

BOLOGNA PROCESS TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL REPORTS: 2005-2007

Final: 9 May 2006

Notes:

The deadline for submitting National Reports is **Friday 15 December 2006**.

BFUG members are encouraged to consult other stakeholders about the contents of their National Report.

Please complete your National Report in English using this template and return it to the Secretariat by email. Your report should not exceed **20 pages in length**, using Times New Roman font size 12. Where appropriate, please include precise web references to legislation or other documentation. For any topic where there has been no change since 2005, please refer to your National Report for the Bergen conference.

Please attach your country's action plan to improve the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications.

National Reports will be posted on the Bologna website in their original form.

Information from National Reports will form the basis of the Stocktaking Report to be presented to Ministers when they meet in London in May 2007.

This template has three sections:

- A. Background information on your Higher Education system
- B. Main stocktaking questions, including scorecard elements
- C. Current issues in Higher Education.

Elements that will inform the scorecard element of stocktaking are clearly indicated in the template.

Information for the stocktaking, including the scorecard element, will also be drawn from the Eurydice survey "Focus on the Structure of Higher Education in Europe". These elements are also indicated in the template. Please use your National Report to supplement, but not repeat, your country's input to the Eurydice survey.

A. Background information on your Higher Education system

Details

Country	Republic of Azerbaijan
Date	04 December 2006
BFUG member (one name only) Position	<u>Mr.</u> Azad Akhundov Chief Executive, Ministry of Education
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Main achievements since Bergen

<p>1. Describe the important developments relating to the Bologna Process, including legislative reforms, since Bergen.</p>
<p>After joining the Bologna process in May 2005 in Bergen, Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan elaborated an Action Plan and by the appropriate Order of the Minister of Education “Plan of activities on implementation of the requirements of Bologna Declaration in higher education system of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2006-2010” was adopted. This Plan stipulates modernization of multi-tier system of higher education, transfer to credit system, elaboration of new Diploma Supplement in compliance with UNESCO/Council of Europe Recommendations, recognition of foreign documents on higher education in Azerbaijan and Azerbaijani diplomas in member countries of Bologna Process, quality assurance of higher education, increasing mobility of students and teaching staff.</p> <p>In compliance with the abovementioned Order, the Working Groups was established in higher education institutions where credit system is applied. These working groups comprise prorectors, faculty deans and highly qualified experts. At the same time, a number of seminars and trainings have been convened, including the national seminar on credit system convened in 2005 with expert and financial assistance of Council of Europe.</p> <p>The Regulation on “Introduction of credit system in higher education institutions” was elaborated and adopted in 2006. In compliance with this Regulation the process of introduction of credit system started in a number of higher schools. In this regard, new State Standards on concrete directions and specialities have been worked out and adopted.</p>
<p>The new legislative basis on accreditation of higher education institutions in our country was adopted. In particular, the new Regulation on attestation and accreditation of higher and secondary specialised education institutions stipulates concrete requirements for implementation of this process. The Standing Commission on Accreditation was established 2006. In 2006 accreditation of 2 higher schools and 2 secondary specialised education institutions was implemented.</p>

National organisation

<p>2. Describe any changes since Bergen in the structure of public authorities responsible for higher education, the main agencies/bodies in higher education and their roles.</p> <p>Please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether higher education institutions (HEIs) report to /are overseen by different ministries • how funds are allocated to HEIs • areas for which HEIs are autonomous and self governing.
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Majority of higher education institutions are under supervision of the Ministry of education of Azerbaijan Republic. Some higher education institutions are supervised by other ministries, including Azerbaijan Medical Academy (Ministry of Health), Azerbaijan State Academemy of Sports (Ministry of Youth and Sports), Azerbaijan Institute of Tourism (Ministry of Culture and Tourism), Baku Higher Police Academy (Ministry of Internal Affairs, Higher Diplomatic Academy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Baku Higher Military Marine School and Higher Military School (Ministry of Defence), National Academy of Aviation (‘Azerbaijan Airlines’ State Concern), Academy of National Security (Ministry of National Securiry).

Public higher education institutions in Azerbaijan are financed from the State budget. 6 higher education institutions functioning on self-management basis (Azerbaijan University of Languages, Azerbaijan State Oil Academy, Azerbaijan Academy of Agriculture, Azerbaijan Technical University, Nakhchivan State University) are financed directly from the State budget. Other higher schools are

Higher education institutions are fully autonomous in development of their curricula on condition that these curricula comply with State education standards, as well as they are autonomous in inculcation of new methods of teaching and training. HEIs have the right to identify and adopt the content and methods of teaching of subjects in compliance with State standards, identify number of students (Bachelor and Master degree) to be admitted next academic year, as well as to grant scientific degrees, establish internal structures (faculties, chairs, laboratories, centers, departments etc), employ faculty members and other personnel on competition basis.

Higher education institutions which function on self-management basis have additional privileges.

3. After joining Bologna process in 2005, 2 private higher colleges (Social-political Higher College and Higher Diplomatic College) and 1 seminary (Baku Higher Seminary for Girls) were granted the status of university. 2 new higher education institutions have been established – Azerbaijan Academy of Diplomacy and Azerbaijan Institute of Tourism.

Validity of the license of 1 private higher school (“Independent Azerbaijan” University) has been terminated.

At present, 48 higher education institutions function in Azerbaijan, including 33 public and 15 private higher schools.

27 higher education institutions have the status of University, 12 - Academy, 5 – Institute, 1- Conservatoire, 3- Higher school.

Out of 21 HEIs which are under supervision of the Ministry of Education, 13 are universities, 4 – academies, 1- conservatoire, 3 – institutes.

In 2006-2007 academic year 18309 students (92,9%) were admitted to HEIs which are under supervision of the Ministry of Education, including 14490 students (79,1%) who entered universities, 2188 students (12%) – academies, 1584 students (8,6%) – institutes, 47 students (0,3%) – conservatoire.

Partnership

4. Describe the structure which oversees the implementation of the Bologna Process in your country.

Please include:

- the membership and role of any national Bologna group (for example policy committee, promoters' group)
- the membership and role of students, staff trade unions, business and social partners in any national Bologna Group.

Supervision on implementation of the Bologna Declaration is carried out by the Department of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education and International Relation Department of the Ministry of Education in partnership with other structures of the Ministry.

Working groups are established in higher education institutions, which include faculties administration, lecturers, researchers, students. Trade unions, youth organisations and students are broadly involved in discussions related to implementation of the Bologna process in HEIs.

5. Describe the arrangements for involving students and staff trade union/representative bodies in the governance of HEIs.

Please include:

- precise references (preferably with web links) to any legislation (or equivalent) in place to ensure students and staff are represented on HEI governing bodies
- the role of students in the governance of HEIs
- the role of staff trade union/representative bodies in the governance of HEIs.

Students and staff trade union organisations in HEIs function within the framework of competences stipulated in educational legislative acts. Their involvement and role in the management of HEIs are regulated and ensured by the Law on Education, educational legal acts and internal regulations of HEIs.

Youth and students organisations and trade unions in HEIs take an active part in implementation of the state youth policy and play major role in issues related to education process, scientific research activity, social protection and organisation of leisure activity of students.

Teachers and students trade union organisations function in all HEIs. Leaders of trade unions are represented in the Scientific Council- the highest governing body of the higher education institution. Participation of students and staff representatives in the activity of the Scientific Council ensures real involvement of trade unions in the decision making policy in HEIs.

6. Describe the measures in place to ensure the co-operation of business and social partners within the Bologna Process.

B. Main stocktaking questions, including scorecard elements

Degree system

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle

7. Describe the progress made towards introducing the first and second cycle.

Please include:

- the percentage of the total number of students below doctoral level enrolled in the two cycle degree system in 2006/07.

In 1993 two-tier system of higher education was introduced in Azerbaijan which includes bachelor and master degree study.

During the first cycle (bachelor level) students acquire knowledge within the study programme on concrete speciality (qualification). Study programme for bachelor level provides general knowledge on science, humanities and applied scientific knowledge on concrete speciality. Period of study for bachelor level is 4 years. Education process at bachelor level is implemented through study plans on concrete specialities prepared in compliance with education standards and adopted by the Ministry of Education. Before completion of Bachelor degree study students submit Diploma work and defend it before the State Attestation Commission.

On successful completion of the first (bachelor) level of education and by the Decision of the State Attestation Commission students are awarded Bachelor degree and unified state diploma.

Post graduate students who displayed high results during their study at Bachelor level of education can continue education at the second cycle (Master level) through application to the State Commission on Students Admission and passing appropriate exams .

In 1997-1998 academic year transfer to the second cycle (master level) was implemented. At this level of education students acquire in-depth knowledge on concrete specialisation.

At present, 39 higher education institutions in Azerbaijan offer Master degree programmes. About 10000 students study in these HEIs at Master level.

The second cycle of education is implemented in the form of full-time and part-time study. The period of study at the second cycle is 1,5-2 years depending on the speciality. The period of part-time study for Master degree is 2,5 years. During the last term of Master degree study students should prepare and defend dissertation. Students who successfully completed Master degree programme and defended dissertation are awarded a professional and scientific degree of Master.

In 2006-2007 academic year 18309 (92,9%) students entered HEIs (Bachelor degree study) which are under supervision of the Ministry of Education and 2550 postgraduate students entered the second cycle of

education (Master degree)

(Eurydice)

Stage of implementation of the third cycle

8. Describe the progress made towards implementing doctoral studies as the third Bologna cycle.

Please include:

- the percentage of 3rd cycle students following structured doctoral programmes
- the normal length of full-time doctoral studies
- the elements that are included in doctoral study programmes, e.g. do they include taught courses or independent research only
- the supervisory and assessment procedures for doctoral studies
- are doctoral studies included in your country's qualifications framework and are they linked to learning outcomes
- are interdisciplinary training and the development of transferable skills integrated in doctoral studies
- are credit points used in measuring workload in doctoral studies?

In accordance with the Education Law of Azerbaijan Republic, the third cycle of higher education (Doctoral degree) is stipulated within the framework of multi-tier higher education system. However, mechanism of preparation of specialists within this system doesn't function yet.

At present, 'aspirantura', and 'doctorantura' which were introduced during Soviet times continue functioning. After completion of a research in 'aspirantura' or 'doctorantura' researcher defends dissertation and by the decision of the Specialised Board he/she is awarded a scientific degree of candidate of science (kandidat nauk) or doctor of science (doctor nauk).

Presently, about 600 researchers study in 'aspirantura' or 'doctorantura' functioning within the system of the Ministry of Education.

Access¹ to the next cycle

9. Describe the arrangements for access between the first and second cycles and second and third cycles.

Please include:

- the percentage of first cycle qualifications that give access to the second cycle
- if appropriate, the percentage of first cycle qualifications that give access to the third cycle
- the percentage of first cycle qualifications that give access to both the second and third cycles
- the percentage of second cycle qualifications that give access to the third cycle
- specify any first cycle qualifications that do not give access to the second cycle
- specify any second cycle qualifications that do not give access to the third cycle.
- specify any examples where bridging courses are necessary to transfer between cycles in the same subject area
- any measures planned to remove obstacles between cycles.

In compliance with the 'Regulation on Master degree study in Azerbaijan Republic', up to 20% of the number of postgraduate (Bachelor degree) students can be admitted to the second cycle of education. This index is valid for free of charge (state supported) education at the second cycle.

In accordance with the 'List of Master degree programmes' adopted by the Council of Ministers of Azerbaijan Republic in May 1997, admission of postgraduate students to the second cycle of education is implemented by the State Commission on Student Admission. At present, Master degree study is implemented on 80 directions which include 380 qualifications.

Some examples of first cycle qualifications that do not give access to the second cycle:

Biomechanics
Physics of optical phenomena
Physics of nuclear and elementary particles
Physics of condensate environment
Technique and physics of low temperatures
Ballistics
Radiochemistry and radioecology
Biology of development
Anthropology
Neurobiology
Psychophysiology

¹ Access as defined in the Lisbon Recognition Convention. Access: the right of qualified candidates to apply and be considered for admission to higher education.

Systematic philosophy
Dialectics and thinking
Logics
Problems of methodology of the history of political science
Black metals ore dressing
Steel metallurgy

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Implementation of national qualifications framework

10. Describe the stage of implementation of the national qualifications framework to align with the overarching Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA².

Please include:

- the stage of development of your national qualifications framework (for example: has your national QF been included in legislation or agreed between all relevant stakeholders; has a working group been established; have national outcomes-based descriptors of the main types of qualifications been prepared; has a timetable for implementation been agreed?)
- the extent to which your national qualifications framework is in line with the Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA
- the role of stakeholders in the development of your national qualifications framework.

In higher education system the students are awarded the 'Bachelor' degree by the specialised Attestation Commission of a higher education institution.

Master degree is awarded by the Specialised Scientific Board of a higher education institution.

Degree awarding system in higher education is regulated by the Education Law. Criteria and conditions of degree awarding system are reflected in the 'Regulation on attestation of Bachelor level students of higher education institutions of Azerbaijan Republic' and by the 'Regulation on Specialised Scientific Board for defending Master degree dissertations'.

Degree awarding system has been elaborated by experts representing Council of Ministers of Azerbaijan Republic, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice and higher education institutions.

11. What measures are being taken to increase the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications?

Please include where possible:

² A Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA: <http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/>

- the percentage of first cycle graduates who found employment after graduating in 2005/06
- the percentage of first cycle graduates who continued into the second or third cycles in 2005/06
- the extent to which this is expected to change in 2006/2007.

In 2005-2006 academic year about 17000 students graduated from the first cycle of HEIs which are under supervision of the Ministry of Education. Out of this amount 27% of students received education on pedagogical specialities and 2186 students were offered job by the Ministry of Education in educational institutions. Out of this amount, 788 (36%) students started working activity.

Postgraduate students who graduate from HEIs on different specialities (technical, technological, agricultural, etc) are not provided with job by the Ministry of Education and their employment is implemented on free_(self-employment) basis.

In 2005-2006 academic year 2550 (15%) postgraduate students continued their education at the second cycle (Master level).

In 2006-2007 academic year this index is expected to be approximately at the same level.

Quality assurance

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

National implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA³

12. To what extent is your national system of QA already in line with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA?

Please include:

- the stage of implementation of the national quality assurance system in line with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA
- any action that has been taken to ensure that the national quality assurance system is in line with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA
- any deadlines set for taking action to ensure that the national quality assurance system is in line with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA
- any action planned to ensure that the national quality assurance system is in line with the standards and guidelines for QA in the EHEA.

In order to ensure quality of higher education ' Regulation on attestation and

³ <http://www.enqa.net/files/BergenReport210205.pdf>

accreditation of higher and secondary specialised educational institutions' was adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers of Azerbaijan Republic. In compliance with this Regulation, criteria for attestation and accreditation of higher and secondary specialised education institutions were elaborated and the composition of Attestation Commission adopted.

In accordance with appropriate Regulation, attestation of higher and secondary specialised education institutions, as the mechanism of state-public control over the education quality in education institutions, is the procedure which identifies the compliance of education quality with state education standards. Attestation of education institutions is implemented every four years by the Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan Republic. At the first stage of accreditation process education institutions carry out self-evaluation of education quality and the results of self-evaluation are taken into consideration while making final decision on granting accreditation.

During the attestation process issues related to compliance of education content and quality with state education standards, effective implementation of study plans and curricula, the level of comprehension by students of selected subjects and results of exams, results of attestation of learners' knowledge by a higher school Attestation Commission, scientific, pedagogical and methodological basis, level of proficiency of teaching staff, medical-social conditions, development trends, etc are checked. At the same time, data on self-evaluation is reviewed.

The main criteria for attestation of directions of education and qualifications in higher school is the results of students progress which are regularly announced by the special commission of HEI. The index of students' progress should be above 50%.

Methodology of attestation of students' knowledge is identified by the Ministry of Education.

The HEI submits the Attestation Commission of the Ministry of Education the following documents:

- Charter of HEI
- Copy of the license for carrying out education activity
- Study plans
- Final report on self-evaluation

The Attestation Commission of the Ministry of Education reviews information and materials submitted by the HEI and within 1 month period prepares recommendations based on results of attestation of a concrete HEI. Taking into consideration recommendation of the Attestation Commission, Ministry of Education issues and Order on attestation/non-attestation of HEI.

Attestation of the HEI is the main condition for subsequent accreditation of this education institution. Following the attestation of HEI by the Ministry of Education, a set of documents is prepared for submission to Accreditation Commission within 1 week. The appropriate Decision on accreditation of HEI is issued by the Accreditation Commission, based on results of review of the materials submitted by Attestation Commission

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Stage of development of external quality assurance system

13. Describe the quality assurance system operating in your country.

Please include:

- the stage of implementation of your external quality assurance system
- the scope of your external quality assurance system: does it operate at a national level; does it cover all higher education⁴
- which of the following elements are included in your external quality assurance system:
 - internal assessment
 - external review
 - publication of results
- whether procedures have been established for the peer review of the national agency(ies) according to the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA.

Described in item 10

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Level of student participation

14. Describe the level of student participation in your national quality assurance system.

Please include:

- whether students are included in the following aspects of quality assurance:
 - the governance of national agencies for QA
 - as full members or observers in external review teams
 - as part of the decision making process for external reviews
 - in the consultation process during external reviews (eg arrangements for external reviewers to consult with students)
 - in internal evaluations.

Students participate in activity of external review teams as observers and they participate in consultation process during external reviews through meetings and discussions with members of external review team.

⁴ higher education: all types of courses of study or sets of courses of study, training or training for research at the post secondary level which are recognised by the relevant authorities as belonging to a country's higher education system.

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Level of international participation

15. Describe the level of international participation in your national quality assurance system.

Please include:

- whether there is international participation in the following aspects of quality assurance
 - the governance of national agencies for quality assurance
 - the external evaluation of national quality assurance agencies
 - teams for external review, either as members or observers
 - membership of ENQA
 - membership of any other international network.

At present, international experts or organisations are not involved in quality assurance process with regard to questions listed above. At the same time, international organisations and experts participate in joint projects and programmes related to quality assurance of education in concrete HEIs of Azerbaijan (TEMPUS/TACIS, European Association for Education Law and Policy, UNESCO)

Recognition of degrees and study periods

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Stage of implementation of Diploma Supplement

16. Describe the stage of implementation of the Diploma Supplement in your country.

Please include:

- the percentage of students graduating in 2007 who will receive a Diploma Supplement
- which of the following apply to Diploma Supplements issued in your country:
 - issued in a widely spoken European language
 - free of charge
 - automatically
 - correspond to the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format.

The Diploma Supplement is an obligatory document and is issued automatically to all students who receive Bachelor or Master degree diploma. Diploma Supplement includes all information related to study of the student in HEI, including personal details, previous education, direction of education and qualification, period of study, Decision of the Attestation Commission, progress during the whole period of study and grades received

during exams, practical training etc. Diploma Supplement is signed by the rector, dean of faculty and secretary of higher education institution.

The student receives Diploma Supplement free of charge.

Diploma Supplement is issued in Azerbaijani language. Foreign students who get education in Azerbaijan receive Diploma Supplement in two languages- Azerbaijani and English.

At present, the work on elaboration of new Diploma Supplement which complies with EU/Council of Europe/UNESCO format is coming to an end.

(Scorecard)

National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention

17. Describe the stage of implementation of the main principles and later supplementary documents⁵ of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Please include:

- whether your country has ratified the convention (including depositing ratification instrument at either CoE or UNESCO)
- whether all appropriate legislation complies with the legal framework of the Convention and the later Supplementary Documents
- which of the following principles are applied in practice
 - applicants' right to fair assessment
 - recognition if no substantial differences can be proven
 - demonstration of substantial differences, where recognition is not granted
 - provision of information about your country's HE programmes and institutions
- whether you have a fully operational ENIC
- any action being taken to ratify or fully implement the Convention and the later Supplementary Documents.

Republic of Azerbaijan Joined the Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of qualifications concerning higher education in the European region in 1997. Our country was the first one, which ratified it and deposited ratification instrument at Council of Europe.

In general, current legislation complies with the legal framework of the Convention and later Supplementary Documents.

In accordance with the Regulation adopted by the Ministry of Education, all individuals who submit foreign diploma for recognition have the right to fair assessment and appropriate Certificate on recognition is issued for holder of the diploma within one month period (if no substantial differences are identified). If the recognition is not granted, the diploma holder has the right to receive detailed information on reasons of negative reply, including demonstration of substantial differences.

Azerbaijan has a fully operational ENIC which functions under the Ministry of Education.

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Stage of implementation of ECTS

18. Describe the credit and accumulation system operating in your country.

⁵ Recommendation on the Criteria and Procedures for Recognition (2001); Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees (2004); Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education (2001)

Please include:

- the stage of implementation of ECTS in academic year 2006/2007
- the percentage of first and second cycle programmes using ECTS in academic year 2006/2007
- how any other credit or accumulation system in use relates to ECTS: is it compatible with ECTS; what is the ratio between national and ECTS credits.

In 2006 'Regulation on introduction of credit system in higher educational institutions of Azerbaijan' was elaborated and adopted. While working out this document, experience of leading European countries has been broadly analysed and taken into consideration. In compliance with this Regulation, student's classroom workload is determined as 15 weeks per term. Students workload is evaluated using credit points and 15 classroom hours equals 1 credit. Students are required to collect up to 30 credits per semester. At the same time, student's workload shouldn't exceed 30 hours per week. In addition to this workload, students (except for first year students) are allowed to select 1-2 additional subjects per term, on condition that number of additional credits doesn't exceed 8.

Depending on direction of education and qualification, Bachelor level students should collect 200-250 credits during the whole period of study, this index being approximately compatible with ECTS (180-240 hours).

At present, 8 higher education institutions of Azerbaijan, including Baku State University, Azerbaijan State Oil Academy, Azerbaijan Technical University, Azerbaijan University of Arts and Culture, Azerbaijan State Economic University, Azerbaijan University of Languages, Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University, Baku Slavic University) introduced credit system on 22 specialities (qualifications).

Before 1999, 5-grade system of students' knowledge evaluation was in common practice. In 1999 higher education institutions started introduction of multi-grade (100 grade) system. Students' knowledge is evaluated as follows:

50 grades – results of exams

10 grades – attendance

10 grades - comprehension of knowledge offered during lectures.

20 grades – results of seminar (practical) or laboratory work

10 grades – course work.

However, some higher educational institutions still practice 5 grade system (Azerbaijan Music Academy, Azerbaijan Medical Academy, Azerbaijan State University of Architecture).

In order to ensure full-scale introduction of credit system in HEIs, broad range activities are being implemented, including information seminars in higher schools, work with mass media, preparation of methodological materials and teaching aids for teachers and information materials for students, organisation of international/national seminars and conferences with participation of foreign experts.

The full-scale transfer to credit system is planned for 2010 after completion of pilot experiment and thorough analysis of its results.

19. Has your country produced a national plan to improve the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications⁶? If so, give a brief description of the plan and attach a copy.

The process of recognition of foreign diplomas and qualifications in Azerbaijan is regulated by the 'Act on recognition of foreign qualifications in the field of higher education' issued by the Council of Ministers of Azerbaijan Republic on 13 May 2003. The process of recognition of foreign qualifications include the following components:

- Compliance of the content of study plans (curricula) with those applied in Azerbaijan
- System of attestation, student's workload and subjects learned during the period of study
- Student's progress and results of exams, practical training, results of final attestation.
- Letter of inquiry to the HIE which issued the diploma and diploma supplement.

Documents submitted by the applicant are reviewed at the meeting of the Standing Commission for Recognition of Foreign Qualifications and in case of positive decision of the Commission, an applicant receives appropriate Certificate on recognition of his/her diploma and qualification.

Lifelong Learning

(Scorecard)

Recognition of prior learning

20. Describe the measures in place to recognise prior learning, including non-formal and informal learning.

Please include:

- the stage of development of any procedures or national guidelines to recognise prior learning
- a description of any procedures or national guidelines for assessing prior learning as a basis for access to HE
- a description of any procedures or national guidelines for allocating credits as a basis of exemption from some programme requirements.

In compliance with the State Programme on reformation of education in Azerbaijan, concept of lifelong learning was developed by national experts and adopted by the Ministry of Education.

Since 1997 Azerbaijan actively participates in international processes related to lifelong learning. Our experts in the field of lifelong learning participated in in 5th International Conference on Adult Education in Hamburg (1997), European Summit in Lisbon (EU Memorandum on continuing education – 2000), International Conference on 'Education for all' in Sofia (2003), 8th Conference of Education Ministers of CIS countries on 'Development of adult education' (2003), Regional

⁶ ENIC/NARIC has produced guidelines for National Action Plans for Recognition.

Conference on 'Education for all – lifelong learning in Central Asia' (2003). Participation in international events and analysis of contemporary experience of European countries in the field of lifelong learning facilitated development of the abovementioned concept of lifelong learning meeting current European standards in this sphere.

For the first time, legislative basis for implementation of non-formal and informal education, as well as recognition of prior learning will be provided in new Draft Law on Education, which is under consideration in the Parliament now and is expected to be adopted in late spring 2007. After entering into force of this Law, follow-up steps will be made in the field of development of up-dated mechanisms of non-formal and informal education and recognition of prior learning.

21. Describe legislative and other measures taken by your country to create opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education.

Please include:

- any flexibility in entry requirements
- any flexible delivery methods
- any modular structures of programmes.

Joint degrees

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

22. Describe the legislative position on joint degrees in your country.

Please include:

- the stage of implementation of any legislation to establish joint programmes
- whether joint⁷ degrees are allowed and encouraged in legislation

⁷ a joint degree is a single degree certificate awarded by two or more institutions, and where the single degree certificate is valid without being supplemented by any additional national degree certificate.

- whether joint degrees are allowed and encouraged in all three cycles
- an indication of the percentage of HEIs that have established joint programmes and are awarding nationally recognised degrees jointly with HEIs of other countries
- any action being taken to encourage or allow joint programmes.

At present, a number of higher education institutions carry out joint study programmes with foreign universities at Bachelor (first cycle) and Master (second cycle) level. On completion of these programmes students receive national diploma. According to Education Law of Azerbaijan Republic, Higher education institutions have the right to conduct joint programmes with foreign universities at all levels of higher education. On the basis of bilateral (multilateral) agreements our HEIs implement joint programmes with foreign universities.

Azerbaijan State Oil Academy implements a joint Master level programme with Georgia University, USA on business administration. Oil Academy implements, also a joint Bachelor level programme with Siegen University, Germany, on 'New technologies', 'Management', 'Mechatronics', 'Information systems'.

Azerbaijan Technical University implements a joint Bachelor level programme with Cologne Technical University, Germany, on 'Electrical engineering'.

A number of other HEIs, including Azerbaijan University of Architecture and Construction, Azerbaijan University of Languages, Azerbaijan State Economic University, Baku State University conduct joint programmes at Bachelor and Master level with HEIs of France, Italy, Russian Federation, USA, Turkey.

Private universities, including "Khazar" University, 'Odlar Yurdu' University, 'Western' University, also carry out joint programmes at Bachelor level with European and American HEIs.

C. Current issues in Higher Education

Higher education and research

23. Describe the relationship between higher education and research in your country - what percentage of research is carried out in HEIs; are any steps being taken to improve the synergy between HE and other research sectors.

There is strong relationship between higher education and research. Scientific research is an integral part of the activity of higher education institutions. It should be mentioned that above 40% of scientific potential of our country is concentrated in higher education system. Teaching staff of higher education institutions, along with 450-500 hours of teaching workload, conduct scientific-research work in laboratories, research centers and institutes affiliated to HEI. Special attention is paid to introduction of results of scientific research to education process and broad involvement of students to scientific-research work. In higher education institutions of Azerbaijan preference is given to researches in the field of fundamental, applied sciences and humanities. At present, increase of number of researchers engaged in scientific-research work in the field of medicine, pharmacology, philology, chemistry, economy, history, philosophy, physics and mathematics is observed.

At the same time, HEIs maintain close cooperation with National Academy of Sciences and its research institutes and centers. A number of universities

conduct joint researches with National Academy of Sciences, as well as convene joint seminars, conferences, olympiads.

24. What percentage of doctoral candidates take up research careers; are any measures being taken to increase the number of doctoral candidates taking up research careers?

About 60% of doctoral candidates take up research careers.

The social dimension

25. Describe any measures being taken in your country to widen access to quality higher education.

Please include:

- any financial or other measures to widen access in higher education amongst socially disadvantaged groups
- any measures in place to monitor the impact of policies to widen access to higher education, including results if possible
- any further measures planned, following evaluation of the widening access measures already in place.

In accordance with the Constitution of Azerbaijan Republic and Education Law of Azerbaijan Republic, every citizen of Azerbaijan has the right to education, including higher education, irrespective of its racial, national and religious affiliation, language, gender, age, state of health, social-financial position, type of activity, political views etc. The State guarantees observance of laws provided in Constitution.

Age requirement for entering higher education institution has been abolished.

Representatives of national minorities have equal rights to higher education.

As stipulated in the legislation of Azerbaijan Republic, men and women have equal rights to education. At present, women constitute 49% of the population of Azerbaijan Republic. 40% of students in higher education institutions are women.

Young people from refugees families and people forcedly displaced from Armenia and Upper Karabakh are exempted from education fee if they study in private higher school or public higher school on fee-paying basis.

26. Describe any measures to help students complete their studies without obstacles related to their social or economic background.

Please include:

- any guidance or counselling services and any other measures to improve retention
- any measures in place to monitor the impact of policies to improve retention, including results if possible
- any further measures planned, following evaluation of the retention measures already in place.

All higher education institutions have counselling services for students, including students from socially disadvantaged groups. The main objective of counselling service is to monitor students progress and provide necessary services to help student to complete his/her study, as well as to improve retention.

Mobility

27. Describe any measures being taken to remove obstacles to student mobility and promote the full use of mobility programmes.

Please include:

- any measures to increase inward student mobility
- any measures to increase outward student mobility.

28. Are portable loans and grants available in your country? If not, describe any measures being taken to increase the portability of grants and loans.

29. Describe any measures being taken to remove obstacles to staff mobility and promote the full use of mobility programmes.

Please include:

- any measures to increase inward staff mobility
- any measures to increase outward staff mobility.

Mobility of students is one of the priority areas of education policy in Azerbaijan. At present, 968 Azerbaijani students study abroad on state-supported basis. All expenses related to their study in foreign country are covered by the State or host country/university. Azerbaijani students receive education in Turkey (694 students), Russian Federation (177), Ukraine (10), Arab Republic of Egypt (48), China (16), Czech Republic (6), Slovakia (4), Romania (5), Malaysia (2), Austria (1), France (1). Besides, about 2000 students receive education in different countries on the basis of grants or on fee-paying basis.

There are no legal restrictions for students to start or continue their higher education abroad. Students have the right to terminate at any stage their study in Azerbaijan and continue it in HEI abroad.

Many students have the opportunity to continue their higher education abroad using grants allocated by international organisations or Embassies of foreign countries in Azerbaijan. Students continue their study in foreign country, but their place in HEI in Azerbaijan can be reserved after appropriate permission of the Ministry of Education or the Founders of higher school (if a student studies in private university).

There are also no legal restrictions for teaching staff outward mobility. Process of inward mobility is regulated by HEIs through announcements about vacant places and teachers are employed by the HEI on competition basis.

The attractiveness of the EHEA and cooperation with other parts of the world

30. Describe any measures being taken in your country to promote the attractiveness of the EHEA.

After joining the Bologna process, concrete measures have been taken by the Ministry of Education to promote the attractiveness of EHEA, including organisation of information seminars in HEIs, round table discussions, work with mass media, convening national and international seminars and conferences, awareness raising activities in different regions of Azerbaijan

Future challenges

31. Give an indication of the main challenges ahead for your country.

In order to create new legislative basis for higher education, the new Education Law should be adopted (at present, the new Education Law is under consideration in the Parliament).

Main challenges ahead for higher education system in Azerbaijan are:

- **Raising attractiveness of investments to higher education among local and foreign investors by offering advantages at the legislative level.**
- **Modernisation of higher education system in order to bring it to full compliance with public and market economy demands.**
- **Taking strong measures for provision of financial support directed to development of new learning and methodological literature, creation of new study programmes (curricula) and text-books in compliance with state education standards.**
- **Development of democratic principles in management of HEIs. Increasing students' role in management of HEIs and ensuring their real involvement in this process, as well as their active participation in organisation of education process. Involvement of local community in management of HEIs.**
- **Modernisation of 'List of directions and qualifications for higher education' and 'List of Master level programmes', taking into consideration public and market economy demands.**
- **Revision of the content of education for Master degree study, as well as revision of minimum requirements for Master level programmes. Elaboration of new State standards.**
- **Expedite the process of attestation and accreditation of higher educational institutions.**
- **Increase geography and number of HEIs which introduce credit system.**
- **Complete elaboration and introduce new version of the Diploma Supplement in compliance with Council of Europe/UNESCO format.**
- **Take concrete measures to ensure broader recognition of our higher education diplomas in European countries.**
- **Modernization of the quality assurance mechanism in order to bring it to compliance with Bologna process requirements.**
- **Modernisation of legislative basis and elaboration of new legislative documents in order to ensure broader mobility of students and staff.**



Completed National Reports should be sent to the Bologna Secretariat by email no later than **Friday 15 December 2006**.

Please remember to attach a copy of your national action plan to improve the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications.

Bologna Secretariat
May 2006