

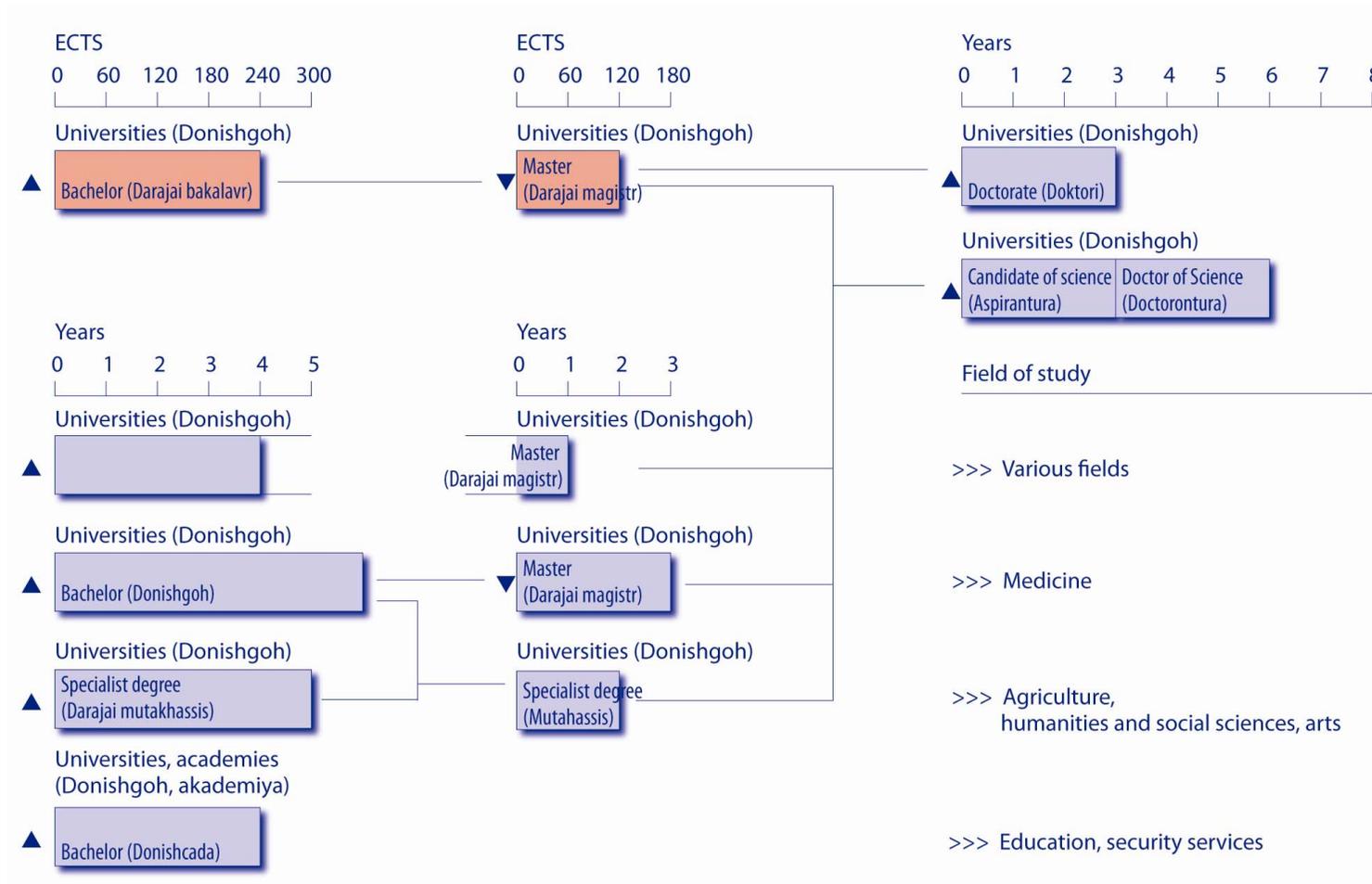


HIGHER EDUCATION IN TAJIKISTAN



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The higher education system in Tajikistan



- Most common length of a Bologna cycle
- Other length of a Bologna cycle
- Programme outside the typical Bologna model
- Professional programme

ECTS
Credits according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

		regulated at national level	decided at institutional level
ALL	programmes have admission requirements	▼	▲
SOME		▽	△

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 specialty 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 inter-governmental agreements.

Number of students at HEI (academic year 2010/2011)	
about 155 000	
Number of HEI (academic year 2011/2012)	
30	
Public	Private
30	None

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.

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 Attestatsionnaya Kommissiya - 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 Process¹

General Information

Level of integration in the Bologna Process		Bologna-Signatory Country
	X	Non Bologna-Signatory Country
		Bologna Process officially embedded in the education system
	X	Bologna Process being implemented by ad hoc groups under the supervision of the Ministry of Education
		No particular mechanism supporting the implementation of the Bologna Process

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
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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)
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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
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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.
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¹ Source: Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency. 'State of Play of the Bologna Process in the Tempus Partner Countries (2012)', A Tempus Study, No 9, April 2012, EACEA, Brussels.

Indicative number of hours of student workload corresponding to one ECTS	Another credit system or student workload not in use to define ECTS
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Bologna Diploma Supplement (DS)

Level of implementation of the Bologna Diploma Supplement	Another type of Diploma Supplement
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Diploma Supplement issued	Another type of Diploma Supplement
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National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

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

Quality Assurance Practices

National Quality Assurance body				
Name	Office of Attestation under the Ministry of Education			
Status	A Government-dependent body or Ministry has responsibility for quality assurance.			
Year of establishment	2003			
Involvement in external quality assurance process		Decision-making role	Participation	No participation
	Academic staff		X	
	Students			X
	International Experts		X	

Recognition of foreign qualifications

Ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention	X	2011 (signature), 2012 (ratification)
Recognition of Foreign Qualifications for academic study	Recognition for academic study by central or regional governmental authorities	
Recognition of Foreign Qualifications for professional employment	Recognition for professional employment by central or regional governmental authorities	

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.
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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)

	TEMPUS I and II	TEMPUS III	TEMPUS IV				
	1990-1999	2000-2006	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Joint Projects	-	8	0	3	2	4	2
Structural & Complementary Measures (Tempus III)	-	8	2	0	1	2	3
Structural Measures (Tempus IV)							
Total	-	16	2	3	3	6	5

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

Institutions	Total	Number of projects	
		JP	SM
TAJIK STATE TECHNICAL (DUSHANBE)	8	4	4
KHUJAND STATE UNIVERSITY (REGIONAL)	7	5	2
KULOB STATE UNIVERSITY (REGIONAL)	6	2	4
KHOROG STATE UNIVERSITY (REGIONAL)	6	3	3
TAJIK TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY (DUSHANBE)	6	4	2
TAJIK STATE PEDAGOGICAL UNIVERSITY (DUSHANBE)	5	4	1
TAJIK UNIVERSITY OF COMMERCE (DUSHANBE)	5	1	4

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:

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/results_compendia/selected_projects_en.php

Number of students/staff participating in the programme

Erasmus Mundus – Joint degrees (Action 1)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Students	1	-	1	-	1	1	1	1	1
Scholars	-	-	-	-	-	-	NA	NA	NA

Nationals of the country participated in the programme for the first time in 2004-2005 (students only).

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

	Undergraduate	Master	Doctorate	Post-doctorate	Staff	Total
2007	3	3	2	1	4	13
2008	12	1	3	2	1	19
2009	11	3	5	0	2	21
2010*	25	18	20	10	18	91
2011*	25	19	16	9	18	87

Institutions participating in the programme up to and including 2011

Institutions	Action 1 Joint Programmes	Action 2 Partnerships	Action 3 Attractiveness projects
INSTITUTE OF ECONOMY AND TRADE OF TAJIK STATE UNIVERSITY OF COMMERCE		X	
KHOROG STATE UNIVERSITY		X	
KHUJAND BRANCH OF TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY OF TAJIKISTAN		X	
KHUJAND STATE UNIVERSITY		X	

KULOB BRANCH TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY		X	
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF TAJIKISTAN		X	
TAJIK AGRARIAN UNIVERSITY		X	
TAJIK POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY		X	
TAJIK STATE UNIVERSITY OF COMMERCE		X	
TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY OF TAJIKISTAN		X	
UNIVERSITY DAVLATII KHUJAND		X	

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- 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>

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