

## Pre-university education in terms of promoting Russian education on the world education market

### La educación preuniversitaria en términos de promoción de la educación rusa en el mercado educativo mundial

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#### Abstract

Russia's advancement on the world education market is one of the foreign policy challenges. The pre-university stage is the milestone for the professional development of a foreign student. Such stage is of paramount importance for the Russia's integration into the world education market. Since the pre-university stage has been the first stage of training in the Russian education system, it should be a specific focal point for the educational service provider. Based on the footprint of pre-university education, foreigners shall have an understanding with respect to the educational system of a country the language whereof is studied.

**Keywords:** Pre-university education, the world education market, Russian education.

## Resumen

El avance de Rusia en el mercado mundial de la educación es uno de los desafíos de la política exterior. La etapa preuniversitaria es el hito para el desarrollo profesional de un estudiante extranjero. Esta etapa es de suma importancia para la integración de Rusia en el mercado mundial de la educación. Dado que la etapa preuniversitaria ha sido la primera etapa de formación en el sistema educativo ruso, debería ser un punto focal específico para el proveedor de servicios educativos. Con base en la huella de la educación preuniversitaria, los extranjeros deberán tener un conocimiento con respecto al sistema educativo de un país cuya lengua se estudie.

**Palabras clave:** Educación preuniversitaria, mercado educativo mundial, educación rusa.

## Introduction

The transition from a resource-based industrial economy to an information-based economy is a distinctive feature of the world economy. The market of international education becomes the most developing sector of the economy.

Expansion of the education market and export stimulation are prioritized by almost all developed countries. By now, the world education market has been shaped up with international academic mobilities of several million people a year. The total financial indicators are over 100,000,000,000 US Dollars (Arefiev, 2010: p. 8). The leading countries in the export of educational services are the USA, Great Britain, Australia, France, Germany, etc. These countries account for 60 % of foreign students. The growing competition between countries to attract foreigners as their own students provides for setting the highly-potential education market capable to meet the needs of a continually dynamic society.

The post-Soviet period was characterized by a weakening Russia's position in the world education market. Upon long-lasting stabilization of the country for more than thirty years, the internationalization of the Russian educational services and the transformation of education into the fifth sector of the economy currently become more relevant.

The growing commercialization of educational services contributes to the Russian education system transition to new educational standards. Against this background, the development of the additional education system aimed at training foreign students for admission to the main faculties of Russian universities, is gaining an up-to-date focus. The number of foreigners attracted to the Russian education system determines the foreign investments into the Russian economy. This explains and points out the problematic scientific understanding of the export stimulations for higher educational services of the Russian Federation to the world market.

## Research methods

The research is methodically based on the analysis of scientific literature, analytical analysis, statistical analysis and questionnaires.

The questionnaire included questions related to the reasons for choosing Russia as the country of study.

## **Pre-university training of foreigners as an element of the higher education market**

Education is a part of the state-run economy and is the most important indicator of a country's well-being.

Agranovich, M.L., Ermachkova, Y.V., Seliverstova, I.V. define the Russian education as follows:

“Education in our country has always been a priority of the state social policy and has attracted increased attention of society. The creation of a knowledge-driven economy expects the education to be a key engine and resource for economic development. This predetermines the importance to improve the quality and the efficiency of the education (in the broad sense of the word) of the country's educational system. Simultaneously, a change in the external environment where the educational system operates, new requests, requirements for opportunities not only set new challenges, but also open up new prospects for the education development” (Agranovich, Ermachkova, Seliverstova, 2019: p. 3).

The current definitions of the education market allow to consider the “education market” as a social institution, which is a self-regulatory system effectively operating and following certain patterns in the absence of centralized management (Aleksandrov, 2010; Arefiev, 2007; Vasilieva, Filimonenko, Raznova, 2008; Golikova, Tolstykh, 2015; Kolosovsky, 1969; Kuzmina, 2012; Novikov, 2008).

The education market is an educational complex represented by various educational institutions within the scope of a system of economic relations arising in the provision of educational services and aimed at increasing the cost of labor and preparing the necessary specialists for the labor market (Lukashenko, 2003; Voronkova, 2011).

Education is the initial category of the education market. As a social institution, education is the most important type of human activity in the form of a purposeful learning process aimed at achieving a certain level of education by students. The educational process is regulated by international agreements, the federal, regional and municipal legislation. The Education Act is the main law governing the educational process in Russian educational institutions. According to federal law, educational services, the participants of the education market (customers and providers) are the components of the educational process.

An educational service is the key concept of the Russian education system as an object of market relations.

The Federal Law No. 273 of December 29, 2012 states as follows:

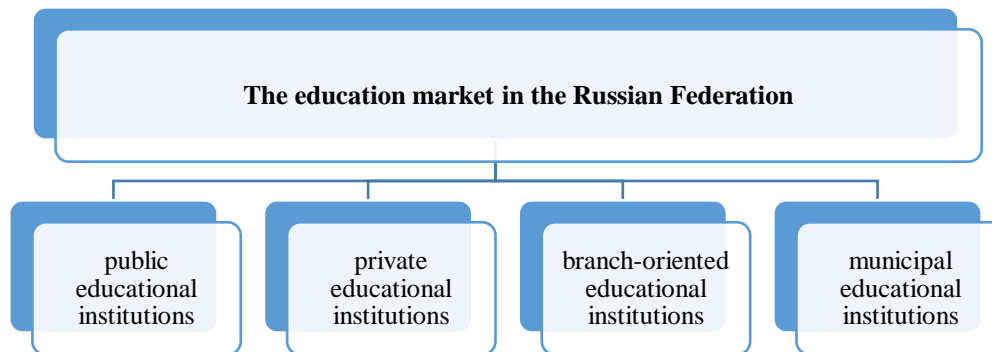
“A higher education service is a service provided by an educational institution of higher education by carrying out educational activities resulting in the acquisition of certain competencies, qualifications and skills confirmed by a standard document on education and qualifications” (No. 273).

Customers stand out among the participants of the education market. We will state a country ordering for specialists in certain areas and with training levels as a customer of educational services. Minor part of the market accounts for the business units, which demand for the training of qualified specialists based on direct contracts. Business units are interested in graduates to ensure high demands on the level of training and competence formation. Students and learners of pre-university courses can also be customers of educational services. Educational institutions feature an executive pattern to enable training for

specialists in specified fields. There are also public institutions, foundations as a contributing factor for the development of the higher education system.

Educational institutions of various forms of property are the providers (sellers) of educational services.

The educational services market in the Russian Federation is represented by public, private, branch-oriented and municipal educational institutions (Figure 1).



Namely, buyers and sellers of educational services are the educational process subjects on the educational market bringing such buyers of educational products and sellers of educational values together.

The management process plays an essential role in the education system. The education system management is referred to as the activity of the educational process subjects, which results in the joint interaction of the controlling and controlled subsystems (governing bodies and educational institutions), where the subjects achieve their goals (Region: output-based education management, 2001: p. 39).

The education system management at the pre-university stage involves such an educational system with an invariable content to ensure the preservation of European traditions in teaching academic disciplines, as well as the variable content reflecting the national specifics of the educational process. The national component allows the coherent separate parts of the educational process into an integral part.

The competitiveness of the national education system is associated with the compliance of the expert training quality with the order of the world innovative society. Please, note that the business of higher education institutions as subjects of the education market reflects the patterns of the services provided, methods of competitive environment, interaction of the educational process subjects interested in the resulting educational activities.

The main features of higher professional education services are the following:

- 1) Educational services are non-material, and the primary indicator is the subsequent formation of intellectual potential;
- 2) Educational services are of a standardized nature, which means that they are provided for a certain predetermined timeline;

- 3) The educational services should be intended for a person with a certain knowledge background;
- 4) Subjects involved in educational activities, as well as the country, are interested in the provision of promising educational services since, on the one hand, they guarantee a high level of specialists, and, on the other hand, guarantee Russia's entry into the international education market.

### **General characteristics of pre-university education in the Russian Federation**

One of the forms of education in Russian universities is the pre-university training. Teaching of foreign students at the pre-university stage plays the most important role for the development of the student's identity. The challenges of pre-university teaching and upbringing management require a personality-oriented, activity-based and systematic approach, as the interest of foreign students in Russian education depends on how successfully they are solved.

The pre-university education develops a secondary linguistic personality capable of receiving higher professional education in Russian universities. The pre-university education of foreign students in Russia is one of the additional educations. Pre-university education is carried out in schools, schools in Russia, secondary vocational institutions, universities, including branches and subdivisions located abroad, courses, including the Russian language courses at the Russian Centre of Science and Culture, etc.

The reforming of the additional education system in the field of foreign students training is to create a multi-level training for foreigners:

- in terms of content – there must be conditions in Russia to ensure the possible variety of fields for foreign students training;
- in terms of organization – the number of institutions, as well as the arrangements of the educational process must meet the needs of students;
- in terms of management – assurance of a high-quality institutional management system to provide training for foreign students.

The general characteristics of the pre-university education are as follows:

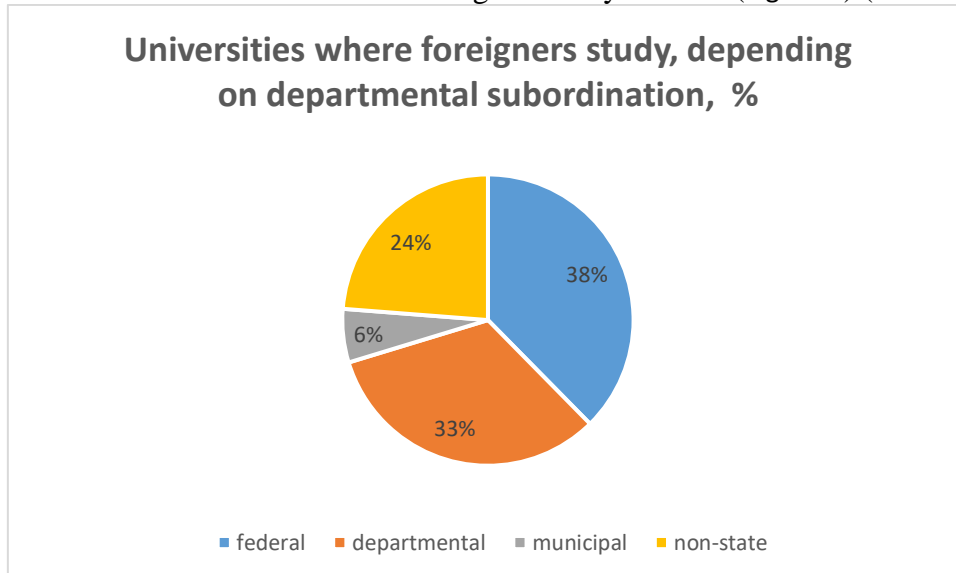
- 1) The pre-university education is an educational system characterized as a complex, consciously controlled social institution;
- 2) The pre-university education is an open system with interface with the external environment;
- 3) The pre-university education is a set of meta-organizations including many those with education providing for the professional training of foreign students.

The main goal of the pre-university stage of foreign student education is the development of a secondary linguistic personality familiarized with the cultural behavior of a country of the language being studied, who has developed communicative competencies, as well as assistance in adapting the personality of students to life in society; creation of a basis for an informed choice and subsequent development of professional educational programs.

In Russia, since 2017, there has been an uptrend towards the share of foreign learners, students, trainees, graduate and doctoral students studying at Russian universities. Last year saw an increase of foreigners by 9.9 %. Natives of the CIS dominate among

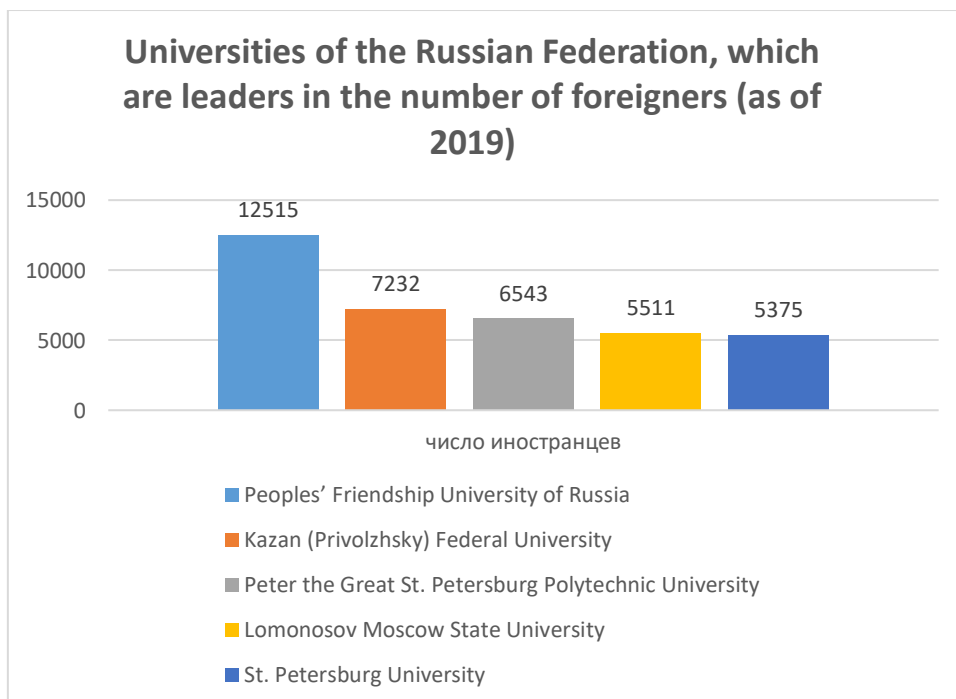
foreign learners. The largest number of students is from Kazakhstan, China, and Turkmenistan.

For 2019, 677 universities in Russia train foreigners, of which 254 are federal universities, 220 are departmental, 40 are municipal, and 162 are private. Note that the number of non-state universities where foreigners study is small (Figure 2) (Arefiev, 2020).



The Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, Kazan (Privolzhsky) Federal University, Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University, Lomonosov Moscow State University (Figure 3) are absolute leaders (Arefiev, 2020: p. 175).

Figure 3.



The metropolitan cities account for the largest number of foreigners for study. The Central Federal District, the Privolzhsky Federal District, the Northwestern Federal District, the Siberian Federal District, the Southern Federal District, the Ural Federal District, the

North Caucasian Federal District, the Far Eastern Federal District are the leaders in terms of the number of foreigners.

The preparatory departments in Russian universities train 9.7 % of the total of foreigners, which represents 10,482 people. 75.6 % (18,116 people) of the total of foreigners are students. Of these, 44.7 % are bachelors, 22.4 % are students enrolled in the specialty program, 8.5 % are masters. 0.002 % are interns, 1 % – residents, 2.7 % – graduate students, 0.02 % – doctoral students, 11 % – trainees (Arefiev, 2020: p. 127).

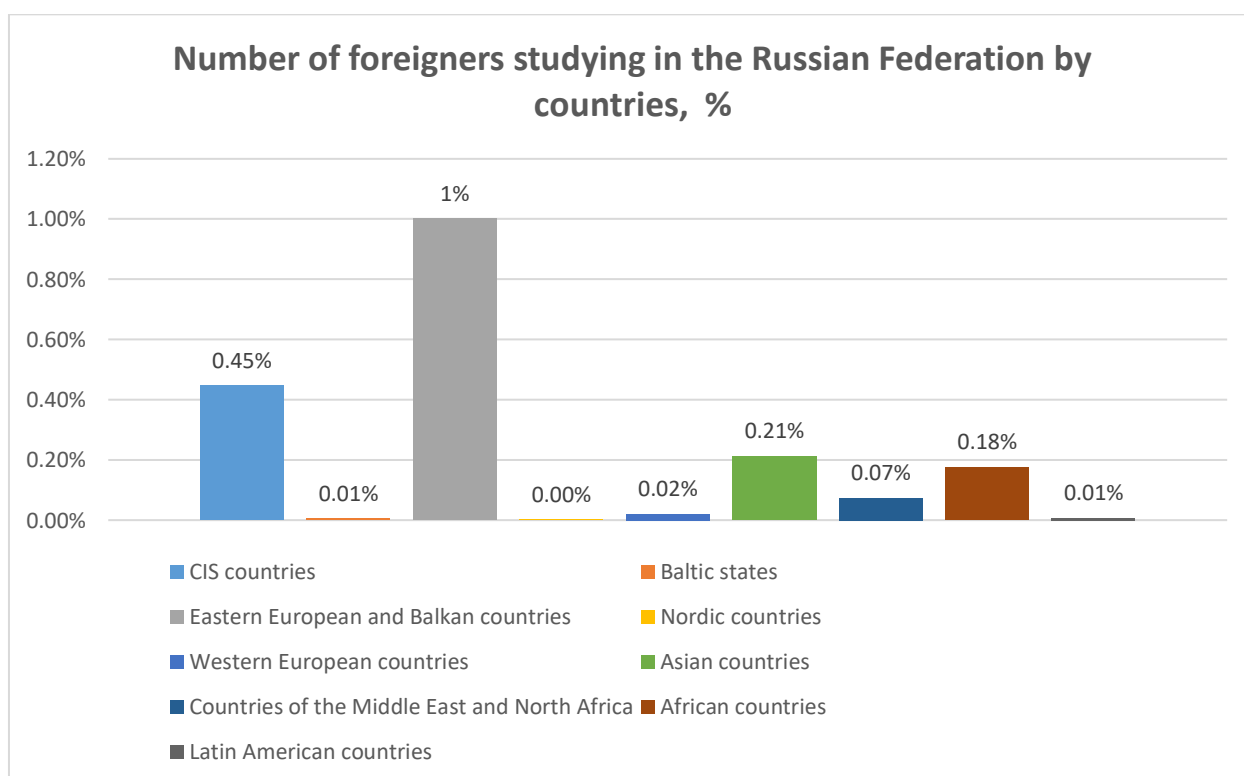
The master's programme finds less demand among foreigners. Therefore, Russian universities need to bring their master's programmes to the international level. This is achievable by the revision of educational programs and the selection of the most demanded areas of training.

Under the "Export of Education" federal project, the Government of the Russian Federation must be committed to doubling the number of foreign students by 2024. Nevertheless, today the share of Russia in the world education market is 6.8 % of the total number of foreign students all over the world.

Since 2010, the Department of International Education and Science Cooperation has played an active role in promoting the Russian educational product. The Concept for the Export of Educational Services of the Russian Federation for 2011–2020 (Bulletin of international organizations, 2010) plays an important role in the promotion of Russian education. Most of the universities involved in the export of educational services are engaged in the linguistic training of foreign students. A well-established linguistic system contributes to the popularization of Russian education.

Analysis of the source base shows the modern education system developing legacy segments of the world education market (Figure 4).

Figure 4



Russian education is popular in the CIS countries, among which the dominant role is played by Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan. As well, the Russian universities have seen a significant decrease of Georgian natives among students. Natives of some CIS countries, within the framework of valid agreements, may study at the main faculties without any preparatory training. This fact makes education attractive.

The Asian countries are the leaders in the number of foreigners who have chosen the Russian Federation as a place of study (21.2 %). China, India, Vietnam, Mongolia are the leaders in provision of students. 17.5 % are from Latin American countries such as Ecuador, Colombia, Brazil, as followed by the countries of the Middle East and North Africa (7.37 %). Iraq, Egypt, Morocco, Syria are the leaders in the number of foreigners from this region.

African countries (except of Northern) — 4.8 %. First of all, these are Nigeria, Angola, Ghana, Congo. Despite the fact that the Countries of North America and Oceania are a huge region, only 0.7 % of the total number of foreigners study in Russian universities. A relatively small number of foreigners studying in Russia from the Baltic countries in 2019 increased by 5 % as compared to 2018. However, this is only 0.53 % of the total number of foreigners studying in Russia. The political situation demonstrates that the Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian nationals opt for the study in Western European countries, the USA and Australia.

The Russian universities open their preparatory faculties for the people from Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro, and the Czech Republic. Bulgaria, Serbia, Poland, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic are leaders among the Eastern European and Balkan countries in terms of foreigners at the preparatory faculties.

A small number of foreign students study from Nordic countries such as Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden. The total number of foreigners from these countries is 0.2 %. The low percentage of foreign students studying at the pre-university training stage is due to the fact that Russian education does not fully comply with European standards. Prospects for the development of the educational services market in the Russian Federation are associated with an increase in the variety of educational programs. The Russian educational space does not always respond to changes in the external and internal environment. Education widespread in foreign universities begins to actively develop only at the beginning of 2020 and is associated with the coronavirus pandemic. An increase in the competitiveness of the Russian education system is associated with an improvement in the quality of education, as well as the expansion of international educational and scientific contacts.

## **Conclusions**

The prospects for the development of Russian education on the world market of educational services are associated with the pre-university stage of education — the most important stage in the formation of a secondary linguistic personality capable of studying at major universities. The competitiveness of Russian education on the international market of educational services and the number of attracted students depends on a successfully conducted campaign to provide pre-university training for foreign students.



The system of effective management of the pre-university education system is determined by a number of key factors:

- 1) the conformity of the system of pre-university training of foreign students must correspond to the needs of the world community;
- 2) the system of pre-university training must meet the needs of citizens of foreign countries, as well as employers;
- 3) pre-university training is designed to help attract foreign investment into Russian higher education;
- 4) reducing government spending on foreign students training;
- 5) competition with European universities in the international market for attracting foreign students to state-financed and non-state-financed places;
- 6) implementation of purposeful activities related to the creation of a quality management system in education in accordance with the common European approaches within the Bologna process).

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