



## Research Article

# REFORMS AND PROSPECTS OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

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**Jabborov Ahmad Ravshanovich**

Lecturer at the Crime prevention and public safety department of the specialized branch of Tashkent State University of Law, Uzbekistan

## ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the nearly thirty-year history of the higher education system in Uzbekistan. The problems in the higher education system over the years focus on their causes and factors. Opinions and comments on the results and achievements of reforms in the higher education system in recent years are presented. At the same time, special attention is still paid to the factors hindering the implementation of reforms.

## KEYWORDS

Reforms, prospects, coverage of the higher education system, the optimal ratio of the number of specialists with higher education, the Concept of development of the higher education system until 2030, joint educational programs.

## INTRODUCTION

Until 2016, the higher education system of the Republic of Uzbekistan was a state with limited access, where there were doubts about the quality and relevance of graduates' knowledge and skills. At that time, the coverage of the student-age population in the higher education system was about 9% and was low by regional and international standards, in stark contrast

to the situation in the primary and secondary levels of the Uzbek education system (where the percentage of the school-age population was about 100%). provided). The centralized planning system determines both the number of students in higher education institutions (universities) and their field of study. The number of places in each direction in higher education institutions



is determined by government regulations, and the selection of students is based on the results of national tests conducted by the State Testing Center under the Cabinet of Ministers. With nearly 100% coverage of secondary education and 9% coverage of higher education, 9 out of 10 high school graduates were unable to enter university, the demand for higher education was high, and competition for each position offered at universities exceeded 6. [1]

In 2014, the higher education system of Uzbekistan included 82 educational institutions preparing bachelors and masters, including 32 universities, 44 institutes, 6 academies, and also seven branches of foreign universities (Moscow State University, Russian Economic University named after G.V.). Plekhanov, Polytechnic University of Turin, Westminster International University, Singapore Institute of Management Development, Gubkin Russian State University of Oil and Gas, Inha University, South Korea). Seven branches of foreign universities work in cooperation with government agencies. A total of 259.3 thousand students studied there in the 2013-2014 academic year. As of December 2014, there were no non-governmental higher education institutions in Uzbekistan. [2]

In developed countries, the optimal ratio of the number of professional technical workers and specialists with higher education in scientific and technical fields is from 2: 1 to 7: 1. In Uzbekistan, the ratio is 10: 1, which clearly contradicts international standards. [1]

The increase in the number of graduates with higher education in these areas, the need for more previously qualified specialists will allow Uzbekistan to further strengthen its competitiveness and increase productivity.

Radical reform of the higher education system in Uzbekistan began in 2016. As an integral part of the reforms, the Concept of Development of the Higher Education System of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030, approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-5847 of October 8, 2019, was adopted.

As of 2019, as a result of reforms, there are 114 higher education institutions in the country, of which 93 are local and 21 are foreign higher education institutions and their branches. In particular, 6 new higher education institutions, 17 branches and 14 branches of foreign higher education institutions have been established. [3]

As of August 2021, the number of higher education institutions has reached 141, the number of admissions has increased from 66,000 to 182,000. Training of specialists has been launched in 26 branches of foreign educational institutions. Gradual increase in the coverage of higher education, creating a healthy competitive environment in the system, optimizing the workload, the introduction of digital technologies in the educational process, ensuring the financial independence of higher education institutions, increasing the salaries of teachers by an average of 3.5 times are the first results. [3]

As of January 2022, there are 159 higher education institutions in Uzbekistan, including 72 in Tashkent and 87 in the regions. This was reported by the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education.

- University - 28;
- Institute - 47;
- Academy - 3;
- Conservatory - 1;

- Branch - 26;
- Foreign universities and their branches - 30;
- Non-governmental HEIs - 24. [4]

It was noted that at the beginning of the 2020/2021 academic year, there were 20 foreign higher education institutions in the country.

The number of foreign higher education institutions operating in the last 3 years has changed as follows:

- At the beginning of the 2018/2019 academic year - 10;
- At the beginning of the 2019/2020 academic year - 18;
- At the beginning of the 2020/2021 academic year - 20.

The number of branches of foreign universities in the country is growing every year. In particular, from the 2021/2022 academic year, the branch of St. Petersburg State University, the branch of the All-Russian Institute of Cinematography, the branch of the University of Debrecen, Hungary, and from the 2022/2023 academic year, the Tashkent branch of the Russian Medical University. A branch of the University of Pisa in Italy is also expected to open in the capital. The new university will train specialists in geology. [4]

Based on the proposals of personnel customers, 329 areas of education and 582 master's specialties were included in the classification of areas and specialties of higher education. In the 2019/2020 academic year, part-time education was introduced in 59 higher education institutions, and evening education was introduced in 10 higher education institutions. The number of students studying in higher educational institutions of the country amounted to 410 thousand in the bachelor's degree and 13 thousand in the master's degree, which has increased 1.7 times over the past 3 years.

54.8% of students are in the humanities and pedagogy, 25.2% in the production and technical field, 5.2% in the social sphere, economics and law, 5.9% in agriculture and water management, 4.4% in health and social care, 4, 5% are studying in the field of service knowledge and specialties.

40.8% of master's students are in the humanities and pedagogy, 23.3% in production and technology, 13.3% in the social sphere, economics and law, 5.9% in agriculture and water management, 13.5% in health and social care, 3, 2% are studying in the field of service knowledge.

Admission parameters for the 2019/2020 academic year amounted to 121 thousand and increased by 18% compared to the previous year and by 92% compared to 2016.

Starting from the 2018/2019 academic year, 16 higher education institutions of the country have launched training activities on the basis of joint educational programs in cooperation with foreign higher education institutions.

The reform of higher education, while talking about the right of citizens to higher education, was also one of the acute problems that need to be addressed, including the coverage of high school and college graduates with higher education. The sharp difference in the ratio of school and college graduates to higher education institutions has led thousands of young people to emigrate to countries near and far as a result of their inability to meet the needs of knowledge-hungry youth. Thanks to the measures taken at the initiative of the President, in 2017-2021, this figure rose to 28% from the previous 9%.

As of January 2021, the number of professors and teachers in higher education institutions is 32,228,

including 12,686 professors and teachers of scientific level, 2,657 doctors of sciences (DSc) and 10,029 candidates of sciences (Phd), with a scientific potential of 39.3%. [4]

1611 professors and teachers of higher education institutions have been provided with internships and advanced training in foreign higher education institutions. Within the framework of international cooperation, 112 young people were admitted to master's specialties of foreign higher education and scientific institutions, and 51 young people were admitted to doctoral studies.

Through the El-Yurt Umidi Foundation, 46 professors and teachers have been trained in Canada, the United Kingdom and Italy.

In 2017-2019, 1,154 highly qualified foreign teachers and scientists were involved in the educational process (94 people from the United States, 445 people from European countries, 299 people from Asian countries, 316 people from the CIS countries). [4]

The basic salaries of professors with the degree of Doctor of Science in higher education institutions increased by 3.2 times compared to 2016. Because it allows highly qualified specialists to adapt to the needs of the country's economy, which is increasingly in need.

The effectiveness of higher education in Uzbekistan depends on a number of internal factors: resource base, human resources, forms of organization. Along with them, the mechanism of taking into account the needs of society for knowledge and skills plays an important role, because the effectiveness of the education system is determined not by the amount of resources used, but by its level of compliance with the national economy.

The need for higher education in society, its constant growth and new requirements of a market economy stimulate continuous changes in the higher education system, the formation and development of the market of educational services in the national economy as a whole.

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