



Overview of the Higher Education in Azerbaijan

National Erasmus+ Office in Azerbaijan

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Azerbaijan Republic



Azerbaijan

- **area:** 86,600 sq km, **population:** 10.0 million
- capital: **Baku**, **language:** Azerbaijani
- **religion:** Islam (95% Muslims, 3.1% Christians, 1.9% others)
- **the member of the Council of Europe:** since 2001
- **economy:** energy (gas, oil), agriculture, tourism, science and technology



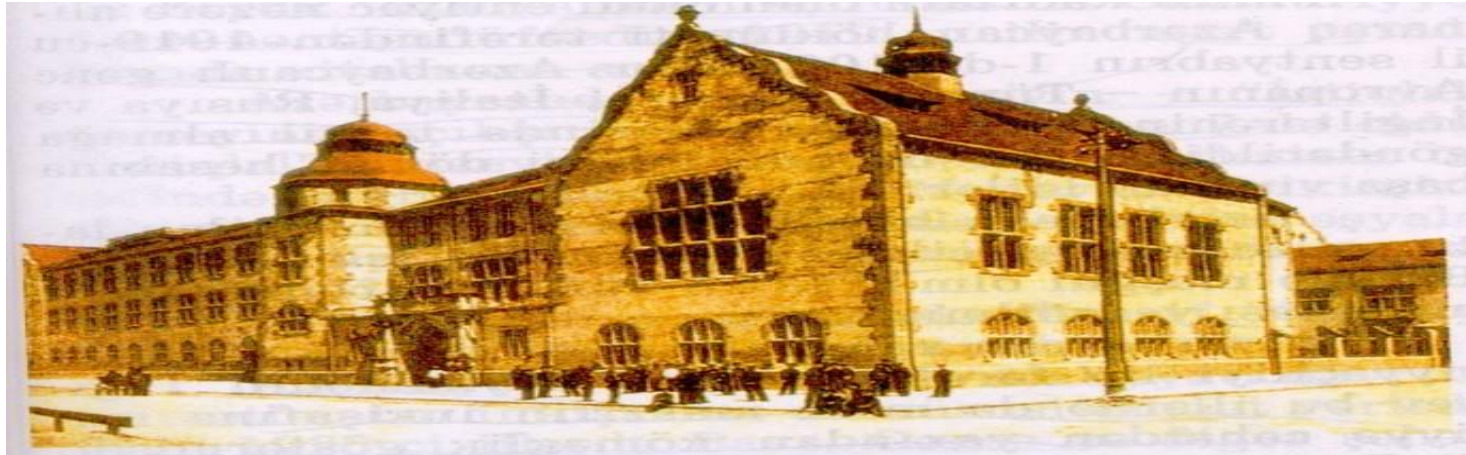
Higher Education

- Currently 51 higher education institutions (for 10.0 million population): 20 public, 18 state, 11 private and 2 branches of Russian HEIs
- 163 779 students (bachelor and master) at higher education institutions in 2017 (89% at public & state and 11% at private)
- including 3379 foreign students (56% Turkish, 44% other countries)

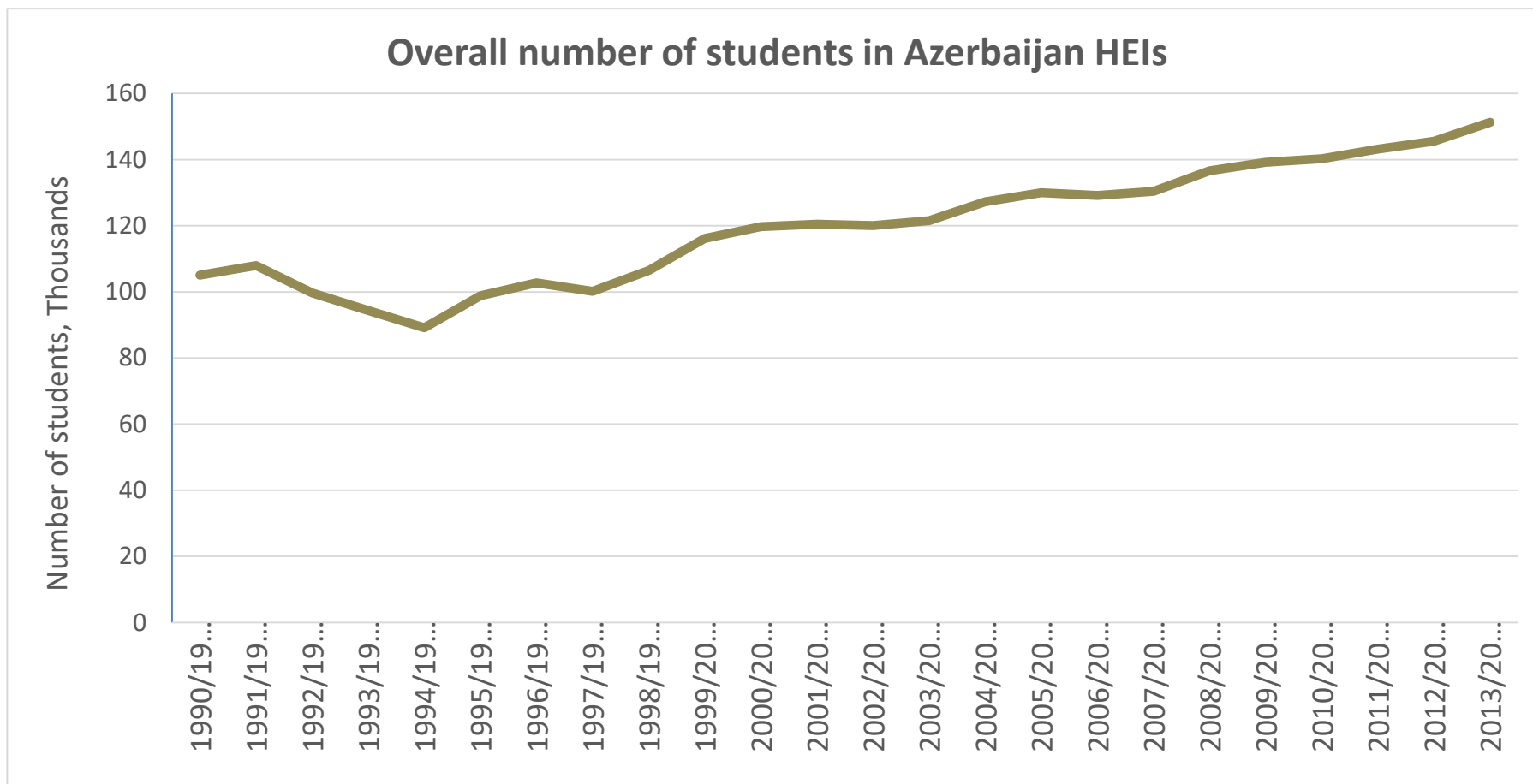


Brief history of the Azerbaijan HE

- **1919:** Baku State University in Baku was established
- **in the Communist era,** universities were under political control, people with wrong profile were not allowed for studies and academic careers
- **after 1991,** HEIs emancipated rapidly and built up a strong autonomy



Broaden access to Azerbaijan HE



Study conditions

- Government covers all **tuition fee expenses** of the following students:
 - students from **refugee families & children of national heroes**
 - students, who **deprived of parental care**
 - special **talented students**, who get the highest points from admission examinations
 - **Disability** students
- State programme **on education abroad**
 - **in general** – 3558
 - **currently studding** – 497
 - **graduated** – 2008



Strategy of the government to improve HE sector

- **Development Concept** “Azerbaijan 2020: Vision of the Future”
and
- **National Strategy** for the Development of Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan
 - To participate in the process of formation of state policy on higher education;
 - To participate in the preparation and implementation of the concept of development of the higher education system, to coordinate and control the implementation of these concepts by higher education institutions and their scientific structures within the scope of their authority.

Policy

Instruments

There **are three main ways** how the Government can influence the HE:

accreditation,
internationalization,
specific support

- **Accreditation Committee** as main QA institution; the Ministry can set only general rules,
- **Internationalization** reflects also the quality of the education, e.g. via mobility or employability of graduates,
- **Specific support** includes e.g. policy recommendations, action plans for improvement and advisory for HEIs.



European Higher Education Area

- Azerbaijan is an active member of **Bologna process** since 2005
- Main goals:
 - International mobility, cooperation and recognition
 - Flexible learning paths
 - Competitiveness of European HE
- Main principles have been introduced:
 - European Credit Transfer System (**ECTS**) – currently all HEIs implementing ECTS system
 - **Three cycle degree** system by Education Law in 2009
 - Diploma supplement (**DS**) – all HEIs awarded by unique DS
 - European Standards and Guidelines for **Quality Assurance (ESG)**

Division of study programmes

Bachelor's degree programme

- first cycle of higher education
- 240 – 300 ECTS (4 or 5 years)

Master's degree programme

- following after Bachelor's degree programme
- 90 – 120 ECTS (1.5 or 2 years)

Doctoral degree programme:

- following after Master's degree programme
- No ECTS system
- 2 levels: PhD (3 or 4 years) & Doc of Sci (4 or 5 years)



External Quality Assurance System

- Accreditation regulations in Azerbaijan
 - Rules for accreditation of educational institutions (Cabinet of Ministers, 28 September, 2010, #167)
 - Accreditation of HEIs stages:
 - preparing for accreditation;
 - self-assessment of education establishment;
 - carrying out an analysis by Accreditation Committee;
 - preparing a final certificate on accreditation;
 - determining the status of education establishment and granting a relevant quality document – certificate.
- Accreditation and Nostrification Office



Criteria for defining HEI State Education Standards (MoE, 26 April, 2011, #656)

1. Meeting requirements of legal documents in University Management
2. University Management (Regulations, education documents)
3. Content of Curricula, its structure and realization
4. Management of Education process
5. Quality of Graduates
6. Human Resource
7. Science – Research
8. International Relations –Cooperation
9. Infrastructure
10. Education support service
11. Financial resources



EU PROGRAMMES

- Bologna process membership since 2005
- 67% of HEIs involved
- In Tempus since 1995 (ENI East)
- Experience of regional and cross-regional cooperation
- 45 Tempus projects total. In Tempus IV (2008-2013) 30 projects awarded, 22 on-going, 26 institutions involved.
- 3 (2015) + 3 (2016) + 1 (2017) + 3 (2018) **total 10** CBHE projects
- 675 (2015) + 840 (2016) + 782 (2017) Erasmus+ credit mobility scholarships with more than half of programme countries (including 18 EU countries)
- Network of “Tempus-experienced” public and private HEIs



**Qafqaz University student
IRANA ALIMOVA was
on a student mobility
and studied Chemical
Engineering at Polytechnic
Institute of Braganca**

“ During this time I had an opportunity to get new friends, I got theoretical and practical experience and a really good knowledge from prolific professors. Note that: Erasmus+ is not one year of your life, but your life in one year! ”



Azerbaijan State Economic University staff member ANAR RZAYEV was on staff mobility and gave lectures on Geo-economics at University of Dunaújváros in Hungary

“ The time spent in Europe with Erasmus+ gave me excellent possibilities to explore better university governance and get better acquainted with methodology of successful cooperation between higher education and business community. ”



National Erasmus+ Office in Azerbaijan

Overall objective:

“to improve relevance, effectiveness and impact of the Erasmus+ Programme in the country through assistance to European Commission’s services and national authorities in the Erasmus+ programme implementation”

Specific objectives:

- Promotion of the programme and assistance to potential applicants
- Monitoring of CBHE Projects
- Promoting Bologna process and providing information on the implementation of reforms (organization of seminars, conferences, conducting studies)
- Engagement in more structured dialogue with educational authorities, involving higher education stakeholders.



AREAS OF COOPERATION UNDER ERASMUS+

- Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE-former Tempus)
- Credit mobility
- Joint Degree Master Programme



AZERBAIJAN NATIONAL PRIORITIES UNDER CURRENT ERASMUS+ CBHE CALL

Curriculum Development – VALID ONLY FOR JOINT PROJECTS!

- Education
- Biological and related sciences
- Environment
- Information and Communication Technologies
- Engineering and engineering trades
- Architecture and construction
- Agriculture, forestry, fishery and veterinary
- Health
- Welfare
- Transport services



AZERBAIJAN NATIONAL PRIORITIES UNDER CURRENT ERASMUS+ CBHE CALL (CONTINUED)

Improving management and operation of Higher Education Institutions – (valid for both Joint and SM Projects)

- Governance, strategic planning and management of HEIs (such as human resource and financial management)
- Internationalisation of higher education institutions (including recognition mechanisms and mobility, international relations capacities)
- Quality assurance processes and mechanisms (such as development of mechanisms and benchmarks, for QA in different segments of HE – academic contents and services)
- Development of research and innovative capacities (excluding research activities)



AZERBAIJAN NATIONAL PRIORITIES UNDER CURRENT ERASMUS+ CBHE CALL (CONTINUED)

Developing the Higher Education sector within society at large – valid for both Joint and SM Projects)

- University-enterprise cooperation (such as support for students` practical placement, entrepreneurship, employability of graduates etc.)
- New technologies in Higher Education (support to the modernization of Higher Education systems through the development of open educational resources, connectivity, the acquisition of digital skills and learning methods and mobilization of stakeholders including teachers, learners, economic and social partners)
- Definition, implementation and monitoring of reform policies (including evidence based policies, financing of education, governance, quality assurance of public and private higher education sector, introduction of transparency tools and standards and guidelines)



REGIONAL PRIORITIES UNDER CURRENT ERASMUS+ CBHE CALL

Region 2

(Eastern Partnership Countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Territory of Ukraine as recognized by International Law)

Curriculum Development – VALID ONLY FOR JOINT PROJECTS!

- Education
- Social and behavioural science
- Law
- Physical Sciences
- Agriculture, forestry, fishery and veterinary
- Health
- Environment



REGIONAL PRIORITIES UNDER CURRENT ERASMUS+ CBHE CALL (CONTINUED)

Region 2

(Eastern Partnership Countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Territory of Ukraine as recognized by International Law)

Improving management and operation of Higher Education Institutions – valid for both Joint and SM Projects)

- Governance, strategic planning and management of HEIs (such as human resource and financial management)
- Internationalisation of higher education institutions (including recognition mechanisms and mobility, international relations capacities)
- Quality assurance processes and mechanisms (such as development of mechanisms and benchmarks, for QA in different segments of HE – academic contents and services)
- Equity, access to and democratisation of higher education (including the disadvantaged groups of people and regions)



REGIONAL PRIORITIES UNDER CURRENT ERASMUS+ CBHE CALL (CONTINUED)

Region 2

(Eastern Partnership Countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Territory of Ukraine as recognized by International Law)

Developing the Higher Education sector within society at large – valid for both Joint and SM Projects

- University-enterprise cooperation (such as support for students` practical placement, entrepreneurship, employability of graduates etc.)
- Knowledge triangle, innovation (such as reinforcing links between education, research and business)
- Definition, implementation and monitoring of reform policies (including evidence based policies, financing of education, governance, quality assurance of public and private higher education sector, introduction of transparency tools and standards and guidelines)



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International Credit Mobility (ICM)

	2017	2016	2015
Proposals received involving Azerbaijan	107	97	108
Projects selected involving Azerbaijan	52	56	44
Students and staff moving to Europe	258	369	249
Students and staff moving to Azerbaijan	181	184	86



Erasmus+

Capacity Building in Higher Education (ex Tempus)

Azerbaijan in CBHE projects

Proposals received in call overall

2017 **2016** **2015**

833 736 515

Projects selected in call overall

149 147 138

Proposals received involving Azerbaijan

42 49 31

Projects selected involving Azerbaijan

1 3 3

Projects coordinated by Azerbaijan

1 1 1

Instances of participation from Azerbaijan

12 14 21

in selected projects

Capacity building projects can be addressed to a group of countries or a single country. They can also be cross-regional, including institutions from different partner regions.



Successes of Credit Recognition in Azerbaijan Higher Education

- It brings openness/transparency to higher education systems.
- It gives the opportunity to compare the grades of students more effectively.
- It's a major component of internationalization.
- Major tool for Bologna process. A credit system has to support the Bologna objective of Employability
- European Higher Education Area
- Possibility for more joint projects in the future (curriculum development, etc.)
- ICM – largest network of alumni, more possibilities for students

Challenges & Perspectives

- Improvement of the study programs
- Training of trainers
- Cooperation with the labor market
- Employability of the graduates
- PhD level
- Recognition
- Modern laboratories
- Research and innovation
- Quality assurance

- Twinning projects
- TAIEX programs
- Different capacity building Erasmus+ projects
- University-Business cooperation
- Internationalization
- Grants
- Best practices



Challenges in credit recognition in Azerbaijan HE

- Incompatibility of study programmes
- Duration of the exchanges
- Credit calculation techniques
- Organizational difficulties (students fear of going abroad)
- Professors do not recognize studies
- Lack of legislation
- Some home universities does not recognize ECTS credits of host universities and give extra projects and lesson for fulfilling the credits
- Some universities oblige students to do the extra exams after exchange.
- Language difficulties. Some courses are not available in English.
- Transparency problems:
 - Information Package / Course Catalogue
 - Learning Agreement
 - Transcript of Records
- Learning outcomes (credits recognized, outcomes not)
- Visa issues



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Thank you!