



PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION IN RUSSIA: LEGAL AND FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF TRANSFORMATION

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Abstract. Purpose. In the situation of long and officially latent crisis there is a change of financing organization in the country. It includes a change in Federal budget expenditures on education, organizational changes in the quantity and structure of higher education institutions, the introduction of efficiency standards for activity of institutes and universities.

So the main purpose of the paper is to analyze problems and prospects of higher education system transformation in Russia and develop proposals for the removal of problems identified.

Methodology. Positive and normative analyses are used. The concept of state regulation of economy is a foundation of the investigation.

Results: Solution of the reforming of higher education should be sought not on the way a significant reduction the number of higher education institutions. The high level of the population education – it is not only an investment to lift the domestic economy, but it is also a necessary condition for human potential development, so – for the country welfare.

Reformation of the education system of the Russian Federation is carried out without considering the needs of society, which is manifested in the absence of a positive effect. However, comparison of the reform program with the changes of consumer preferences, market demands, as well as indicators and characteristics of educational institutions, will help to achieve a positive result.

It is necessary to create of common educational websites, which will contain information actual at present on all courses of the higher school. Besides, much attention has to is paid to creation of the imitating models working as in real time, and in limited temporary terms in the various directions of training. Such approach will allow students to form necessary practical and professional skills which aren't fully formed at existing education system and practically are not realized in the traditional distance learning system.

Keywords: *professional education, financing, higher educational institutions, education reform, distance learning*

JEL code: I122

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Introduction

At the present time there are two types of education standards in the system of special and higher education of the Russian Federation - diploma and two-level system of higher education (bachelor and master). The transition to the two-level system legislatively carried out just under the impact of the economic crisis.

Current trends of special and higher education financing in the Russian Federation are reviewed in the paper. At the present time there are two types of education standards in the system of special and higher education of the Russian Federation – diploma and a two-level system of higher education (bachelor and master). Just under the impact of the world economic crisis legislatively carried out the transition to the two-level system. In this work problems and prospects of such transformation are analyzed. Financing of higher school in the Russian Federation is exacerbated by the demographic problems of the country.

In the conditions of long and officially latent crisis there is a change of financing organization in the country. It includes a change in Federal budget expenditures on education, organizational changes in the quantity and structure of higher education institutions, the introduction of efficiency standards for activity of institutes and universities. As a result the state differentiation of educational institutions takes place instead of market-public differentiation.

According to the results of such differentiation various conditions are provided to various educational institutions. It concerns both the preparation of students, and scientific and educational-methodical activity of teachers and scientific staff. This approach fixes the position of the educational institution in their group, not allowing to develop the competition in the service sector, which includes an education.

The main purpose of the research is to analyze problems and prospects of higher education system transformation in Russia and develop proposals for the removal of problems identified.

Tasks of the research are following:

- to review current trends of special and higher education financing in the Russian,
- to analyze problems and prospects of higher education transformation in a two-level system,
- to identify the features of the competency-based approach in the implementation of the new education standards,
- to develop offers on elimination of problems identified.

Positive and normative analyses are used in this research and also the concept of state regulation of economy is a foundation of the investigation.

The authors reveal the features of the competency-based approach in the implementation of the new education standards. Authors believe that the offered state approach of the maximal transition to distance learning for economy of means in the higher and vocational school is ambiguous and doesn't allow the student to get the required volume of knowledge and especially practical skills. The authors propose to make changes to this paradigm of education, having added it, and at the same time having limited it widespread.

The article deals with the proposals for the creation of common educational web sites, which will contain information actual at present on all courses of the higher school. Besides, much attention has to be paid to creation of the imitating models working as in real time, and in limited temporary terms in the various directions of training. On authors' opinion, such approach will allow the listener to form necessary practical and professional skills which aren't fully formed at existing education system and practically are not realized in the traditional distance learning system.

Education reform requires changing the order of modernization. Practical implications of the research are that the authors propose to establish normative regulation categories of education quality, because at the present time educational institutions do not have information on demands placed on them. The above requirements should represent a concept of characteristics totality that reflects to the level of the educational institution. For example, such characteristics include the demand for graduates.



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Legal and Financial Aspects

Russian society, changing economic, political and state structure, has felt the necessity to make changes in the well-established education system. This necessity is dictated by the new demands of the society for citizens who possess a certain volume of knowledge that is important in the modern professions and able to reach certain purpose of the state. Reforming of the national system of higher education is caused by demands of the general (note: general, and not only economic) development of the country. It is necessary to bring the country on the frontiers of post-industrial or information society, ensuring its people a decent life in compliance with the modern standards of scientific, technical, socio-economic, spiritual and cultural progress.

For the preparation of highly trained and qualified personnel are required systematic and significant investments in education.

Realizing the important role of education, the countries with a developed market economics implemented serious investment in the development of this sphere in the last 15-20 years. We have, in accordance with the Education Act, the money allocated to this sphere in two times less than in the West. Public and private expenditures on education in Russia, according to the authors of the report of the OECD “Education at a Glance – 2011” account for only 4.7 per cent of GDP, while in the OECD countries – 6.1 [1].

For instance, public expenditure on education in the EU-27 in 2009 was equivalent to 5.4% of GDP, while the expenditure of both public and private sources of funds on educational institutions amounted to 6.2% of GDP (see Table 1).

The highest public spending on education relative to GDP was observed in Denmark (8.7% of GDP), while Cyprus (8.0%), Sweden (7.3%), Finland (6.8%), Belgium (6.6%) and Ireland (6.5%) also recorded relatively high proportions. Most Member States reported that public expenditure on education accounted for between 4% and 6% of their GDP (note that the data for Luxembourg excludes the tertiary education sector). Between 2004 and 2009 the combined public and private expenditure on education as a share of GDP rose by 1.9 percentage points in Ireland, 1.6 percentage points in Malta and by 1.5 percentage points in the United Kingdom; the only Member States to record a decrease in their relative expenditure were Slovenia, Slovakia and Poland, all down by either 0.1 or 0.2 percentage points. It should be noted that changes in GDP (growth or decline) can mask significant increases or decreases made in terms of education spending. [2].

Meanwhile, the state support of education is a long-term investment in the future economic and social stability.

Expenditure on education may help foster economic growth, enhance productivity, contribute to people’s personal and social development, and help reduce social inequalities. The proportion of total financial resources devoted to education is one of the key choices made by governments in each country of the European Union (EU). In a similar vein, enterprises, students and their families also make decisions on the financial resources that they will set aside for education.

The Federal budget expenditures on education will amount in 2012 year 603.5 billion rbl., in 2013 – 558.9 billion rbl., in 2014 – 499.5 billion rubles[3]. In the total expenditures of the Federal budget these costs will amount respectively 4.6%, 3.9% and 3.3%.

The education reform includes two directions: a qualitative transformation of the system and the reorganization of its financial provision. Legal reform of the qualitative component of the education system provides for implementation of a number of measures aimed at selection of educational institutions. To a large extent, this selection affects higher education. Employment of graduates reflects to the market demand for the services of a particular educational institution. In case if the quality of the education graduates do not meet the requirements of the economy, the demand for graduates of this higher educational institution decreases, which makes the latter correspond to the needs of the society. Consequently take place the market regulation of the educational institutions quality.



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Table 1

Expenditure on educational institutions, 2004 and 2009 (1)

	Public expenditure (% of GDP)		Private expenditure (% of GDP)		Expenditure on public & private educational institutions per pupil/student (PPS for full-time equivalents)	
	2004	2009	2004	2009	2004	2009
EU-27	5.06	5.41	0.65	0.79	5487	6504
Belgium	5.95	6.57	0.34	0.38	6251	7659
Bulgaria	4.40	4.58	0.62	0.66	1810	2874
Czech Republic	4.20	4.38	0.58	0.58	3664	4621
Denmark	8.43	8.72	0.32	0.33	7645	9114
Germany	4.62	5.06	0.92	0.80	6184	7299
Estonia (2)	4.92	6.09	0.38	0.36	2823	4172
Ireland	4.65	6.50	0.32	0.37	5723	:
Greece	3.83	:	0.19	:	4148	:
Spain	4.25	5.01	0.61	0.72	5258	6953
France	5.80	5.89	0.55	0.61	6121	6988
Italy	4.56	4.70	0.42	0.45	5916	6275
Cyprus	6.77	7.98	1.18	1.53	5960	8590
Latvia	5.08	5.64	0.82	0.58	2403	3722
Lithuania	5.17	5.64	0.47	0.66	2356	3509
Luxembourg (3)	3.87	3.15	:	:	:	:
Hungary	5.44	5.12	0.52	:	3642	:
Malta (4)	4.79	5.46	0.44	1.36	4076	6836
Netherlands	5.46	5.94	0.97	1.01	7016	8359
Austria	5.48	6.01	0.39	0.51	7804	8945
Poland	5.41	5.10	0.59	0.77	2723	3928
Portugal	5.10	5.79	0.13	0.38	4233	5298
Romania (2)	3.28	4.24	0.40	0.11	1437	2386
Slovenia	5.74	5.70	0.83	0.68	5527	6610
Slovakia	4.19	4.09	0.75	0.72	2594	3965
Finland	6.42	6.81	0.13	0.16	6242	7085
Sweden	7.09	7.26	0.19	0.18	7130	7950
United Kingdom	5.16	5.67	0.93	1.87	6046	7847
Iceland	7.47	7.82	0.74	0.74	7375	7702
Liechtenstein (5)	2.43	2.05	:	:	:	:
Norway	7.42	7.32	0.05	0.11	8629	10179
Switzerland	5.72	5.55	0.58	0.60	:	:
Croatia (6)	3.87	4.33	0.28	0.36	:	4103
Turkey	3.07	:	0.08	:	:	:
Japan	3.59	3.61	1.21	1.60	6820	7484
United States	5.32	5.47	2.33	2.03	9948	11370

(1) Refer to the internet metadata file (http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/en/educ_esms.htm).

(2) Data for 2005 instead of 2004 other than for public expenditure.

(3) Excluded tertiary education; data for 2007 instead of 2009.

(4) Break in series between 2004 and 2009.

(5) Data for 2008 instead of 2009.

(6) Data for 2005 instead of 2004 for private expenditure.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: educ_figdp, tps00068, and tps00067), UNESCO, OECD



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However, the Russian Federation chose a faster (revolutionary) way to improve the system, based on the statistical data about the needs in qualified specialists. Such approach has a number of drawbacks. So, the government's view of a qualifying level of a specialist is different from the real needs of the economic environment in the staffing. The Bologna process, to which Russia joined in 2003, is implemented in the form of the adoption of the Federal state standard for the preparation of specialists, bachelors and masters. However, the useful effect of the adoption of these standards level out the uneven distribution of the total load on each teacher, the lack of a common system of funding for higher education institutions, as well as the unified requirements the higher educational institutions. Furthermore, analysis of the effectiveness and relevance of trained professionals points to reduce the overall level of their training.

Currently, the legislation establishes requirements to the teaching staff of the University, to the volume and procedure of teaching in each subject of the curriculum, but there are no requirements directly to the educational institution. Moreover, the educational institution is deprived a possibility independently to estimate own efficiency, a demand of graduates on a labor market in connection with absence, difficulty of reception or closeness of the given information. Given these facts, we can conclude that it is impossible to evaluate the quality of education provided by the specific higher education Institution. Consequently, it is impossible to draw a conclusion about the effectiveness of the reform of the system.

Nevertheless, the Ministry of Education in year 2012, monitored the activities of the federal educational institutions of higher professional education. To determine the effectiveness of universities were elected the following indicators:

- Educational activities: the Average score of the Unified State Examination (USE) of students admitted to the USE results.
- Research and development: the volume of R & D per science teachers (NDP).
- International activities: the share of foreign students completed their education, in the total output of the students.
- Financial and economic activities: income of universities from all sources per NDP.
- Infrastructure: the total area of the educational-laboratory buildings of the University on the right of ownership and assigned to the University on the right of operational management, per student.

It should be noted that these indicators have not been approved regulations, have not been tested, and are not objective. Earlier similar requirements to the educational institutions of higher professional education are not presented. But the monitoring of higher education institutions on the basis of these indicators has revealed a number of so-called "inefficient institutions of higher education". Moreover, the consequences of classifying establishments to "inefficient" seem fatal, because a way of increasing the effectiveness determined as the reorganization of the institution.

Today there are 3 thousand universities and branches in Russia, including:

- Global Research Universities – 2 (Moscow and St. Petersburg State Universities);
- Federal universities – 8: North-East (Krasnoyarsk), Kazan (Volga), Ural (Yekaterinburg), Northern (Arctic), Far-East (Vladivostok), Southern (Rostov-on-Don), Baltic universities;
- National – research – about 30 universities [4].

The Ministry of Education and Science of Russia in the next three years plans to reduce the number of higher educational institutions by 20%, and the number of their branches by 30%. Thus, the reform of the higher education system by increasing the quality component is currently not given the positive results.

The second element of the reform of the education system is the financial aspect. This issue is painful for consumers of educational services, and for educational institutions. One of the tasks of the education change's system is the reduction of the volume of state financing into this sphere at the expense of reduction of the budget subsidies. Another task – to provide educational institutions an opportunity to independently carry out activities, aimed at making profit.



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Up to 2010, the educational institutions had the organizational-legal form of the unitary enterprise based on the right of operative management or institution, and therefore were deprived of the opportunity to dispose of their property, to render additional educational services and receive profit.

In May 2010, the Federal Law was adopted; it allows to carry out the reorganization of the educational institutions in the preferred form a state-owned institution, budgetary organization, an Autonomous institution. However, lately gaps were identified of this type of transformations. For example, insufficient written the procedures of the reorganization of institutions, that led to the bureaucratization of the process and legal errors. In addition, a significant number of shortcomings were revealed in the field of the financial sphere rights of the activities of educational institutions. These features of modernization noted also by other authors [5].

Such shortcomings complicate the activities of educational institutions, including those aimed at making a profit. Nevertheless, the objective to reduce the volume of state financing is achieved. The volume of financing has significantly reduced. However, the planned incomes sufficient for self-sufficiency, educational institutions do not currently receive. Insufficient financing of higher education institutions is an additional reason for the reorganization.

Distance learning as a way to save money in higher education

Currently, the following types of information technologies used in the educational process in a reduction of financing are selected:

1. *Distance learning*. This area of the Russian practice is quite new and not fully worked off. Let's mark the problems, which associate with this type of training.

- It is assumed that in such system of training students are present in person only at the final certification: state interdisciplinary examination, the defense and protection of the graduation thesis. In Because of it, there is reasonable doubt in student's self-study. (Unfortunately, we are often faced with a dependent work.). There could be a situation when the student will not be certified and selected out, which naturally have a negative impact for the university. We obviously need to produce highly skilled professionals. But at the time the government finances the universities according with the number of students enrolled in it. If one student is not certified graduate – is a high possibility for the universities to loss the budgetary funds.
- There also could be problems of legal order. If in the process of training a student receives positive grades, but what do they mean, if the final assessment of students – is not satisfactory? It should be noted that institutions with a strong position find the ways how to fight with such problems. As for private institutions – they have more serious problems. Payment by students of their education – is the main source of income for the institution, and it is difficult to deduct students. In normal form of study problems with such students are identified in the early courses, which allow to use various methods to improve the situation.
- In our opinion, Distance learning needs more for time students, and in this group there are less strong students than in other forms of education, and they should have the greater constant and personalized control. For these students the motor memory is important. A practice shows that the form of lectures with the video camera was not effective. The teachers do not see the feedback, if they read for the audience. And probably it will be quite difficult to make classes for students on an individual basis.
- It should also be noted some distrust for such form of study from the part of students and their parents.
- Electronic textbooks. The main problem in this case due to the inability to see before buying a textbook with its contents – “look through” like a book. As a result, buy “a cat in a poke”. The



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reason for the purchase is often the presence of different vultures on the basic subjects of the specialty and expertise. The experience has shown that even in this case, often shows a lag of 6-8 years in changes of legal basis of the items in the content material of electronic textbooks. Also, traditionally, each electronic textbook has shorter course than other forms of training. Also some inconvenience due to the fact that during the installation of the data required textbooks utilities are higher than it's available in student's computers, especially not in big cities. This disadvantage is pretty much due to the need to protect the electronic books from unauthorized copying, what often try to do by buying a copy, and trying to install it on a computer class, or by passing to a group of students, usually external students.

2. *Full-length electronic courses with tutors.* For such a system also used the name "E-teaching materials" (EUMK). Its purpose is to improve the quality of education on the basis of information support of the educational process, the application of automatic knowledge control, learning and management self-study of students. In EUMK it's supposed to provide a systematic approach based on interdisciplinary and inter navigation links, based on the structural logic schemes of disciplines in specialties and areas of training, compliance with all the training materials standardization. If we approach the solution of these problems is complex, it is necessary to consider the personnel component, technical support and implementation.

Personnel component is divided into two parts:

- Teachers, who receive the advanced training, and as a result they can work in information space,
- Specialists with specialty number 230202 – "Information Technology in Education". This specialty takes place since year 2003, and its volume is quite small in a number of universities.

The main personnel problem is that at the time of using some standardized software products that are in demand on the market and, therefore, the training work that is carried out in universities; there is a deficit of qualified teachers of their own, capable to teach at a high as the methodological and specific professional level. In such cases it is necessary to involve the specialists for teaching process from outside [6].

The next problem is related to the overall resource base of universities and public purchase of necessary equipment for the educational process. In this procedure, there are usually two extremes: University buys or "all the best", non-optimal using their financial resources or purchases made on a residual principal.

The process of agreement the equipment purchased with public purchase usually is time-consuming and makes quite large distortions into the process of passing on services. Initially the specialist makes a request, who generally can't determine the optimum configuration for the equipment, which will to be used in the classroom. Moreover, such computer can be used by students of different specialties to solve completely different problems – from simple mathematical calculations, which do not require more resources to work in complex design and graphics packages and distributed DBMS which significantly critical to the configuration.

The equipment, which is written in the request, includes into a set of requests, accepts in different departments and then certain lot-batch is formed. Such form of work usually allows to get the best possible price during the trading, but has a negative impact on the quality (in terms of the future use in the learning process) of purchased equipment.

And of course, problems as incorrect complex of practical implementation of information technology in the educational process couldn't be ignored. For example, a major theme reported by EUNIS member universities is the change from "choosing" to "using" e-learning platforms [7].

The fact that the process of implementation supposes a simultaneous attack of several events: the construction of a network, installation the required software, user training of elementary work in the system, and the support of all training complex in up-to-date and operational conditions. In this case a lot of programs are installed in the same network, each of them needs its own system requirements, and not



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at the level of the workstations, but at the server level. For some of installable network products specialized knowledge is required, which the university administrators often do not have.

Another problem is the lack of possibilities for the students to get practical skills, because in most companies there is a system of information security and information security management system, which make up a system of information security together. This way of technology organization greatly limits the possibilities of cooperation between the higher education and the practical scope of activities in improving the students' skills, because it's not possible to use the technologies in the learning process, as full so trial versions [8].

However, the search for solutions to these problems is ongoing.

In our opinion, integrated learning systems based on the simulation can be created in the universities for getting a large number of competences in their profile. Part of the universities solves such tasks on different levels of credibility, authenticity and specification. In the integrated model of the economy should be included:

- Enterprise. In a system are modeled as a manufacturing process so servicing units (including accounting, finance, sales, marketing, logistics, warehouse, R&D departments, technological department, etc.);
- Commercial bank. The system is modeling with the following departments: credit, foreign exchange, front office, processing, client, securities, deposit, asset management, financial management at the bank, the credit committee, legal, internal audit, etc.
- Exchange;
- The insurance company;
- Customs;
- Federal Treasury;
- Investment Company and / or the Fund and / or depositary;
- The Central Bank;

Mechanism for constructing goes ascending Product – from simple to complex. An enterprise may produce a single product and has the simplest organization system. It may be an enterprise with a more complicated functional, divisional or other management system, and also to have a more number of departments. A small amount of accounting records and simple, not sophisticated conductings, with the corresponding list of primary, settlement, payment and analytical documents can be used. The same applies to the list of departments – from the minimum to the more complex structures, including the departments of tax planning, foreign economic activity, the development department and innovation. Number of institutions may also be minimal, and much larger than presented in the list.

The model is constructed in such manner as to there were modularly expandable opportunities for work of students as under the reduced temporary scheme, and, for example, in real-time. Students also have to have the opportunity to work as individually, and in various groups. Other than that, the group can be divided into various departments within of one institution (businesses, banks, etc.), or among all institutions between which is carried out economic cooperation. The process can develop indefinitely. The unconditional requirement is the constant updatability information in connection with significant fluctuations of the Russian legislation.

Conclusions

Solution of the reforming of higher education should be sought, in our opinion, not on the way a significant reduction the number of higher education institutions. The high level of the population education – it is not only an investment to lift the domestic economy, but it is also a necessary condition for human potential development, so – for the country welfare.



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Education reform requires changing the order of modernization. The authors propose to establish normative regulation categories of education quality, because at the present time educational institutions do not have information on demands placed on them. The above requirements should represent a concept of characteristics totality that reflects to the level of the educational institution. For example, such characteristics include the demand for graduates. Thus, the goal is reached – equal competition in the education market, where the most effective educational institution will prepare specialists needed by society.

The proposed imitating model will allow to participate in its work students of different economic specialties which will better understand the related professions and the interaction between them. The problem is the high cost of such models and a long period of their drafting, that not on forces for small universities, or higher technical education institutions, having only the one economics faculty. Nevertheless, on our opinion, such way of learning is more effective. It allows speaking about the need for its introduction and financing, if not in the one higher education institution that in several higher education institutions of the city on the basis of solidarity.

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Acknowledgements

The study was supported by The Ministry of education and science of Russian Federation, project 14.B37.21.1995.