DOI 10.22394/1726-1139-2021-8-65-70

Global Changes in Higher Education: Post-Covid Times

Julia P. Bayer[1, *], *Nikita A. Churaev*[2]

[1]Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (North-West Institute of Management, Branch of RANEPA), Saint-Petersburg, Russian Federation; *bayer-yp@ranepa.ru
[2]Committee for Science and Higher Education of the Government of Saint-Petersburg, Saint-Petersburg, Russian Federation

ABSTRACT

In this article we talk about education as a global phenomenon that includes many actors with their own political interests. In this regard, the question of the anthropological component of modern education, including in the international context, arises extremely sharply: what kind of person is formed by the new global education, to whom it applies, and what values it forms. Main trends in global education policy are defined. The formation of a global educational policy has not yet been completed, and the pandemic of coronavirus infection has brought both positive and negative aspects. We name both of them: the advantages and disadvantages of pandemic situation that shifted the global higher education into the different format. Also, we make the forecast on further higher education development.

Keywords: global education policy (GEP), pandemic, digitalization of education, citizen of the world

For citing: Bayer Ju. P., Churaev N. A. Global Changes in Higher Education: Post-Covid Times // Administrative consulting. 2021. No. 8. P. 65–70.

Глобальные изменения в высшем образовании: постковидное время

Байер Ю. П.[1, *], *Чураев Н. А.*[2]

[1]Российская академия народного хозяйства и государственной службы при Президенте Российской Федерации (Северо-Западный институт управления РАНХиГС), Санкт-Петербург, Российская Федерация; *bayer-yp@ranepa.ru
[2]Комитет по науке и высшей школе Правительства Санкт-Петербурга, Санкт-Петербург, Российская Федерация

РЕФЕРАТ

В этой статье мы говорим об образовании как о глобальном феномене, включающем множество акторов со своими политическими интересами. В этой связи крайне остро встает вопрос об антропологической составляющей современного образования, в том числе в международном контексте: какого человека формирует новое глобальное образование, к кому оно применяется и какие ценности оно формирует. Определяем основные направления глобальной образовательной политики. Формирование глобальной образовательной политики еще не завершено, и пандемия коронавирусной инфекции принесла как положительные, так и отрицательные аспекты в образование. Мы рассматриваем и преимущества, и недостатки пандемической ситуации, которая перевела мировое высшее образование в другой формат. Также мы делаем прогноз по дальнейшему развитию высшего образования.

Ключевые слова: глобальная образовательная политика (ГОП), пандемия, цифровизация образования, гражданин мира

Для цитирования: *Bayer Ju. P., Churaev N. A.* Global Changes in Higher Education: Post-Covid Times // Управленческое консультирование. 2021. № 8. С. 65–70.

The process of globalization in recent decades has covered almost all spheres of social life. Education, which is rapidly acquiring an increasingly global character, overcoming national borders and reaching the transnational level, is no exception. Today we can already speak with a certain degree of confidence about such a phenomenon as "Global Education Policy" — the purposeful activity of a number of national and global actors that are shaping a single global educational agenda.

As we considered it earlier publications, in the current global context, it is important to note that education is, firstly, viewed by the UN leadership as an ongoing process that facilitates growth for children and adults; secondly, the importance of education was understood as going beyond the framework of socio-cultural restrictions imposed in every society in the process of cultural production and reproduction; thirdly, education became primarily a technical endeavor and as such could be improved through the application of principles revealed by scientific research [12].

As A.V. Torkunov states, "international leadership is increasingly determined by the state's ability to purposefully develop its neighbor or competitor" [13]. And in this aspect, of course, one of the most important tools of influence is education, which serves as a powerful factor in the formation of the cultural and civilizational identity of the individual, his/her value orientation, political preferences, and so on. So, for example, funding in universities began to acquire a more selective and targeted nature, such as, the Erasmus + (that is financed by EU) program is aimed at individual grants for successful students, undergraduates, teachers and research, as well as scientific projects.

The trend that we pointed out in 2019 [12], is developing further: a prerequisite for the funding of grants from the representatives of the European Union is the highly detailed paragraph of the application on the "dissemination of European values" [12]. Thus, the European Union, as an actor of the GEP, pursues its own goals, which do not always coincide with the opinion of possible grantees. Nevertheless, this program is very successfully implemented among students, undergraduates and scientists all over the world.

Modern education is complex architectonics associated with a significant increase in the functional aspect of the educational process. If earlier education was necessary only for the transfer of knowledge, then since the second half of the XX century it begins to play an increasing political role, both within the country and in foreign policy processes [12]. Today we can talk about education as a global phenomenon that includes many actors with their own political interests. In this regard, it seems extremely important to determine the actors of global education policy today, what goals they pursue, and what are the mechanisms of their interaction. In this regard, the question of the anthropological component of modern education, including in the international context, arises extremely sharply: **what kind of person is formed by the new global education**, to whom it applies, and what values it forms [1].

The concept of "global education policy" is reflected in the works of a number of Western experts. The problem of globalization of educational policy is reflected in the works of such authors as N. Stormqvist, E. Green, K. Mandy, B. Lingard and others. Such authors as T. Falg, T. Bieber, K. Martens and others turn their attention to problems of actorness in the new global education, including at the national and supranational levels [2–11].

If we talk about specific Russian scientific schools, then in the context of the study of global educational policy, one should single out the schools that have developed at MGIMO and RANEPA.

Today, we can fix the basic directions of the development of higher education in the world, which we define as the main trends in GEP. Among them, we should highlight such as:

- massification, expressed in the increasing accessibility of higher education, individualization and nonlinearity of educational trajectories,

- openness (Life Long Learning) — learning throughout life,
- delocalization of the educational space (computerization, e-learning), an increase in the share of project and problem-oriented learning.

Major new players such as China, Korea, Taiwan, Brazil and India have emerged in the global economy. They began to undermine US and European dominance in manufacturing and education. Global education policy is an integral part of world politics. We see that among the countries exporting educational services, the first places are taken by the United States and the European Union, which is quite natural from the point of view of the geopolitical ambitions of these countries. Russia, in turn, historically, since the Cold War, and also due to language restrictions, exports educational services to countries that are historically close to it and are its allies geopolitically.

Nevertheless, it can be noted that the 2019–2020 pandemic has significantly accelerated the process of delocalization of education, since the universal transition to distance learning took place as soon as possible.

So, for example, 03/11/2020, the World Health Organization announced a pandemic of the new coronavirus infection COVID-19. However, as early as January 24, 2020, an emergency regime was introduced throughout the People's Republic of China. The Chinese authorities banned all sports events, significantly restricted movement on public transport, canceled mass cultural and entertainment events, closed museums, and in a number of regions of the country that are zones with a particularly high epidemiological risk, a full lockdown was introduced.

With these restrictions, the preservation of traditional classroom forms of conducting classes becomes almost impossible. As in a number of other countries, educational organizations of the People's Republic of China were forced to switch to distance forms of education as soon as possible to ensure the continuity of education. The most massive online educational platforms in the People's Republic of China are: "XuetangX" (www.xuetangx.com), which was launched back in 2013 and as of 2020 contained over 3000 online courses from leading universities in the world, and also online platform "iCourse International" (www.icourse163.com), which was launched on 28/04/2020.

The Russian Federation has a similar platform — the national Open Education platform (https://openedu.ru/), developed with the support of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation. This platform was created by the Association "National Platform for Open Education", which includes the following leading Russian educational organizations: Moscow State University M.V. Lomonosov, St. Petersburg State Peter the Great Polytechnic University, St. Petersburg State University, National Research Technological University MISiS, National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology, Ural Federal University named after the first President of Russia B.N. Yeltsin, as well as the National Research University ITMO.

The development, filling with educational materials and programs, as well as supporting the functioning of the above platforms, both in Russia and abroad, most clearly testifies to the need of a modern person for an affordable, continuous and high-quality education.

In addition, the relevance of the topic is determined by the already well-known fact that education and its export are often used as "soft power", as a way of informational and ideological influence of one country on another, thus, carrying out the conquest of minds by information. So, the EU countries export their influence through the provision of educational services and grants (for example, the Erasmus+ program), the USA provides significant benefits in education for citizens of Georgia, Latin America, etc. Step by step, national traditions in education are eroded, social norms and values become universal, and geopolitical influence is carried out at a more subtle level than trade or military action. As a result of the transition to distance learning and the erasure of geographical physical boundaries, education becomes generally available.

Not so much has been written about globalization and educational policy and about the creation of a separate area of global educational policy, as it deserves. It seems that the process of development of the GEP is developing more rapidly than the process of its comprehension. Both in politics and in practice, the concept of using "soft power" is already the most relevant and one of the most effective.

The process of globalization in recent decades has covered almost all spheres of social life. In this case, education was no exception, and is rapidly acquiring an increasingly global character, overcoming national borders and reaching the transnational level. Today, we can already speak with a great deal of confidence about such a phenomenon as global educational policy — the purposeful activity of a number of national and supranational actors to form a single global educational policy.

There are a lot of definitions of GEP in the scientific world discourse, but we, on the basis of the studied literature, believe that global education policy is the current trend in the field of modification, improvement and development of educational processes occurring at the global level. Through the information sphere, one (as a rule, more economically wealthy and politically strong) state (union of states) influences another state (states), thereby using "soft power" to win the minds of the most promising target audience — youth. Thus, values and norms become universal, there is no need to conquer other states physically, if this can be done informationally. The nationality of citizens is losing its meaning. As a result of the GEP, a unified formation of a "citizen of the world" takes place, possessing the personal and professional competencies necessary for survival in the world society. We don't give here our opinion on that intentionally, being scientists, we are free of judging, we only study pure facts and processes in society, trying to extrapolate them and foresee social and political consequences.

At the same time, it is necessary to understand that at the moment the formation of a global educational policy has not yet been completed, and the pandemic of coronavirus infection in this formation has brought both positive and negative aspects.

The positive aspects include the following:

- self-aligning by students of their own time necessary for mastering educational programs,
- convenience in choosing a place for training and reducing the time and financial costs for the journey to the educational institution,
- a fairly wide range of additional information resources that are available at any time, both to students and to the teaching staff thanks to access to the Internet.

The negative aspects include the following:

- the lack of full-fledged social contact of students between each other and the teacher,
- the geographical aspect when conducting group classes in the online format, that is, the difference in time zones between cities affects, with all the abundance and availability of information, the organization of distance learning in the Russian Federation.
- lack of uniform standards and (or) unified educational platforms,
- a decrease in the motivation of a number of students to systematically master educational programs,
- an increased load on the teaching staff during the period when students provide lots of materials that needed to be checked,
- the impossibility or extreme difficulty in conducting practical classes, which is especially important for a number of specialties,
- now, in almost post-covid times, difficulty in returning students (as well as teaching stuff) to the traditional (classroom) form of education, lack of students' discipline in attending off-line classes, probably because that during 2020 they learned so well to "stay safe home".

Summing up, it should be noted that the global pandemic of the new coronavirus infection COVID-19, which broke out in 2019 and continued in 2020 and 2021, clearly marked the following trend towards the transformation of the education system — the traditional form of education, which has already undergone forced changes due to the pandemic and further, the trend towards hybridization of forms of education will continue, and more and more attention will be paid to the creation and (or) development of unified educational Internet platforms.

Still, we have to admit that these extreme circumstances has sped up the process of digitalization of education all over the world. If under "normal" environmental conditions it would have taken 10 years to get all educational levels into digital form, under stress of pandemic it took only one year. We can surely state that since global fast digitalization of education already occurred, students will never get back to only off-line format of studying.

The education, we suppose, will continue developing into global, boundaries-free shape. Since the time of post-pandemic arrives, we are talking about developing better, interactive, convenient forms of e-study platforms that the competitive education global environment will create. Those actors of global education, who create the most competitive, creative and developing "clouds" will win the game. Still, education will continue to be less national and more global, because the competences that we develop in students, should be in demand on international labor market. Pandemic times has proven to us that the world is small and we all are interconnected. That is why any university should make their educational programs above their national interests and in alliance of the global labor market demands and internal desires of the students involved.

References

1. *Ball S.* J. (2012). Global education inc. London: Routledge., Rizvi, F., & Lingard, B. (2010). Globalizing education policy. London: Routledge.
2. *Bieber* T. (2010), 'Playing the Multilevel Game in Education-the PISA Study and the Bologna Process Triggering Swiss Harmonisation', in K. Martens, A. Nagel, M. Windzio and A. Weymann (eds), Transformation of Education Policy. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 105–131.
3. *Green* A. (2003), 'Education, Globalisation and the Role of Comparative Research'. London Review of Education, 1, (2), 84–97.
4. *Lingard* B., & Rawolle S. (2011). New scalar politics: Implications for education policy. Comparative Education, 47, 489–502.
5. *Lingard* B., Rawolle S. and Taylor S. (2005), 'Globalising policy sociology in education: working with Bourdieu'. Journal of Education Policy, 20, (6), 759–777.
6. *Martens* K. and Wolf K. D. (2009), 'Boomerangs and Trojan Horses: The Unintended Consequences of Internationalising Education Policy Through the EU and the OECD', in A. Amaral, G. Neave, C. Musselin, and P. Maassen (eds), European Integration and the Governance of Higher Education and Research. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, pp. 81–107.
7. *Martens* K., Nagel A., Windzio M. and Weymann A. (2010), Transformation of Education Policy. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
8. *Mundy* K. (1998), 'Educational Multilateralism and World (Dis)Order'. Comparative Education Review, 42, (4), 448–478.
9. *Mundy* K. (1999), 'Educational multilateralism in a changing world order: UNESCO and the limits of the possible'. Journal of Education Development, 19, (1), 27–52.
10. *Mundy* K. and Menashy F. (2011), 'Varieties of Organized Hypocrisy: The Case of the World Bank and Private Provision of Education', paper presented to Workshop 'Studying International Organisations in Social Policy', Bremen, 21 October.
11. *Mundy* K. and Murphy L. (2001), 'Transnational Advocacy, Global Civil Society? Emerging Evidence from the Field of Education'. Comparative Education Review, 45, (1), 85–126.
12. *Bayer* Ju. P. Actor approach to researching global educational policy [Байер Ю. П. Акторный подход к исследованию глобальной образовательной политики] // Administrative consulting [Управленческое консультирование]. 2019. № 3. P. 72–78. (In Rus)

13. *Torkunov A.* V. Education as a soft power tool in Russian foreign policy [Торкунов А. В. Образование как инструмент «мягкой силы» во внешней политике России] // MGIMO Review of International Relations [Вестник МГИМО университета]. 2012. № 5. P. 85–93. (In Rus)

About the authors:

Julia P. Bayer, Head of "Sociology" and "Social work" programmes, Associate Professor of North-West Institute of Management, Branch of RANEPA (St. Petersburg, Russian Federation), PhD in Sociology; bayer-yp@ranepa.ru

Nikita A. Churaev, Chief specialist of the Department of Development of Programs and Projects in the Field of Vocational Education of the Committee for Science and Higher Education of the Government of St. Petersburg (St. Petersburg, Russian Federation); nikitazch@yandex.ru

Об авторах:

Байер Юлия Паулевна, директор образовательных программ «Социальная работа» и «Социология», доцент кафедры социальных технологий Северо-Западного института управления РАНХиГС (Санкт-Петербург, Российская Федерация), кандидат социологических наук; bayer-yp@ranepa.ru

Чураев Никита Антонович, ведущий специалист отдела развития программ и проектов в сфере профессионального образования Комитета по науке и высшей школе Правительства Санкт-Петербурга (Санкт-Петербург, Российская Федерация); nikitazch@yandex.ru