

## EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA: RUSSIA ON THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

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International cooperation in the area of education is one of the key directions of Russian education and science Ministry and the most important tool in the process of integration of Russian science into the world educational and scientific-technological area. The paramount attention at the actual stage is paid to the development of mutually-profitable contacts within European space and, first of all, with the European Union. The work is carried out in order to improve the mechanisms and structure of interaction between Russia and European Union, to coordinate Russian and European scientific-technological and innovative priorities in the education area. The development of permanent education is a State political programme that is carried out with an active support by the society and aimed not only for the acceleration, but also deepening of the reformations.

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A multi-level cooperation takes one of the most significant priorities in the scheme of international connections that defines the growth of integration relations that include all areas of social relations, including education, science, technology, and innovations. The main goal of international cooperation is to increase the quality of Russian educational and scientific-technical potential, its competitiveness on the world market of scientific and educational services, and as a result, the provision of the quickest and the most effective transfer of Russian economy to an innovative development way.

Considering geopolitical and economic interests of Russia, its efforts in the area of international activity are aimed for the fixation of the results, achieved in recent years, and, on this basis, provision of further development in the area of cooperation with foreign countries and organizations within the most prior directions of education. A cooperation with European Union, its versatile institutions and programs is being developed (the 6<sup>th</sup> Frame programme of the scientific-technological EU development, TESIS, EURICA, etc), as well as with the European Council, Organisation of economic cooperation and development (OECD), a number of the UN system organizations (UN ECE, UNESCO, specialized scientific and educational organizations (Science committee of NATO, etc)). An active work is carried out on the line of «Big Eight» structures and regional economic consolidations (APEC, ASEAN, BSEC).

Russia is an active participant in many international agreements in the area of higher education. Among them we can outline:

- ❖ The convention of fighting discrimination in the educative area (14.12.1960, Paris, UNESCO);
- ❖ The convention of acknowledgement of educational courses, higher education diplomas, and scientific degrees in the European region states (21.12.1979, Paris, UNESCO);

- ❖ The European convention of equivalence of diplomas that give access to universities (11.12.1953, Paris) and its protocol (03.06.1964, Strasburg). In force in Russia since 17.10.1999;

- ❖ The European convention of university education duration period equivalence (15.12.1956, Paris). In force in Russia since 17.09.1999;

- ❖ The European convention of the general university education duration period (06.11.1990, Rome), in force in Russia since 01.01.1997;

- ❖ The convention of the acknowledgement of qualifications, linked to the European region education (11.04.1997, Lisbon). In force in Russia since 01.07.2000;

- ❖ The European convention of the academic acknowledgement of university qualifications (14.12.1959, Paris). In force in Russia since 18.10.1999.

Once again, we should underline, that one of the main directions of an international interaction is the establishment of two-side relations. Such relations are realized, first of all, with highly-developed countries, new industrial states, and also a number of the developing countries in Asia and Latin America. The Russian Federation signed a big number of interstate and intergovernmental agreements with different countries on questions of education, including higher.

The realization of such approach must lead to the achievement of new quality for Russian education that is defined first of all, by its correspondence to actual and perspective objectives of social-economic development of the country. The development of permanent education requires deep integration of all of the education system elements, and also their interaction with other social systems and reformations.

International cooperation in the area of permanent education must realize the following objectives:

❖ Coordinate education programmes in the area of the permanent education (adults' education);

❖ Provide the realization of joint projects in the methodology of adults' education in the direction of interactive educative methods wide introduction;

❖ Develop a programme on publication of text and methodological adults' education materials in Russia;

❖ Develop a programme on advancement of Russian training and methodological materials in the area of permanent education (adults' education) in the world market, and, first of all, CID market.

An importance of international educational cooperation in the area of development and strengthening stable, peaceful, and democratic societies is one of the social nature and accepted as the most prior one. In the Sorbonne declaration of the 25<sup>th</sup> of May 1998 the important role of universities in the development of European cultural values is outlined. The declaration explains the creation of European higher education zone as a key point in developing citizens' mobility with a possibility of their employment. European higher education institutions follow the fundamental principles that were formulated by the university charter «Magna Charta Universitatum» that was accepted in Bologna in 1998, and play the major role in the formation of European higher education zone.

Supporting the main principles, described in the Sorbonne declaration, a number of countries, including Russia, accepted the responsibility to coordinate their policy in order to achieve in the closest future the following objectives, that are considered as the most significant ones for the creation of the European higher education zone and the advancement of European higher education system all over the world:

❖ An acceptance of system of easily comprehended and comparable degrees through the introduction of a diploma attachment in order to provide a possibility of employment in European countries and increase an international competitiveness of the European higher education system.

❖ An acceptance of system that is based on two major cycles – pre-degree and post-degree. A degree that is provided after the first cycle, must be claimed on the European labor market as a qualification of a corresponding level. The second cycle must lead to an obtaining of a master or/and doctor degree, as it is accepted in most of the European countries.

❖ An introduction of credit system according to ECTS type – the European system of relating of labor-intensiveness units credit, as a proper mean of large-scale students' mobility support.

❖ An assistance for the European Union via provision of education quality in order to develop comparable criteria and methodologies.

❖ An assistance for the European views in higher education, especially regarding educational plans development, inter-institution cooperation, mobility schemes, joint education programmes, practical training, and implementation of scientific researches.

❖ An assistance for mobility through overcoming the obstacles of the effective free movement realization, considering the following:

– a student must be provided with an ability to obtain an education and practical training, as well as the accompanied services;

– tutors, researchers, and administrative personnel must be provided with an acknowledgement and accreditation of time period, spent for a research, training activity, and probation period in European region, without affecting their rights, fixed legitimately.

The European higher education zone is being constructed on European traditions of education responsibility before the society, wide and open access to both pre-degree and post-degree training within the whole life period, education and development of personality within the whole life period, and civicism. Since scientific research is the main power that pushes higher education the creation of the European higher education zone must be accompanied by a creation of European scientific research zone.

The European higher education zone must meet the expectations of its partners in the aspect of education services' quality. It is true that quality evaluation must consider objectives and missions of institutes and their programmes. A certain balance is needed between innovations and traditions, academic advantages and social economic necessity, programmes' connection and students' freedom of choice. Free mobility of students, personnel, and graduates is a necessary existence condition for the European higher education zone. Higher education institution of countries that participate in Bologna process, support the orientation for comparable qualifications, based on key differences in pre-degree and post-degree training. An important role in the process of taking such decisions play networks that are created on the foundation of the studied disciplines' homogeneity. And here, first of all, it is necessary to solve the problem of further improvement of mechanisms that provide two-way interaction within all the education problems' range, youth policy, generation of fundamental and applied knowledge of the world level, innovative activity in order to transform the cooperation with such states to the level of international partnership.

A deeper cooperation between educational institutions is supposed under terms of signing various agreements between them on the implementation of coordinated educational programmes. «Global Alliance of Transnational Education» (GATE) is an international union that includes business-organizations, higher education institutions, and governmental structures that are involved in the provision of quality, accreditation, and certification of institutions' programmes, that are offered outside their country.

The prior partner of Russia in educative and scientific-technological area is still France. The main direction of our educative interaction with France is the harmonization of Russian and French education system within European innovation processes. A whole number of Russian-French seminars has been conducted and planned, including some of such topics, as «Single basic European limits, certification systems, methodical manuals», «French language in business communication», and others.

In our cooperation with great Britain the prior attention in topic aspect is paid to the problems of biotechnology, genetic engineering, ecology, and global climate alterations. At the same time mutual projects in the area

of technological prognosis, national scientific-educational system development strategies formation and realization are realized. Together with Great Britain regular contacts on actual problems of national education systems' improvement are carried out.

In order to create additional abilities to increase international academic mobility with a direct involvement of Ministry, interstate agreements with FRG, France, Italy have been signed on topics of simplifying mutual trips, according to which visa obtaining procedures are greatly reduced for scientific-educational transfers' participants. The same goals are achieved via interstate agreements of educational documents' acknowledgement, particularly with Austria, FRG, and France.

The development of international cooperation on adults' education programmes must be founded on a wide informing of Russia's partners on its offered programmes of additional professional, and social education via creation of special web-sites on adults' education and educational portals, international meeting and forums, mutual educational programmes' realization. An importance international education cooperation in the development and stabilization of peaceful and democratic societies is universal and confirmed as the prior one.