



# Erasmus+ in Azerbaijan. Overview of Higher Education system, possibilities for cooperation in the view of successes and challenges of credit recognition

National Erasmus+ Office in Azerbaijan

Parviz Baghirov

[www.erasmusplus.org.az](http://www.erasmusplus.org.az)



European  
Commission



## Azərbaycan

- The largest country in the South Caucasus region
- Population: 10 Mio (2017)
- Area: 86.600 km<sup>2</sup>
- Capital: Baku
- Language: Azerbaijani
- Government: Presidential republic



# Higher Education System in Azerbaijan

- Three cycle degree system (bachelor, master and PhD)
- ECTS fully adopted and Diploma supplement issued
- Most common model 240+120 credits (4+2 years)
- Unified admission exams by a separate government body “State Committee on Student Admission”
- Quality assurance mechanisms:
  - At institutional level – quality assurance departments – self-assessment, surveys, improvement oriented
  - At national level – Accreditation Unit at Ministry of Education (institutional and programme accreditation)
- National Qualification Framework – still in the process of development (possible area of cooperation?)

# Higher Education System in Azerbaijan (as of 2017)

<b>Total # of HEIs</b>	<b>52</b>	
Type	Public (36)	Private (16)

<b>Total # Teaching staff</b>	<b>16 993</b>	
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Students	BA	MA	PhD	Total
Sum	126518	32 835	3 941	163 146



## Current HE reforms in Azerbaijan

- Curriculum Development (Focus on joint degree programmes)
- University Autonomy
- Development of NQF-based academic standards
- Programme accreditation (in regulated professions: medicine, education, law)
- Improvement of university quality and management
- New financing formula development (student voucher)
- Development of Competitive Innovation Funds for HEI



## EU PROGRAMMES

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



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

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



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

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



# National Erasmus+ Office in Azerbaijan

## Overall objective:

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

## Specific objectives:

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



## AREAS OF COOPERATION UNDER ERASMUS+

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



# AZERBAIJAN NATIONAL PRIORITIES UNDER CURRENT ERASMUS+ CBHE CALL

## Curriculum Development – VALID ONLY FOR JOINT PROJECTS!

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



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

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

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



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

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

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



# REGIONAL PRIORITIES UNDER CURRENT ERASMUS+ CBHE CALL

## Region 2

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

### Curriculum Development – VALID ONLY FOR JOINT PROJECTS!

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



# REGIONAL PRIORITIES UNDER CURRENT ERASMUS+ CBHE CALL (CONTINUED)

## Region 2

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

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

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



# REGIONAL PRIORITIES UNDER CURRENT ERASMUS+ CBHE CALL (CONTINUED)

## Region 2

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

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

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



## Azerbaijani HEIs active in international cooperation

- Experienced HEIs
  - Baku State University – 8 Tempus projects
  - Azerbaijan Languages University – 5 Tempus projects (first Tempus grantholder in Azerbaijan)
  - Azerbaijan State Oil Academy – 7 Tempus projects
  - Azerbaijan Technical University – 6 Tempus projects
  - Azerbaijan Medical University – 6 Tempus project
  - Khazar University (private) – 7 Tempus projects (Recent project grantholder for CBHE)
  - State Universities in Sumgayit, Nakchivan, Ganja and Lenkoran (up to 7 Tempus projects)
- Very ambitious HEIs
  - Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy
  - Qafqaz University (private) – 7 Tempus Projects
  - Tourism University



# Erasmus+

## International Credit Mobility (ICM)

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



## Erasmus+

### Capacity Building in Higher Education (ex Tempus)

Azerbaijan in CBHE projects	2017	2016	2015
Proposals received in call overall	833	736	515
Projects selected in call overall	149	147	138
Proposals received involving Azerbaijan	42	49	31
Projects selected involving Azerbaijan	1	3	3
Projects coordinated by Azerbaijan	1	1	1
Instances of participation from Azerbaijan	12	14	21

in selected projects

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



## Successes of Credit Recognition in Azerbaijan Higher Education

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



## Challenges in credit recognition in Azerbaijan HE

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



# Contacts

- **NEO Azerbaijan** [www.erasmusplus.org.az](http://www.erasmusplus.org.az)

**Parviz Baghirov**

E-mail: [pbaghirov@erasmusplus.org.az](mailto:pbaghirov@erasmusplus.org.az)

[pbagirov@gmail.com](mailto:pbagirov@gmail.com)

Phone: (994 12) 4974865

(994 50) 2038865



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Thank you!