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**PEDAGOGICAL EDUCATION IN SELECTED COUNTRIES OF  
THE POST-SOVIET SPACE**

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*Abstract*

The article presents the results of the research of pedagogical education reforming processes from the 1990-s to 2015. Having become an important task alongside with cardinal changes in the sphere of education at the present stage of social world development, this process has also affected the countries in the post-Soviet space which appeared as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union. The findings of a comparative analysis of the state and trends in the development of pedagogical education in certain countries in the post-Soviet space are considered (Belarus, Ukraine, Russia, Moldova, the Baltic republics, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan). Common and distinctive features characterizing the transformation in this area are identified, such as the desire to join the Bologna process, i.e. transition to multi-level teacher training on the basis of classical universities; provision of all teachers with higher education; functioning of programs to improve the qualifications of teaching staff. At the same time, the transition to new forms and levels of teacher's education depends on the political and economic factors that operate in specific countries. The authors identify the problem points that exist in certain countries: a decline in the prestige of the teacher's profession, the lack of staff of pedagogical workers and insufficient level of their preparation in the educational institutions of specific countries. Along with the existing problems, a general tendency to create a system of training and upgrading the qualifications of pedagogical workers that corresponds to the level of world development has been found.

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**Keywords:** Pedagogical education, multi-level higher education, post-Soviet space, university education.



## 1. Introduction

In conditions of the modern dynamically developing world, when the role of education significantly increases, the results of profound transformations that embrace educational systems in various countries of the world, including the post-Soviet space, largely depend on the level of professional training and the competence of teachers, and the degree of effectiveness of their pedagogical activity. The process of pedagogical education reforming has become an important task, along with cardinal changes in the sphere of education.

At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> - beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the conception of the key role of the teacher in the modern world has been reflected in many international documents. At the 45<sup>th</sup> session of the International Conference on Education in 1996, the Declaration "The Role of Teachers in the Modern World" was adopted. Important tasks related to the training and activities of teachers were the provision of active participation of teachers in the reform of education systems; formation and implementation of a comprehensive policy to attract and retain the most talented people; reform of the teacher training systems in line with the new challenges of the development of education in a rapidly changing world, the strengthening of professional autonomy and the sense of responsibility of teachers, the improvement of their position and working conditions.

In the following years, other international documents in the field of education, which emphasized the direct dependence of the quality of education on the professional training of teachers and the continuous improvement of their qualifications were adopted. Such documents are important as benchmarks reflecting the general goals and objectives of teacher education on a global scale.

## 2. Research Questions

The leading **research question** was the identification of how the functioning and development of higher pedagogical education systems in some countries in the post-Soviet space is proceeding at the stage of their aspiration to join the European and global processes.

## 3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine the leading trends that characterize pedagogical education in the post-Soviet countries.

## 4. Research Methods

The comparative analysis method of the conditions and changes in the field of pedagogical education taking place in the countries under consideration made it possible to determine the stages of its reform and to reveal similar and distinctive features.

## 5. Findings

The study showed that with the acquisition of independence in the 1990s, all countries in the post-Soviet space took the path of change in higher pedagogical education. The systems of higher pedagogical

schools experienced a rather complicated period of transformation, connected with the entry of many of these countries into the Bologna process. In the post-Soviet period, considerable experience in the modernization of national systems of higher pedagogical education has been accumulated.

The countries that emerged as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, where the unified system of pedagogical education was formed and functioned, experienced similar stages of its reform. The first stage was the period of the destruction of the existing system, which was characterized by inertia, the organization of education on the basis of the old traditions of Soviet higher pedagogical education. Then spontaneous transformation began in the conditions of absence of normative documents, refusal of mono-ideology, approbation of multilevel models. At the stage of targeted reform, the regulatory and legal framework of the functioning of higher pedagogical education was developed, on the basis of which curriculum and programs, methods and forms of education were improved.

In the beginning - the middle of the 2000s, conceptual and program documents appeared in many post-Soviet countries, providing the development of national systems of higher pedagogical education. The duration of the stages is limited by different time periods due to the intensity of the processes that took place in the political and socio-economic spheres of each country, as well as in education systems.

One of the main trends in the teaching staff training was the transition to compulsory higher education of the university type.

So in the Republic of Belarus from the beginning of the 1990s, the higher school became the main institution for the teacher's training of the general education school. Higher educational institutions trained teachers for vocational and secondary special educational institutions, educators for preschool institutions, teachers of social and psychological services. In the early 2000's the system of higher pedagogical education consisted of 12 universities, including a pedagogical university, 9 classical universities (pedagogical faculties), a pedagogical institute and a higher pedagogical college. (Andaralo, 2001)

Students training in two pedagogical specialties - basic and supplementary - made it possible to move quickly to a five-year training period for specialists in the pedagogical profile, and then introduce a university type of a multilevel system (bachelor, master, postgraduate, doctoral) of pedagogical staff training and solve the problem of pedagogical specialists training for secondary special and higher educational institutions.

Although in Belarus there was a transition to a higher two-level pedagogical education, as in the EU countries, as a feature, it remained an opportunity to engage in research activities in the chosen specialty in a two-stage postgraduate education system: at graduate school (first stage), where the training is aimed at training specialists, possessing skills of planning and independent carrying out of scientific researches, the deep theoretical knowledge allowing to prepare qualification scientific work for the degree of Candidate of science (corresponding to PhD degree in many foreign countries) and get the qualification "Researcher"; in doctoral studies, where specialists who have the skills to organize research work on a new direction of scientific research or to develop existing topical areas of scientific research and analytical generalization of the results of scientific activities that allow preparing a qualifying scientific work for a doctorate degree are trained. (Andaralo, 2001)

In Belarus, according to the Concept for the Development of Pedagogical Education, a system of pre-professional pedagogical training has been created that takes into account the regional and social

characteristics of youth groups, including the development of a wide range of educational programs, the opening of pedagogically oriented lyceums, colleges, profile classes, and the possibility of remote pre-professional pedagogical education. (Konceptiya razvitiya, 2016) Such a system helps young people to orient themselves and choose their future profession more consciously.

In 2005, Ukraine joined the Bologna Treaty, according to which, it was required to revise the principles and content of the scientific and pedagogical staff training. Along with the enlargement of the network of higher education institutions, regional university centers were established. In the period 2010-2012 nine regional university centers were established on the basis of 22 higher educational institutions. In Ukraine, there is a budget program for the training and internships of students, scientific and pedagogical staff in leading foreign higher educational institutions. In the 2011-2012 for the first time, 275 people from 36 Ukrainian universities were sent to study or internship at the leading foreign higher educational institutions. In the following years, this figure increased slightly. (Skorobogatova, 2013)

Prior to the adoption of the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" in 2014, scientific and pedagogical staff for higher educational institutions of Ukraine prepared III and IV levels of accreditation through magistracy, postgraduate study, doctoral studies, and research organizations. The majority of post-graduate students and doctoral students studied in higher education. However, the effectiveness of postgraduate and doctoral studies was not high: with the defense of the thesis, graduate studies were completed by approximately 23% of graduate students, and about 20% of doctoral students defended their doctoral thesis (Skorobogatova, 2013).

After the analysis of the highly qualified staff training, including that engaged in research, the law of 2014 recorded a five-level system of higher education, including pedagogical:

- 1- initial level (short cycle) of higher education - junior bachelor;
- 2- the first (bachelor) level bachelor;
- 3- the second (master's) level - master;
- 4- the third (educational-scientific) level - Doctor of Philosophy (PhD);
- 5-scientific level-doctor of science.

New degrees for higher education in Ukraine were: "Doctor of Philosophy" and "Doctor of Science", these levels are created on the basis of former postgraduate and doctoral studies in the form of structured PhD programs that integrate science and education. (Zakon Ukrainy, 2014)

However, in the system of scientific and pedagogical training in Ukraine there are still unsolved problems: almost half of the teachers in higher educational institutions do not have the necessary scientific qualifications; there is absence of moral, material encouragement of the work of scientists with the aim of stimulating the creative activity of scientific workers, the freedom of their scientific activity.

Teachers training in the Russian Federation in accordance with article 10 of the Federal Law "On Education in the Russian Federation" (2012) includes the following main levels: secondary vocational education; higher professional education - bachelor's degree; higher professional education - specialty, master's degree; higher education - training of highly qualified staff. (Federal'nyj zakon, 2012)

Secondary professional pedagogical education is realized by pedagogical colleges and pedagogical technical schools, which conduct a set of students on the basis of both complete and basic general education. Specialists with secondary specialized education work in preschool institutions, teach in primary school, in the system of additional education with fields of activity: technical creativity,

choreography, visual activity, arts and crafts, musical, stage, social and pedagogical, tourist and ethnographic -biological, physical culture and health activities. In the system of secondary professional pedagogical education, it is possible to obtain the qualification of "educator of preschool-age children with developmental disabilities and with safe development" and "a teacher of primary classes and primary classes of compensatory and correction-developing education", as well as "a master of industrial training (technician, technologist, designer, etc.). (Federal'nyj zakon, 2012)

Training in the system of higher professional pedagogical education is conducted according to:

- 3-4 - year programs on several pedagogical directions: pedagogical education; vocational training (specialization); psychological and pedagogical education; special (defectological) education; pedagogy and psychology of deviant behavior.
- 5-6-year programs of the specialty, which is a traditional form of training for specialists in Russia. Currently, the Russian education is abandoning the specialty in favor of magistracy, due to the process of integration into the world system of higher education, which is characterized by two-level training: bachelor's and master's degrees. When studying in the magistracy, the emphasis is on independent work under the guidance of a scientific leader. The number of lecture hours is less in comparison with the specialty. But there is an in-depth study of the profession in one chosen topic. Masters defend a thesis, which differs from the final qualification work after the specialty is completed with greater novelty, depth and independence of the results obtained. The theme of the master's thesis is chosen upon admission to the magistracy, and work on it is conducted under the guidance of the scientific leader during the entire period of study. At the same time, the master's degree is academic, not scientific; it reflects professional, not scientific, qualifications. (Sistema pedagogicheskogo obrazovaniya, 2017)

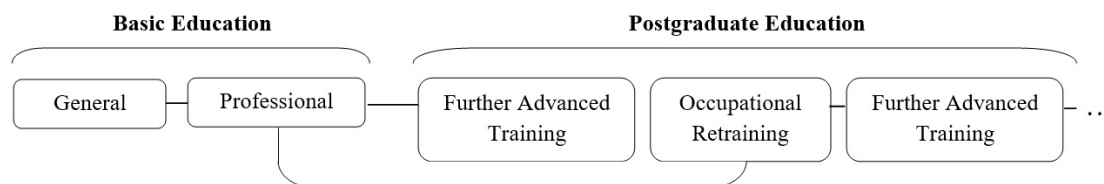
As for the training of specialists in higher scientific and pedagogical qualifications, in Russia the graduate school, which has become, on the basis of the "Law on the Education of the Russian Federation" (2012), the level of higher education, and doctoral studies, which is the highest scientific qualification level are retained.

Apart from these levels, there is an additional pedagogical professional education, which provides the improvement of pedagogical qualification and retraining (the acquisition of new pedagogical specialties) of pedagogical staff. Educational programs for professional development and retraining of specialists are implemented in institutes and academies of professional development of educators, as well as in special faculties for advanced training and additional education of universities and scientific organizations.

The additional vocational education in the Russian Federation is being built at the present stage as an integral element of the system of continuing education. The concept of continuing education was first presented at the UNESCO Forum (1965) by the greatest theorist P. Lengrand, who believed that a person should create conditions for the full development of his abilities throughout his life. In the world of pedagogy, the concept of "continuing education" is expressed by a number of terms, including "continuous education", "lifelong education", "lifelong learning", "permanent education". In Russia, the system of continuing education consists of two main subsystems - basic and post-basic education. The

subsystem of basic education includes a set of educational institutions that provide general and vocational education, and the subsystem after the base - periodical upgrading or retraining. (Gershunskij, 1987)

Schematically, the system of continuing education in general form can be represented the following way (Figure 01).



**Figure 01.** The system of continuing education.

In recent decades, in Russia, as well as in developed countries of the world, a new socio-economic structure is being formed ("knowledge economy", "post-industrial society", "cognitive society"). In the situation of the emergence of a postindustrial society, the key to development is the new qualities of human capital. The backbone of its activity at this stage of the development of society is not the standard once mastered, but the accumulated experience, the volume and quality of which depend on the ability to analyze and predict situations, to build their own unique practical innovations. (Osipov, 1989)

Therefore, the modern head of the school is interested not in the formal specialty of the applicant for the vacancy, but in his/her professional and educational experience: what higher professional institution he/she graduated from, the prestige and authority of this institution in the pedagogical educational environment (this is a reflection of talent, ambition and the level of the applicant's claims), the share of the practice-oriented component of his/her education, in which projects he/she participated, what functions he/she performed. Unfortunately, the modern Russian higher pedagogical education has not yet been able to respond to this challenge, since it does not have sufficient organizational and financial resources to build a powerful system for training future practical teachers with their practical skills and acquire real experience in teaching students.

And if the specialty is confirmed by the document on the level of education, then competence - the graduate's readiness to perform pedagogical activity by evaluating his/her activity in special model situations, is still not confirmed by anything.

Abroad, the assessment of competencies is performed by the so-called "Assessment centers". (Osipov, 1989) In Russia, such a mission to form and evaluate professional competencies can be undertaken today by a system of additional pedagogical education. In the Report on Improving the System of General Education in the Russian Federation, December 23, 2015, the following innovations have been listed and characterized: "The role of the system for improving the qualifications and retraining of teachers is radically changing, the system must depart from practice of "One-off courses" and be guided by the continuous process of professional and personal growth more and more. One of the trends in the development of additional professional education is a network of practice-oriented form of implementation of additional professional programs (training and retraining), in which teachers learn the experience of the best specialists of the leading educational organizations - a large-scale federal-regional network, which provides professional development of educators through the exchange of experience

between them and the development of systems of reflective practice, including training sites" (Doklad, 2015).

Among new objects of attention and state support in the system of continuing education of pedagogical workers, it is necessary to allocate a accumulative system of professional development, which allows the educator to design an individual educational route. Improvement of the qualification carried out by the accumulative system is based on the summation of the results of mastering the modules in the structure of the educational program, on which the training is conducted. This allows the teacher to create a virtual architecture of his/her competence as a flexible and growing structure. This experience has already been provided by the institutes of advanced training of Krasnoyarsk and Altai Territories, St. Petersburg, Moscow and the Moscow Region and other regions. (Doklad, 2015).

In the Republic of Moldova, the training of a teacher is largely determined by the existing standard for the preparation of the European Network for Teacher Policies, the task of improving the quality of the teacher training process itself in terms of the principles of continuing education, as well as enhancing the image of the teacher's profession.

Basic pedagogical education in Moldova is carried out on two levels of the educational system:

- Secondary special education - colleges, which diploma gives the qualification of an intermediate level specialist in the field of preschool and primary education. A graduate of a college can receive a bachelor's degree, passing the appropriate exams, and get an opportunity to enter the master's program of a university of any profile.
- Higher education - institutes, universities - train pedagogical staff for all levels of pre-university education, in all school disciplines. (Proekt Zakona, 2017)

Continuous professional education of pedagogical staff in Moldova is carried out in the Institute of Pedagogical Sciences, universities, as well as in non-governmental organizations accredited and licensed to provide this type of educational services. The Republican Institute of Pedagogical Sciences occupies a special place in the system of continuous professional education of Moldova due to the specificity of its bifurcation activity: research in the field of pedagogy and psychology and continuous professional education (advanced training of teachers, retraining of teachers, psycho pedagogical education for teachers of universities, colleges, professionally -technical institutions who do not have the diploma of a teacher, etc.).

Despite the steps taken in the field of reforming teacher education in the Republic of Moldova, the task remains to prepare these specialists only at the level of higher education. (Pogol'sha, 2017)

Former Baltic republics of the Soviet Union in the preparation of teachers follow European documents, on the basis of which they develop their own regulatory framework. So, in Lithuania in 2004 the Concept of teacher training was created; In 2006 State program for the restructuring of teacher training and development; In 2007 Description of the competence of the profession of the teacher; in 2008 (Edition 2010, 2012) Regulations for the training of teachers.

In Lithuania, by the mid-2000s, there was a system of teacher training on the basis of higher education institutions, consisting of two models:

Parallel: substantive training + teacher training + practice. In the framework of this model, primary school teachers and pre-school education are trained.

Consistent: the academic program of training on the subject, then pedagogical preparation. This model exists for the preparation of gymnasium teachers. (Pedagogicheskaya praktika, 2016)

In any of these models, two-level training is provided: a bachelor's and a master's degree, then one can get a doctorate (PhD).

As for the countries of the Asian region, former part of the Soviet Union, the formation of national systems of teacher education there also takes into account the global and European trends. Currently, there is a two-level (bachelor's, master's) training of teachers in higher educational institutions. However, lack of funding and some traditional features hamper the pace of reform. In many republics, like Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, the prestige of pedagogical activity has fallen dramatically, as a result the education system will soon lack pedagogical staff. In Kyrgyzstan, according to the Minister of Education in 2015, there were 2340 teachers in schools, that is, about one teacher per school. Only in Bishkek, where 20% of the country's population lives, there are no problems with staff. Every second graduate of pedagogical universities refuses to work by the specialty, at the same time there is no mechanism for returning the funds spent for their education. There are no financial and living conditions for encouraging young teachers, especially in rural areas (Zakon Kyrgyzskoj Respubliki, 2017), (Kyrgyzskij gosudarstvennyj pedagogicheskij universitet, 2017)

In Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in the 1990s, the main problems were the shortage of qualified pedagogical staff with higher education, the decline in the prestige of professional teacher education and the social status of teachers, educators and mentors, scientific and pedagogical staff, lack of marketing in education and training frames. The schemes of multivariate financing of the education system and the training of pedagogical staff were not worked out.

In the Republic of Uzbekistan in preschool education only 20% of the total number of educators and teachers had higher education. The staffing of schools with teachers was 93%, of individual schools - 77-80%, and in some academic disciplines - up to 50%. (Zakon Respubliki Uzbekistan, 2016)

In the Republic of Tajikistan by October 1, 2000 about 62% of teachers of full-time general education institutions had higher education, and only 22.3% had the average pedagogical education (Strategiya obrazovaniya, 2017)

Among the Asian region in the post-Soviet space, the Republic of Kazakhstan holds the leading place in reforming teacher education. In the "Concept of Continuous Teacher Education of a Teacher of the New Formation of the Republic of Kazakhstan" (2005), the system of continuous pedagogical education should be multilevel, aimed at providing multistage vertical and horizontal alternatives, dynamism, flexibility of preparation, its fundamentality and universality. Training in the system of continuous teacher education will be targeted, focused on specific requests of educational organizations of all types, subjects of the market of educational services while preserving the freedom of choice by the personality of the educational trajectory, strengthening the practical orientation of education.

In the context of transition to a new model of education focused on the result, and also due to the large number of small-scale schools, the preparation of a teacher in several specialties acquires particular urgency. In this regard, the university and postgraduate teacher training will provide the possibility of obtaining an additional specialty and be carried out only on the basis of higher education institutions. It was proposed to revive the network of boarding schools for teaching children from remote settlements. (Konceptsiya nepreryvnogo pedagogicheskogo obrazovaniya, 2005)



The current system of continuous pedagogical education of the Republic of Kazakhstan is built on the basis of the continuity of all its links and represents a unity of five steps.

I stage - pre-university vocational guidance in pedagogical classes of secondary school.

II level - training in pedagogical colleges, possible only after receiving a twelve-year education, with the right to enter the third year of a pedagogical university.

III level (basic) - higher pedagogical education.

IV level - postgraduate education: profile magistracy (one-, two-year) and doctoral studies (3 years), which is the final educational level of the system of teacher education.

V step-system of advanced training and retraining of teaching staff. (Konceptsiya nepreryvnogo pedagogicheskogo obrazovaniya, 2005)

The best among the higher pedagogical institutions of the Republic of Kazakhstan is the Kazakh National Pedagogical University named after Abay, in which 52 specialties of bachelor's degree, 52 specialties of magistracy and 16 scientific directions of PhD are conducted. In 2011, the university entered the top 601+ international university rankings of QS World University Rankings. In 2012, 2013, 2014, according to the Independent Kazakhstan Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, KazNPU named after Abay won first place in the General rating of the best pedagogical universities. In 2014, according to the rating of the Center for the Bologna process and academic mobility, 14 specialties of the Bachelor's program in the direction of "Education" were awarded prizes. In 2015, 10 specialties in the direction of "Education" won prizes in the rating of the Independent Rating Accreditation Agency (NAAR). (Kazahskij nacional'nyj pedagogicheskij universitet, 2015)

## **6. Discussion**

The study showed that the reform of the system of pedagogical education in the post-Soviet space is being carried out in stages, at different times, which is politically and economically conditioned. There are common features in the reform of teacher education, among which the desire to join the Bologna process, which involves, among other things, the transition to multi-level teacher training on the basis of classical universities; providing all teachers at all levels of education with higher education; assignment of a PhD degree in place of the previously available Ph.D. and Ph.D. degrees; the functioning of programs to improve the qualifications of teaching staff. Among the specific features, the presence of traditional levels of training such as specialty can be noted in some countries. As for research training among pedagogical staff, in most cases it is carried out through an educational doctoral program with qualification Ph.D. However, such countries as Belarus, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia still retain postgraduate and doctoral studies as two levels of the highest scientific qualification.

## **7. Conclusion**

The main conclusion of the study is that all countries in the post-Soviet space are carrying out a profound reform of the systems and content of pedagogical education, relying on their own traditions and global trends.

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