendations, etc.).

The new Law on Education together with its correspondent amendments made in 2011 have represented an important step in improving the national system of quality assurance in education. Assessment of quality of education comprises the totality of institutional structures, procedures, forms and ways towards indentifying whether the quality of education provided meets the state compulsory education standards, at the same time as it covers the needs of individuals, the society and the state. A new element is the use of international standards (in particular, MS ISO 9001:2008) for assessing the correlation of the system of quality management and accreditation of education institutions by agencies which are internationally recognised.

The MES developed criteria for assessing risks in the field of education which form the basis of checking compliance with the legislation. HEIs are referred to high, average or insignificant risk group based on the assessment of their operations (accreditation, compliance with state compulsory educational standards, number of full-time staff, material and technical base, external assessment of learning achievements of students, etc.) and the results of inspection.
The principal authority responsible for the evaluation of HEIs and programmes in Kazakhstan is the Ministry of Education and Science. The MES defines the general policy and strategy and has established a number of government agencies and government-based committees to monitor and improve the quality of the higher education system. All of them are answerable to the MES and, whatever their functions might be; the final decision is made by the MES.

Besides, there are independent accreditation agencies that carry out the independent external evaluation of education quality provided by HEIs.

Among the mechanisms for the evaluation of education quality operations are:

Mechanisms of state management:
- Licensing education institutions and education services;
- Inspecting to identify compliance with legislation in the field of education;
- Introducing External Evaluation of Learning Achievements (EELA). In November 2011 it replaced the Comprehensive National Mid-Term Test and Unified National Test which evaluates learning achievements of those who would like to join HEIs;
- Inspection by Administration of the President;
- Attestation of HEIs;
- Attestation of education services;
- Attestation of academic staff;
- Attestation of rectors of state HEIs;
- Audit.

Mechanisms of state regulation:
- National ranking;
- Accreditation of education institutions (institutional);
- Accreditation of education programmes (specialised or professional);
- Special award of the President ‘For achievements in the field of Quality’;
- Coordination of strategic planning.

Mechanisms of public regulation:
- Ranking by independent and foreign agencies;
- Certification towards compliance with international standards (including the system of quality management);
- Public and professional accreditation;
- Accreditation by recognised reputable foreign agencies;
- Certification of staff.

Mechanisms of self-regulation:
- Benchmarking;
- Self-inspection;
- Internal audit;
- Self-assessment;
- Ongoing improvement.

In line with the ‘Government Decree of 7 July 2011 (#778) on building the vertical system of quality control’, 16 territorial bodies were set up with the mandate to monitor the operations of HEIs, including EELA. The Committee for Control in the field of education and science (CCES) develops a methodology of quality assurance and controls the quality of education. On behalf of the state these territorial subdivisions implement the function of control in the field – monitoring and analysis of quality of education, accreditation, attestation, licensing, EELA and UNT-.

State attestation of education institutions is carried out every five years by a commission chaired by a representative of the MES. The commission judges the effectiveness and adequacy of HEI. Attestation determines whether HEIs are meeting state compulsory education standards for level, content and quality, as well as the qualification requirements reported during the licensing process. The first state attestation is carried out in all newly established HEIs after the first graduates have completed their education.

Based on the self-assessment and the conclusions of the attestation commission, the MES adopts a decision on whether the higher education institution would be attested or non-attested. The decision is formalised by an order or decree of the MES. The information on attested or non-attested HEIs is uploaded on the official website of the CCES as well as being published in the mass media.

In case a HEI is non-attested, the licence shall be suspended and the head of the HEI shall be held liable to administrative proceedings.

Accreditation is the process by which an certification body evaluates the quality of the services provided by a higher education institution, in order to formally attest that it has met certain predetermined criteria and standards. It also provides objective information regarding the quality and the availability of efficient tools for improvement.

The Law on Education defines two types of accreditation:
Institutional – evaluation of the overall operation of HEIs;
- Specialised – evaluation of the quality of selected education programmes offered by HEI.

In accordance with the Law on Education and the State Programme of education development, it is foreseen that from 2012 accreditations are to be carried out by public or professional bodies.

HEIs and colleges which have passed institutional accreditation by recognised accreditation agencies shall be exempt from state attestation.

Kazakh HEIs are encouraged to pass international specialised accreditation.

Education institutions that have been accredited by accreditation agencies included in the register, shall have the right to issue documents (diploma) of their own format in the accredited education programmes (specialties).

State attestation of medical and pharmaceutical education is carried out by the Ministry of Health.

At present, the MES is developing three national registers and requirements for registration, as follows:
- Register of accreditation agencies (both national and foreign),
- Register of accredited education institutions,
- Register of accredited education programmes.

Accreditation of HEIs is carried out on a voluntary basis. Institutions are free to select the accreditation agency. However, allocation of education grants and of state attestation for the period of validity of accreditation will depend on whether accreditation was carried out by eligible agencies or not. A new condition is that the accreditation agency should be either a full or an associate member of the international networks of quality assurance (INQAAHE, ENQA, APQN etc.) and international cooperation agreements.

HEIs have the right to pass national and international institutional or specialised accreditation by accreditation agencies included in the register of the MES. All costs incurred are covered by the HEIs themselves.

The internal assessment of education quality is the responsibility of HEIs themselves and includes a system of quality management, various procedures of self-assessment and monitoring of academic achievements.

Assessment of HEI operation also includes the opinion of students on the quality of the teaching process. The quality assurance procedures and accreditation mechanisms are the same both for public and private HEIs.

### 7. Admission

Admission to HEIs is carried out based on the Standard Admission Rules approved by an order of the Ministry of Education and Science which can be amended and complemented when necessary.

In Kazakhstan, funds are received by the beneficiary and not by the supplier of education services. The admission of students from secondary schools is based on the results of the Unified National Test (UNT). All others – graduates of former years, graduates of initial and secondary vocational schools, graduates of secondary schools who have studied abroad and some other categories - must pass the Comprehensive Test (CT) which is administered using the same procedures as the UNT. All HEIs have to accomplish the UNT regulations. The UNT is administered simultaneously throughout the country, normally at the beginning of June. Since 2007, it has to be kept in secret and is treated accordingly in terms of security and involvement of the relevant structures. The UNT lasts for 3.5 hours. Re-examination is not permitted. In 2011 the UNT was taken by 126 109 school graduates.

The content of the UNT and CT is based on the curricula of general secondary education in five subjects, three of which are compulsory – the mother tongue, Kazakh history, the language of instruction and mathematics. The fifth ‘profile’ subject is chosen by the student and depends on the student’s career choice. The results are evaluated based on a 125 point scale. Since 2012, a minimum of 70 points is required for admission to HEIs which have national status, for other HEIs 60 points are sufficient. Applicants with at least 30 points can be admitted to TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) colleges.

Winners of international and national Olympiads, scientific contests and sport competitions have preferential treatment in the allocation of grants.

The admission procedure to Kazakh higher education is as follows:
- Step 1: The UNT and CT are administered by the Committee for Control in the field of education and science (CCCES) and the National Centre of State Standards and Testing
Admission to Bachelor studies on a fee-paying basis is administered by the Admission Commission of a higher education institution based on the scores indicated in the State certificate. Admission to Master studies is based on competition taking into account the results of the admission examinations. Those who apply to Master courses have to pass entrance examinations in one foreign language (English, French or German), as well as the language of instruction (Kazakh or Russian) and in a specialty.

To improve access to higher education for disadvantaged groups, quotas have been established. Grants to rural students, for priority social and economic disciplines, for Kazakh ethnic minorities, for Kazakhs who are citizens of another country, for disabled children, for orphans and children without parental support are provided. In the case of equal scores in the UNT and CT, orphans and children who need support receive preferential treatment. The same applies to Kazakh children who are citizens of other countries. Grants can be awarded also to foreign citizens and persons without national status permanently living in Kazakhstan, as well as citizens of the Russian Federation, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic. Other foreign citizens and individuals without citizenship can be admitted to HEIs in the order established by legislation as well as by international agreements ratified by the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Admission of students who are older than a typical tertiary education student is the same as for 'traditional' students. Thus, they have to pass the Comprehensive Test and then they follow the same rules and procedures.

Discussions are ongoing that all those with vocational/professional qualifications also have to pass the CT. In the past, there were two ways: those who would like to apply for a state grant had to pass the CT and to participate in the competition. A decision on the admission of applicants who did not claim a state grant and could cover the cost of their education on their own was made based on an interview at the higher education institution where he/she would like to study. In either case, these applicants are admitted to the second year of study if the profile of their previous education is similar to the one of their choice.

8. Organisation of the academic year

The Ministry of Education and Science determines the beginning and end of the academic year in educational institutions irrespective of the form of ownership and subordination (rules on organisation of the academic year based on credit technology endorsed by order of the Minister of Education and Science of 20 April 2011 No152).

The academic year starts on 1 September which is officially known as the Day of Knowledge.

An academic period includes theoretical education which is determined by a higher education institution independently for an academic year in one of the following forms: semester (15 weeks), trimester (10 weeks) or quarter (8 weeks). The duration of study, except for the final (graduation) year, is a minimum of 30 weeks. The duration of examination sessions is four weeks minimum during one academic year. Upon completion of each academic period the students have academic breaks. The duration of vacations in an academic year is a minimum of seven weeks.

The length of the teaching and learning process in HEIs is determined within the framework of the academic year which consists of academic periods (semesters), a period of interim attestation/final assessment, practical work and an academic break (vacation).

A summer semester may be included, except for final year studies, with a duration of up to six weeks.

HEIs design the academic calendar which includes full information on all education activities, practical work, assessment and attestation, vacations, public holidays, etc. The calendar is the main document regulating the organisation of the academic year; it is approved by the heads of HEI based on the decision of Academic Councils.

9. Curriculum content

In accordance with Article 5 of the Law on Education curriculum design and delivery is...
normally regulated by the Ministry of Education and Science. State standards are followed for core courses in all academic programmes offered by both public and private HEIs.

HEI curricula are based on study cycles of general education disciplines, of professional disciplines, basic (core) and profile disciplines, as well as professional practical work in the specialty.

Programmes of professional education have two components – a mandatory and an optional component. Programmes of professional education of higher education consist of theoretical studies, including core disciplines, practical work, and research work resulting in a dissertation.

HEIs have the right to develop and implement innovative education programmes oriented to the latest technologies, teaching and learning methods.

State Compulsory Education Standards are developed in line with the ‘Governmental Decree on the procedure of developing, approving and term of validity of state compulsory education standards (SCES)’. The Ministry of Education and Science organises and conducts a competition for developing state compulsory education standards.

There are two components of SCES. The mandatory component includes a list of subjects and the number of credit points to be obtained. The optional component comprises a list of disciplines and sets minimum credit points or academic hours offered by a higher education institution which are selected by students and which can be studied during any academic period.

Generally, around 50% of the total academic workload in all academic programmes is mandatory and the other 50% is optional.

At national level, students have no influence on the educational content. At institutional level, students’ wishes and opinions are taken into consideration in defining optional disciplines. In many HEIs, students are members of Academic Councils and can thus represent their own interests.

New higher education SCES make provision for widening the academic freedom of HEIs: they can determine 55% of the programme content at Bachelor level, 70% at Master level and 90% at doctorate level.

While the first SCES were input-based and defined what was to be taught, in the ‘new generation’ of SCES there is a positive tendency towards their orientation to developing competences. At present, consultations are ongoing concerning the necessity to abandon SCES and give the right to determine the content to HEIs themselves.

10. Assessment, progression, and graduation

Conditions for progression from one year to the next are regulated by an order of the MES. According to this order, it is mandatory to fulfil all requirements of the curriculum of the previous academic period and pass an interim assessment (attestation).

When a student is transferred from another university or has to abandon his/her studies (e.g. for health reasons, maternity leave, duty in the army, etc.) he/she may resume studying later and continue in the same specialisation or change the profile of training.

This also can apply to cases when for example a second year student moves from one university to another, or from one country to a Kazakh university, he/she will be allowed to continue studying in the same year if the difference in the study programmes is not more than five subjects of the mandatory component for Bachelor degrees, and not more than three subjects for Master and Ph.D studies.

If there is a big difference then the student will have to repeat the year. Sometimes there might be an exclusion from the programme but these are considered on a case–by-case basis.

As for continuation, students will carry on to the next year if they successfully pass all examinations of the same institution.

Continuation to the next year occurs based on the results of the summer examination session (interim assessment), taking into account the summer semester contents and scores.

Graduates have to pass the final state attestation in the form of a state examination and defend a thesis (diploma) or project.

Since 2012, a new form of assessment – External Assessment of Learning Achievements (EALA) – has been introduced for Bachelor students in the main disciplines. In 2012, the system will be tested and if it meets the expectations, it will be fully implemented as from 2013 involving all HEIs.

The MES issues degree certificates (diplomas) for all universities, both public and private. In accordance with the state compulsory standards, in order to graduate it is mandatory for a student at Bachelor level to pass the final state examination in the form of a state examination or by defending a Bachelor thesis/project.

The state examination is mainly conducted orally. Defences of theses and projects are open to the public. There may be collective (group) projects which have been developed jointly by more than one undergraduate.
Upon successful attestation, graduates receive a degree which allows their access to further education or to employment.

11. Academic staff

The teaching staff in HEIs is categorised as follows: professors, associate professors (docents), senior lecturers, lecturers and lecturer-trainees. The appointment to a specific post depends on the possession of relevant qualifications. This is based on the possession of a degree and working experience.

The recruitment of academic and research staff is regulated by legislation based on competitive selection, signed contracts and on individual agreements. The recruitment procedure for teaching staff posts is subject to the Rules of Substitution of Positions of Academic Staff of HEI which are approved by the central executive body in the field of education. These rules also stipulate that a three-year contract is signed based on competitive selection. It is possible to extend the agreement (contract) without any indication of its duration.

There are also posts for research fellows, divided into: senior research fellows, chief research fellows, leading research fellows, research fellows and junior research fellows.

12. Research activities

The Law on Science (2011) recognises the importance of research and gives it priority along with education activities. New types of higher education institutions called ‘Research universities’ are being introduced, whose main mission is to provide training for managers in scientific and innovative activity and to become active centres in developing an innovative economy. A model of such university has already been set up in Kazakhstan: the Nazarbaev University. It is anticipated that it would become not only a higher education institution providing education compliant with the top world level universities, but also an international research university.

In 2011, the overall amount allocated for research was KZT 28.8 billion or 0.1 % of the GDP. For 2012, it is planned to allocate KZT 49 billion – this represents an increase of 70 % (0.17 % of the GDP). By 2015, expenditure for research is planned to reach 1 %, and by 2020 it should be at least 1.5 % of the GDP. Taking into account that Kazakhstan’s GDP in 2011 was over KZT 27 trillion (USD 185 billion) and the expected increase in GDP in 2012 is 7 % (to USD 198 billion), it is reasonable to expect a considerable increase of the investment in research.

In April 2010, the Government developed a road map ‘Business and science-2020’. Its principal aims are:

- to ensure efficient interaction between business and research;
- to develop private-public partnership in the area of research and innovation;
- to enhance the implementation of scientific achievements in the economy.

Measures are underway to stimulate research activities that help slow down the process of ageing staff.

A state order for the training of experts/professionals has been increased twice, and that for doctors has increased by 2.5 times. By 2020, about 1 000 doctors will have been trained per year, the biggest share will complete their training in leading research centres throughout the world.

In the same direction, a project on the ‘Commercialisation of technologies’ has been launched with the World Bank. It aims to transfer advanced expertise from abroad into this area. This would help to accelerate the development of the infrastructure, to create centres of commercialisation in the biggest scientific organisations and HEIs, subdivisions of commercialisation in public research and higher education institutions involved in research in the field of natural sciences and technologies.

Kazakh scientists and teachers have access to foreign resources of scientific and technical information. In November 2011, a National Licence was signed with Thomson Reuters (USA) as well as a contract with Springer (Germany). It enables Kazakh scientists for the first time to gain free access to online scientific and technical platforms.

In April 2011, the session of the higher scientific-technical commission under the Government defined five priorities for developing research in Kazakhstan for 2011–2013: power engineering, deep-processing of raw materials and products, ICT, life sciences, and the intellectual potential of people. State funds will be directed to funding research projects in these priority areas.

Moreover, new forms of funding research have been implemented: basic, grant based and specific programmes. Basic funding will cover the expenditure on infrastructure, communal services, administrative costs, salaries of administrative and support staff, information provision and so on. Research will be grant-based and programme-based.

HEIs considered to have the best potential for training and research are granted the status of

Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries: Central Asia
national universities which results in better funding. A group of big universities have a well-developed research infrastructure. Among the HEIs that are known for their research, there are around ten universities. The undisputed leader is Kazakh National Al-Farabi University. Scientific research at this university is carried out in six research institutes (new chemical technologies and materials, biology and biotechnologies, ecology, mathematics and mechanics, combustion matters, experimental and theoretical physics), and also in the national nano-technological laboratory, the laboratory of engineering, the centre of physical and chemical methods of analysis and last but not least, in the Technopark.

A large part of applied research is carried out at the Kazakh National Satpaev Technical University in the fields: innovations and commercialisation of technologies, nanotechnologies and new materials, information and space technologies, renewable energy, industrial ecology, and information security, etc. There is a tendency to merge academic scientific institutes with HEIs. For example, the Institute of Chemical Sciences, named after Bekturov, and the Institute of Organic Catalysis and Electrical Chemistry, named after Sokolski, are at present a part of the Kazakh-British Technical University.

In 35 subdivisions, research is carried out at the Eurasian National Gumilev University. A variety of research is conducted at the Karaganda Buketov State University and Karaganda State Technical University, Kazakh National Asfendiyarov Medical University and many others.

To stimulate research activities among academic staff, the Government launched an annual competition, the 'Best university teacher' (2005). As a result of the competition each year around 200 teachers receive grants of a cash value equal to USD 18 000 each, enabling them to develop teaching and learning materials, books, participate in international events, carry out research, purchase laboratory equipment, etc.

Prizes have also been instituted in various fields of science. To name a few, there is the Satpaev Prize for innovative research in the natural sciences, the Valikhanov Prize in the humanities and the Altinsarin Prize in the field of pedagogy. Laureates are awarded a diploma, a special award and a certain financial reward.

13. University-enterprise Cooperation
HEIs are very actively involved in increasing the employability of graduates. All public HEIs and the overwhelming majority of private HEIs have set up career promotion centres. Events such as meetings with employers, presentations of graduates, job fairs and meetings with alumni have become usual activities for all HEIs. HEIs have databases with information on the employability of graduates over several years to monitor their career paths, maintain liaison with former graduates and inform job-seeking graduates about vacancies. Regular communication is maintained with enterprises to obtain information on the need for specialists.

There are many examples of efficient bilateral cooperation between individual universities and enterprises and employers’ organisations - some have lead to agreements with more than 50 enterprises, institutions and organisations. Article 45-1 of the 'Social partnership in the field of professional education' indicates that social partnership is oriented towards enhancing the adequacy of HEI operations, bringing the level of training specialists closer to the needs of the economy and employers, strengthening the links between education and enterprises, and involving additional sources of funding. Along with the forms of interaction between partners that have already become usual, the law legitimised also such forms as the involvement of employers in developing state educational standards and programmes, monitoring and assessing the qualifications of graduates.

Practical implementation of the law will give impetus to fostering further cooperation in these fields, improving the content and process of learning, their influence on education policy and planning.

14. International cooperation
Over the last decade substantial efforts have been made to modernise the national higher education system, make it competitive at international level and enhance its quality and relevance.

International cooperation is increasingly developing in terms of legislative provisions, carrying out events that have international status, academic exchange, promoting international cooperation between Kazakh HEIs and other countries, and through the 'Bolashak’ programme.
The number of international agreements signed by the MES with other countries in the field of education and science is increasing (124 in 2011), as well as the overall number of agreements signed by HEIs (around 8,000). In 2011, the number of foreign students amounted to 8,982.

A major step towards the internationalisation of higher education in Kazakhstan is the decision to implement higher education reform along the general lines of the Bologna Process. In line with the national plan, the former types and levels of academic programmes were divided into the three levels established under the Bologna framework: Bachelor, Master and Ph.D.

Along with this, major changes are taking place in the teaching and learning process, the way curricula and programmes are organised and delivered. As a result of the reform it is expected that degrees offered in the country will be comparable with European degrees.

The country is investing in the ‘Bolashak’ scholarship programme through which talented young people are fully supported to study abroad in leading institutions. At present, more than 28,000 young people are studying abroad, including over 3,000 within the frame of the ‘Bolashak’ programme, in more than 20 countries.

It is worth mentioning the ‘Nazarbaev University’ which is expected to provide a quality breakthrough in the training of national specialists in the field of engineering and technical sciences and to be a centre of innovations and advanced research. Each subdivision (school) has close links with academic partners from top universities around the world. The university hosts top-level professors and researchers from abroad to work as visiting scholars. The university is developing its own research and clinical facilities and potential. Young Kazakhstani people will be able to obtain world class education in their own country.

Collaboration and integration in education worldwide is one of the main priorities of Kazakhstan policy.

Additionally, teachers and researchers have the chance to visit research centres and universities in other countries through traineeships using the state scholarship provided for each Master and doctoral student.

In the framework of the ‘Bolashak’ programme, the focus is on Master and doctoral studies. It also includes trainee visits for a period of one month to a year, and a complementary language training for up to six months.

Opening the country to international universities also contributes to some extent to internationalising the higher education system. Currently, there are five branches of foreign universities in the country.

Other initiatives are being implemented to further enhance the process of internationalisation, including visiting scholars, attracting international students, international joint/collaborative research projects, the presence of Kazakhstan HEIs and government agencies in international forums and international higher education organisations, etc.

II. Current challenges and needs

1. Trends and challenges

During the last years Kazakhstan has made significant progress in reforming its higher education system. To achieve this aim the Government has fully renewed the legislative base of education development by adopting several legislative documents. Among them we can find amendments and changes to the ‘Law on Education (2011), the State Programme of Education Development in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020, the Strategy for Industrial-Innovative Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2003-2015, the Law on Science and other normative documents. In 2011, seven laws were adopted and more than 70 Government decrees are under consideration.

According to the Human Development Index, Kazakhstan is in the group of countries with a high HDI (68th place).

State policy in the field of higher education is aimed at strengthening the competitiveness of education, developing human capital through providing access to quality education. This is the principal goal of the State Programme of Education Development in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020.

Kazakhstan is the first in Central Asia which signed and ratified the Lisbon Convention. In March 2010, Kazakhstan became the 47th to join the Bologna Process. The aims are to increase access to EU education, further
improve the quality of the national system of education, as well as increase academic mobility of students and teachers through adopting a comparable system of degrees, using the system of credit accumulation, and issuing Kazakh graduates with the EU diploma supplement.

A number of steps are being taken to implement the Bologna principles. The three cycle system of Bachelor-Master-Doctorate (Ph.D) was introduced in 2004.

Kazakhstan’s adherence to the Bologna Process gives good opportunities for Kazakh universities to implement joint education projects, such as double diploma education, mutual recognition of academic courses, international accreditation, etc. At present the double diploma programme is implemented by 37 HEIs. The involvement of visiting professors and researchers is currently gaining strength. In 2011, over 1 500 professors visited and gave lectures and seminars in 27 HEIs of Kazakhstan with all costs covered by the hosting side.

To facilitate international recognition of national education programmes, academic mobility of students and teachers, enhancing the quality of education and providing continuity of all levels of higher education, a credit system has been introduced.

To improve the quality of higher education and to create a competitive environment, the Government introduced a new system of classification of HEIs.

Special attention is given to external assessment of Kazakh HEIs by national and international accreditation and ranking agencies. The number of institutions that have passed international accreditation is increasing. The MES is developing a National Register of accreditation bodies, rules and procedures to operate the register. From 2012, accreditations have been carried out by non-commercial accreditation agencies.

From 2015, state attestation will be replaced by national institutional accreditation of HEIs and colleges.

The Labour Code was complemented by a new Article 10-1 ‘National system of Qualifications’. In the future, all education programmes should be compliant with the NQS. The work on developing sectorial qualification frameworks is ongoing.

Conditions are being created towards providing more autonomy to HEIs. In 2015, national research universities will be given full autonomy. In 2016, this will be the case for national higher education institutions and from 2018 all other HEIs will be able to function autonomously.

A voucher-like system of upgrading qualifications of adult population is in progress.

A National Centre to handle the Bologna Process and academic mobility has been set up.

High expectations have been put on the Nazarbaev University established in 2010. The experience of the Nazarbaev University will be disseminated among other HEIs.

In relation to the governance and management of HEIs, the considerable autonomy in operational, management and financial matters enjoyed by HEIs, especially private ones, is worthy of note. New principles of university management based on the principles of corporate management, strategic planning and the autonomy of HEIs are being drawn up.

As analysis has shown, large scale reforms are being implemented in Kazakhstan to modernise higher education.

However, there are a number of aspects that need to be further improved. Among them:

- Education programmes offered by many HEIs are not outcome based;
- Centralised control over the content of education (courses and curricula) and process (organisation of teaching and degree standards) is still limiting universities’ freedom and ability to respond to the needs of the economy, students and employers;
- Research, development and innovation need substantial strengthening. The productivity of research activities of HEIs remains low;
- The Higher Education Quality Assurance System is rather complicated. There is too much emphasis on compliance checks and too little on university self-evaluation and improvement;
- Inter-country, regional and international academic mobility need further development.
## 2. The Bologna Process

### General Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of integration in the Bologna Process</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Bologna-Signatory Country (in 2010)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non Bologna-Signatory Country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bologna Process officially embedded in the education system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bologna Process being implemented by ad hoc groups under the supervision of the Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No particular mechanism supporting the implementation of the Bologna Process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Bologna cycle structure

| Level of implementation of a three-cycle structure compliant with the Bologna Process | Extensive but gradual introduction of Bologna structure/ongoing adaptations or enlargement |

### Student workload/duration for the most common Bologna programmes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bachelor programmes</th>
<th>Master programmes</th>
<th>Various combinations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>240 ECTS (4 academic years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition of the Learning Outcomes Concept</th>
<th>Learning outcomes are defined in national steering documents and implemented through guidelines and recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of implementation of ECTS</td>
<td>More than 75% of institutions and programmes are using ECTS for both transfer and accumulation purposes. Allocation of ECTS is based on learning outcomes and student workload.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Indicative number of hours of student workload corresponding to one ECTS | 1 ECTS = 40 – 50 hours |

### Bologna Diploma Supplement (DS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of implementation of the Bologna Diploma Supplement</th>
<th>Bologna DS is issued to students in most (approximately 75%) institutions and study programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diploma Supplement issued</td>
<td>Bologna DS issued on request and free of charge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries: Central Asia

25
National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage towards establishing a National Qualification Framework</th>
<th>Not yet started formally/not foreseen.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Step 1: Decision taken. Process just started.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 2: The purpose of the NQF has been agreed and the process is under way including discussions and consultations. Various committees have been established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 3: The NQF has been adopted formally and the implementation has started.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 4: Redesigning the study programmes is ongoing and the process is close to completion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 5: Overall process fully completed including self-certified compatibility with the Framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quality Assurance Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Quality Assurance body</th>
<th>Independent Kazakhstan Agency on Education Quality Assurance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>A Government-dependent body or Ministry has responsibility for quality assurance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year of establishment</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Involvement in external quality assurance process | Decision-making role | Participation | No participation |
| Academic staff                  | X                                                           |               |
| Students                        |                                                             | X             |
| International Experts           |                                                             | X             |

Cross Border Evaluation: Institutions are allowed to choose a foreign quality assurance agency.

Recognition of foreign qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>1997 (signature), 1998 (ratification)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of Foreign Qualifications for academic study</td>
<td>Recognition for academic study by central or regional governmental authorities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of Foreign Qualifications for professional employment</td>
<td>Recognition for professional employment by central or regional governmental authorities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Joint Degrees

| Establishment of joint degrees and programmes in higher education legislation | Joint programmes and joint degrees are not mentioned at all in the higher education legislation. |
III. Participation in EU programmes

1. Tempus

Kazakhstan has participated in the Tempus Programme since 1994.

1.1 Statistics

Number of projects in which one or several institutions in the country have been involved (as coordinator, contractor or partner)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
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<td>Structural &amp; Complementary Measures (Tempus III)</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Structural Measures (Tempus IV)</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
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</table>

Higher education institutions with highest TEMPUS participation during TEMPUS IV (2008-2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Number of projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KARAGANDA STATE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUMILEV EURASIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUKETOV KARAGANDA STATE UNIVERSITY</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUEZOV SOUTH-KAZAKHSTAN STATE UNIVERSITY</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UALIKHANOV KOKSHETAU STATE UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
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<td>SEIFULLIN KAZAKH AGRO-TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>KORKYTY ATA KYZYL ORDA STATE UNIVERSITY</td>
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</tr>
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<td>ABAI KAZAKH NATIONAL PEDAGOGICAL UNIVERSITY</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAITURSYNOV KOSTANAI STATE UNIVERSITY</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
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1.2 Impact of the Tempus programme

In Kazakhstan, Tempus has had a strong impact on curriculum modernisation. Many projects were implemented with the active participation of research institutions, business community NGOs and TVET institutions. Moreover, the geographic representation was also extended through the involvement of regional universities as well as of universities with no previous experience in Tempus. The projects aimed at curricular development based on the EU experience covered a wide range of education fields – economic, humanities and technical. The project ‘Technical Education on Resource Savings for Industrial Development’, the development and implementation of the Master programme ‘Eco-Engineering – environmental processing and sustainable use of renewable resources and bio-waste’ and the programme called ‘Geoinformatics: Managing Energy, Resources, Environment’ demonstrate new approaches to developing interdisciplinary curricular at the edge of different spheres.

New curricula and programmes developed within the framework of Tempus projects are finding their place in HEIs. (Projects: Development of a Ph.D programme in agriculture in Kazakhstan (2006); space technologies (project Curricula Reform in Space Technology, 2008), chemical engineering (Chemical engineering: Curricula Development and International Recognition, 2008).

Active involvement of Kazakh HEIs in the Tempus programme made it possible to
considerably increase awareness of the aims and objectives of the Tempus programme, which, in its turn, contributed to closer synergy with the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

In the field of business education at the Kazakh-British Technical University, the International Academy of Business, the University of International Business, Tempus projects (for instance, 'Restructuring Business Education Teaching with Innovative Curricula Development in Kazakhstan', 2004 and 'New Curricula in trade theory and econometrics', 2005) have brought expertise to restructuring curricula and modernising teaching and learning methods and approaches in order to meet the changing economic needs of the business environment in Kazakhstan.

A number of Tempus projects enabled the launching of new approaches in the operation of HEIs, namely in setting up institutes and mechanisms of interaction that contribute to improving collaboration with key stakeholders – business, students and the society at large.

A number of selected projects were undertaken to improve the system of quality management in education. Among them: 'Documentation for quality assurance of study programmes', involving Kazakh Satpaev National Technical University; Eurasian Gumilev National University; Kazakh Ablaykhan University of international relations and world languages; Kazakh leading academy of architecture and construction.

In the field of university governance, Tempus has made a difference as well: at least six projects have supported the introduction and the development of a national quality management and assessment system in the Kazakh higher education system. For example, the Kazakh National Agrarian University has introduced a system of quality assurance (both internal and external) which was disseminated to all universities. The project is sustainable with well-established and functioning structures. In the framework of the Tempus project aimed at developing a quality management system based on international standards and Total Quality Management (TQM) principles implemented in 2005 at the International Business, a general concept of quality accompanied by a Manual for Education Quality Evaluation was developed together with a coherent system of staff development. A key achievement of the project was the development of two scientific laboratories for quality enhancement; one for students and one for faculty staff. These two laboratories continue to operate under the new Centre for Innovation in Education.

Another Tempus project aimed at developing the system of university governance 'Institute for strategic Management of Universities' was very pertinent and made it possible to identify key directions for improving the performance of HEIs in this area.

Tempus has supported the implementation of the ECTS, an important step in aligning universities with the principles of the Bologna process. The outcomes of the Tempus project 'Implementing of ECTS at Kazakhstan Universities' had systemic effects in the overall system of higher education in Kazakhstan. Beginning in 2011, a system of transferring national Kazakh credits into ECTS was initiated.

New curricula and degrees developed in Tempus projects are being systematically implemented in accordance with the ECTS, notably in business education (under the project 'Restructuring Business Education Teaching with Innovative Curricula Development in Kazakhstan', 2004), space technologies (under the project Curricula Reform in Space Technology, 2008) and chemical engineering (under the project 'Chemical Engineering: Curriculum Development and International Recognition', 2008).

Many more Tempus projects have brought spin-off effects which are visible in the area of cooperation between HEIs and members of consortia. As a result of the project 'Transferring of EU evaluation models in KAUIR functions and processes' (2006), it was decided to implement an overall system of quality management.

As a result of these positive experiences, there is an increased interest in participating in Tempus projects amongst Kazakh universities. It is also worth mentioning that all universities which have recently received international accreditation have been involved in Tempus.
2. Erasmus Mundus

The objective of the Erasmus Mundus programme is to promote European higher education, to help improve and enhance the career prospects of students and to promote intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries, in accordance with EU external policy objectives in order to contribute to the sustainable development of third countries in the field of higher education. It does this through three Actions:

Action 1 – Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes (Master Courses and Joint Doctorates) – with scholarships
Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes are operated by consortia of higher education institutions (HEIs) from the EU and (since 2009) elsewhere in the world. They provide an integrated course and joint or multiple diplomas following study or research at two or more HEIs. Master Courses and Joint Doctorates are selected each year following a Call for Proposals. There are currently 131 Masters and 34 Doctorates offering EU-funded scholarships or fellowships to students and scholars.

More information:

Number of students/staff participating in the programme

Erasmus Mundus – Joint degrees (Action 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
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<th>2011</th>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nationals of the country participated in the programme for the first time in 2005-2006 (students) and in 2007-2008 (scholars).

Erasmus Mundus– Partnerships (External Cooperation Window, Action 2)

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>2011*</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>12</td>
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Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries: Central Asia
## Institutions participating in the programme up to and including 2011

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<tr>
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<th>Action 2 Partnerships</th>
<th>Action 3 Attractiveness projects</th>
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IV. Bibliographical references and websites

- The Law on Education (October 2011) of the Republic of Kazakhstan
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- The Law on Education (June, 7, 1999) of the Republic of Kazakhstan
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Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries: Central Asia
Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries: Central Asia

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- www.minzdrav.kz - website of the Ministry of health of Kazakhstan
- www.stat.kz - website of the Ministry of communication and information of Kazakhstan
- www.aic.gov.kz – website of the Agency for statistics of Kazakhstan
- www.iimp.kz – International Institute of Contemporary Policy
- www.resource.nauka.kz/high - Information and education portal
- www.ppi.kz – website of Pavlodar state pedagogical institute
- www.kaznu.kz – website of Kazakh Al-Farabi National University
- www.enu.kz – website of Eurasian Gumilev National University
- www.kaznau.kz – website of Kazakh National Agrarian University
- www.kazntu.kz – website of Kazakh Satpaev National Technical University
- www.kaznmu.kz – website of Kazakh Asfendiyarov National Medical University
- www.nu.edu.kz – website of Nazarbayev University

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For further information:

- Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)
  Unit P10 - Tempus and Bilateral Cooperation with Industrialised Countries
  Postal address: Tempus Programme
  Avenue du Bourget 1 (BOUR 02/017) B-1140 Brussels, Belgium
  Contact: EACEA-Tempus-Info@ec.europa.eu
  Website: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus/

- National Tempus Office Kazakhstan
  Postal address: Room 416, Gogol street 84 ‘A’ Almaty 050000 Kazakhstan
  Contact: nc@tempuskaz.kz, nto@tempuskaz.kz
  Website: www.tempuskaz.kz

Last update: July 2012

13 Shaizada Tasbulatova (NTO Kazakhstan)
HIGHER EDUCATION IN KYRGYZSTAN

I. Overall description
II. Current challenges and needs
   – Trends and challenges
   – The Bologna Process
III. Participation in EU programmes
   – Tempus
   – Erasmus Mundus
IV. Bibliographical references and websites
The higher education system in Kyrgyzstan

ECTS

0 60 120 180 240 300

University, academy, institute
(universitet, akademia, institut)

Years

0 1 2 3 4 5

University, academy, institute
(universitet, akademia, institut)

Bachelor (Bakalavr)

Years

1 2 3 4 5

University, academy, institute
(universitet, akademia, institut)

Specialist degree (specialist)

University, academy (universitet, akademia)

Specialist degree (specialist)

ECTS

0 60 120 180

University, academy, institute
(universitet, akademia, institut)

Master (Magistr)

Years

1 2 3

Field of study

>>> Arts, humanities, social sciences, journalism and information, business and administration, law, etc.

>>> Medicine

Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries: Central Asia
I. Overall description

1. Major characteristics of tertiary education in the country

Legislation covering the field of tertiary education

The period after the independence of Kyrgyzstan turned out to be a period of implementation of educational experiments to move towards a system based on democratic principles and on pluralism of values. The key guiding lines of the reforms were quality, efficiency and accessibility.

In 2002, a Concept for Education in the Kyrgyz Republic was approved. Among the main priorities of these documents, the aspects of equality, accessibility and quality of basic education were underlined.

In 2003, the new Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic was approved.

The activities of higher educational institutions (HEIs), regardless of the legal form of ownership and departmental affiliation, are governed by a single law, the Law on Education dated 30 April 2003. According to this law, the education system is based on the following main principles:

- free access to elementary, secondary and higher education in public institutions within the limits set by the state educational standards;
- the possibility of receiving education on a commercial basis, including in state educational institutions;
- the humanistic character of education,
- independence of education from political and religious institutions and the secular character of education;
- academic freedom of educational organisations, academic integrity.

On 27 August 2011, the Government Decree on transferring to a two-cycle system of higher education in Kyrgyzstan was issued. According to the new law, all HEIs will transfer to the Bachelor and Master system by 1 September 2012.

On 23 March 2012, the Government Decree on 'strategic directions of development of the education system in Kyrgyz Republic’ was adopted. This document approved the Concept and Strategy of Development of Education in the Kyrgyz Republic until 2020 and the action plan to implement the strategy for the years 2012-2014.

Types of tertiary education institutions

The higher education system of Kyrgyzstan has a network of 54 higher education institutions, including 33 public and 21 private institutions. Private higher education institutions accordingly have increased their role and in 2011/2012 they enrolled 12.5 % of the total number of students.

The higher education system of Kyrgyzstan consists of four types of HEIs: universities (universitet), academies (akademia), specialised HEIs (for example, Kyrgyz National Conservatory, Bishkek higher military specialised schools (Uchilische – in KG) and institutes (institut)).

A university is a higher educational institution which implements programmes of higher and postgraduate education in a wide range of specialisations; an academy is a higher educational institution (HEI) which implements programmes of higher and postgraduate education in fields of scientific activity; an institute is a higher educational institution or branch of a university or academy which implements programmes of higher and postgraduate education; a specialised higher education institution is a narrow-profile higher educational institution which implements higher and postgraduate education programmes in a wide range of specialisations. They also conduct pure and applied research, provide training, re-training of specialists and they train scientific and pedagogical staff (to the levels of Ph.D, Doctors of Science).

Types of tertiary education programmes and qualifications

The following educational programmes are delivered by higher education institutions in Kyrgyzstan: Bachelor (bakalavr), Master (magistr), specialist programmes (specialist) and at postgraduate level, aspirantura and doctorantura (Licentiate and Ph.D).

The Bachelor degree is defined as an academic degree of basic higher education, which gives entry to Master programmes and to specific employment in the labour market. The Master degree is an academic degree which gives entry to Aspirantura (similar to a Licentiate) and to specific employment in the labour market.
In Kyrgyzstan, the Vocational Education and Training system (VET) is divided into three levels: Primary Vocational Education, Secondary Vocational Education and Higher Vocational Education.

Since 1994, Primary Vocational Education (PVE) has been under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, while Secondary Vocational Education and Higher Vocational Education are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Science (MOES). It is one based on social and economic development and improvement and it is an integral part of the system of continuous education. The Ministry of Education and Science is involved in PVE insofar as it defines the requirements for the general education subjects to be included in the vocational curriculum.

The Primary Vocational Education system comprises a network of centres that covers all regions of the country. Currently, there are 110 vocational education institutions. Included in this number are 103 vocational lyceums, one college, six special vocational schools ('professionalnye uchilishcha') for penitentiary institutions. Of the 110 educational vocational institutions, 63 are located in rural areas.

There are 122 Secondary Vocational Educational institutions consisting of technical schools and colleges. 53 of these are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Science, 23 are private and 46 are attached to universities.

The students are taught by more than 3 500 teachers working in Primary Vocational Education (PVE) and about the same number of teaching staff in Secondary Vocational Education. 74.5% of the staff works full-time with the remaining 25.5% engaged on a part-time basis.

The age for entering PVE is usually determined by the requirement that a person must have completed 9 or 11 years of general education. Students at the age of 16 who have completed the 9th grade of general education are generally enrolled in educational programmes lasting for two or three year. Those who have completed the 11th grade of general education usually undertake a one year programme.

The PVE schools have educational programmes covering more than 155 professions. The introduction of the market economy which was associated with an increase in self-employment as well as in hidden unemployment in the agricultural sector, required a revision of the list of these professions to better reflect the changed needs of the labour market. The following professions have been identified by the Ministry of Education and Science as priority professions:

- small business entrepreneurs;
- importers/exporters;
- managers;
- office managers;
- secretaries;
- farmers,
- hotel administrators;
- travel agents;
- IT repair specialists;
- Typists with computer skills.

As of the beginning of the academic year of 2011/2012, secondary vocational schools have been offering programmes covering 25 groups of professions. Non-state secondary vocational schools deliver training in a limited number of specialisations, such as: pedagogy, economics and management, processing technology, humanities and social sciences. The number of college graduates has increased substantially from 7 700 in 2006 to almost 13 000 in 2011.

VET is also provided by private training providers through non-formal education programmes. For example, NGOs, private training organisations, specialised professional organisations and individual trainers, including external international experts acting as training providers. The Ministry of Education and Science has a system of registering private training providers. The duration of training in NGO programmes is from one day to one week, while in specialised training organisations it is from several weeks to several months. Training in the non-formal education sector seeks to develop market skills and knowledge (business administration, including farming and agribusiness) and vocational skills (skills in traditional crafts, service sector and industrial skills).

The main outcomes of the first stage (2012-2014) of the Strategy of Development of Education in the Kyrgyz Republic until 2020, for secondary vocational education are, to:

1. Reduce the gap between the SVE curricula structure and requirements of the labour market;
2. Involve employers in the evaluation process of qualifications of graduates;
3. To raise the prestige of the SVE in all segments of the population;
4. Optimise the management of the SVE system;
5. Improve the quality of human resources in SVE institutes;

The main outcomes for the higher education system are:
1. To improve the quality assurance in higher education.
2. To optimize the structure and levels of higher education.
3. To reduce the gap between training in HE and the demands of the labour market.
4. To reform the training system. Implementation of a system of teacher evaluation.
5. To revise existing mechanisms for funding higher education, including the experience of the transfer of public HEIs to self-financing.
6. To develop scientific research in HEIs.

The system of vocational education is currently being reformed. The basis for this reform is the 'Action Plan of the Kyrgyz Republic Vocational Education System Reforms until 2010' for Primary VET, the 'State Programme for the Development of Secondary Vocational Education and Training in the Kyrgyz Republic for the period 2005-2010', and the 'Action Plan for Reforming the System of Secondary Vocational Education in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2005-2010'. The outcome of the reforms should be the establishment of a modern system of vocational education, resulting in increased employment for adults, a reduction in poverty and unemployment for socially vulnerable groups of the population and an increase in labour production and labour competitiveness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of students at HEIs (academic year 2011/2012)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>209 400</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Number of HEIs</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Public</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
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2. Distribution of responsibilities

The Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for formulating the national education policy and its implementation, setting the standards for each level of formal education, curriculum development and introduction of innovative practices, teacher training, accreditation of HEIs and international cooperation.

During the last 20 years, priority has been given to developing regional higher education institutions in the country. In 1991, most students (80 %) were studying in the capital, whereas at present this figure has fallen to 53 % with the remaining percentage (47 %) studying in the regions.

Nowadays, HEIs have a high level of autonomy for defining their academic programmes (within the framework of the state educational standards), for dictating their forms and methods of teaching and for developing international collaboration. Providing autonomy for HEIs became the main tool in the reform of the higher education system and adapting it to the changing social and economic conditions.

There are different public and private bodies operating in higher education: associations (the association of non-public14 higher education institutions, Education Network Association (EdNet), association of higher education institution rectors, students’ associations), independent companies for testing students, and student unions in HEIs.

Student governments are a form of association of higher education students through which participation in management and higher education development are implemented. Since September 2005, the new structure of HEIs was approved, (except HEIs of national and regional status). Also the new state-public form of university management was introduced by the Stewardship Councils.

The Ministry of Education and Science is the main agency responsible for the quality of education and the management of the education system.

Several institutions are regulated by both the Ministry of Education and Science and other ministries. This is the case of the Kyrgyz Medical Academy which depends on the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Health, the Kyrgyz Academy (Ministry of Internal Affairs), the Diplomatic Academy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), and the

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14 Non-public institute refers to private HEIs
3. Governing bodies of the higher education institutions

The Ministry of Education and Science has responsibility for defining policy, standards and programmes, determining priorities, conducting strategic planning and regulating the operation of the 33 public HEIs, including their branches and institutes at regional level. The MOES also allocates financial resources, monitors quality through its licensing and attestation department, collects statistics and liaises with the Academy of Science for research priorities. The State Examination Board awards professional qualifications or academic degrees and issues a state education certificate based on final examination results. The Council of Rectors links many institutional managers together and cooperates to develop quality, internationalisation and a research agenda across the education system.

Public HEIs have more limited autonomy. Institutions are accountable to the MOES for programmes which are to be taught according to State standards and for the proper administration of scholarship funds, according to the established criteria. Their operation is governed by the Law on Education under which they can legally establish branches, ‘transferring to them part of their assets.’ [Article 37 of the Law]. Rectors of public HEIs are appointed for five years by the MOES following election by secret ballot at a general meeting of the faculty. Rectors of private HEIs are appointed by the founders according to the institutional charter [Article 38 of the Law].

Each HEI has a Governing Board which is responsible for human resources policies at institutional level, including staff recruitment. The Law is silent about the composition of the Board and, consequently, it is not possible to determine the amount of employer participation. The Academic Council manages academic and research programmes. The State determines the number of scholarship students (budget funded) while the institution determines the number of fee-paying students. The Financial Committee is responsible for institutional budgets together with the management of extra budgetary (private) funds. HEIs evaluate student performance and are responsible for the organisation and delivery of distance education courses.

The forms of university governance are meetings of trustees, academics and other councils or committees. The institutions’ selection procedure and their competences and the distribution of authorities between the council and the head of the educational institution are determined by the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Charters of the universities. The direct management of the university is the responsibility of the Rector.

The appointment and dismissal procedures of the head of a public higher education institution are the remit of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic with the exception of higher education institutions having the status of ‘national’. The heads of higher education institutions having ‘national’ status are appointed and dismissed by the President of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Upon the expiry of the term of a head of a public higher education institution, the head retains the right to fill the position from an executive position (or equivalent title) out of competition for a period of three years, as long as the nominee worked in that institution before the nomination.

The heads of departments of public universities are appointed from among academics of relevant expertise and qualifications, under contract and on a competitive basis in the manner prescribed by the University charters.

The heads of private HEIs and their departments are appointed by academic experts with academic degrees of related expertise and qualifications. The appointment procedure and the head’s authority are determined by the appropriate person in accordance with the Law on education and other legal acts of the Kyrgyz Republic and recorded in the Charter of the university.

The university is divided into faculties and departments.

The faculty of a university is a structural educational (a scientific or administrative department) that implements professional educational programmes of higher education, including postgraduate and additional professional education in a specific discipline or
in several related specialties. It also conducts research activity in the relevant field.

The faculty may consist of departments, schools and research laboratories that carry out educational and scientific work in the subject of the faculty and other departments.

The faculty is in charge of the overall management of the education and research activities of departments, laboratories and other units.

The feasibility of a faculty is determined by each higher education institution based on the available funds of the university.

Direct supervision of the faculty is carried out by the dean of the faculty, appointed under contract and on a competitive basis by order of the head of the university for up to five years. The dean is elected by secret voting system in a general meeting of the faculty of the university from suitably qualified academics with a relevant profile and qualifications.

4. Financing

Of the 209 400 students in public HEIs, only 13.5 % receive state scholarships, although this proportion appears to be rising. In 2011/12, there were 4 092 scholarships which accounted for about 7.9 % of new 51 800 admissions. Of these, 4 092 were awarded through the MOES, 35 % in teacher education, 8 % in agriculture, 5 % in construction, computer technologies, mining, energy, etc. (Education Development Strategy 2011-2020). Public higher education institutions have limited funding from the national budget. Higher education represents 5.9 % of the total state budget allocated to education.

So the dominant pattern remains in so far as public institutions receive the greatest amount of their revenue from fee-paying students.

According to the OECD [Education at a Glance 2008] and other sources, it appears that the Kyrgyz Republic has one of the largest private funding sources in higher education in the world.

According to the National Statistics Committee, the dynamics of the last five years demonstrate that the proportion of expenditure on education in the national budget is significant, accounting for 20-23 %. According to the Ministry of Finance, this amount represented 3.9 % of the GDP in 2001, 5 % in 2005 and 6.5 % in 2007. In 2011, expenditure on the education system amounted to KGS 19.3 billion and on HEIs amounted to KGS 2.9 billion (15 % of GDP).

Two departments within the Ministry of Education and Science are responsible for financial management activities - the Financial Department and the Accounting Department.

The Financial Department is responsible for the planning and calculation of expenditure and budget funds, drafting regulations and compiling statistics on affiliated institutions. The Accounting Department is responsible for all accounting within the ministry. It receives and processes payments from the public budget, pays the taxes and other state duties, controls budget performance, collects reports from affiliated institutions and carries out financial analyses based on accounting data.

The financial plans of public higher educational institutions, including procurement, are reviewed by the Economic Unit and RMSPU (Rehabilitation, Monitoring, and State Procurement Unit) of the Ministry of Education and Science. They have to be prepared according to the strategic plan for higher education, and must be updated and approved annually.

Despite the fact that in 2007 special attention was paid to the education system, 86 % of all expenditure allocated for education was spent on salaries, deductions to the Social Fund, communal service payments, food, etc., and only 14 % of these resources were spent directly on education. In 2007, the average expenditure per student in higher education amounted to KGS 12 569.

5. Student contributions and financial support

The system of governmental funding has improved since the introduction of the National Testing System in 2002. The idea is that the system administers a universal admission test in all regions of the Republic which is free of charge and open to all prospective students (high school graduates) willing to apply for government sponsorship of their studies. The top achievers are awarded with government scholarships (as well as stipends). In previous times, universities were allocated quotas by the Government and independently distributed their share of government scholarships. The former system was highly criticised for being discriminatory, corrupt and ineffective. The National Testing System improved access to free education for young people from remote districts. Governmental financial support includes fees for Bachelor and specialist programmes and scholarships but the Government does not provide financial support for students of Master programmes. The Government also supports students who are orphans.

Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries: Central Asia
Tuition fees in the Kyrgyz Republic can be really variable. Some HEIs formerly used low fees to attract students as an additional source of revenue and the MOES has established a base fee threshold of KGS 15 000 per annum for day students, and KGS 3 000 for distance students in public institutions. However, individual HEIs appear to have some discretion over their fee structures, (for example, in one regional university, the maximum fee is KGS 15 000 whereas to study economics in a large Bishkek HEI costs about KGS 29 000.) Part-time and distance education are all fee-paying and on average cost less than full-time education. Tuition fees in private universities are nearly 25 % higher than in public ones, (KGS 14 300 compared with KGS 11 500). Some of the more prestigious institutions charge higher fees; for example the American University charges USD 2 000 a year (about KGS 80 000) and the Yraim Professional Institute charges about USD 900 – although both these private institutions also have a comprehensive system of bursaries and needs-based grants. International students pay more in all institutions.

There are more than 32 000 school-leavers annually.

A grants commission draws up a list of recommended school-leavers based on the selection results.

These are grouped according to social categories of school-leavers as follows:

1. School-leavers from Bishkek;
2. School-leavers from regional centres and towns;
3. School-leavers from villages;
4. School-leavers from schools in high mountain areas of the country;
5. School-leavers who have rights to benefits (disabled persons of different categories, orphans, and discharged military personnel).

Grant competitions are held separately in each category so as to guarantee equal access to higher education in the different groups.

Another source of funding for HEIs is foreign investment in education. However, in recent years foreign investment has been decreasing. In 2007, foreign investment in education plunged as compared with 2004, amounting KGS 4 million.

At present, the Ministry is developing a mechanism for providing loans to students with the support of the OSCE.

6. Licensing, quality assurance and accreditation of institutions and/or programmes

The Quality Assurance (QA) framework in the Kyrgyz Republic has not kept pace with the rapid growth in higher education. Large increases in the numbers of students, the need for new degree structures and modernised programme delivery and the emergence of new institutions have all placed strains on the capacity and relevance of the existing centralised licensing and attestation activities of the MOES, which cover both VET and HEIs.

In the current QA system, a licence is a simple assurance mechanism whereby all teacher qualifications, buildings, equipment and learning resources are reviewed so as to be fit-for-purpose. Attestation is a process whereby HEI programmes are checked against State standards using input indicators such as numbers of professors, students, type and amount of equipment, etc. It operates through the MOES which sets up an Verification Commission composed of one or two members of the MOES staff and some academic staff from other HEIs. Attestation visits typically last for three-five days. Ideally, each HEI should work on its own self-assessment exercise before the commission visits. Once existing programmes or new courses meet attestation requirements, they can be continued. Otherwise, the programme must be discontinued. All HEIs have to go through this procedure every five years.

There is an agreement that the functions of the existing State inspection on licensing and attestation of educational institutions under the Ministry of Education and Science of Kyrgyz Republic are to be further developed towards a full and independent accreditation service, with an institutional rather than individual course focus. This new accreditation system will be more rigorous than the existing attestation service as it will be based on best practice US and European Quality Standards. The Ministry staff estimates that only about 20 % of universities are ready for this kind of quality assurance process at the moment. State inspection currently employs ten individuals, approximately five of whom have postgraduate qualifications. These staff numbers will not be enough to cope with the needs of so many institutions and programmes and the MOES would require considerable further strengthening in order to implement the proposed new system. This is one area where continued donor support would be immediately very useful.

At present the external system of quality assurance includes the procedures of licensing and state accreditation (attestation). The State
inspection on licensing and attestation of educational institutions was established in 1994 under the Ministry of Education and Science.

It is responsible for implementing the state policy in the area of licensing and state accreditation of all educational institutions including higher education institutions.

The licensing of institutes of higher education was introduced in 1993. Since 1998 the licensing became a mandatory procedure every five years for all institutes of higher education and educational programmes. In 2001, the licensing of state educational institutes was cancelled which brought about an unregulated increase in the number of institutes being set up without necessarily sufficient resources. In 2003, since the licensing procedure was reinstated, the number of newly-founded institutes, departments and units has fallen.

Currently, a higher education institute has the right to commence educational activity from the time the licence is granted by the State department on licensing and attestation of Kyrgyz Republic on the basis of the Commission of experts’ conclusions. The aims and contents of examinations are set according to the state educational standards of higher education. The examination costs are borne by the university.

State accreditation (attestation) permits institutions to issue diplomas and degrees in line with the State Educational Standards. This accreditation procedure is implemented every five years. The accreditation decision is taken by the collegial body which is under the Ministry of Education and Science and includes representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science as well as representatives of HEIs, etc.

The requirements of the State and expectations of society regarding the knowledge, capacity, ability of graduates are underpinned in the State Educational Standards for higher education.

The Ministry of Education and Science set up a commission for implementing the attestation and approved its staff.

An expert, who checks the quality of educational activity, should base his/her assessment on the following criteria:

- the structure of departments from which students graduate and their management system;
- the dynamics of students;
- the quality of the graduate;
- the educational organisation in programmes;
- the results of the final attestation of graduates;
- the demand for graduates;
- internal HEI quality assurance on the graduation process of students;
- the level of teaching staff;
- the level of methodological, informational and library procurement in the educational programmes being assessed;
- the level of scientific research activity;
- the level of technical supply.

The weaknesses of the current process are the following:

- the emphasis is put on quantitative parameters (the number of square meters per student, numbers of staff, etc.) rather than on qualitative parameters;
- the static approach does not provide a dynamic perspective (no long-term comparison with previous periods);
- the lack of objectivity in the evaluation carried out by the experts;
- external stakeholders are not involved in the process;
- The results of the evaluation are not made public systematically.

Voluntary accreditation by other professional bodies, including international organisations, is allowed by the Law. Nevertheless, such an approach is quite rare, considering the lack of such organisations in the country and the costs of such procedures.

In 2005, two universities – the Academy of Administration under the President and the Bishkek Academy of Finance and Economics – passed the Central Asian Management Education Quality ICAMEQ international accreditation of the Central Asia fund of management development (CAMAN).

The first national independent accreditation agency was set up in September 2011 within the framework of the TEMPUS project ‘Central Asia Network Quality Assurance’. In spring 2012, this Agency carried out a pilot accreditation of the first two Kyrgyz universities (Kyrgyz Economic University and Osh State University). However, the regulatory framework for the operation of this agency has not been approved.
7. Admission

At present, the number of students in higher education amounts to 239,208. Those enrolled in private universities were 29,808 in 2011. Although the number of private universities has hardly changed, the attractiveness of private universities has considerably increased in recent years.

The State guarantees equal access to higher education. The breakdown of students by discipline in 2011 was the following: business and economics – 21%, law – 9%, engineering and technical studies – 15.5%, management – 5%, pedagogy and education – 20%, health and related services – 3.6%, interdisciplinary science and agriculture – 1%.

A student is admitted to the first year of study if he/she has passed the entrance examination and has a certificate (attestat) of completion of secondary education, secondary professional education or a diploma in primary professional education. Each applicant receives a certificate indicating the number of accumulated points.

The 50 best applicants who have the highest scores (usually above 220 points out of a maximum 240) receive an optional certificate giving them the right to be enrolled in any university and in any discipline of their choice without further need for competition.

Other applicants may participate in the competition for educational grants that is held in schools.

For this purpose, each university has a grant committee consisting of representatives of the education authorities as well as representatives of the universities.

Normative documents provide for independent observers, who are entitled to attend all meetings of the grant committees but cannot interfere nor affect the process of selection and admission of applicants.

The admission procedure consists of three rounds and gives applicants the opportunity to participate in several competitions and in various universities and thereby increases their chance of being enrolled in a higher education university.

The applicants have the right to be accepted by the university following the results of the national testing and entrance examination. The university conducts the entrance examination for:

- applicants who have not participated in the national testing or have scores below the threshold but are willing to join fee-paying programmes;
- applicants who apply for correspondence, distance and evening classes;
- applicants who are foreign nationals.

The national testing is conducted yearly at the end of May, selection and grants are awarded between 10-23 July. The acceptance of applications starts from 10 July, entrance examinations for full-time education are held until 20 August and for correspondence courses - until 30 August.

8. Organisation of the academic year

The teaching process is based on the State Educational Standards. HEIs are free to select the evaluation systems, the forms and methods of teaching.

Usually, the undergraduate semesters last for 17-18 weeks and post-graduate semesters for 15-16 weeks. The weekly workload for students amounts to approximately 54 hours. A single course cannot exceed 30 hours a week.

In the late 1990s, a modular system was introduced in most HEIs. It includes a half-term and a final evaluation for each semester.

In most HEIs, the academic year starts on 1 September and ends in June. The annual schedule (exam sessions, holidays, etc.) is prepared by the deans of the faculties and controlled by the department of educational administration.

Since 2004, Tempus pilot projects aimed at introducing the ECTS have been developed within some higher education institutions. A national coordinating ECTS office was set up in the Ministry of Education and Science.

Institutions should inform all applicants and students about the organisation of studies on the basis of ECTS. Such information should be provided in a printed form in the Institution’s Prospectus and also on the website of the institution. One ECTS credit equals 30 academic hours. Each academic hour lasts for 50 minutes.

An individual student’s trajectory is created with the support of an academic advisor on the basis of an individual learning plan which defines the number and sequence of study courses during the academic year or semester.

The number of ECTS in an individual student’s learning plan should amount to 60 credits per year (30 per semester). For students on a
scholarship, the annual number of credits cannot be less than 60. For fee-paying students, the minimum number of ECTS is 15 per semester and 30 for the whole year.

9. Curriculum content

At present, the higher education content in the Kyrgyz Republic is determined by the State educational standards of the second generation. In accordance with these documents, each educational programme has a mandatory component (a list of compulsory subjects, and their content/duration). The mandatory examinations make up roughly 60-70% of the total educational programme.

The existing state standards hamper the academic mobility of students and do not provide opportunities to respond quickly to changes in the labour market. Therefore, new state standards are being drawn up which only aim to regulate the expected learning outcomes for educational programmes. The competence approach (TUNING methodology) is being built into the new State educational standards. The results of the educational programmes at Bachelor and Master levels are now subject to the Dublin descriptors (Bologna).

10. Assessment, progression, certification and degree

In accordance with the Law on Education of the Kyrgyz Republic, graduates must receive final certification on completion of higher education programmes.

A list of mandatory final certification tests in academic fields and disciplines is defined in the state educational standards on higher education.

Final degree-qualifying work is carried out at certain stages of higher education. For example, for a Bachelor degree, there is a Bachelor’s thesis or project, and for a Master degree there is a Master thesis.

Current evaluation can be realised in different ways depending on the learning outcomes of the study module. Most commonly this involves tests, problem-solving, case-studies, projects, essays and role games.

11. Academic staff

Staff levels in higher education in the Kyrgyz Republic increased steadily up to 2007 but have since returned to 2002 levels, giving an overall student teacher ratio of approximately 18:1. The teaching loads in public institutions are, on average, heavy; for example, 850 hours for lecturers, 800 hours for senior lecturers and 750 hours for professors, with about 70% of classroom time. Of the total 12,057 staff in 2009/2010, about one-third teaches in more than one institution. Salaries have been historically low. In 2006, teaching staff in the public HEIs earned approximately USD 82 per month while those working in private HEIs earned USD 112. Many staff in public HEIs supplement their salaries by teaching in private HEIs.

On 19 January 2011, the ‘Government Decree on the introduction of new remuneration conditions for employees of educational institutions’ was adopted. In accordance with this decree the minimal salary of teachers equals USD 117-138, and of professors – USD 150-170.

The requirements for academic staff are set by the State educational standards on higher education.

The minimum requirements for academic staff are indicated in the State educational standards, namely: basic education, an academic degree, work experience, etc.

The licence specifies the percentage of academic staff with degrees (e.g. B.Sc., M.Sc., Ph.D). The proportion of academic staff with relevant degrees depends on the type of institution (university, academy, and institute) as well as the type of educational programme (Bachelor, specialist, Master). The main functions of the academic staff are to lecture, develop study materials (textbooks, recommendations, reading materials, training programmes and etc.) and develop methods for evaluating student progress. Part of the academic staff is involved in the organisation of additional work with students and organisational processes of the university.

Employment in higher education institutes is carried out on a competitive and contractual basis.

12. Research activities

In accordance with the Education Development Strategy 2009-2011, more attention will be paid to promoting research at universities. Currently, only 12% of teaching staff at national universities are involved in research and development. Nevertheless, in the last years, Kyrgyz HEIs have made drastic budget cuts to research.

There are two separate and independent structures coordinating research activity in the country – the Ministry of Education and Science of Kyrgyz Republic (MOES) on one side...
and the National Academy of Science of Kyrgyz Republic (NAS KR) on the other.

The National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic carries out research in natural sciences, engineering and social sciences, to train scientists in all fields of knowledge, to advise the Government on Science and Technology S&T policy, and to disseminate knowledge. The NAS defines the research topics in the national research institutions, coordinates basic research funded by the state, participates in international cooperation on S&T and organises symposia and conferences to discuss science issues and to coordinate research.

The education and science policy of the Kyrgyz Republic at governmental level is developed and coordinated by the MOES. Besides, the Ministry certifies the main S&T research institutions.

The share of expenditure for research and development has remained constant since 2004 at 0.12 % of the GDP. The financing of science is multi-channelled: the separated line of the republican budget subsidizes scientific institutions of the National academy of sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Ministry of rural, water management and a process industry of the Kyrgyz Republic and the MOES. Other ministries and departments support the scientific divisions with the help of off-budget means.

In 2010, that amounted to about KGS 329 million. This research budget is spent on physics, chemistry and technology, which are priorities for research funding, followed by agriculture, health and biosciences and then humanities. Priority sectors are mining, hydro-electric power industries, forestry science and environment science. Co-operation with industry comes through special demands for research.

There are many Faculties of Science where research is carried out by academic staff and technicians in HEIs. The number of scientists on the MOES payroll is approximately 3 402, of whom 626 are Doctors of Science and 2 776 are Kandidat Nauk (similar to Licentiates).

13. University-enterprise cooperation

Employers have a very small role in higher education at present, especially with regard to curriculum development.

In 2007, a recommendation was made to update the State educational standards and in 2009 the process started and is ongoing.

14. International cooperation

The higher education system in Kyrgyzstan has been extending its international contacts, both in CIS and countries abroad. There are some 20 institutional agreements with the CIS countries and about 50 agreements with countries abroad. Over 3 000 young citizens of Kyrgyzstan are currently studying abroad at universities in Russia, USA, Germany, France, Turkey, Malaysia, etc. through accredited exchange programmes.

It is expected that the implementation of the Bologna process will bring local and European universities closer and help develop partnerships and facilitate education reform.

The current policy concentrates mainly on expanding international relations, promoting academic exchange and international recognition of Kyrgyz higher education and improving connections with the international donor community.

Kyrgyzstan benefits from international programmes supporting student and teaching staff mobility such as ERASMUS MUNDUS, TEMPUS, UNESCO, UNDP, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Soros Foundation, IREX (International Research and Exchange Board), ACCELS (American Councils for International Education). In addition, mobility is also encouraged within the national initiative called ‘Staff of the 21st Century’. Thanks to these measures academic mobility has increased substantially.

Kyrgyz universities mainly host students from CIS countries (Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan) and non-CIS countries such as Turkey, India, Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, Mongolia, Nepal, etc.

The main areas of international university activities are the establishment and development of international relations with foreign HEIs, international educational funds and organisations; work with foreign students; cooperation and partnership with foreign scientific research and setting up educational programmes; participation of university specialists in international conferences and hosting of experts from abroad.
II. Current challenges and needs

1. Trends and challenges

In Kyrgyzstan, the higher education sector is characterised by:

**Non systematic and consequential educational policy**

No comprehensive policy stipulates the systematic modernisation of structure and content of higher education and removal of contradictions in the system exists in higher education. Bachelor and Master degrees are not known on the labour market and there is scepticism regarding the equivalence of these degrees with the degree of specialist. This is an obstacle for the introduction of the Master and Bachelor programmes and the gradual termination of specialist programmes. This situation causes a mismatch (shortage or excess) between the market needs and the education offer.

**Ineffective quality assurance system**

The two existing quality assurance mechanisms – licensing and attestation – are not of great effect as they are not used as monitoring instruments for improving quality. There are no appropriate criteria or standards to assess higher education institutions and there is no independent accreditation institution that would systematically control compliance with these standards.

**Low quality of staff and material resources**

The existing norms are out-of-date and do not comply with the requirements of contemporary higher education. There are low standards in the recruitment of academic staff. Officially, a Master degree is required for the position of a lecturer; however, in reality administrations hire people with Bachelor degrees or specialist diplomas to teach students at universities (60% of the total number of teachers have no degree).

**Cost ineffectiveness of training of the state budget funded students**

In 2011, the Ministry of Education and Science allocated 4,092 scholarships, that is 85% of the total state scholarships available. Almost half of the scholarships have been allocated to students majoring in education but most of them did not fulfil their commitments and changed to majors, more-in-demand, during their last year of study. In addition, only 76% of the students completed their training. Since the amount of the scholarships is much less than the real costs, higher education institutions have to compensate for the difference using the contribution made by fee-paying students.

**Insufficient development of research at higher educational institutions**

There is no adequate link between research and higher education. Efforts have been made to merge scientific and educational institutions. However, these efforts focused on formal aspects and many issues were not dealt with such as the development of scientific skills or ways of involving students in scientific work.

**Bringing qualifications into line with the labour market needs**

The objective is to create favourable conditions for higher education institutions to enable them to revise their structures and programmes in view of labour market needs.

Activities:

- To revise the existing accountability system by ensuring more independence of HEIs in developing their own curriculum content;
- To adapt existing criteria, and requirements of accreditation;
- To strengthen interaction between universities and the market and stimulate HEIs by providing scholarships funded by the private sector;
- To identify the qualification levels in HEIs within the framework of the national qualification structure;
- To introduce a credit-hours system ensuring flexibility and allowing adults to ‘return’ to higher education in order to get the qualifications required for their career development.

**Bringing higher education quality into line with international standards in order to increase the competitiveness and mobility of graduating students**

The objective is to provide graduating students of Kyrgyz higher education system with advantages over those from other countries in the regional labour market.
Activities:
- To speed up the transition to the three cycle structure (Bachelor, Master, Ph.D.), and rising public awareness about the value of these degrees and start a gradual phasing out of the specialist qualification;
- To introduce up-to-date teaching and assessment technologies in accordance with international quality standards;
- To bring national educational standards into line with existing qualification requirements involving external stakeholders;
- To strengthen relationships with higher education institutions from other countries and strategic partners of Kyrgyzstan;
- To investigate the possibility of introducing a credit accumulation system based on the workload of students and learning outcomes.

**Introducing an incentive system for teaching staff**

The objective is to improve the quality of training research and teacher qualifications.

Activities:
- To increase opportunities for career development for academic staff (training programmes, exchange programmes, grants for innovating in training or research, etc.);
- To include the attestation of academic staff and integration of incentive mechanisms into the standards and requirements of the accreditation system;
- To reinforce qualification requirements for academic staff in particular through increasing the number of staff with doctoral degrees.

**Development of a comprehensive quality assurance system**

The objective is to create conditions for improving the accountability of administrators and academic staff.

Activities:
- To develop an external quality assessment system through the involvement of independent experts and international accreditation agencies;
- To develop an internal quality support system to motivate administrative and academic staff to regularly review and report their individual results;
- To develop a system of indicators to measure the quality of education services and introduce accountability based on evidence (facts, statistics, information on measurable results);
- To achieve transparency in the management of financial and human resources and in decision-making processes.

**Revising existing funding mechanisms of higher education**

The objective is to achieve a transparent and effective distribution of state funds in the higher education system.

Activities:
- To estimate minimal costs per student and use this amount as a basis for allocating funds to higher education institutions;
- To revise the criteria for granting state scholarships and introduce new clauses in scholarship contracts making it compulsory to return the scholarship in the case of changing majors, leaving education or working on a different major;
- To introduce an equal distribution system of state scholarships in accordance with market needs;
- To investigate possibilities of introducing a student loan system in cooperation with leading banks of the country.

**Ensuring legal basis for reforming of higher education**

The objective is to establish a clear and comprehensive legal framework for higher education that would encourage the integration of science into the higher education system, collaboration between state and private sectors, definition of new norms (standards) on material and human resources and other aspects.

Activities:
- Review of existing research and reports and preparation of a draft action plan leading to the necessary amendments to the legislation.
### 2. The Bologna Process\(^{15}\)

#### General Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bologna Process officially embedded in the education system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bologna Process being implemented by ad hoc groups under the supervision of the Ministry of Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No particular mechanism supporting the implementation of the Bologna Process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Bologna cycle structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of implementation of a three-cycle structure compliant with the Bologna Process</th>
<th>Extensive but gradual introduction of Bologna structure/ongoing adaptations or enlargement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Student workload/duration for the most common Bologna programmes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bachelor programmes</th>
<th>240 ECTS (4 academic years)</th>
<th>Master programmes</th>
<th>120 ECTS (2 academic years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bachelor/Master cycle structure models most commonly implemented</th>
<th>240+120 ECTS (4+2 academic years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition of the Learning Outcomes Concept</th>
<th>Learning outcomes are defined in national steering documents and implemented through laws and regulations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of implementation of ECTS</th>
<th>75% of institutions, or lower, and/or 75% of programmes, or lower, are using ECTS for both transfer and accumulation purposes. Various references are used to define the credits.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicative number of hours of student workload corresponding to one ECTS</th>
<th>1 ECTS = 20 – 30 hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Bologna Diploma Supplement (DS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of implementation of the Bologna Diploma Supplement</th>
<th>Partial and gradual introduction of the Bologna DS (25%-75% of institutions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diploma Supplement issued</th>
<th>Bologna DS issued on request in return of payment</th>
<th>Bologna DS issued in the language of instruction and /or English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage towards establishing a National Qualification Framework</th>
<th>Not yet started formally/not foreseen.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: Decision taken. Process just started.</td>
<td>Step 2: The purpose of the NQF has been agreed and the process is under way, including discussions and consultations. Various committees have been established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3: The NQF has been adopted formally and the implementation has started.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4: Redesigning the study programmes is ongoing and the process is close to completion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 5: Overall process fully completed including self-certified compatibility with the Framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quality Assurance Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Quality Assurance body</th>
<th>State inspection on licensing and attestation of educational institutions under the Ministry of Education and Science of Kyrgyz Republic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>A government-dependent body or Ministry has responsibility for quality assurance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year of establishment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement in external quality assurance process</td>
<td>Academic staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Experts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recognition of foreign qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>2004 (signature and ratification)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of Foreign Qualifications for academic study</td>
<td>Recognition for academic study by central or regional authorities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of Foreign Qualifications for professional employment</td>
<td>Recognition for professional employment by central or regional authorities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Joint Degrees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Establishment of joint degrees and programmes in higher education legislation</th>
<th>Joint programmes and joint degrees are not mentioned in the higher education legislation whatsoever.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries: Central Asia
III. Participation in EU Programmes

1. Tempus

Kyrgyzstan has participated in the Tempus Programme since 1995.

1.1 Statistics

| Number of projects in which one or several institutions in the country have been involved (as coordinator, contractor or partner) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Joint Projects | TEMPUS I and II | TEMPUS III | TEMPUS IV |
| 2000-2006 | 0 | 0 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
| Compact Projects | 8 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Structural & Complementary Measures (Tempus III) | 0 | 10 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| Structural Measures (Tempus IV) | 3 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 7 | 0 |
| Total | 11 | 24 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 7 |

Higher education institutions with highest TEMPUS participation during TEMPUS IV (2008-2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Number of projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KYRGYZ NATIONAL UNIVERSITY NAMED AFTER J BALASYGHIN</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSYK-KUL STATE UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACADEMY OF TEACHEX \ EDNET (NGO)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KYRGYZ STATE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY NAMED AFTER RAZZAKOV</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NARYN STATE UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSH TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TALAS STATE UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2 Impact of the Tempus Programme

Tempus projects have been the main instruments for implementing the Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS system) in the national higher education system. Over the last years, ECTS has been widely used in the framework of bilateral agreements with EU universities through at least eight Tempus projects. In this regard, the most successful project was the Elaboration of a Strategy for the Transition to ECTS in the Kyrgyz Republic (2004) that aimed at studying the European experience in implementing the ECTS and studying its introduction in Kyrgyz universities. A working group on the transition to the ECTS, consisting of teachers from Kyrgyz universities having experience of ECTS and international cooperation, was established in 2004 following an order of the Ministry of Education and Science. The working group designed a method to estimate the workload of major higher education programmes. These methods were then tested in seven pilot universities. The consequences of the introduction of ECTS in Kyrgyzstan went much further than expected and required a complete revision of the way courses were structured and described.

The ECTS/Diploma Supplement National Bureau under the Ministry of Education and Science was established in 2007 in the framework of a Tempus pilot project to further support the introduction of ECTS and the European Diploma Supplement.

The ECTS National Bureau prepared a number of concept papers such as the Concept of Higher Education Development in the Kyrgyz Republic, the Education Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic until 2010 or the Education Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2010-2020, etc. It also published an ECTS introduction handbook which was disseminated to all universities in the country. It organised a high number of ECTS training events for university administration and teachers and monitored the transition process to ECTS.
The testing phase was completed in 2008 and the conclusions were reported to the Minister of Education and Science. The decision to apply ECTS is taken independently by each university. For the time being, ECTS is partially applied by pilot universities which participated in the Tempus pilot project.

Tempus has also contributed to the establishment of the legal basis for a national quality assessment system that resulted in the adoption of the Law on education in 2003. Six Tempus projects developed higher education quality assurance systems in Kyrgyz universities. The most remarkable projects in this respect were Reforming higher economic education in Kyrgyzstan (1995), Recognition of qualifications through the introduction of the European Credit Transfer System (2005) and Training of national teams of Bologna promoters in Central Asia (2004). These projects contributed to developing and introducing an internal quality assurance system, including an anonymous written assessment system as well as a new student knowledge assessment system aimed at ensuring a proper level of quality, both at programme and institutional levels. In 2011, a first Independent quality assurance agency has been established as a result of the Tempus project Central Asian Network for Quality Assurance, which undertook first programme accreditation at two universities (curricula on Economics).

The 13 universities participating in the project studied different approaches to quality assurance in the framework of Tempus Centres on the promotion of the Bologna Process and support to Tuning Teams. Tuning Educational Structures in Europe is a university initiative which defines learning outcomes and competences at different levels for a series of disciplines and cross-disciplinary fields, such as history, mathematics or European studies. One of the main purposes of Tuning is to develop a new methodology for re-designing high quality degree programmes and to enhance the educational offer on a regular basis.

Based on the experience gained, in 2007 the Kyrgyz universities involved in the Tuning project carried out self-attestation procedures on the basis of the Tuning methodology. The academic community of the Kyrgyz Republic continues to work on establishing quality assurance systems (both at programmes and institutional levels). A Quality Assurance manual, based on the guidelines produced by the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) was developed by experts trained in the framework of Tempus projects and is now widely used.

Tempus has also been active in supporting the transition to the three-cycle degree system, in particular through ten projects focusing on the development of Bachelor and Master curricula. However, the higher education system continues to consist of two parallel subsystems: the preparation of specialists in five years and the two-cycle system leading to Bachelor (4-year) and Master (2-year) degrees. In 2008, the Ministry of Education and Science appointed by its decree Higher Education Reform Experts (HEREs; five experts) who are responsible for promotion of higher education reforms in Kyrgyzstan and promotion of Bologna principles. Supported by the Tempus Programme, in 2011/2012, the HEREs team conducted a number of training events for HEIs in Kyrgyzstan on developing new standards, quality assurance materials, the Guidelines on the introduction of the Diploma Supplement and ECTS and legal regulations provided for the introduction of these innovations into the HE sector in the country. Round tables on the national qualifications framework for higher education have been conducted in November 2012. As a result of contribution provided by the National team of higher education reform experts (HEREs), in 2011 the Government adopted the ‘Decree on transferring to a two-cycle system of higher education’ (Bachelor and Master programmes), according to which all universities in Kyrgyzstan will transfer to the new system by 1 September 2012. In order to facilitate the transfer process, the HERE team is providing ad hoc advice and training on curriculum modernisation in line with the Bologna principles.
2. Erasmus Mundus

The objective of the Erasmus Mundus programme is to promote European higher education, to help improve and enhance the career prospects of students and to promote intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries, in accordance with EU external policy objectives in order to contribute to the sustainable development of third countries in the field of higher education. It does this through three Actions:

**Action 1 – Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes (Master Courses and Joint Doctorates) - with scholarships**

Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes are operated by consortia of higher education institutions (HEIs) from the EU and (since 2009) elsewhere in the world. They provide an integrated course and joint or multiple diplomas following study or research at two or more HEIs. Master Courses and Joint Doctorates are selected each year following a Call for Proposals. There are currently 131 Masters and 34 Doctorates offering EU-funded scholarships or fellowships to students and scholars.

**Action 2 – Erasmus Mundus Partnerships (former External Cooperation Window) – with scholarships**

Under Action 2, Erasmus Mundus Partnerships bring together HEIs from Europe on the one hand and those from a particular region, or geographical ‘lot’ on the other. Together the partnerships manage mobility flows between the two regions for a range of academic levels – Bachelor, Master, doctorate, post-doctorate and for academic staff.

**Action 3 – Erasmus Mundus Attractiveness projects**

This Action of the Programme funds projects to enhance the attractiveness, profile, image and visibility of European higher education worldwide. Action 3 provides support to activities related to the international dimension of all aspects of higher education, such as promotion, accessibility, quality assurance, credit recognition, mutual recognition of qualifications, curriculum development and mobility.

More information:


### Number of students/staff participating in the programme

**Erasmus Mundus – Joint degrees (Action 1)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholars</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellows</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kyrgyz nationals participated in the programme for the first time in 2005-2006 (students) and in 2007-2008 (scholars).

**Erasmus Mundus– Partnerships (External Cooperation Window, Action 2)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010*</th>
<th>2011*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-doctorate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Institutions participating in the programme up to and including 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Action 1 Joint Programmes</th>
<th>Action 2 Partnerships</th>
<th>Action 3 Attractiveness projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BISHKEK ACADEMY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMICS</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BISHKEK STATE UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSYKKUL STATE UNIVERSITY NAMED AFTER K.TYNYSTANOV</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KYRGYZ ECONOMICAL UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KYRGYZ NATIONAL AGRARIAN UNIVERSITY AFTER K.I. SKRYABIN</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KYRGYZ NATIONAL UNIVERSITY NAMED AFTER JUSUP BALASAGYN</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KYRGYZ STATE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY NAMED AFTER I RAZZAKOV</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KYRGYZ STATE UNIVERSITY OF CONSTRUCTION, TRANSPORT AND ARCHITECTURE KYRGYZSTAN</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KYRGYZ-RUSSIAN SLAVONIC UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KYRGYZSKYI GOSUDARSTVENNYI UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NARYN STATE UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSH TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY NAMED AFTER ACADEMICIAN KADYSHEV??</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TALAS STATE UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV. Bibliographical references and websites

- Country Education Strategy 2009-2011, Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic
- Review of Tempus projects’ impact on higher education reformation in Kyrgyzstan 2009 – produced by Higher education reform experts
- Law on Education of the Kyrgyz Republic adopted in 2003 (definition of HEIs)
- Government Decree No 495 on transferring to a two-cycle system of higher education in Kyrgyzstan dated 27 August 2012
  - www.tempus.kg
  - www.ednet.kg
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European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained
therein.

For further information:

- Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)
  Unit P10 - Tempus and Bilateral Cooperation with Industrialised Countries
  Postal address: Tempus Programme
  Avenue du Bourget 1 (BOUR 02/017) B-1140 Brussels, Belgium
  Contact: EACEA-Tempus-Info@ec.europa.eu
  Website: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus/

- National Tempus Office Kyrgyzstan
  Postal address: Business Centre ‘Russia’, 4th floor Office N 402, 19 Razzakova Street,
  720040 Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
  Contact: nto@tempus.kg, nto@elcat.kg
  Website: www.tempus.kg/

Last update: July 2012

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16 Gulnara Chokusheva (NTO Kyrgyzstan)
HIGHER EDUCATION IN
TAJIKISTAN

I. Overall description
II. Current challenges and needs
   – Trends and challenges
   – The Bologna Process
III. Participation in EU programmes
   – Tempus
   – Erasmus Mundus
IV. Bibliographical references and websites
The higher education system in Tajikistan

Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries: Central Asia
I. Overall description

1. Major characteristics of tertiary education in the country

Since gaining independence in 1991, Tajikistan has been implementing a policy aimed at ensuring the country’s macroeconomic stability. Since the year 2000, relatively high rates of economic growth have been observed: between 2000 and 2008 the annual growth in the GDP amounted to nearly 8%; inflation dropped to 11%; external debt, which was 108% of the GDP in 2000 had been reduced to 31% of the GDP by 2008 and the poverty rate went down from 80% to 57%. The economic crisis affected dramatically the country’s development causing serious challenges. Nevertheless, year by year the prestige of higher education is growing and so is the number of applicants. These phenomena dictate the reforms in education policy development and the improvement of higher education management which will be the key to the effectiveness and sustainability of higher education.

Legislation covering the field of tertiary education

Educational reform started in 1994 with the aim of determining the strategic directions in which the country’s higher education should develop. The last draft of the Law on Higher Education and Professional Postgraduate Education was revised in 2009. The key legislative documents are the Law on Education, the Law on Higher Education and Professional Postgraduate Education and the National Concept of Education.

Types of tertiary education institutions

Under the Law on Higher Education and Professional Postgraduate Education and in accordance with the National Standards for Higher Professional Education in the Republic of Tajikistan, there are three types of higher education institutions (HEIs): universities (donishgoh), academies (akademiya) and institutes (donishkada). Currently, the universities and academies offer Bachelor, Master and specialist degrees whereas institutes offer only Bachelor and specialist degrees.

Universities provide higher education in a wide range of specialisations and carry out fundamental and applied research. Academies concentrate on a limited number of fields in which they provide education and carry out research. Institutes provide education in one or several fields.

The situation of higher education in Tajikistan has changed radically since independence. The total number of institutions of higher education throughout the country has grown from 13 in 1991 to 30 in 2012. New institutions of higher education and branches of the central ones were opened in the north of the country (Sughd oblast) and in the Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast. A number of institutions have been established under the auspices of various authorities (various ministries including military ones).

Student numbers are increasing every year and the gender balance is improving. The percentage of growth in the number of higher education students was 5.45% (for the period 2004 – 2008). The index of the number of higher education students per 10 000 inhabitants shows the following figures: in the academic year 2000-2001, it was 127 and in 2007-2008 it had nearly doubled to 214. In spite of the 2.99% decrease in the number of upper secondary school graduates in 2010-2011, admissions to HEIs increased by 2.39%.

Types of tertiary education programmes and qualifications

According to the National Standards for Higher Professional Education, the higher education in Tajikistan consists of three levels, each of which can be attended either free of charge (on a budget-funded basis) or on a contractual basis (fee-based).

In accordance with the Law on Higher Education and Professional Postgraduate Education the country provides for the following levels of higher education:

- the Bachelor degree (darajai bakalavr), with studies lasting not less than four years except for medicine (no less than five years);
- the Master degree (darajai magistr), with studies lasting not less than two years.
- the specialist degree (darajai mutakhassis), with studies lasting not less than five years.
On receiving a Bachelor degree a student may continue studies at Master level for a minimum of two years and after the final attestation receive a Master degree.

Some higher education institutions still apply an old system by training specialists without Bachelor degrees where upon graduation a specialist diploma is awarded. On the other hand, some HEIs award Bachelor degrees after four or five years of studying. Thus those who do not have a Bachelor degree in a speciality cannot start a Master degree.

The basic professional education programme consists of a Bachelor study programme in a particular field of not less than four years’ specialised preparation, including practice, research and scientific pedagogical work (traineeship) of the student.

In general, the study period is a minimum of six years for specialisations leading to the qualification of a ‘Master’, and five years for specialisations leading to the qualification of ‘engineer’, ‘teacher’, ‘agriculturist’ or ‘economist’; medicine takes six years.

Students with ‘specialist’ or ‘Master’ degrees may be accepted on a competitive basis to postgraduate courses leading to a Candidate of Science diploma (aspirantura), which takes three years. Candidates of Science may be admitted to Doctor of Science (doctorantura) courses which also take a maximum of three years. Recently, the country started the introduction of alternative doctoral programmes, leading to the academic degree of Ph.D.

Foreign students may be admitted to aspirantura and doctorantura studies in accordance with international and intergovernmental agreements.

### 2. Distribution of responsibilities

The competences of the Government, which is an executive office of the President, include the following:

- definition and implementation of a state policy in the field of higher education;
- implementation of budgetary financing of higher education;
- development of legislation and approval of the normative legal acts defining the HEIs functions;
- drafting of regulations on licensing, attestation and accreditation of HEIs;
- establishment, reorganisation and closure of state HEIs.

The competences of the Ministry of Education (MoE) include the following:

- development and introduction of state educational standards for higher education;
- development and approval of curricula and educational programmes with compulsory subjects together with the organisation and publication of course books;
- organisation of the licensing, attestation and accreditation process;
- establishment of models for state higher education documents, drawing up regulations on recognition and equivalence regarding foreign states’ documents on higher education and academic status, issuing recognition documents;
- coordination of the HEIs activities and of sectorial and regional systems of higher education;
- establishment of HEI admission regulations for students, postgraduate students and doctoral students;
- development and implementation of measures on the social security of students, postgraduate students and HEIs employees in partnership with public organisations;
- signature of international agreements in accordance with the legislation of the Republic Tajikistan etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of students at HEI (academic year 2010/2011)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>about 155 000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of HEI (academic year 2011/2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Governing bodies of the higher education institutions

The governance of HEI falls under the Civil Code, legislation on education, normative legal acts and the Charters of HEIs which set out the rights and responsibilities of HEIs.

According to the legislation, rectors of higher education institutions are appointed or dismissed from their services by the founder. The new regulations on higher education institutions define the system for the appointment and dismissal of rectors from services. Rectors of state HEIs are nominated jointly by the state department for HEI and the relevant ministries and authorities that are responsible for higher education institutions. Rectors of private institutions of higher education are appointed and dismissed from service by their founders (board meeting of founders).

The general management of a HEI is carried out by the representative body – the Scientific Council headed by the rector. The responsibilities of the Scientific Council and the rector are defined by the Charter of the HEI.

Vice-rectors of state higher education institutions are appointed and dismissed from service by the rector in consultation with the founding body, while in private higher education institutions happens the other way around: vice-rectors are assigned and dismissed by the founding body based on the rector's decision. Heads of faculties and other structural units are appointed and dismissed from office by the rector.

Higher education institutions have autonomy in selecting and appointing academic staff, including deans of faculties, heads of departments, professors, associate professors, senior instructors, instructors and assistants. The legislation envisages the following procedure for employing academic staff: all academic staff with the exception of vice-rectors, deans of faculties and heads of departments is employed on a contractual basis for up to five years. All academic staff is employed on the basis of a competition advertised in local newspapers.

According to the legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan and the HEI Charter, HEI are independent in the selection and placement of personnel and also in carrying out educational, research, financial, economic and other activities. State bodies can intervene in educational, research, economic and other activities of a HEI only in the cases provided for by the legislation. Teaching and research staff of the HEI have academic freedom in the teaching process in the framework of educational programmes. Since there is still a teacher-centred approach applied instead of student-centred, students do not play an important role in HEI governance as they should.

4. Financing

According to the Law, the development of higher and postgraduate education is ensured by financing from the state budget and grants as well as by creating favourable conditions for self-financing the process of training specialists and academic staff (in accordance with the norms to promote the establishment and functioning of private higher education institutions). The financing of state education is carried out in accordance with the state standards for funding by a special body of the educational administration and by the executive bodies responsible for the HEI. Private institutions are financed by their founding bodies in accordance with their agreements. State higher education institutions are free to use their state funds and funds from other sources.

Additional incomes received from extra-budgetary sources, including the organisation of commercial training, are to be used for maintenance and the development of the authorised activities of HEIs. The State budget is assigned and monitored by the Ministry of Education. The additional income is received from fee-basis students or other fund-raising activities.

Higher education is funded by three sources: the national budget, private funds (student fees) and other sources (such as HEI income received from research and manufacturing contracts, a wide range of educational services and international funds (as grants)).

In accordance with their Charters, HEIs may carry out paid activities in the field of education and in other areas, as long as it is not detrimental to its basic activities.

Foreign currency received by a HEI as a result of its international activities is regarded as its property and the institution may use it according to its needs.

From 2000 to 2008, the national funds allocated to support the overall education sector have increased by more than 16-fold. The share of the GDP going to education also increased, and in 2008 stood at 4.7 %. The share of national funding for higher education in terms of the GDP is thus increasing and in 2008 was 0.2 %, in comparison with 0.13 % in 2001.
5. Student contributions and financial support

There is no difference between the fees of ‘traditional’ students (students usually aged 18-25) and those payable by ‘mature’ students. There is a slight difference between the fees for full-time students and distance learning students.

Course fees are fixed by the HEI in coordination with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Economy and Trade. The fees depend on the speciality, the HEI type, its location and the form of study. Per year, it ranges from TJS 880 Tajikistan somoni (EUR 150) for teacher-training courses up to TJS 5 280 (EUR 935) for law.

As a rule, only full-time successful students have the right to receive a grant. There are a number of grants:

- Presidential grants which are awarded to socially active students with excellent marks;
- Advanced grants for students with excellent study results;
- General grants for students with good study results;
- Special grants for orphans and those studying by Presidential quota.

In addition, some HEIs have their own grant system.

There is no financial assistance to parents of students in tertiary education.

6. Licensing, quality assurance and accreditation of institutions and/or programmes

The external quality control of HEIs is carried out by the Office for the Attestation of Educational Institutions. The Attestation Commission consists of professors, researchers, representatives of the Ministry of Education and other education bodies. The procedure for the external evaluation of HEIs comprises three stages and is at present conducted every five years.

The first stage is licensing; which gives the HEI the right to carry out educational activities. According to the Licensing Rules, the HEI should meet certain requirements in terms of material and technical conditions, research fields and capacity, student quotas per teacher, number of academic staff, etc. Once it receives the licence from the MoE the HEI has the right to start educational activities. A licence may be issued for one to five years.

The second stage, which is considered the main one, is national attestation. A HEI may apply for its first national attestation no less than three years after receiving its licence and not later than the first graduation of specialists. Attestation is required once every five years and depends on a number of criteria and indicators.

The third stage, the state accreditation, takes place five years after attestation. State accreditation defines the status of the HEI by type and form, i.e. a university, institute or academy, on the basis of which the content and quality of the educational process conform to state educational standards and allow the HEI to award diplomas to graduates. A higher education institution which successfully passes state accreditation receives a certificate of state accreditation.

The existing mechanism for higher education quality assurance (QA) does not fully reflect the requirements of international standards of quality assurance, as all three stages are conducted by the same body, without the involvement of any independent institutions or external experts. Ideally, the office responsible for quality assurance should report openly on the recommendations made and their implementation, involve students and teachers in the quality assurance process and be a member of a quality assurance network. For the moment, this is not the case.

7. Admission

Admission examinations are organised and conducted annually on the basis of general test rules and regulations approved by the Ministry of Education. The number of ‘budget-funded students’ (state financed) is defined annually by the Ministry of Education in accordance with the norms established by the law. HEIs have some autonomy in defining the approach, the programme and contents of entrance examinations. This means that currently there is no uniform national testing system.

Students who have completed general or vocational/professional secondary education can apply to HEIs, on a competitive basis, depending on the results of the entrance examinations. The form and time of admission is defined annually by special regulation of the Ministry of Education.

The HEI admission procedure includes a general or written test. The admission tests
of each HEI are developed by specialists from the institution and vary from one institution to the other. Depending on the specialisation, the HEI or its faculties can conduct additional matriculation tests (written work, creative work, etc.).

It should be mentioned that a National Testing System (NTS) for university admission was about to be introduced in 2010 (pilot phase) but due to insufficiency of funds it is now planned for 2014. The draft NTS has been approved by the President and the National Testing Centre and will operate under the Ministry of Education. The preparation and implementation processes are supported by the Ministry of Education, the World Bank, the UNDP and the Open Society Institute (OSI)-Tajikistan. The project objectives are the: promotion of equal access to higher education; improvement of the quality of education; transparency and reduction of corruption.

The following categories of individuals have the privilege of being admitted to HEIs without having to pass an entrance examination:

- students awarded a medal upon upper secondary school graduation. They are accepted to HEIs on the basis of an interview. Students who fail the interview have the right to take the general examinations;
- winners of national Olympiads in particular school disciplines who are applying for studies of the same discipline;
- students admitted under the President’s quota, according to Government decree (2006-2010) on the admission of students to HEI from the remote rural areas. The aim of the decree is to provide young people from remote rural areas with the opportunity to study at HEIs.

The following students are also entitled to enter HEIs without passing entrance examinations (interview based):
- people with work experience;
- former members of the armed forces;
- orphans;
- disabled people who have a certificate from a medical expert authorising them to study at a HEI.

8. Organisation of the academic year

The national standard for the structure of the academic year is defined in the national documents as follows:

First semester: 1 September - 1 January; winter examination period: as appropriate, 1 January - end of January or early February; academic break till the mid-February; second semester: mid-February - early June; summer examination period: mid-June - end of June or early July; summer vacation until 1 September, or one month practice plus one month vacation.

9. Curriculum content

The higher education curriculum provides for the following compulsory disciplines:

- general humanities and socio-economic subjects;
- mathematics and general natural science disciplines;
- general professional disciplines (for particular fields or specialties);
- special disciplines.

Students may choose to take optional disciplines. The compulsory minimum content of each basic higher education curriculum and the level to be achieved in different specialities are laid down in the National Standards for Higher Education. According to these standards, the maximum work load for students should not exceed 54 hours per week, including contact hours and self-study.

10. Assessment, progress, certification and degree

The ordinary forms of student assessment are tests, examinations, course papers, essays, diploma papers, and state examinations.

The following types of diplomas and certificates are awarded:

- Bachelor degrees;
- specialist diplomas;
- Master degrees;
- certificate of incomplete higher professional education (an intermediate certificate for students who decide not to continue their education to degree level).
HEI students who pass the necessary attestation and accreditation have the right to issue state diplomas of higher and postgraduate education.

Students who successfully defend their dissertation/thesis are awarded with the diploma of candidate of sciences or doctor of sciences. All defended dissertations (candidate and doctoral) have to be approved by the Visshaya Attestacionnaya certification commission of the Russian Federation. All dissertations, even if they are defended in the native language, have to be translated into Russian before they are sent for approval to Russia.

11. Academic staff

The main categories of academic staff are as follows: deans of faculties, heads/chairs of faculties, heads of laboratories, associate professors (docents), senior lecturers, lecturers and assistants.

The academic staff of HEIs are employed under contracts, usually for five years, following competitive selection procedures.

Today, a major problem for national HEIs is the lack of highly qualified academic staff.

The statistics demonstrate that the yearly indicators on the defence of candidate and doctoral dissertations are rather positive but the problem is that academic staff tend to leave for more attractive salaries to other institutions. This is the first and main reason for the lack of academic staff with higher academic degrees. The second factor is that most of the academic staff with higher academic degrees are over 55 and young lecturers are employed as academic staff without professional experience. Therefore, quality assurance of higher education depends mostly on the improvement of the quality of the academic staff, partially accomplished by raising salaries.

From the gender point of view, the proportion of women among the academic staff is changing: the number of women with a doctorate is decreasing, while the number of those with a candidate degree is increasing.

12. Research activities

The evaluation of scientific research in HEIs and its interrelation with the educational process is carried out by the Ministry of Education and the other sectorial ministries which are responsible for the various HEIs. The requirements for scientific research at HEIs and the evaluation procedures are established by the Ministry of Education together with the Academy of Sciences which defines and implements national policies in the field of scientific research. The results of the research evaluation and technical activities of a HEI become a part of the general evaluation of the institution’s activities for further state accreditation procedures. It is also one of the bases for defining the type of the HEI. Various requirements related to the organisation, implementation and research evaluation have been established for the three types of HEIs: institutes, academies and universities.

Research is compulsory for the academic staff of HEIs, and as a rule, it represents 20-25% of their workload, as stipulated in the ‘individual plan’ of staff members. It means that research is a part of the general work of academic staff.

Research carried out within the framework of a HEI is financed by the national budget together with cost-effective contracts, bank credits, own resources, donations and other sources.

In order to receive state funding for research activities, HEIs have to present to the Ministry of Education and other sectorial ministries a description of each subject and a research plan. The Ministry of Education then reviews the HEI proposal and if the proposal is accepted then it is presented to the Scientific Technical Council of the Academy of Sciences. If the Council takes a positive decision, the Ministry issues the order, determines the funding and terms of work. Priority is given to research in line with national and regional priorities and country needs.

Currently, the country’s economy is still in a recession and industry is mostly going through a slump which means that there is no opportunity for constructive and effective relations and cooperation between HEIs and enterprises, except in the aluminium sector.

13. University-enterprise cooperation

The country is implementing significant changes to its education system which are all derived from Tajikistan’s independence as a result of the break-up of the former Soviet Union and the subsequent civil war (1992-1997).

At present, universities and enterprises do not recognise the potential for cooperation through innovation and research. Moreover, they still have to be persuaded of the advantages of an entrepreneurially-oriented approach.
14. International cooperation

The development of international cooperation in the educational sector based on treaties and agreements signed by Tajikistan with other countries on a bilateral and multilateral basis has undoubtedly a positive impact on the implementation of the national sustainable development strategy in the HE field.

The Ministry of Education has signed numerous agreements in the field of HE with relevant educational organisations in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS countries; former Soviet republics), Asian and European countries and the USA. A treaty on the attestation of scientific-pedagogical staff of Tajikistan in the Russian Federation was signed between the Governments of Russia and Tajikistan in 1997. Agreements on the mutual recognition and equivalence of documents on education, scientific degrees and titles were signed between the Governments of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan in 2001.

In recent years, the Ministry of Education has negotiated with a number of CIS countries on the allocation of quotas for Tajik students to allow them to study certain specialities abroad that are not offered by the Tajik HEIs. HEIs have the right to establish cooperation and apply to international organisations for grant support. Each HEI has within its organisation the position of vice-rector for international relations and a department of international relations. Most Tajik HEIs are making use of the opportunities offered by international organisations working in the field of education: Tempus, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Open Society Institute, USAID, Agha Khan Foundation, German Technical Assistance, and the World Bank, etc.

By establishing international cooperation the Tajik HEIs are aiming to:

- develop a long-term mobility plan for teaching and academic staff, students, postgraduates and young researchers;
- increase the opportunities for the improvement of teacher qualifications in leading universities throughout the world;
- develop research and intercultural cooperation relations on an agreement and project-partnership basis;
- establish and strengthen business relations with foreign international organisations and companies.

II. Current challenges and needs

1. Trends and challenges

After independence, the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan took concrete steps to further develop HEIs. The new laws, decrees and national programmes defined the strategic directions of the development of higher education.

Current national policy in the field of higher education is based on the following principles:

- equal access to higher education;
- special conditions for women’s access to higher education (the access of women to higher education is a sensitive point - the current percentage of female students is only around 40% - and this has led to a special decree on the introduction of quotas for girls from remote rural areas);
- improvement of professional skills of academic staff;
- civic education;
- maintenance and development of the achievements and traditions of professional HEIs;
- integration of higher education and post higher education of the Republic of Tajikistan into the worldwide educational process;
- public support for training specialists, development of the priority directions of pure and applied scientific research within the framework of higher and post higher education.

Higher education in Tajikistan faces numerous problems. One of the main problems is related to the training of teaching/academic staff. Currently, there is a lack of qualified
professionals and a very low turnover of staff. This could be explained first of all by the poor social conditions offered in general by higher education employers. Graduates/alumni of the international scholarships programmes or universities and the most talented students, prefer to work for international organisations or in the private sector; therefore academic work is neither attractive nor prestigious.

The aging generation of teaching staff is not availing of opportunities to improve their competences, etc. In order to train a new generation of academic staff, special dissertation councils need to be established to approve theses and international relations need to be developed further. Currently, to obtain a scientific degree one needs to go through the certification commission (Visshaya Attestacionnaya Commissia - VAC) in Russia. Since Russian is gradually becoming a foreign language for the population of Tajikistan, it is becoming difficult to obtain certification in the Russian Federation. Besides, it requires considerable financial resources. Other issues that need to be tackled are as follows:

- maintaining the standard functions of the existing HEIs in the context of the sharp reduction in state funding;
- developing legislation in response to the new economic context;
- raising and improving the quality of higher education; coordination and systematisation of the curriculum, and study material development, etc.;
- developing skills;
- improving fund-raising;
- improving the university governance;
- fighting corruption in higher education;
- developing relations worldwide by signing international and bilateral agreements, exchanges of teaching staff, students and researchers, recognition of diplomas, etc.

There is a political will to respond to the country’s needs as regards higher education reform and the Government is seeking the most effective ways of overcoming the problems that the country faces.

In June 2011, the Lisbon Convention was signed by the President of Tajikistan during his visit to the European Parliament and on 19 January 2012 it was ratified by the Parliament of Tajikistan. Currently, one of the main activities in the country’s higher education reform is to implement the Convention by following the special procedure which is set out in the text of the Convention.

One of the challenges is the introduction of the ECTS at national level by 2020. In accordance with an order of the Ministry of Education (2007) this had previously been tested in two universities – the Technological University of Tajikistan and its branch in Khujand and the Tajik University of Commerce. The introduction of ECTS in higher education is seen as one way of becoming part of the international higher education process. In particular, a number of new policy documents stress the importance of becoming a part of the Bologna process. Another example of the ongoing reform, in accordance with the norms of the Bologna process, is the plan to transfer to a 12 grade system or general education from 2012.

Another challenge is the introduction of the National Testing System for entrance to HEIs. The decision to start the process has been signed by the President on the basis of the draft developed with the support of UNDP and OSI-Tajikistan. The system of admission examinations to HEIs in the Republic of Tajikistan has not changed since Soviet times. Therefore, it is out of date and does not meet the new requirements of higher education. The introduction of a unified testing system for entrance examinations is one of the latest innovations in most HEIs in the country.

To change this situation the Government decided to develop a new national testing system that will help to evaluate impartially the standard of knowledge of comprehensive school graduates at the stage of university enrolment. The main aims of this are:

- to promote equal access to higher education for all citizens;
- to ensure transparency and to reduce corruption in education;
- to improve the quality of education in general.

The preparation phase for establishing the National Testing Centre under the Ministry of Education is supported by the Government, the World Bank and OSI-Tajikistan. The pilot phase should take place in 2014.
2. The Bologna Process\textsuperscript{17}

**General Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bologna Process officially embedded in the education system</td>
<td>No particular mechanism supporting the implementation of the Bologna Process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bologna Process being implemented by ad hoc groups under the supervision of the Ministry of Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bologna cycle structure**

| Level of implementation of a three-cycle structure compliant with the Bologna Process | Extensive but gradual introduction of the Bologna structure/ongoing adaptations or enlargement |

**Student workload/duration for the most common Bologna programmes**

| Bachelor programmes | 240 ECTS (4 academic years) | Master programmes | 120 ECTS (2 academic years) |

| Bachelor/Master cycle structure models most commonly implemented | 240+120 ECTS (4+2 academic years) |

**European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)**

| Definition of the Learning Outcomes Concept | Learning outcomes are defined in national steering documents and implemented through guidelines and recommendations |

| Level of implementation of ECTS | 75\%, or less, of institutions and/or 75\%, or less, of programmes are using ECTS for both transfer and accumulation purposes. Various references are used to define the credits. |

| Indicative number of hours of student workload corresponding to one ECTS | Another credit system or student workload not in use to define ECTS |

**Bologna Diploma Supplement (DS)**

| Level of implementation of the Bologna Diploma Supplement | Another type of Diploma Supplement |

| Diploma Supplement issued | Another type of Diploma Supplement |

**National Qualifications Framework (NQF)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage towards establishing a National Qualification Framework</th>
<th>Not yet started formally/not foreseen.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X Step 1: Decision taken. Process just started.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 2: The purpose of the NQF has been agreed and the process is under way including discussions and consultations. Various committees have been established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 3: The NQF has been adopted formally and the implementation has started.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 4: Redesigning the study programmes is ongoing and the process is close to completion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 5: Overall process fully completed including self-certified compatibility with the Framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Quality Assurance Practices**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Quality Assurance body</th>
<th>Office of Attestation under the Ministry of Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>A Government-dependent body or Ministry has responsibility for quality assurance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year of establishment</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Involvement in external quality assurance process</th>
<th>Decision-making role</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>No participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic staff</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Experts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recognition of foreign qualifications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>2011 (signature), 2012 (ratification)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of Foreign Qualifications for academic study</td>
<td>Recognition for academic study by central or regional governmental authorities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of Foreign Qualifications for professional employment</td>
<td>Recognition for professional employment by central or regional governmental authorities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Joint Degrees**

| Establishment of joint degrees and programmes in higher education legislation | Joint programmes and joint degrees are not mentioned in the higher education legislation whatsoever. |
III. Participation in EU programmes

1. Tempus

Tajikistan has participated in the Tempus Programme since 2004.

1.1 Statistics

Number of projects in which one or several institutions in the country have been involved (as coordinator, contractor or partner)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TEMPUS I and II</th>
<th>TEMPUS III</th>
<th>TEMPUS IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joint Projects</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural &amp; Complementary Measures (Tempus III)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Measures (Tempus IV)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Higher education institutions with the highest TEMPUS participation in TEMPUS IV (2008-2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Number of projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TAJIK STATE TECHNICAL (DUSHANBE)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>JP: 4, SM: 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KHUJAND STATE UNIVERSITY (REGIONAL)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>JP: 5, SM: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KULOB STATE UNIVERSITY (REGIONAL)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>JP: 2, SM: 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khorog State University (Regional)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>JP: 3, SM: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAJIK TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY (DUSHANBE)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>JP: 4, SM: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAJIK STATE PEDAGOGICAL UNIVERSITY (DUSHANBE)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>JP: 4, SM: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAJIK UNIVERSITY OF COMMERCE (DUSHANBE)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>JP: 1, SM: 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2 Impact of the Tempus Programme

A number of changes in the Tajik higher education sector, from top management to grassroots' level, have been supported by Tempus projects. Currently, all major stakeholders in higher education are involved in Tempus: university staff and management, scholars, students as well as the Ministry of Education. Participation in the programme has helped to improve the university governance by involving and encouraging the university management in the projects implementation; to improve and strengthen the relationship between the universities and the Ministry of Education; to increase the knowledge and information base of stakeholders regarding the EU education process, including the Bologna process; to encourage the professional development of academic staff; to motivate a younger generation of teachers and to increase motivation in general and promote career opportunities, etc.

The Tempus programme started in Tajikistan in 2004 but by June 2006 only four Tempus projects (Structural Complementary Measures; SCMs) had been fully implemented. Unfortunately, at that time only a very limited number of Tajik teachers had been able to avail themselves of the Individual Mobility Grants (IMGs). According to the beneficiaries, this was mainly due to difficulties in finding partner EU institutions ready to host Tajik visitors. Another obstacle was a lack of English language skills. The main actors in Tempus projects have been academic and administrative staff, heads of departments, university management and representatives of the Ministry of Education.

IMGs have been used to prepare Joint European Projects (JEPs) and for staff re-training. Further JEP projects mainly covered the quality assurance system, setting up international services, the introduction of ECTS and teacher training.

The Tajik universities participating in Tempus projects are interested in the introduction of modernised teaching methods in order to enhance student learning capacities and qualifications. Through Tempus, university staff have acquired a thorough knowledge of
international educational standards and relevant strategies for enhancing teaching approaches.

Several Tempus projects have been used as pilot cases by the Ministry of Education to introduce some elements of the Bologna process, in particular the credit transfer system. Activities in the field of quality enhancement are also closely followed by the national authorities. Tempus has helped some universities to expand the network and re-establish links with the international and regional academic community, including the Central Asian neighbouring countries.

Tempus projects have been the main instruments through which the implementation of the ECTS system in the national higher education system was introduced. The Technological University of Tajikistan, the Khujand Branch of the Technological University of Tajikistan and Tajik State University of Commerce were selected by Decree of the President as the pilot universities for the introduction of ECTS.

Between 2005-2007, Tajik State University of Commerce (TSUC) implemented the project ‘Recognition of Qualifications through the Introduction of the European Credit Transfer System’, with the aim of developing a framework for the introduction of a credit-hours system, to be used for two pilot academic programmes and as a basis for the recognition of qualifications from HEIs. The positive outcome of the project was a step towards introducing the credit system throughout the country and the staff trained through the project can now pass on the experience gained to others.

The project involved the non-governmental organisation ‘Innovative Educational Technology Centre’ which was set up by the Tempus project implementer. Its other activities include training lecturers and university staff responsible for organising educational processes on the basis of the ECTS, the development of coherent curricula and programmes based on the ECTS, ensuring student mobility and further introduction to the educational processes of partner universities. The reports and training modules developed as a result of the project became basic documents for disseminating the experience of introducing the credit system in Tajikistan.

A Tempus project involving the Khujand Branch of the Technological University of Tajikistan (KBTUT) called ‘KBTUT on the Way to a Credit System’ was intended to develop a list of subjects in the Computer and Information Sciences sector, in order to implement the credit system in Tajikistan, and to recommend lists of subjects for other sectors.

Another project, ‘Facilitating Recognition in Higher Education by Harmonisation of Qualification Requirements’, was intended to create a framework for the development and introduction of qualification requirements compliant with European requirements for technical specialisations at Tajik HEIs.

One more essential idea of KBTUT supported by Tempus was the project ‘Establishing a Bologna-based Internal QA System & a Web-portal for its support’. It helped to support target universities in Tajikistan, using the credit system, in setting up internal quality assurance systems in line with European standards, in particular with the goals of the Bologna principles.

A new approach to the training of specialists was demonstrated by the Tajik Agrarian University arising from the successful implementation of the project ‘Development of a New University Programme in Geographic Information Technology’. Its main objective was the development of new curricula to train specialists in geodesy and geo-information. The course was introduced in autumn 2009, and is in line with the Bologna process and consists of Bachelor and Master levels. It shows that the Tempus project provides multiple benefits which also affect economic growth and social progress. It should be noted that in the field of land reform, a Tempus project on the ‘Development of a new university programme in geographic information technology’ provides training for specialists of the State Land Management Agency as well as in water management and land assessment, agricultural, construction, GPS and satellite images. The above-mentioned examples give a good picture of the rational use of donor support through cooperation between HEIs, and show their clear impact on the development of higher education.

Tempus is the largest international programme supporting higher education reform processes in Tajikistan and is laying the basis for long-term inter-university cooperation, support for innovation in HE and strengthening of relations between higher education institutions and the labour market.

Currently, the ongoing Tempus projects in Tajikistan with the involvement of Tajik higher education institutions are aimed at the modernisation of curricula through the development of new courses, capacity building of academic staff and students, introduction of modern teaching methods and learning materials, information technologies and introduction of ECTS, among others.
2. Erasmus Mundus

The objective of the Erasmus Mundus programme is to promote European higher education, to help improve and enhance the career prospects of students and to promote intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries, in accordance with EU external policy objectives in order to contribute to the sustainable development of third countries in the field of higher education. It does this through three Actions:

Action 1 – Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes
(Master Courses and Joint Doctorates) - with scholarships
Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes are operated by consortia of higher education institutions (HEIs) from the EU and (since 2009) elsewhere in the world. They provide an integrated course and joint or multiple diplomas following study or research at two or more HEIs. Master Courses and Joint Doctorates are selected each year following a Call for Proposals. There are currently 131 Masters and 34 Doctorates offering EU-funded scholarships or fellowships to students and scholars.

Action 2 – Erasmus Mundus Partnerships
(former External Cooperation Window) – with scholarships
Under Action 2, Erasmus Mundus Partnerships bring together HEIs from Europe on the one hand and those from a particular region, or geographical ‘lot’ on the other. Together the partnerships manage mobility flows between the two regions for a range of academic levels – Bachelor, Master, doctorate, post-doctorate and for academic staff.

Action 3 – Erasmus Mundus Attractiveness projects
This Action of the Programme funds projects to enhance the attractiveness, profile, image and visibility of European higher education worldwide. Action 3 provides support to activities related to the international dimension of all aspects of higher education, such as promotion, accessibility, quality assurance, credit recognition, mutual recognition of qualifications, curriculum development and mobility.

More information:

Number of students/staff participating in the programme

Erasmus Mundus – Joint degrees (Action 1)

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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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National of the country participated in the programme for the first time in 2004-2005 (students only).

Erasmus Mundus – Partnerships (External Cooperation Window, Action 2)

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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010*</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>2011*</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
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</table>
Institutions participating in the programme up to and including 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Action 1 Joint Programmes</th>
<th>Action 2 Partnerships</th>
<th>Action 3 Attractiveness projects</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INSTITUTE OF ECONOMY AND TRADE OF TAJIK STATE UNIVERSITY OF COMMERCE</td>
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<td>UNIVERSITY DAVLATII KHUJAND</td>
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</table>

IV. Bibliographical references and websites


Perspective of the development of HES in the Republic of Tajikistan (Analytical Paper), PULSE Educational Reforms Support Centre, Dushanbe, 2005


Ministry of Education of the Republic of Tajikistan. 2008. Planned and implemented presidential gender quotas for women from rural areas in HEIs in the Republic of Tajikistan. Dushanbe: MOPE.


PULSE Educational Reforms Support Centre: http://www.ersu-pulse.by.ru

Ministry of Education of the Republic of Tajikistan: http://education.tj

Eurasian Universities Association: http://www.eau.msu.ru

Tajik University of Commerce: http://tguktj.narod.ru

Tajik Technological University: http://www.tut.tajnet.com

Open Society Institute: http://www.soros.tj

Khujand Polytechnical Institute: http://www.kbtut.tj

Tajik Medical University: http://tajmedun.tj

Tajik Agrarian University: http://www.tajagroun.tj
Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries: Central Asia

This document has been produced by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) on the basis of contributions from the Tempus Office and the authorities of the country concerned. The approach and data collection have been implemented in close cooperation with Eurydice, the network on education systems and policies in Europe. The executive agency works under the supervision of the Commission Directorates General. Funds of the Tempus Programme are delegated to the agency by the European Commission for Development and Co-operation Directorate-General and the Directorate-General for Enlargement.

This document reflects the views of the Tempus Office and the Authorities of the country concerned. The European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

For further information:

- Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)
  Unit P10 - Tempus and Bilateral Cooperation with Industrialised Countries
  Postal address: Tempus Programme
  Avenue du Bourget 1 (BOUR 02/017) B-1140 Brussels, Belgium
  Contact: EACEA-Tempus-Info@ec.europa.eu
  Website: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus/

- National Tempus Office Tajikistan
  Postal address: 44 Rudaki St., 4th floor, 734025, Dushanbe, Tajikistan
  Contact: tempus@tajnet.tj
  Website: www.tempus.tojikiston.com/ru

Last update: July 2012

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Czarina Nuridinova (NTO Tajikistan)
I. Overall description
II. Current challenges and needs
   – Trends and challenges
   – The Bologna Process
III. Participation in EU programmes
   – Tempus
   – Erasmus Mundus
IV. Bibliographical references and websites
The higher education system in Turkmenistan

- Medical Institute, Art Academy, Conservatoire (Lukmançylık instituty, Çeperçilik akademiýasy, Konserwatoriýasy)
- Internship for medical graduates (Lukmançylık instituty üçin internatura)
- Diploma (Diplom)
- Postgraduate degree (Yokary okul mekdebinden sonki bilim)
- Doctorate (Doktorantura)
- Higher educational institute (Yokary Okul Mektepleri)
- Diploma of higher education
- Field of study
  >>> Medicine and art
  >>> Other fields

Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries: Central Asia
I. Overall description

1. Major characteristics of tertiary education in the country

Legislation covering the field of tertiary education

The Law on Education and Law on the Status of Scientists entered into force in August 2009 and aim to radically reform the national system of education and science in Turkmenistan.

The Law on Education regulates social relations in the sphere of education, defines the basic principles of the state education policy, as well as the objectives, tasks and functions of the education system and its management. It also provides a number of innovations. For example, the law authorises the establishment of private educational institutions and educational institutions in other countries in which the primary language of instruction is not Turkmen.

Educational institutions can be set up by state government bodies, local governments, domestic and foreign organisations of all types of ownership, public associations registered in the territory of Turkmenistan, Turkmen citizens and even foreign nationals. However, education institutions carrying out educational programmes for training the staff of military and law enforcement agencies can only be set up by the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan.

In addition, the law foresees that education can also be provided through self-education, external studies, as well as online learning. Along with full-time study, distance education will be introduced.

The Law on the Status of Scientists defines the rights, duties and responsibilities of researchers, the criteria for evaluation of their qualifications as well as the responsibility of state government bodies to ensure the freedom of academic work, provide social protection for researchers and raise the prestige of scientific activities.

Types of tertiary education programmes and qualifications

University studies consist of five-year programmes except for medicine and some programmes in arts which last for six years. After three years of additional studies, graduates can obtain the degree of ‘Candidate of Science’, followed by a ‘Doctor of Sciences’ through supervised research.

Higher education institutions (HEIs) provide higher education in various fields. Higher education is mainly provided by universities, academies, conservatoires and institutes.

Higher education is carried out on the basis of full-time, part-time (evening) and correspondence courses. The fields of study offered are in line with the classification of specialities of higher education of Turkmenistan or are determined by the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan.

Students are admitted to higher education institutions, followed by two years working experience in the chosen profession. Upon finishing, they receive a recommendation by the employer. After these two years of work experience, the graduates receive a diploma of higher education (specialist degree).

The laws are aimed at improving HE while extending the period of study to five (six) years, decreasing the teaching load from 1,250 to 850 hours, providing a review of curricula and study plans, introducing 33 new disciplines, increasing the annual number of student places and developing postgraduate and study programmes in relevant branches of science.

Types of tertiary education institutions

There are 24 higher education institutions in Turkmenistan: 19 civil and five military HEIs. All HEIs are state-owned: 17 institutes, five universities, an Academy and a Conservatoire.

The Branch of Gubkin Russian State University of Oil and Gas was opened in Ashgabat on 1 September 2008. In September 2011, a new institute – the Turkmen State Institute of Finance – was opened in Ashgabat. In July 2012, the Turkmen Polytechnic Institute was closed and in its place two new institutions were opened – The Turkmen State Institute of Oil and Gas and the Turkmen State Institute of Construction and Architecture.

There is also an Academy of the Civil Service which was established in 2009. This Academy is designed to produce highly-skilled managerial staff and civil servants with the competence and lateral thinking to successfully implement the reforms underway in Turkmenistan.

| Number of HEI |  
|---------------|---
| Civil         | 19 |
| Military      | 5  |
2. Distribution of responsibilities

The higher education institutions are governed by the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan.

The Cabinet is responsible for developing and implementing state policy in the field of education. It ensures compliance with the constitution of Turkmenistan, the legal provisions governing education and international treaties.

It is in charge of the management of the education system and the state budget in the field of education.

In addition, the state body for management of education is responsible for:

- development of a strategy for education and state educational standards;
- coordination of the activities of the educational institutions;
- maintenance of international relations, studying and disseminating best practices;
- development of regulatory guidance documents on the organisation of education, educational methods and scientific work of educational institutions of all types;
- participation in setting the state budget for education;
- development of models for quality assurance, licensing and accreditation;
- scientific and methodological support for the final certification of graduates on completion of their studies;
- determine requirements for admission to educational institutions;
- issue certificates of activities in education and vocational/professional training;
- development of recognition procedures for co-validation of degrees from foreign countries;
- development of certification procedures and professional development of teaching staff.

3. Governing bodies of the higher education institutions

The direct management of an educational institution is carried out by its head (appointed and dismissed according to the provisions of the laws of Turkmenistan).

The title of the head of an educational institution, the powers and responsibilities of the head and the establishment and responsibilities of the various boards of institutions are defined by the regulations and charters of educational institutions.

4. Financing

The funding of state educational institutions is carried out according to the standards of funding determined for each type of educational institution based on the number of students. The standards for public funding of state educational institutions are set by the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan.

For educational institutions with lower student populations and for educational institutions in rural areas, the standard funding requirements are taken into account regardless of the number of students.

Non-governmental educational institutions take the standard funding specifications of state educational institutions as a model for their funding activities.

Educational institutions are entitled to conduct business and other income-generating activities in accordance with the legislation of Turkmenistan.

The acquisition of additional funding by an educational institution does not result in the reduction of its funding from the state.

Educational institutions can provide, within the available extra-budgetary resources, social support to students in need.

Educational institutions conduct their financial activities independently and keep their own accounts.

Fee-based education

According to the new Law on Education of 2009, state HEIs shall have the right to charge tuition fees from legal and/or physical persons in the following cases:

a) students whose education is not being funded from the state budget;

b) students admitted to part-time, evening or correspondence courses;

c) students admitted to the second cycle of higher education.

State educational institutions, in possession of an appropriate licence, have the right to provide educational services for a fee to the public, enterprises, organisations and other establishments. The income from such activity
shall be used by the educational institution in accordance with their charter for authorised purposes.

Fee-paid educational services cannot be rendered in place of educational activity financed by the state budget. However, if this happens, the money earned through such activities shall be paid into the state budget of Turkmenistan.

Non-governmental educational institutions shall charge the students for their services.

The fee based activities of educational institutions are not considered as a business if the income received from them is completely used for the provision of the educational activity (including salaries), its development and improvement.

The relations between non-governmental educational institutions, students and their parents (or substitute persons) are regulated by a contract defining the level of education, term (period) of education, amount of tuition fees, guarantees and responsibilities of the educational institution in cases of suspension or revocation of its licence, refusal of state accreditation of the institution, cessation of activities of the educational institution and so on.

5. Student contributions and financial support

Students in educational institutions, established by the laws of Turkmenistan, are provided with scholarships, accommodation in student residences and other measures of social support.

Students in all educational institutions have the right to receive education in accordance with the state educational standards, to obtain additional educational services (including fee-paid) as well as to use textbooks and teaching material in state educational institutions for free.

6. Licensing, quality assurance and accreditation of institutions and/or programmes

Educational institutions are established and registered in accordance with the legislation of Turkmenistan. Regulations on the licensing of activities in education and training are approved by the Cabinet of Ministers.

The right of educational institutions to issue state qualifications to their graduates and to use the seal of the state emblem of Turkmenistan, arises from the moment of their state accreditation, as certified by the certificate of state accreditation.

The certificate of state accreditation issued to educational institutions (except pre-school centres), confirms their status and their commitment to maintain quality in the preparation of students in line with the state educational standards.

The state accreditation of educational institutions is carried out in the manner prescribed by the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan.

State control of quality in education is carried out by the bodies of the state administration for education through the final state certification of the graduates directly at the institution, through scheduled and unscheduled inspections of the content and quality of students' performances and in compliance with the implemented educational programmes. The procedure for the certification of educational institutions and inspections has been established by the Cabinet of Ministers.

Educational institutions may be reorganised or wound up in accordance with the laws of Turkmenistan.

7. Admission

Admission to university is decided by a Presidential Decree which determines the number of students to be admitted to each faculty.

Students have to pass three entrance exams and the most successful are admitted on a competitive basis. Entrance exams test the knowledge of general subjects, which includes an interview on the history of Turkmenistan. Tests are done in Russian in writing and interviewing is conducted in Turkmen on the basis of Turkmenistan's secondary school curriculum.

Persons who hold a higher education degree, who have five years of work experience and who have proven themselves capable of doing academic research in a chosen field are eligible for admission on a competitive basis to postgraduate studies. For medical studies, persons who have completed clinical training and who have three years' work experience in medicine, or for those who have not completed clinical training but have five years' work experience in medicine, are eligible for admission to postgraduate studies on a competitive basis.
8. Organisation of the academic year

The Ministry of Education is responsible for determining the length/beginning/end and organisation of the academic year. The academic year starts on 1 September. The first semester lasts for 18 weeks followed by a two-week break. The second semester lasts for 17 weeks. Each semester is followed by a one-month examinations period.

9. Curriculum content

The Ministry of Education sets the curricula of higher education institutions. New textbooks for vocational and higher education institutions have been updated recently.

Particular measures will be taken to improve the following:

- further develop university research;
- strengthen the material and technical base of educational institutions;
- introduce advanced technologies in the educational process;
- widely use scientific and technological advances;
- develop and use new methodologies to compile textbooks and teaching aids.

A number of universities have recently introduced new specialties. For example, the Turkmen State University, named after Magtymguly, introduced Archaeology studies; the Turkmen National Institute of World Languages, named after D. Azadi, introduced Hindi Language studies; the Turkmen State Energy Institute introduced Industrial Electronics studies; and the Turkmen State Institute of Economics and Management introduced State and Local Governance studies.

10. Assessment, progression, certification and degree

The most common forms of student assessments are tests and examinations.

Students must pass the examinations to progress from one year/stage of studies to the next.

Students must pass one compulsory state exam on Ruhnama (in Social Science) and then they can choose to take other state exams or defend a diploma/degree thesis.

On completion of the course of study the students are given Higher Education degrees/diplomas which attest the corresponding qualification.

11. Academic staff

The main categories of academic staff are junior lecturers, lecturers, senior lecturers, heads of department, assistant deans of faculty, deans of faculty, vice-rectors and rectors.

According to the standard provisions of the educational institutions, the persons with relevant pedagogical or vocational education/training have the right to engage in pedagogical activities and be appointed to pedagogical posts.

A state official or a public servant has the right to be engaged in pedagogical activities according to the laws of Turkmenistan.

For the academic staff of the higher educational institutions, the employment contract is concluded for a definite period (normally one year), based on the results of a competition conducted in the manner prescribed by the authorised body of state management of education.

Teaching staff are paid according to their qualifications or degrees and the rate is established by the State, regardless of the field of study.

12. Research activities

The research activities in HEIs are coordinated by the HEIs and the Academy of Sciences of Turkmenistan. The Academy of Sciences is responsible for the organisation of training in postgraduate and doctoral studies. It defines and approves specialities for postgraduate training, establishes postgraduate and doctoral studies at higher education institutions and research institutes, and funds entrance exams from the state budget, etc.

To be admitted to postgraduate studies, students have to pass two entrance exams: one in the speciality (the general course), and another in foreign language (optional). During the postgraduate training the student must pass four exams in: a foreign language (optional), philosophy of science, information and communication technologies, in the chosen speciality (special course), publish at least three articles on the subject of the doctoral dissertation in scientific journals, write a scientific work on the approved subject and to defend it in front of a Special Council. The Council includes doctors of science and candidates of science in the corresponding
speciality. The number of members of the Special Council is a minimum of 15 people from different research institutes and higher education institutions, including foreign experts, basically from the CIS countries. After defending a thesis, a postgraduate student receives the Degree of Candidate of Science or Doctor of Science.

13. University-enterprise cooperation

University-enterprise cooperation is realised through the students’ annual work placements.

The syllabus is defined in cooperation with the relevant organisations offering work placements.

After completing the programme the graduate has to work for two years in a relevant enterprise assigned by the university. After that the student receives a Degree/Diploma.

Within the Tempus programme various projects have helped to create a bridge between the academic and professional communities. As an example, in the framework of the Tempus project ‘Solar Cell Technology Courses for VET and Industry in Turkmenistan’ the Science-Production Association ‘GUN’ of the Ministry of Energy and Production of Turkmenistan worked closely with two Turkmen partner universities on the development of an educational platform and implementation of practical experience in ICT-supported teaching. Pilot teaching in the area of renewable energies and solar cell technology was implemented and followed by subsequent large-scale teaching, dissemination and networking. Due to this cooperation in the Turkmen State Institute of Transport and Communication, the Solar Pavilion was constructed and the Solar panels with measuring equipment were installed. The project was completed in February 2012.

Through the Tempus project ‘Online Learning and Resource Training’ (2006), online sources were created for teaching English to the students of the Aviation and Maritime Departments of the Turkmen Institute of Transport and Communication. The Turkmen World Languages Institute, Turkmen State Institute of Transport and Communication worked closely in the creation of online materials with the Agency ‘Turkmenistan Airlines’ and International Sea Port in Turkmenbashy city. The working group published two textbooks, entitled ‘Hot Air’ and ‘Deep Waters’.

As a result of the project ‘Euro-Turkmen Centre of additional education for inter-branch Professional Qualifications in the Oil and Gas sector’ (2005), the ‘Europäisch-Turkmenisches Weiterbildungszentrum für fachübergreifende Berufszulieferung im Gas- und Erdölektor’ (ETWZ) Centre was set up to provide retraining and training of the staff of Turkmen Oil and Gas industry enterprises (Turkmen State Associations such as Turkmengas, Turkmenoil, and Turkmengazgeology) in the following training modules transport and logistics, economy and management, specialised language training, and information technologies.

14. International cooperation

International cooperation is actively developing in the field of education. Many Turkmen students are studying at prestigious universities worldwide. The most popular universities for Turkmen students are - Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Malaysian, Turkish, Chinese, European and American Universities.

There are a number of foreign students (from China, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Ukraine and Russia) studying in the HEIs of Turkmenistan.

Most of the Turkmen higher education institutions are involved in Tempus and Erasmus Mundus Programmes.

Since October 2008, an interactive multimedia learning centre set up by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and International Research and Exchange Board (IREX) at Magtymguly Institute of Language and Literature of the Academy of Sciences of Turkmenistan has been operating. The centre provides support services to research fellows of the Academy of Sciences, postgraduate students and teaching staff of higher education institutions.

USAID has been active in Turkmenistan for more than 17 years. It operates in Turkmenistan on the basis of bilateral cooperation. The long standing relationship has given rise to a number of joint projects in the fields of education, economic development, healthcare, law and the social sector.

There is cooperation with other international organisations such as UNDP, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), GIZ, Erasmus Mundus, Tempus, the Asian Development Bank, American Councils, IREX, Foreign Embassies in Turkmenistan, JICA, all of which support the development of the Turkmenistan education system.

The EU project ‘CAREN’ has been operating since June 2010 on the basis of the Virtual Silk Highway Programme (http://www.silkproject.org/) that was sponsored by the NATO Science Programme.
and other sponsors in Turkmenistan. The Turkmen Research Educational Network Association (TuRENA) has been operating successfully for several years in Turkmenistan.

II. Current challenges and needs

1. Trends and challenges

In Turkmenistan, alongside ongoing socio-economic transformation, reforms in education and science are also underway. One of the primary objectives, underpinning the development of Turkmenistan, is to improve the system of education and increase the qualifications and profile of scientific personnel.

The Government of Turkmenistan pays special attention to the development of international cooperation. Currently, young Turkmen have an opportunity to study and receive professional education which meets international standards. The Government encourages the development of cooperation with the education and scientific centres of different countries, as well as joint research and information exchange.

Since 2008, state-supported scientific projects are being implemented on a competitive basis allowing Turkmen scientists to conduct research activities aimed at addressing important issues of social and economic development and to develop and introduce advanced technologies in industry. There is commitment to further advances, such as the implementation of comprehensive plans aimed at raising the national education system to a new qualitative level in compliance with existing international standards.

The education system in Turkmenistan actively integrates information technologies and distant learning is therefore currently undergoing significant developments.

In addition, new information technologies provide support and an excellent platform for the future of science and education in the country.

The widespread implementation of multimedia and interactive methods in Turkmen educational institutions is one of the challenges of the Turkmen educational policy.

Last but not least, foreign languages are another priority of the state education policy.
2. The Bologna Process

**General Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of integration in the Bologna Process</th>
<th>Bologna-Signatory Country</th>
<th>X Non Bologna-Signatory Country</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bologna Process officially embedded in the education system</td>
<td>Bologna Process being implemented by ad hoc groups under the supervision of the Ministry of Education</td>
<td>X No particular mechanism supporting the implementation of the Bologna Process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bologna cycle structure**

| Level of implementation of a three-cycle structure compliant with the Bologna Process | No three-cycle structure |

**Student workload/duration for the most common Bologna programmes**

| Bachelor programmes | No three-cycle structure | Master programmes | No three-cycle structure |

| Bachelor/Master cycle structure models most commonly implemented | No three-cycle structure |

**European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)**

| Definition of the Learning Outcomes Concept | No definition of learning outcomes at national level |
| Level of implementation of ECTS | No credit system |
| Indicative number of hours of student workload corresponding to one ECTS | No credit system |

**Bologna Diploma Supplement (DS)**

| Level of implementation of the Bologna Diploma Supplement | Another type of Diploma Supplement |
| Diploma Supplement issued | Another type of Diploma Supplement |

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**National Qualifications Framework (NQF)**

<table>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Step 1</strong>: Decision taken. Process just started.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Step 2</strong>: The purpose of the NQF has been agreed and the process is under way including discussions and consultations. Various committees have been established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Step 3</strong>: The NQF has been adopted formally and the implementation has started.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Step 4</strong>: Redesigning the study programmes is ongoing and the process is close to completion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Step 5</strong>: Overall process fully completed including self-certified compatibility with the Framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Quality Assurance Practices**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Quality Assurance body</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Ministry of Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Status</strong></td>
<td>A Government-dependent body or Ministry has responsibility for quality assurance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year of establishment</strong></td>
<td>1991</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Involvement in external quality assurance process</strong></td>
<td>Decision-making role</td>
<td>Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic staff</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Experts</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recognition of foreign qualifications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of Foreign Qualifications for academic study</td>
<td>Recognition for academic study by central or regional governmental authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of Foreign Qualifications for professional employment</td>
<td>Recognition for professional employment by central or regional governmental authorities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Joint Degrees**

| Establishment of joint degrees and programmes in higher education legislation | Joint programmes and joint degrees are not mentioned in the higher education legislation whatsoever. |
III. Participation in EU programmes

1. Tempus

Turkmenistan has participated in the Tempus programme since 1997.

1.1 Statistics

Number of projects in which one or several institutions in the country have been involved (as coordinator, contractor or partner)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TEMPUS I and II</th>
<th>TEMPUS III</th>
<th>TEMPUS IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joint Projects</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compact projects</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural &amp; Complementary Measures (Tempus III)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Measures (Tempus IV)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Higher education institutions with highest TEMPUS participation during TEMPUS IV (2008 - 2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Number of projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TURKMEN NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF WORLD LANGUAGES NAMED AFTER D. AZADI (ASHGABAT)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>JP 2 SM 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURKMEN AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY NAMED AFTER S.A. NIYAZOV (ASHGABAT)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>JP 2 SM 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURKMEN STATE PEDAGOGICAL INSTITUTE NAMED AFTER S. SEYDI (TURKMENABAT)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>JP 1 SM 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURKMEN POLYTECNIC INSTITUTE (ASHGABAT)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>JP 1 SM 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURKMEN STATE INSTITUTE OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION (ASHGABAT)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>JP 2 SM 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE POWER-ENGINEERING INSTITUTE OF TURKMENISTAN</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>JP 2 SM 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURKMEN STATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY (ASHGABAT)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>JP 1 SM 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERNATIONAL TURKMEN-TURKISH UNIVERSITY (ASHGABAT)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>JP 1 SM 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURKMEN STATE UNIVERSITY OF CULTURE</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>JP 1 SM 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2 Impact of the Tempus programme

Tempus has been effective in promoting international academic cooperation between Turkmen and EU universities.

The Tempus programme is the only international programme in Turkmenistan that is fully involved in the teaching process on different levels.

While it has been a priority to meet the specific aims of each project, it can be said that the wider objectives of the Tempus programme in fostering professional, academic and human networks are also very significant.

The Tempus programme is well-recognised by the Turkmen universities and authorities. The Turkmen HEIs have been engaged in Tempus projects since 1997 and the programme’s principles are still relevant and in great demand in Turkmenistan.

The programme has been instrumental in motivating staff and introducing new ways of teaching/learning. For example, the experience of the project ‘Innovative education for sustainable agro-industrial and rural development in Turkmenistan’ (2005), clearly showed excellent opportunities for teaching and using modern optical microscopy. The most important areas of implementation are in: veterinary sciences, veterinary control and sanitary control of water, air and soil, technologies for processing vegetable as well as milk and meat products. A modern educational microscopic laboratory purchased by the project for the Turkmen Agricultural
University is a solid base for future significant improvements. The project experience and willingness to share knowledge, as well as the enthusiasm and energy of Turkmen colleagues all support the potential of achieving better results in the reform of veterinary education in Turkmenistan.

Academic staff participating in international mobility programmes have upgraded both their teaching and foreign language skills. The programmes are an important instrument for motivating university staff and opening new horizons for them. The close co-operation of the Dovletmammed Azadi Turkmen National Institute of World Languages with its European partners and its numerous exchanges with the universities of the partner countries (Great Britain, Spain and France) within the Tempus project ‘Study of European Languages’ (1999), have resulted in improvements of the following: in the methods of teaching foreign languages, translation and interpretation, the opening of a simultaneous interpretation laboratory, and setting up of the Translation Centre and library of literature on new methodologies and translation with audio and visual aids.

Thanks to Tempus, a significant number of East-West and West-East exchange opportunities took place, providing participants from both sides to take time out from their normal duties to reflect on and discuss the shared problems of all language teachers in higher education. Tempus is always to be seen as a mutually-enriching joint endeavour rather than a one-way exchange.

Now that all Turkmen institutions of higher education provide English language training to all students, there is a debate over the most appropriate methods for training students of technical disciplines in language skills.

Within the framework of the project ‘Inter-University Knowledge Management’ (2005), the professors of Magtymbuly Turkmen State University and Turkmen State Institute of Economy and Management in co-operation with the professors of the Catalonia Polytechnic University in Barcelona, Spain, have participated in compiling an English-Russian-Turkmen and Turkmen-Russian-English on-line dictionary. This dictionary includes more than 3,000 words used in economics and finance. The online dictionary is already on the Internet.

Tempus has contributed to the modernisation of curricula through the development of new courses and teaching materials.

The professional horizons were extended to a significant degree by discussing education in the field of tourism providing links between them. They provided the teaching staff with an enormous amount of factual material which can be used for teaching and academic research later on. Firstly, the collaboration under the aegis of this programme helped to broaden the range of subjects covered in Turkmen education programmes on tourism which was then a new subject area in higher education. Secondly, it led to the introduction of new teaching methods. Thirdly, it made possible study visits for students and teachers which enhanced their knowledge of international practices in the fields of tourism.

Joint cooperation of European and Turkmen partners demonstrated the benefits of future tourism development and awareness of ecological and cultural principles.

Modernisation of the curricula also underpinned agricultural subjects. For example, during the project on ‘Development of Agricultural Education in Turkmenistan in cooperation with European Universities’ (2004), the curricula was reformed and training was held at the faculty of Agricultural Mechanisation of the Turkmen Agricultural University. The Educational Innovation Centre was created for educational innovations.

The Turkmen partners developed and published 15 textbooks in Turkmen language on the new and revised courses. The university network was created. Teaching skills and institutional competences have undergone deep changes. 64 teachers from the Agricultural University received different types of training.

Tempus has had a significant impact on the modernisation of universities and on capacity building.

One of the successful projects in this area was a Tempus project on ‘Turkmen Economy Training Centre’ (2002). The Turkmen Economy Training Centre was established to train managers and staff members of the Institutions. The centre was provided with a computer and lecture rooms with supporting equipment and infrastructures as well as internet connections. In the framework of the Tempus project, the training courses on economic topics such as International Accounting Standards, Internal/External Audit, Fiscal Policy and Taxation, Monetary Policy and Budgeting, Business Management were developed. The courses were delivered by the Turkmen Institute of the National Economy for the different staff of the Turkmen ministries.
One of the projects under the University Management was the 'Modernisation of the Turkmen State University Library' (2001). It resulted in the installation of a computing system for documentary management and the development of an electronic catalogue (more than 14,000 records). To support this process, the project provided the library with modern and high performance equipment.

The project addressed as well the development of electronic information through setting up a website giving access to a large scope of internet scientific resources. The Centre for Training and Promotion of Scientific and Technical Information was established with the aim of training and increasing awareness among students, teachers, researchers and librarians about the use of electronic information.

The Tempus Programme is useful not only for Turkmen HEIs which are involved in these educational contacts with European universities but also for their European partners. Creative professional contacts introduce new themes and teaching methods into the learning process. One example is the Tempus project 'Development of International Relations Related to the Needs of the Higher Educational System of Turkmenistan'. The topic of the project is new for the Turkmen Universities. The positive aspects of systemic internationalisation of Turkmen HEIs will be analysed as well as the impact on teaching and learning and on research and innovation. Furthermore, the project is creating the administrative structures responsible for internationalisation (i.e. the International Relations Offices) within four Turkmen universities that deal with internationalisation in a professional way in Western Europe. It will transfer the necessary know-how by providing extensive training for its future staff. It is planned to draw up national recommendations in conjunction with each Turkmen partner university that will raise the educational standards.

2. Erasmus Mundus

The objective of the Erasmus Mundus programme's is to promote European higher education, to help improve and enhance the career prospects of students and to promote intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries, in accordance with EU external policy objectives in order to contribute to the sustainable development of third countries in the field of higher education. It does this through three Actions:

**Action 1 – Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes (Master Courses and Joint Doctorates) – with scholarships**
Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes are operated by consortia of higher education institutions (HEIs) from the EU and (since 2009) elsewhere in the world. They provide an integrated course and joint or multiple diplomas following study or research at two or more HEIs. Master Courses and Joint Doctorates are selected each year following a Call for Proposals. There are currently 131 Masters and 34 Doctorates offering EU-funded scholarships or fellowships to students and scholars.

**Action 2 – Erasmus Mundus Partnerships (former External Cooperation Window) – with scholarships**
Under Action 2, Erasmus Mundus Partnerships bring together HEIs from Europe on the one hand and those from a particular region, or geographical ‘lot’ on the other. Together the partnerships manage mobility flows between the two regions for a range of academic levels – Bachelor, Master, doctorate, post-doctorate and for academic staff.

**Action 3 – Erasmus Mundus Attractiveness projects**
This Action of the Programme funds projects to enhance the attractiveness, profile, image and visibility of European higher education worldwide. Action 3 provides support to activities related to the international dimension of all aspects of higher education, such as promotion, accessibility, quality assurance, credit recognition, mutual recognition of qualifications, curriculum development and mobility.

Number of students/staff participating in the programme

**Erasmus Mundus – Joint degrees (Action 1)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholars</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nationals of the country participated in the programme for the first time in 2005-2006 (students) and in 2008-2009 (academic staff).

**Erasmus Mundus– Partnerships (External Cooperation Window, Action 2)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Master</th>
<th>Doctorate</th>
<th>Post-doctorate</th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned 2010</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned 2011</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Institutions participating in the programme up to and including 2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Action 1 Joint Programmes</th>
<th>Action 2 Partnerships</th>
<th>Action 3 Attractiveness projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TURKMEN POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURKMEN STATE UNIVERSITY NAMED AFTER MAGTYMGULY</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURKMEN STATE INSTITUTE OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IV. Bibliographical references and websites**

- Abstracts of reports of the International Conference ‘Science and Education of the new revival epoch in the global science and education system’ (September 9-11, 2009)
Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries: Western Balkans
HIGHER EDUCATION IN UZBEKISTAN

I. Overall description
II. Current challenges and needs
   – Trends and challenges
   – The Bologna Process
III. Participation in EU programmes
    – Tempus
    – Erasmus Mundus
IV. Bibliographical references and websites
The higher education system in Uzbekistan

- Institute (Institut), University (Universitet), Conservatory (Konservatoriya)
  - Bachelor (Bakalavr)

- Medical Institute (Tibbiyoit Instituti), Medical Academy (Tibbiyoit Akademiyasi)
  - General practitioner (Umumiy amaliyot vrachi)
  - Bachelor (Oily ma’lumotli hamshira)

- Medical Institute (Tibbiyoit Instituti), Medical Academy (Tibbiyoit Akademiyasi)
  - Master (Magistr)
  - Medical Institute (Tibbiyoit Instituti), Medical Academy (Tibbiyoit Akademiyasi)
    - Master (Magistr)
    - Medical Institute (Tibbiyoit Instituti), Medical Academy (Tibbiyoit Akademiyasi)
      - Attending physician
  - Medical Institute (Tibbiyoit Instituti), Medical Academy (Tibbiyoit Akademiyasi)
    - Master (Magistr)

- University
  - Doctor of Science (Fanlar Doktori)

Field of study
- >>> Health studies
- >>> Nursing studies with higher education diploma
I. Overall description

1. Major characteristics of tertiary education in the country

Legislation covering the field of tertiary education

National policy in the field of education, including legislation on higher education, is based on the Constitution, Decrees and Resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Radical reform of the education sector in Uzbekistan started in 1997 with the adoption of the Education Act and the National Programme for Personnel Training (NPPT). The two documents have provided a legal basis for higher education (HE) and further development of the HE system in Uzbekistan.

The importance of the reform of the education system should be considered in the specific demographic context of Uzbekistan: about 35% of the total population of 30 million people are under 16 years of age, more than 62% are under 30.

The NPPT (adopted as an Act of Parliament) provides a long-term strategy for strengthening education, developing a continuing education system and reinforcing the multi-level higher education system. The aim of the programme is the fundamental reform of the education system, the complete overhaul of its ideological aspects, and elaboration of a national educational system to train highly qualified specialists to the same level as in advanced democratic states. The fostering of international co-operation has been defined as one of the tools for achieving the objectives of the NPPT.

A legal basis is being established for international cooperation in education to establish priority directions of international cooperation, including the creation of joint educational establishments. One such example is the existing Westminster International University in Tashkent, affiliate of the Russian Plekhanov University of Economics, Moscow State University named after Lomonosov, the Russian University of Oil and Gas named after Gubkin, Turin Polytechnic University, and the Management Development Institute of Singapore, and broader exchange systems for scientific-pedagogical specialists and students.

During the first stage of the NPPT’s implementation (1997-2001) a new legal and financial basis for reforming and developing the education system was created which affected the personnel and scientific methodology. According to the Education Act, higher education is provided by higher education institutions (HEIs) after 12 years of compulsory and free-of-charge education obtained in secondary schools (9 years) and in secondary specialised institutions (3 years).

According to the Education Act, the quality of education is ensured by State Educational Standards. They provide detailed information on the main features, such as the structure, content and implementation of curricula, quality control of personnel training, compulsory (core) components (the list of academic subjects), learning outcomes and descriptions of competencies.

A New Programme to strengthen the technical facilities and resources of higher education institutions and improve the training quality of highly qualified specialists for the period of 2011-2016 has been adopted according to the President’s Decree of 20 May 2011. Within this programme, the following action plans should be implemented:

- Strengthen and develop the technical facilities and resources of higher education institutions for the period of 2011-2016;
- Optimise the quality of subjects and courses to achieve excellence and to improve the state educational standards.

Types of tertiary education programmes and qualifications

The reforms in the higher education sector of the country have resulted in a switch to a two level structure consisting of a 4-year Bachelor programme and a 2-year Master programme.

The Bachelor programme provides fundamental and applied knowledge in one of the fields of higher education for a minimum period of study of four years. Upon completion of the Bachelor programme graduates are awarded the Bachelor degree and a state diploma (Bakalavr), which entitles them to start professional activity or to continue studies at Master level.

The Master programme provides knowledge in specific areas and lasts for a minimum of two years after the Bachelor degree. Master
students are awarded a state diploma (Magistr), which entitles them to work in relevant professional areas. Admission to Master degree studies is on a competitive basis and only students who have obtained a Bachelor degree in a specific field or fields may apply for the corresponding Master programme.

According to the President’s Resolution of July 24, 2012 the existed two-stage postgraduate education (two scientific degrees “Fanlar Nomzodi” and “Fanlar Doktori”) would be replaced by a single level of Doctor of Sciences that will be active starting from January 1, 2013. This resolution on “further improvement of system for training and attestation of research-pedagogical human resources of highest degree level” should be followed-up by a specific Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers providing a complete view of this development and necessary clarifications. All relevant public structures (two ministries of education, Supreme Attestation Council, Academy of Sciences, Cabinet of Ministers) are currently involved in the preparation of the Decree and special mechanisms/procedures regarding the status and profile of Scientific Committees.

Types of tertiary education institutions

Today there are 75 higher education institutions in Uzbekistan, including 11 branches located in country regions. The HEIs are legal entities.

There are HEIs of the following types:

- University (Universitet): provides educational programmes of higher education (both Bachelor and Master levels) and post-graduate education in a wide range of fields of knowledge and areas of professional training: economy, fundamental and applied scientific research in a wide range of sciences. The universities also conduct re-training and upgrading of courses for specialists in different branches of the above mentioned areas. The universities are scientific–methodological centres in specific fields of knowledge. There are 23 universities in total, including 19 Uzbek universities and 4 branches of overseas universities.

- Academy (Akademiya): provides educational programmes in higher education in specific fields of knowledge and areas of training.

The Academies also conduct re-training and the upgrading of courses for specialists in specific areas of knowledge and fundamental and applied scientific research in science, culture or art.

The Academies are leading scientific–methodological centres in the respective fields of their activities.

There are two academies located in Tashkent: Tashkent State Medical Academy and the State Tax Academy.

- Institute (Institut): provides educational programmes of higher education at Bachelor, Master and post-graduate levels of studies in specific fields of professional training within one area of knowledge and education. The Institutes conduct re-training and the upgrading of courses for specialists in specific branches, and carry out applied and, as a rule, fundamental scientific research. There are in total 39 institutes throughout the country.

For the moment there are no non-governmental universities in Uzbekistan, although the Education Act adopted in 1997 provided a legal basis for the establishment of non-governmental HEIs. Educational institutions of this kind may operate if accredited and certified in line with the established guidelines of the Cabinet of Ministers and obtain the rights of a legal entity and right to undertake educational activities.

| Number of HEIs (in academic year 2011/2012) |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| University | Academy | Institute |
| 23 (6) | 2 (2) | 39 (3) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of students (in academic year 2011/2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>272 114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Distribution of responsibilities

According to the Education Act, the implementation of the unified public policy in the field of education in Uzbekistan is governed by the Department operating under the Cabinet of Ministers (CM) which is responsible for the development of the social sector as a whole, including the implementation of educational reforms.

At the same time, some specific issues are responsibility of central bodies operating in other areas: e.g. the financing system and tuition fees (the Ministry of Finance); facilities development, demographic forecasts, forecasting and programmes for admission to HEIs (Ministry of the Economy). The Ministry of
Labour and Social Security is responsible for some programmes aimed at professional training and raising the level of employees' professional skills.

The CM is responsible for:
- The direction and implementation of strategy;
- The development of a unified state education policy;
- The management of the public HEIs and their educational programmes;
- The establishment and reorganisation of educational institutions;
- The definition of the procedure for licensing, quality assurance and accreditation of institutions and/or programmes;
- The recognition and determination of foreign qualifications;
- The approval of State Educational Standards;
- The award of state grants to institutions;
- The definition of the quotas for admission;
- The nomination of the rectors.

The Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education (MHSSE) supervises Higher and Secondary Specialised Education in the country. It reports to the Cabinet of Ministers and incorporates the Centre of Secondary Specialised and Vocational Education (SSVE) and the Centre for Development of Higher and Secondary Specialised Vocational Education (HSSVE). The MHSSE has the power to approve secondary legislation to improve the quality of education.

3. Governing bodies of the higher education institutions

Each higher education institution is headed by the Rector, who is appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers. The Rector is responsible for ensuring that teaching processes are in accordance with the State Educational Standards and also for the supervision and methodological guidance of academic lyceums or professional colleges established within the HEI.

The management structure of a HEI depends on several indicators, such as the: number of teaching staff, students, state budget and off-budget funds. Each HEI receives and manages revenues generated from commercial operations according to regulations defined in the University Charter. The Statute of the University is a document which defines the main objectives, activities and tasks of the university.

There are two bodies within each HEI, the Academic Council and the Board of Trustees, which are responsible for key operational issues and ensure the quality of education. The Board of Trustees is an advisory body to the HEI (regardless of its type of ownership) and comprises representatives of local government, enterprises, finance and science, the mass media, public organisations and professional associations. The Board of Trustees operates on the basis of the legislation and the University Charter. Different faculties and departments, training and research laboratories are established according to the fields of education and types of training provided by the particular HEI.

Generally there are five Vice-rectors with responsibilities for academic issues, scientific work, social and cultural affairs (see below), supervision of academic lyceums and professional colleges, and for budgetary matters and finances.

One of the Vice-rectors (manaviyat va marifat) is responsible for social and cultural issues, for external affairs and relations with parents, student and youth organisations, sponsors, public structures and local communities (makhalla). She/he manages the organisation of social events, fairs, sport competitions, contents and exhibitions of talented students and, in general, the promotion of a good education for the younger generation based on our national, cultural and historical traditions, as well as virtues common to all mankind.

There are also branches of the civic youth movement of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Kamolot, in each HEI. They provide support to students in ensuring the development of their intellectual and cultural potential, the comprehensive defence of their rights and the improvement of social and living conditions. The majority of students are members of Kamolot and benefit from joint activities aimed also at promoting entrepreneurship among the younger generation, the development of leadership, and international cooperation.

4. Financing

The government of Uzbekistan gives high priority to education. This is reflected in the allocation of resources: public expenditure on education in Uzbekistan as a proportion of GDP is relatively high. Over the last few years it has constantly exceeded 10-12% of GDP, which is not only the highest figure in Central Asia but higher even in comparison with Europe.
More than 70% of public expenditure on education is allocated to general secondary and specialised secondary vocational education. This demonstrates the priority of government policy in line with the NPPT, the demographic situation in the country and the ongoing National Programme for Basic Education Development (adopted in 2004).

Since the introduction in 1999 of a new funding system for public-funded institutions, their capacity for more flexible and efficient use of extra-budgetary resources, self-financing and the attraction of private and foreign investment is being encouraged.

The education sector in Uzbekistan is mainly funded from the public budget at three levels: central, regional and local. Higher educational institutions, affiliated academic lyceums, and teacher training institutions in the regions, are funded from the central budget.

Training specialists in higher education institutions are supported by state education grants and on a contract basis. The state education grants are paid out of the central republican budget.

A new procedure of normative planning and budgetary funding of HEIs based on expenditure per student was introduced on 1 September 2010. The budget bid for each HEI is calculated taking into consideration the basic normative expenditure for training one student.

Enterprises, institutions and individuals provide education grants for contract-paid students in order to meet the demand for specialists or in order to obtain corresponding higher education.

After prior approval of the MHSSE, the extra-budgetary funds of universities and institutes are subsidised from the following sources and activities: student fees, educational services, entrepreneurial, consulting, expert, publishing, research and other activities in accordance with the University Charter.

Extra-budgetary funds may be used mainly for further improvements of infrastructures and facilities.

Considerable budget support for the overall improvement of technical facilities and resources of HEIs in Uzbekistan is envisaged in the implementation of the recent Programme concerning higher education of 20 May 2011. It is particularly shown in constructing, refurbishing, renovating and equipping university buildings, sports facilities and student dormitories, and creating modern scientific-research laboratories.

5. Student contributions and financial support

The admission of students to higher education institutions in Uzbekistan is on the basis of state grants (budget) and individual contracts (fee paid basis). There is no difference between fees required from 'traditional' and 'non-traditional' students in Uzbekistan.

At the beginning of the academic year tuition fees for all levels and specialisations are determined by the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

In 2011/2012, the tuition fee for a Bachelor student studying on a contract basis was between EUR 1 237 and EUR 1 802 per year.

The tuition fee for a Master student studying on a contract basis was between EUR 1 341 and EUR 1 982 per year.

Students who study full time on the basis of state grants and contracts are provided with stipends, which are set by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The most talented students may receive special individual stipends.

The stipends by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan are awarded to Uzbek students of state HEIs in their last year of studies (at Bachelor and Master levels). President's stipends are awarded on the results of the Annual Call organised by the MHSSE in 11 areas of knowledge: agriculture and water resources, technical studies and computers, health care and social security, humanities and social sciences, natural sciences, business and management, pedagogy, culture, arts and sports, foreign languages, law, international relations and journalism.

Other state stipends (named after Beruniy, Avicenna, Navoi, Ulugbek and Imam-Al-Bukhari) can be provided to students at state HEIs in the last two years at Bachelor level.

A new procedure was introduced in 2001 to provide all students with a stipend, whether they are studying on a state grant or on a contractual basis (with the exception of foreign students).

This initiative was introduced in order to ensure the social protection of students, to provide all students with an opportunity to have a monthly stipend and to encourage those who are successful in their studies. For example, the contract for a student is paid by an enterprise/organisation/company directly to the university. If a student (on a contract basis) succeeds in obtaining good exam results he/she is paid a stipend in the same way as
other (state grant) students. Moreover, there are three levels of stipends depending on whether results are excellent, good or satisfactory.

The Forum of Culture and Arts of Uzbekistan Foundation (Fund Forum) which was established in February 2004 for the support of domestic science, culture, education and sport provides Educational Grants annually to more than 100 young people who have been admitted to the universities on a contract-paid basis but cannot pay their tuition fees. The Educational Grants cover their tuition fees for one academic year and can be extended for another year if the students demonstrate good academic achievements. The Fund Forum also provides more than 100 scholarships to high talented 3rd and 4th year students of HEIs in Uzbekistan. The scholarship holders are selected annually on the basis of competition results.

All students can obtain monthly public transportation cards. The students from regions are provided with free accommodation in student hostels.

In July 2001, a new system for the provision of educational loans was introduced, which provided an opportunity for a large number of students to enrol at any HEI throughout the country. Educational loans are allocated to citizens of Uzbekistan who have successfully approved the admission test and have been admitted to HEIs on a contract basis. For orphans and disabled students, the loans are provided interest-free. Those with low-income families are provided with a rate of interest which is 50% of the standard rate.

6. Licensing, quality assurance and accreditation of institutions and/or programmes

The State Testing Centre (STC) which comes under the auspices of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan (established in May 1994) is authorised to undertake a review (state attestation procedure) of all educational establishments in Uzbekistan regardless of their status or type of ownership. The main objectives of the STC are the following:

- ensuring the quality of education and training, fairness of test scores and rating points;
- reviewing State Educational Standards and state requirements and, on this basis, reviewing syllabuses and curricula for all types of education for approval in due course.

State attestation and accreditation of educational institutions is organised and conducted in accordance with the Regulation on State Accreditation of Educational Establishments in the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Accreditation of an educational institution is carried out by the STC on the basis of attestation. This is the prevailing method of state control aimed at assessing the educational establishment and deciding whether the content, level and quality of personnel training is in line with the State Educational Standards.

The educational establishment is subject to an attestation procedure every five years. The process includes comprehensive analysis of the educational establishment’s activities over the previous three years, divided into types of education, with special attention paid to established criteria.

State accreditation includes recognition of the educational establishment’s activities’ compliance with the criteria and requirements laid down in the State Educational Standards and the granting of the right to issue an educational certificate of the approved national format to the graduates of the establishment.

After consideration and approval by the Cabinet of Ministers, the quality assurance report is made available to the university administration so that it can be discussed by the Academic Council to implement necessary measures.

The State Testing Centre is also responsible for accreditation/validation of documentation for education qualifications. International and bilateral agreements, State Educational Standards and normative documents in education are taken into consideration. In the case of diplomas received in the framework of inter-governmental agreements or governmental programmes recognition, is done without validation.

Licensing of non-governmental educational establishments is done in accordance with the Regulation on licensing the activities of non-governmental educational establishments. Licenses are issued to non-governmental educational establishments separately for each type of education. Decisions on granting and cancelling licenses, including suspension, are made by the Committee for licensing the activities of non-governmental educational
establishments under the auspices of the Cabinet of Ministers. Licenses permitting educational establishments to operate are granted for five years.

7. Admission

The Cabinet of Ministers issues a Resolution each year providing detailed information on the admission procedure and admission requirements for enrolment at higher education institutions in Uzbekistan.

In the 2011/2012 academic year, the general quota for admission was for 56,607 students (19,560 of which were on state grants and 37,047 were on a contractual basis) for Bachelor courses and 5,880 (1,566 and 4,314) for Master programmes.

The State Testing Centre is responsible for organising testing and developing testing materials. Uzbekistan is in the group of 10 countries using a modern testing system based on multiple choices. The tests are held on 1 August throughout the country for all types of HEIs. The tests require the applicants to show a deep knowledge and understanding of subjects and clear logic among other relevant skills.

The admission to HEIs is organised in accordance with the quotas for entrance on the basis of state grants and contracts which are adopted by Decree of the President and the Cabinet of Ministers, respectively.

The admission of students is decided by the State Commission on the basis of test results and according to a rating system.

The admission to Master programmes follows a similar procedure: it is organised by the HEIs in accordance with quotas for entrance on the basis of state grants and contracts which are adopted by Decree of the President and Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, respectively.

The admission of students is conducted by the State Commission on the basis of test results and according to a rating system.

The admission to Master programmes is carried out on a competition basis among the holders of a Bachelor degree and in accordance with the list of related areas/specialties of higher education defined by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, or those with specialist’s diploma.

Bachelor degree holders and specialists have the right to participate in the competition in one of the specialties on the list of related education fields.

The admission to Master programmes is based on equal rights for all (on state grants and contracts), common requirements for enrolment and common test which ensures the priority of admission of applicants on state grants who demonstrated the best overall scores during the admission process. Other applicants have the right to be admitted on the basis of scores within the limit of quotas for entrance.

The tests are organised separately in each HEI in Master specialities, languages and types of training.

The holders of Presidential and other governmental scholarships are admitted to Master programmes on a state-budget basis without any entrance exams.

The procedure described above is applicable to non-traditional students as well.

The prestige of higher education is constantly increasing. Between 2000 and 2010, the overall number of students studying in universities has increased by more than 150%. The current total number of students is 272,114 (including 259,208 Bachelor and 12,906 Master students).

Admission to Master programmes is carried out on a competition basis among the holders of a Bachelor degree and in accordance with the list of related areas/specialties of higher education defined by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, respectively.

The admission of students is conducted by the State Commission on the basis of test results and according to a rating system.

The admission to Master programmes is carried out on a competition basis among the holders of a Bachelor degree and in accordance with the list of related areas/specialties of higher education defined by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, or those with specialist’s diploma.

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The procedure described above is applicable to non-traditional students as well.

The following priority areas of the Uzbek economy are taken into consideration when defining the national quotas for future specialists:

- Agro-industrial complex
- Energy sector
- Telecommunications
- Chemical industry
- Food industry
8. Organisation of the academic year

The Ministry of HSSE has the responsibility for the organisation of the academic year, including the length of semesters, examination periods and academic holidays.

The academic year starts on 2 September and lasts until the end of June. It is divided into two semesters with holidays ranging from 10 to 12 weeks:

- 1st semester - from early September to late January.
- 2nd semester - from the beginning of February to the end of June, although the duration of the semester can vary depending on the status of the HEIs or on the study programme.

9. Curriculum content

The continuity and the linkage among general secondary, specialised secondary, vocational and higher education are important aspects of higher education quality. As a result of updates and merged areas and specialities, the State Educational Standards (SES) have been updated for 165 Bachelor fields and 447 specialities at a Master level. The quality of higher education is assured by the SES which set the minimum requirements for each educational level, describe the main features, structure, content and implementation of curricula, ensure the quality control of personnel training and set the compulsory (core) components (the list of academic subjects).

The curriculum is defined both at national and institutional levels. According to the Education Act, higher educational establishments are allowed to choose their own curricula, textbooks and methods of teaching. The educational process in higher educational institutions is carried out in line with the State Educational Standards and is regulated by the curricula, academic calendar and timetables.

10. Assessment, progression, certification and degree

During the academic year there are several phases of assessment undertaken for Bachelor and Master students regarding each academic subject taught during the semester. A rating system (minimum - 56 points, maximum - 100 points) was introduced in 1999 for all types of HEIs in Uzbekistan. The system requires a separate allocation of academic hours for student independent learning and the assessment of the students’ knowledge at the end of each semester. The following marking scheme is applied: 86-100 – excellent (5); 71-85 - good (4); 56-70 – satisfactory (3); less than 55 - unsatisfactory.

On the basis of the assessment results a decision is made about the transfer of successful students to the next year of the educational programme. It is impossible to be transferred to the next year if the requirements of the curriculum are not met.

At the end of the educational programme in all types of HEIs graduates have to take compulsory final state examinations with participation of the employers who have an opportunity to assess the relevance and quality of the curricula. At the end of a Bachelor programme, the students also have to undergo an assessment (defence) of their final qualification work. Master students have to prepare and defend a dissertation.

Upon completion of the Bachelor programme, graduates are awarded the degree of Bachelor and a state diploma, which entitles them to start professional activity. It should be emphasised that only students who have studied for a Bachelor degree in a certain field may apply for the corresponding Master course. Master degree holders are awarded a state diploma, which entitles them to work in the relevant profession. They may also proceed further to the first post-graduate study programme. Students who have studied on a contract basis are awarded a diploma upon completion of the study programme. Students who have studied on a state-budget basis have to work for at least three years in public organisations/institutions.

11. Academic staff

According to the information of the MHSSE (2011), the current total number of academic staff in Uzbekistan is 23 000 (including more than 40% with scientific degrees): 1 580 Doctors of Sciences (6.5%), 7 600 Candidates of Sciences (33%), 13 820 lecturers (60%).

There are the following categories of academic staff: Head of Department (kafedra mudiri), Professor (professor), Associate Professor (Dotcent), Senior Lecturer (katta o‘qituvchi), Lecturer (o‘qituvchi). In order to access to all these categories a diploma of higher education (specialist) / Master diploma (Magistr) is required along with ethical and moral qualities. In order to be eligible for a competition for a position of Head of Department a diploma of Candidate’s degree (Fanlar Nomzodi) or Doctorate degree (Fanlar Doctori) is required; for a position of Professor – a diploma of PostDoc (Fanlar Doctori) or the scientific title of Professor; for a position of Associate Professor (Dotcent) - diploma of Candidate’s
In order to be employed as a lecturer at any HEI a person should have at least a Master degree and be selected on the basis of a competition; this takes place every five years depending on the teaching position within the university. Academic staffs of higher educational establishments are employed on a contract basis for five years. After graduation, holders of Master diplomas or Fanlar Nomzodi diplomas may be enrolled onto the academic staff without a competition, but only for a period of three years. Taking into account their personal and intellectual capacities, these people are assigned to a particular department and faculty so that they may stay within the university. The aim of this initiative is to provide support to young specialists. Taking into account that competitions are organised every five years, this gives them the opportunity to be properly prepared for the next competition on an equal footing with other experienced teachers.

There is a mechanism for rating lecturers which is aimed at encouraging and increasing responsibility among staff for the results of their work. The intention is that professors and lecturers should upgrade their qualifications on a compulsory and differentiated basis, obtain certification and have their results assessed. Every five years the teaching staffs of all HEIs have to take short retraining or upgrading courses. The ‘Istedod’ foundation provides support to young lecturers and researchers so that they can take advantage of study opportunities and upgrade their skills at foreign universities.

In the framework of the above mentioned Programme, specific measures are envisaged to improve the salary system of the academic staff of higher educational institutions, in particular by the:

- introduction of an improved rating system of the academic staff of higher educational institutions on the basis of optimising the categories of teaching positions and reviewing qualification requirements for academic positions;
- improvement of the system of awarding academic titles ‘docent’ and ‘professor’, increasing its role in encouraging university academic staff to constantly improve their teaching and methodological skills.

12. Research activities

The role of higher educational institutions in the area of research and science is laid down in the Education Act and the NPPT. The MHSSE and sectorial ministries are responsible for the organisation, the admission to programmes for trainees–researchers–fellows and senior scientific staff members, for the monitoring and analysis of activities and for providing information and methodological support to researchers. There is an on-going programme to support talented youth and in particular young researchers.

In Uzbekistan, a new system of research has been established which envisages specific measures to involve talented students, trainees–researchers–fellows and senior scientific staff members in research at all HEIs.

The established structure ensures the necessary conditions for attracting the younger generation into research and the exploitation of the potential of young people for the further development of society and economy. In order to ensure fruitful interaction between the research activities at the HEIs and scientific–research institutes of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan, a joint Regulation of the MHSSE and the Academy to attract and encourage students into scientific research and development work has been adopted and is fully operational.

The Government of Uzbekistan considers scientific research activities and the introduction of innovations in specific branches of the national economy as the most valuable and important way of further modernising higher education. The MHSSE has issued a number of regulations to implement and facilitate the realisation of the tasks envisaged by this legislation, including a database of planned, on-going and completed innovative projects of all Uzbek HEIs. One effective way of strengthening university-science-industry cooperation is the regular participation of HEIs in the Republican Fair of Innovative Ideas and Projects.

The HEIs make a valuable contribution to developing science in Uzbekistan. Scientific research work on the basis of state orders, grants or contracts. The Coordinating Committee for the Development of Science and Technology annually awards grants to Uzbek HEIs for innovative projects.

Since 2006, in the framework of the Pedagogical Grants Programme of the Fund, lecturers and scientific employees are offered incentives to carry out innovative projects in the education field.
In the framework of the implementation of the above mentioned Programme, the establishment of academic and research facilities and centers within HEIs and scientific institutions is envisaged in order to further integrate the educational processes with the research activities of teachers and students.

13. University-enterprise cooperation

At present, a new generation of State Educational Standards is being prepared, with the main focus on the integration of science, education and local industry and a better coordination of higher education activities with the demands of employers, particularly in terms of staff. In order to strengthen relationships between universities and enterprises, bilateral partnerships have been established between HEIs and industry. This has been especially important in the following sectors of the Uzbek economy: oil and gas, geology and mining-extraction, and automobile and road construction. The universities benefit from the strengthened partnership through revising and updating the curricula in the light of the requirements of employers from the industrial sector and the latest developments in science and technology.

At present the universities are moving from passive to active interaction with enterprises, by improving and revising their curricula and syllabuses so as to balance to the needs and demands of local consumers. HEI marketing departments may propose new areas of studies and educational programmes based on analyses of local labour market needs and on consultations with key stakeholders in the economic sector. The HEIs can then follow up the proposals and initiate the new programmes and develop relevant SES, estimate the number of graduates and submit a proposal for new programmes both at Bachelor and Master level to the MHSSE and subsequently the Cabinet of Ministers. A decision on the introduction of a new programme is based on the requirements of the local labour market and the particular area of expertise, available facilities and the level of teaching staff of the relevant department and faculty.

The Government is encouraging closer links between enterprises and HEIs through direct cooperation agreements and by creating branches of faculty departments (mainly in the field of engineering) in factories or enterprises. Generally these departments are responsible for: the placement of students and lecturers in enterprises, developing work-based learning, the preparation and presentation of joint lectures with colleagues from enterprises, and the development of continuing training programmes for the staff of enterprises.

The provision of practical training to students is used in educational programmes as the most effective path towards the integration of education and industry. Moreover, there is a trend towards simplifying moves to educate students through individualised study plans.

Nowadays there is a number of measures on development of innovative corporative cooperation of higher education, science and industry. In order to support this cooperation, new innovative groups have been set up in each department of higher education institutions. These groups involve professors, senior scientific staff, talented Bachelor and Master students, as well representatives from industrial enterprises and organisations. Scientific-technological requests from the industrial enterprises, defined through synthesis, analysis and expertise, provide the basis for topics chosen by graduate for their qualification works, Master dissertations and for doctoral dissertations of young researchers. Consequently, the intellectual potential of the talented young generation of HEIs can be used to carry out applied scientific tasks by the industrial enterprises and organisations.

Two national priorities for the Tempus programme in Uzbekistan, ‘partnerships between universities and enterprises’ and the ‘knowledge triangle’ have been maintained in order to encourage the Uzbek universities to introduce advanced and modern models and approaches for further integration of education with industry and science. Tempus projects in this field have provided support to establish University-Industry Liaison departments at the HEIs, Educational Scientific Production Laboratories and Career Centres.

14. International cooperation

The fostering of international co-operation has been defined as one of the tools for achieving the objectives of the National Programme for Personnel Training.

International cooperation is one of the fastest and most dynamic developing areas of higher education in Uzbekistan. The highest priority is given by the national authorities to the internationalisation of higher education. Thanks to inter-governmental agreements, students have various options for studying abroad. International cooperation is being achieved in the following ways (based on data supplied by MHSSE):

- establishment of joint higher education institutions;
involvement of foreign lecturers and scientists in the teaching process at Uzbek HEIs;

- support for incoming and outgoing student mobility;

- support for the organisation of joint research work;

- organisation of international conferences on current problems in higher education, innovative technologies, resources and energy saving;

- attracting foreign investment.

The MHSSE has signed cooperation agreements with the Russian Federation, Malaysia, Egypt, India, Poland, Greece, Italy, etc.

Students from other countries may study in Uzbek HEIs on a contract basis and have to follow the admission procedure. According to the MHSSE (2012) over 332 foreign students at all levels of higher education are studying at Uzbek universities. At present more than 97 academic staff from other countries are teaching at Uzbek HEIs.

Wide-scale international cooperation has contributed considerably to improving the quality of the educational process of HEIs in Uzbekistan and upgrading lecturers’ qualifications. According to the Education Act, the HEIs have the right to establish direct cooperation with foreign universities and create joint institutions on a legal basis. At present Westminster International University in Tashkent, affiliate of the Russian Plekhanov University of Economics, Moscow State University named after Lomonosov, the Russian University of Oil and Gaz named after Gubkin, Turin Polytechnic University, and the Management Development Institute of Singapore are successfully operating in Uzbekistan.

The Uzbek HEIs have strengthened international cooperation through a number of bilateral agreements with universities from 45 countries throughout the world. There is intensive cooperation with universities of the European Union in the framework of the Tempus and Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Programmes. The MHSSE maintains close contacts with the diplomatic missions located in Tashkent.

The working relationships with the following international organisations (active in the field of higher education) provide a stable basis for fruitful inter-university cooperation: Asian Development Bank (ADB), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), German Academic Exchange Programme (DAAD), the British Council, Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), Goethe-Institute, World Bank, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), UNESCO, and the French Institute, etc.

The final document-resolution of the international conference ‘Upbringing of educated and intellectually advanced generation as the most important condition of sustainable development and modernisation of the country’ (Tashkent, 16-17 February 2012) presented specific recommendations for international and donor organisations (operating in the field of education).
II. Current challenges and needs

1. Trends and challenges

As already mentioned, the unified policy for education is detailed in the National Programme for Personnel Training, which reinforces the multi-level higher education system and identifies the specific areas which are critical for the new system to become fully operational.

For the reform period since 1997, the following target programmes were developed and are now being implemented: training, retraining and upgrading of pedagogical staff; support for talented youth; management of the education system; intellectual and moral development, cultural and social life of students; quality control and competitiveness of personnel; interaction between education, science and industry; maintenance of the educational process and scientific research.

Higher education in Uzbekistan is currently characterised by the continuation of the reform process and further implementation of the National Programme for Personnel Training. This is being done by redirecting the system in line with experience, labour market development and real social-economic conditions. All necessary legal, personnel, scientific-methodological and financial conditions are in place, ensuring the development of reforms and a coherent education system. Structural reforms and qualitative modernisation of the content of this system are ongoing.

The State Educational Standards are being developed and introduced, defining new requirements for the quality of training and qualification of graduates. At present the new generation of State Educational Standards are being prepared, with the main focus on the furthering the integration of education with science and production and thorough coordination of HEI activities with the requirements of employer organisations.

Uzbekistan was one of the first countries of the former Soviet Union to introduce a two-level higher education system: Bachelor and Master. Transition to the two-level system started in 1997 when the NPPT was adopted. So far the State Educational Standards (SES) have been updated for 165 Bachelor areas and for 447 specialities at Master level.

At present, the primary goal in the modernisation of the higher education system is to improve the quality. This can be done through the further development of State Educational Standards, strengthening of assessment and accreditation structures, and through a continuing process of capacity building among university teaching staff.

Considering experience gained from the implementation of the NPPT, developments on the labour market and real social-economic conditions, the following priority areas have been defined for the further development of education system:

- widespread introduction of new information technologies and modern pedagogical methodologies;
- creation of a national computerised educational network to cover HEIs connected to the Internet;
- development of updated teaching materials and provision thereof to the academic lyceums, professional colleges and HEIs;
- upgrading of skills of university teaching staff, especially in the field of engineering (oil, gas, textile, agriculture, civil engineering, automobile industry, etc);
- improvement of forms and methods of prospecting the labour market, analysis of demand for specific specialities of higher education;
- introduction of a quality assurance system.

There is a basis for the introduction of some elements of the Bologna process in Uzbekistan, which will help the country to become part of the worldwide education community, and encourage the expansion of competition in education.

The following actions have been defined by the recently adopted ‘President’s Decree on Measures for improvement of technical facilities and resources of higher education institutions and for radically improving the quality of excellence for the period of 2011-2016’: 

- optimisation of education areas and specialities for training of highly-qualified specialists;
- further improvement of the state educational standards;
- construction, renovation, refurbishment of academic and
laboratory buildings, sports facilities and student dormitories;

- creation of scientific-research laboratories.

The final resolution of the international conference 'Upbringing of educated and intellectually advanced generation as the most important condition of sustainable development and modernisation of the country' (Tashkent, 16-17 February 2012) presents the recommendations developed by the participants, in particular related to higher education:

- to create an efficient system of teacher training and continuous upgrading of teachers' skills in accordance with the changes in economy structure and needs of society, enhance the attractiveness of teaching by promoting material and moral incentives;

- to ensure continuity between the curricula of different levels of education, maximum adequacy of training to real life demands;

- to constantly upgrade curricula, textbooks, training materials and teaching methodologies, strengthening training in the fields of natural sciences and engineering in compliance with the international standards, progress in science and technical studies, priorities in institutional and structural reforms as well as the integration of all forms of education;

- to introduce systems of applied training in natural sciences and engineering at all levels with the aim of educating specialists to meet the quickly developing and high-technology labour market,

- to ensure access of teachers and students to ICT in training and information sources, widely introduce e-learning, development of new technological forms and methods of training;

- to enhance the teaching of foreign languages at all levels thus enabling the youth to have better access to information resources and adaptation to international labour market requirements.

The 'President’s Decree on Measures for further implementation and development of information communication technologies for the period of 2012-2014’ (No 1730 of 21 March 2012) envisages the following actions directly linked to the higher education system: development of the national social networks and other information resources for wide use, enhancement of computer literacy and foreign language skills of public.
2. The Bologna Process\(^{21}\)

**General Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of integration in the Bologna Process</th>
<th>Bologna-Signatory Country</th>
<th>X Non Bologna-Signatory Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bologna Process officially embedded in the education system</td>
<td>Bologna Process being implemented by ad hoc groups under the supervision of the Ministry of Education</td>
<td>X No particular mechanism supporting the implementation of the Bologna Process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bologna cycle structure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of implementation of a three-cycle structure compliant with the Bologna Process</th>
<th>Another three-cycle structure exists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Student workload/duration for the most common Bologna programmes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bachelor programmes</th>
<th>Another three-cycle structure exists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master programmes</td>
<td>Another three-cycle structure exists</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bachelor/Master cycle structure models most commonly implemented</th>
<th>Another three-cycle structure exists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition of the Learning Outcomes Concept</th>
<th>Learning outcomes are defined in national steering documents and implemented through laws and regulations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of implementation of ECTS</td>
<td>Another credit system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicative number of hours of student workload corresponding to one ECTS</td>
<td>Another credit system or student workload not in use to define ECTS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bologna Diploma Supplement (DS)**

| Level of implementation of the Bologna Diploma Supplement         | Another type of Diploma Supplement                                                                |
| Diploma Supplement issued                                       | Another type of Diploma Supplement                                                                |

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*Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries: Central Asia*
### National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage towards establishing a National Qualification Framework</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: Decision taken. Process just started.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2: The purpose of the NQF has been agreed and the process is under way including discussions and consultations. Various committees have been established.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3: The NQF has been adopted formally and the implementation has started.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 4: Redesigning the study programmes is ongoing and the process is close to completion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 5: Overall process fully completed including self-certified compatibility with the Framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Quality Assurance Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Quality Assurance body</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Year of establishment</th>
<th>Involvement in external quality assurance process</th>
<th>Decision-making role</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>No participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State Testing Centre under the Cabinet Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan</td>
<td>A Government-dependent body or Ministry has responsibility for quality assurance.</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Academic staff</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>International Experts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Recognition of foreign qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of Foreign Qualifications for academic study</td>
<td>Recognition for academic study by central or regional governmental authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of Foreign Qualifications for professional employment</td>
<td>Recognition for professional employment by central or regional governmental authorities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Joint Degrees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Establishment of joint degrees and programmes in higher education legislation</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joint programmes are allowed in the higher education legislation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint degrees are not foreseen in the legislation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. Participation in EU Programmes

1. Tempus

Uzbekistan has participated in the Tempus programme since 1994.

1.1 Statistics

Number of projects in which one or several institutions in the country have been involved (as coordinator, contractor or partner)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TEMPUS I and II</th>
<th>TEMPUS III</th>
<th>TEMPUS IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joint Projects</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compact Projects</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural &amp; Complementary Measures (Tempus III)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Measures (Tempus IV)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Higher education institutions with highest TEMPUS participation during TEMPUS IV (2008-2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Number of projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>JP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUKHARA STATE UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TASHKENT STATE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TASHKENT STATE UNIVERSITY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URGANCH STATE UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KARSHI INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING AND ECONOMICS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FERGHANA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAMARKAND INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KARAKALPKA STATE UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF UZBEKISTAN</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TASHKENT INSTITUTE OF CHEMICAL TECHNOLOGY</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2 Impact of the Tempus programme

In Uzbekistan Tempus has had a considerable impact on the overall internationalisation process of higher education, being the only programme providing long-term intensive inter-university cooperation and improving the universities’ technical infrastructure and computer facilities.

In recent years joint projects for curriculum development have been especially important because of their direct links with the National Programme for Personnel Training (NPPT), and in particular with the introduction of the two-level higher education system.

Tempus projects have supported the development of new curricula and courses for Master and Bachelor programmes, as well as modernisation of the existing curricula, mainly in the fields of engineering and applied technologies, ensuring their relevance to local labour market needs through the direct involvement of enterprises, branch ministries, Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other non-academic organisations.

A considerable impact of Tempus has been recognised in the overall improvement of technical and resource facilities of the higher education institutions by providing modern computer and laboratory equipment.
A number of new and sustainable structures have been established in several universities through Tempus: Quality Assurance Centres at the Tashkent State Agrarian University and at the National University of Uzbekistan, Practical Clinical Skills Training Centre at the Tashkent Medical Academy, Information Technologies Centre and laboratory on computer modelling at the Tashkent Automotive and Road Institute, Technology Transfer Units at the Tashkent Institute of Textile and Light Industry and Namangan Engineering and Economics Institute, entrepreneurship support office at the Tashkent Financial Institute and Andijan Engineering and Economics Institute, training laboratories on information & library science in Tashkent Institute of Culture and Tashkent University of IT.

Training of highly-qualified Master students in the field of land resources management is ensured at the training-research centre established by the Tempus project LAREMA at the Tashkent Institute of Irrigation and Melioration.

Some projects have demonstrated a number of spin-off effects going beyond the planned activities and outcomes. In the framework of Structural and Complementary Measures and due to the active role of local partners, additional outcomes were achieved: for example, the development of re-training courses for university management staff has lead to the introduction of a new Master programme on university management at the Tashkent State Pedagogical University and an optional course in all faculties.

One of the priorities of the Ministry of Higher and Specialised Secondary Education (MHSSE) is the strengthening of relations between universities and enterprises. Tempus has contributed to the establishment of links between HEIs and industry and the non-academic sector of society: a total of over 44 non-academic organisations have been involved in Tempus projects. Due to the direct involvement of representatives of the energy, aviation, automotive, food, light and chemical industries as well the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and other branch ministries in projects, the partnerships between HEIs and the local enterprises have been strengthened.

Several ministries, industries and various institutions have shown a great deal of interest in the graduates trained through Tempus projects, as demonstrated by the high demand for students freshly graduated from the new Master programme on food safety, developed through a Tempus project. The project provided two unique training laboratories for Master students, and also facilitated the upgrading of specialists from partner enterprises.

Twelve new courses, new training materials and textbooks, courses on computer modelling for university teachers and industry representatives have been developed in two HEIs of Tashkent and Dijizzakh in cooperation with the partners from Sweden and Italy.

A considerable number of Tempus projects have been implemented in the field of university management. For example, the information management system established in the National University of Uzbekistan was extended to another eight universities in Tashkent, Bukhara and Gulistan. Seven university management projects have contributed to fostering the development of international cooperation through the establishment of international relations departments in different regions of the country.

Three Tempus projects have provided support in strengthening the links between different levels of education, in particularly with secondary specialised vocational education. Training centres at the Tashkent Pedagogical University and the Ferghana State University provide upgrading and re-training courses for the teaching staff of professional colleges and academic lyceums. Upon graduation both centres award the trainees certificates recognised by the MHSSE.

Overall, the Tempus programme has considerably contributed to the improvement of higher education quality. Since 2004 quality assurance has been a continuing national priority for Tempus in Uzbekistan, and this has led to the implementation of six projects in this field, providing support to Uzbek universities to improve university quality management systems through the development of e-resource management methodologies, the development of qualification requirements for technical specialties, a concept for quality assurance in agrarian higher education and capacity building for student independent learning.

The higher education institutions located in various regions of the country have greatly benefited from Tempus projects, as this cooperation has helped them to build links with European partners as well as with other universities within Uzbekistan. For instance, five agricultural universities based in Tashkent, Andijan and Samarkand worked together on agricultural economics, ecology, water resources management and agrarian management. In the framework of two consecutive Structural Measures, six universities throughout the country have successfully implemented an internal quality assurance system and enhanced specific strategy on research-science-enterprise cooperation.

Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries: Central Asia

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Regional cooperation in higher education has also been boosted: six successful projects in Energy, Water Resource Management, Social Economics and Tourism, Food Safety, Agrarian Management have been successfully implemented together with universities and non-academic organisations from Ukraine, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan.

The Tempus projects currently provides support to strengthen cooperation within Central Asia and other partner-countries. 13 out of 14 Tempus IV projects are multi-country projects involving 24 Uzbek HEIs and over 110 universities from 10 partner-countries and 22 EU Member-States.

Cooperation with the European universities provides continuing awareness of developments within the Bologna process and about promoting its principles. Teachers and students recognise the importance of an alignment with Bologna and its crucial role in international cooperation.

As a partnership programme where all partners have equal rights and benefit from the same processes, Tempus is an instrument which builds strong international partnerships. When Tempus funding is over, the links between Uzbekistan universities and European partners are sustained through academic exchanges, joint publications, participation in projects and events and scientific collaboration.

The Ministry of Higher and Specialised Secondary Education has recognised the considerable impact of the Tempus programme on the overall modernisation process, including on the improvement of university facilities, the installation of modern computer and laboratory equipment, and the development of modern teaching materials and textbooks.

2. Erasmus Mundus

The objective of the Erasmus Mundus programme is to promote European higher education, to help improve and enhance the career prospects of students and to promote intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries, in accordance with EU external policy objectives in order to contribute to the sustainable development of third countries in the field of higher education. It does this through three Actions:

Action 1 – Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes (Master Courses and Joint Doctorates) - with scholarships
Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes are operated by consortia of higher education institutions (HEIs) from the EU and (since 2009) elsewhere in the world. They provide an integrated course and joint or multiple diplomas following study or research at two or more HEIs. Master Courses and Joint Doctorates are selected each year following a Call for Proposals. There are currently 131 Masters and 34 Doctorates offering EU-funded scholarships or fellowships to students and scholars.


Action 2 – Erasmus Mundus Partnerships (former External Cooperation Window) – with scholarships
Under Action 2, Erasmus Mundus Partnerships bring together HEIs from Europe on the one hand and those from a particular region, or geographical 'lot' on the other. Together the partnerships manage mobility flows between the two regions for a range of academic levels - Bachelor, Master, doctorate, post-doctorate and for academic staff.

Action 3 – Erasmus Mundus Attractiveness projects
This Action of the Programme funds projects to enhance the attractiveness, profile, image and visibility of European higher education worldwide. Action 3 provides support to activities related to the international dimension of all aspects of higher education, such as promotion, accessibility, quality assurance, credit recognition, mutual recognition of qualifications, curriculum development and mobility.

### Number of students/staff participating in the programme

#### Erasmus Mundus – Joint degrees (Action 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholars</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellows</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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*Nationals of the country participated in the programme for the first time in 2005-2006 (students) and in 2007-2008 (scholars).*

#### Erasmus Mundus– Partnerships (External Cooperation Window, Action 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Master</th>
<th>Doctorate</th>
<th>Post-doctorate</th>
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<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>51</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>63</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>2010*</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011*</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>146</td>
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</table>

#### Institutions participating in the programme up to and including 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Action 1 Joint Programmes</th>
<th>Action 2 Partnerships</th>
<th>Action 3 Attractiveness projects</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Bukhara State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karakalpak State University named after Berdakh</td>
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<td>Karshi Engineering-Economic Institute</td>
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<td>Namangan Engineering and Economical Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Namangan Engineering Pedagogical Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>National University of Uzbekistan named after Mirzo Ulugbek</td>
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<tr>
<td>Navoi Davlat Konchilik Instituti</td>
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<tr>
<td>Samarkand Agricultural Institute</td>
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<td>Samarkand State University named after Alisher Navoi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tashkent Chemical-Technology Institute</td>
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<td>Tashkent Institute of Irrigation and Melioration</td>
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<td>Tashkent State Technical University named after Abu Raikhan Beruni</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tashkent State University of Economics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tashkent University of Information Technologies</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Tashkent Pediatric Medical Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urgench State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Westminster International University in Tashkent (WIUT)</td>
<td>X</td>
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</table>
IV. Bibliographical references and websites

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- ‘Charter on assessment of students’ knowledge and rating system’ Regulation of the MHSSE No 194 (1999)
- Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan №343 ‘Decree on State Educational Standards’ (2001)
- Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan № 100 ‘Decree on Licensing non-governmental education institutions activities’ (2004)
- Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan №293 ‘Decree on Modernising of the activities of the State Testing Centre under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan’ (2004)
- Appendix to the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan №20 ‘Decree on rules of employing the pedagogical staff into higher education institutions’ (2006)
- Appendix № 1 to the Presidential Decree №1564 «Decree on quotas for admission to the Bachelor degree courses» (4 July 2011)
- Appendix № 2 to the Presidential Decree №1564 «Decree on quotas for admission to the Master degree courses» (4 July 2011)
- ‘Harmoniously Developed Generation is the Basis of Progress of Uzbekistan’, Islam Karimov (Tashkent 1998)
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- Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan № 118 ‘Decree on admission to HEIs…’ (18 June 2010) Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan № 1533 ‘Decree on measures to improve technical facilities and resources of higher education institutions, and radically improve the quality of excellence for the period of 2011-2016’ (20 May 2011)
- The final document-resolution of the international conference ‘Upbringing of educated and intellectually advanced generation as the most important condition of sustainable development and modernisation of the country’ (Tashkent, 16-17 February 2012): http://www.educonf.uz/
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- Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on "Further improvement of system for training and attestation of research-pedagogical human resources of highest degree level” (21 July 2012 )
- Official website of the ‘KAMOLOT’ Youth Movement: www.kamolot.uz
- Official website of the ‘Fund Forum UZ’: www.fondforum.uz
- Official website of the Presidential Fond ‘Istedod’: http://istedod.uz/?page&pid=0&lang=3

Overview of the Higher Education Systems in the Tempus Partner Countries: Central Asia

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This document reflects the views of the Tempus Office and the Authorities of the country concerned. The European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

For further information:

- Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)
  Unit P10 - Tempus and Bilateral Cooperation with Industrialised Countries
  **Postal address**: Tempus Programme
  Avenue du Bourget 1 (BOUR 02/017) B-1140 Brussels, Belgium
  **Contact**: EACEA-Tempus-Info@ec.europa.eu
  **Website**: [www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus](http://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus)

- National Tempus Office Uzbekistan
  **Postal address**: 11th floor, 107B Amir Temur street, International Business Centre, 100084 Tashkent, Uzbekistan
  **Contact**: nto@tempus.uz
  **Website**: [www.tempus.uz](http://www.tempus.uz)

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22 Aziza Abdurakhmanova (NTO)
Overview of the Bologna Process

History of the Bologna Process

The Bologna Process is the product of a series of meetings of Ministers responsible for higher education at which policy decisions have been taken with the goal to establish a European Higher Education Area by 2010. The process also includes the European Commission as a full member. The Council of Europe and UNESCO – CEPES, along with a range of stakeholder organisations are also involved as consultative members. There is thus full and active partnership with higher education institutions, represented by the European University Association (EUA) and the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), students, represented by the European Students' Union (ESU), academics represented by Education International (EI) as well as the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and Business Europe representing employer organisations.

Since 1998, nine ministerial conferences devoted to mapping out the Bologna Process have been held in different European cities, namely Paris (at the Sorbonne University), Bologna, Prague, Berlin, Bergen, London, Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve, Budapest/Vienna and Bucharest.

Sorbonne Declaration (1998)

The basic precepts of the Bologna Process date back to the Sorbonne Joint Declaration on Harmonisation of the Architecture of the European Higher Education System, signed on 25 May 1998 by the education Ministers of four countries: France, Germany, Italy and United Kingdom.

The Sorbonne Declaration focused on:

- Improving the international transparency of programmes and the recognition of qualifications by means of **gradual convergence towards a common framework of qualifications and cycles of study**;
- Facilitating the **mobility of students and teachers** in the European area and their integration into the European labour market;
- Designing a **common degree level system** for undergraduates (Bachelor degree) and graduates (Master and Doctoral degrees).

Bologna Declaration (1999)

The Bologna Declaration on the European Higher Education Area, largely inspired by the Sorbonne Declaration, was signed in June 1999 by Ministers responsible for higher education in 29 European countries. This Declaration became the primary document used by the signatory countries to establish the general framework for the modernisation and reform of European higher education. The process of reform came to be called the Bologna Process.

In 1999, the signatory countries included the then 15 EU Member States, three EFTA countries (Iceland, Norway and Switzerland) and 11 EU candidate countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia). International institutions such as the European Commission, the Council of Europe and associations of universities, rectors and European students also participated in drafting the Declaration.
The Bologna Declaration also formulates the objective of increasing the international competitiveness of the European system of higher education and stresses the need to ensure that this system attracts significant attention from around the world.

In the Bologna Declaration, Ministers affirmed their intention to:

- Adopt a system of **easily readable and comparable degrees**;
- Implement a system based essentially on **two main cycles**;
- Establish a **system of credits** (such as ECTS);
- Support the **mobility of students, teachers, researchers and administrative staff**;
- Promote **European cooperation in quality assurance**;
- Promote the **European dimensions in higher education** (in terms of curricular development and inter-institutional cooperation).

**Prague Communiqué (2001)**

In May 2001, the meeting in Prague was convened to assess the progress accomplished to date (particularly as indicated in the respective national reports) and identify the main priorities that should drive the Bologna Process in the years ahead. 33 countries participated, with Croatia, Cyprus and Turkey accepted as new members. Liechtenstein was also included, having committed to the Process between the Bologna and Prague conferences, and the European Commission also became a member.

The education Ministers also decided to establish a Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) responsible for the continuing development of the Process. The BFUG is composed of representatives of all signatory countries and the European Commission and is chaired by the rotating EU Presidency. The Council of Europe, the European University Association (EUA), the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE) and the National Unions of Students in Europe (ESIB), later renamed the European Students Union (ESU), take part as consultative members in the work of the BFUG.

The Prague Communiqué emphasised three elements of the Bologna Process:

- Development of **lifelong learning**;
- Involvement of **higher education institutions and students**;
- Promotion of the **attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area**.

Held in September 2003, the Berlin Conference was an important stage in the follow up to the Bologna Process. With the inclusion of seven new signatory countries (Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Holy See, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro), 40 countries were then involved.

In the Berlin Communiqué, Ministers charged the BFUG with preparing detailed reports on the progress and implementation of the intermediate priorities and organising a stocktaking process before the following ministerial conference in 2005. The Unesco European Centre for Higher Education (Unesco-CEPES) joined the work of the BFUG as a consultative member.

With the Berlin Communiqué, the Bologna Process gained additional momentum by setting certain priorities for the next two years:

- Development of **quality assurance at institutional, national and European levels**;
- Implementation of the **two-cycle system**;
- **Recognition of degrees and periods of studies**, including the provision of the Diploma Supplement automatically and free of charge for all graduates as of 2005;
- Elaboration of an overarching **framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area**;
- Inclusion of the **doctoral level as the third cycle** in the Process;
- Promotion of closer **links between the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area**.

Bergen Communiqué (2005)

By May 2005, the Bologna Process extended to 45 signatory countries with the inclusion of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The Ministers responsible for higher education met in Bergen to discuss the mid-term achievements of the Bologna Process. The commissioned Stocktaking Report was submitted by the BFUG for the occasion. The Bergen Conference also marked the adoption of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), and the Framework of Qualifications for the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA).

The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the Education International Pan-European Structure and the Union of Industrial and Employers’ Confederations of Europe (UNICE, later to become Business Europe) joined the BFUG as consultative members.

In the Bergen Communiqué, Ministers enlarged their priorities for 2007, which now also include:

- **Reinforcing the social dimension** and removing obstacles to mobility;
- Implementing the **standards and guidelines for quality assurance** as proposed in the ENQA report;
- Developing **national frameworks of qualifications in compatibility with the adopted Framework of Qualifications for the European Higher Education Area**;
- Creating opportunities for **flexible learning paths in higher education**, including procedures for recognition of prior learning.
London Communiqué (2007)

The London ministerial meeting, held on 17 and 18 May 2007, provided a landmark in establishing the first legal body to be created through the Bologna Process – the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR). This is to become a register of quality assurance agencies that comply substantially with the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area on the basis of external evaluation.

London also saw developments in two key areas – the social dimension, where Ministers agreed to develop national strategy and action plans, and the global dimension, where Ministers agreed on a strategy to develop the global dimension of European higher education.

The country membership expanded to 46 with the recognition of the Republic of Montenegro as an independent State in the European Higher Education Area.

In the London Communiqué, Ministers:
- Welcomed the creation of the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR);
- Committed to completing national frameworks of qualifications in compatibility with the adopted Framework of Qualifications for the European Higher Education Area by 2010;
- Promised to report on national action to remove obstacles to the mobility of students and staff;
- Pledged to implement and report on national strategies for the social dimension, including action plans and measures to evaluate their effectiveness;
- Adopted a strategy for the European Higher Education Area in global setting.

Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué (2009)

The Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve ministerial meeting, held on 28 and 29 April 2009, took stock of the achievements of the Bologna Process and laid out the priorities for the European Higher Education Area for the next decade.

Looking back to ten years of European higher education reform, Ministers emphasised the achievements of the Bologna Process, highlighting in particular the increased compatibility and comparability of European education systems through the implementation of structural changes and the use of ECTS and the Diploma Supplement. Acknowledging that the European Higher Education Area is not yet a reality, the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve communiqué also established the priorities for the decade until 2020.

The organisational structures of the Bologna Process were endorsed as being fit for purpose, and Ministers decided that in the future the Bologna Process would be co-chaired by the country holding the EU presidency and a non-EU country.

In the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué, Ministers agreed that:
- Each country should set measurable targets for widening overall participation and increasing the participation of under-represented social groups in higher education by the end of the next decade.
- By 2020 at least 20% of those graduating in the EHEA should have had a study or training period abroad.
- Lifelong learning and employability are important missions of higher education.
- Student-centred learning should be the goal of ongoing curriculum reform.
Budapest/Vienna Communiqué (2010)

The Budapest/Vienna ministerial meeting held on 11 and 12 March 2010 launched officially the internationally competitive and attractive European Higher Education Area as envisaged in the Bologna Declaration of 1999, based on trust, cooperation and respect for diversity.

The Ministers committed to the full implementation of the agreed objectives and the agenda for the next decade set by in Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve. They acknowledged that the Bologna action lines are implemented to varying degrees and that Bologna aims and reforms have not always been properly implemented and explained. Ministers emphasised the need to listen to the critical voices raised among staff and students and to work on improving and better communicating about the process.

In particular, Ministers fully support staff and student participation at decision-making structures (EU, national, institutional) and student-centred learning. Ministers recommitted to academic freedom as well as autonomy and accountability of higher education institutions.

They also reaffirmed that higher education is a public responsibility, and despite difficult economic times, are committed to ensure that higher education institutions have the necessary resources and can provide equal opportunities to quality education, paying particular attention to underrepresented groups.

The country membership expanded to 47 with the recognition of Kazakhstan as a new participating country.

In the Budapest/Vienna Communiqué, Ministers agreed:

- To ask the Bologna Follow-up Group to propose measures to facilitate the implementation of Bologna action lines, among others by developing additional working methods, such as peer learning, study visits and other information sharing activities.
- To intensify policy dialogue and cooperation with partners across the world.

Bucharest Communiqué (2012)

The Bucharest ministerial meeting was held on 26th and 27th April, 2012. It set out of the achievements of the Bologna process and agreed on further priorities of the European Higher Education Area for 2012-2015.

Ministers underlined how the Bologna reforms have helped to change higher education in Europe: higher education structures in Europe are now more compatible and comparable; quality assurance systems contribute to building trust; higher education qualifications are more recognisable across countries and students are more mobile and can benefit from different educational opportunities.

Nevertheless, as the report on the implementation of the Bologna Process shows, further efforts to consolidate this progress are deemed necessary. The Bologna countries underlined the need for more coherence, particularly in completing the transition to the three cycle system, the use of ECTS, the issuing of Diploma Supplements, the enhancement of quality assurance and the implementation of qualifications frameworks. The importance of international openness through joint programmes and degrees was also stressed as a key factor in making progress on higher education reforms.
Alongside the Communiqué, a new mobility strategy was adopted, defining in particular actions to enhance learning mobility, **enforcing** the 20 per cent mobility target set out in the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué.

The Bucharest Communiqué focuses on:

- **Providing quality higher education for all** through **widening its access**, developing the **social dimension of higher education** by stepping up the efforts towards underrepresented groups, reiterating the commitment to promote **student-centred** learning in higher education. It acknowledges the importance of **quality assurance**, and the ministers confirm their commitment to maintaining public responsibility for higher education and acknowledge the need to open a dialogue on **funding and governance** of higher education.

- **Enhancing employability to serve Europe’s needs** by improving cooperation between employers, students and higher education institutions, as well as by underpinning the importance of the **link between research, teaching and learning** at all levels bridging the EHEA and the European Research Area (ERA). Furthermore, the ministers encourage the meaningful implementation of learning outcomes and specifically call on higher education institutions to further link study credits with both **learning outcomes** and student workload. The further development and implementation of qualifications frameworks is encouraged.

- **Strengthening mobility for better learning** by for instance reinforcing the portability of national grants and loans. The ministers also state the importance of removing obstacles hindering effective and proper **recognition** and are willing to work together towards the automatic recognition of comparable academic degrees, building on the tools of the Bologna framework, as a long-term goal of the EHEA. Reviewing national legislation to comply with the Lisbon Recognition Convention is a step in this direction.

- **Improvement of data collection and transparency to underpin political goals** by asking for more targeted data collection on higher education, encouraging a system of voluntary peer learning and reviewing of the implementation of the Bologna reforms, as well as by striving to make the education systems more transparent and hence, understandable to the public, in particular to students and employers.

**Beyond Europe, the Bologna Policy Forum**

In 2007, Ministers and European Union representatives decided to develop a strategy specific for the external dimension of the Bologna Process. Two years later, in 2009, the first Bologna Policy Forum was held to encourage closer cooperation with countries outside the process. This meeting immediately followed the ministerial meeting on 29 April 2009 and was attended by higher education Ministers or their representatives from 15 countries around the world, including the US, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Australia, China and several Tempus countries (Egypt, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco and Tunisia).

The first Bologna Policy Forum, held in Louvain-la-Neuve on 29 April 2009, provided the opportunity to discuss how worldwide cooperation in higher education can be enhanced through the Bologna Process. The final Declaration highlighted the consensus that a more permanent and structured dialogue between "Bologna" and third countries would be of mutual interest. It stated that the recognition of studies and qualifications as well as the issue of quality assurance are key elements for promoting mobility that go much beyond the Bologna signatory countries. It also concluded that the Bologna Policy Forum should become a regular, institutionalised event.
The second Bologna Policy Forum took place in Vienna on 12 March 2010, right after the Bologna Ministerial Anniversary Conference. Debates focused on how higher education systems and institutions respond to growing demands, but also on mobility, including the challenges and opportunities of “brain circulation” and the balance between cooperation and competition in international higher education.

It was decided that each country will nominate a contact person who will function as liaison point for a better flow of information and joint activities, including the preparation of the next Bologna Policy Forum at ministerial level.

The third edition of the Bologna Policy Forum was held in Romania on 27 April 2012 coinciding with the Bucharest Ministerial Conference. The Ministers agreed on increasing the cooperation and policy dialogue among their countries.

The discussions focused on creating and connecting national, regional and global higher education areas. They also underlined the need to provide appropriate investment and public funding to sustain equitable higher education and the need to continue working towards reducing obstacles to mobility. The importance of quality assurance was also stated. They further underlined their willingness to enhance graduate employability by reforming higher education.

The Policy Forum will continue to promote dialogue and cooperation among higher education institutions, staff and students and other relevant stakeholders across the world. In this context, the need to foster global student dialogue is acknowledged.

Cooperation based on partnership between governments, higher education institutions, staff, students and other stakeholders is at the core of the European Higher Education Area. This partnership approach should also be reflected in the organisation of the next Bologna Policy Forum at ministerial level in Armenia in 2015.
"A Tempus Study" is a series of studies providing an in-depth overview about the management, achievements and impact of the Tempus programme:


**These documents are available on the Tempus website:**

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus
THE PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN BY:

Philippe Ruffio  
Antonella Giorgio  
Juliane Gierach  
Albert Sesé Ballart

EDUCATION, AUDIOVISUAL AND CULTURE EXECUTIVE AGENCY  
UNIT P10 - Tempus and Bilateral Cooperation with Industrialised Countries  
Avenue du Bourget, 1  
B-1140 Brussels  
(http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus)

IN CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH THE FOLLOWING NATIONAL TEMPUS OFFICERS:

Kazakhstan: Shaizada Tasbulatova  
Kyrgyzstan: Gulnara Chokusheva  
Tajikistan: Czarina Nuridinova  
Turkmenistan: Aina Choreklieva  
Uzbekistan: Aziza Abdurakhmanova

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