

## CONTEXT FOR THE NATIONAL DATA: RUSSIA

Recent reforms, including the introduction of tuition and fees at public universities, adoption of a legal framework for non-state higher education, the set-up of a national system of quality assurance, and adoption of bachelor and master's degrees, have considerably altered the entire configuration of Russia's higher education. The system has undergone diversification of institutional missions and of governance mechanisms and a general trend toward reliance on tuition and other market controls, an important shift for systems previously financed entirely by state subsidies.

After a period of stagnation in the 1980s and at the beginning of the 1990s, higher education has been showing steady, robust growth in both enrollments and the number of institutions. Since early 1990s, enrollments have almost doubled. As of 2001, a total of 1008 institutions serve approximately 5.4 million students, of which 621 institutions are public and 387 non-state, enrolling 4.8 million and 630,000 students respectively. About 53 percent of all students attend higher education institutions on a full-time basis, and 57 percent are female.

Public higher education institutions are controlled by the government through various ministries. Over 50 percent of public institutions are directly governed by the Ministry of Higher and Professional Education (MHPE) and the remaining institutions by other ministries (e.g., transportation, economy, culture and art, health care, etc.) and local and regional administrations. Non-state institutions are controlled by their founding entities, which may include various state-run organizations, private businesses, civil or religious organizations, or private individuals. However, the MHPE controls all institutions in matters of licensing and accreditation and curricula and programs of study.

Almost all non-state higher education institutions charge tuition and fees, which is their major source of financing. Public counterparts have both tuition-free and tuition-based students. Currently the proportion of students at public institutions paying tuition is about 40 percent, and the number of such students is steadily increasing. Public institutions also generate revenues through entrepreneurial activities (e.g., renting out their facilities), and a main part of their

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finances (estimated at between 40 and 60 percent of their operational budgets) still comes from the State through subsidies.

Russian higher education continues to be characterized by a dual system of degrees. The newly emerged system of bachelor and master's degree functions simultaneously with the 'old' system of specialist and doctoral degrees. The institutionalization of the 'new' system (particularly bachelor degrees) experiences difficulty in its acceptance in the labor market. At present, bachelor and master's degrees account for about 12 percent of all first university degrees awarded, as compared with 87 percent for specialist degrees. However, Russia's signing the Bologna declaration in the fall 2003 is likely to increase emphasis on bachelor and master's degrees.