

New Curricula in Foreign Trade and Econometrics – Lessons Learnt and Future Plans

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Outline

1) Motivation for our JEP

2) Intermediate Results and Lessons Learnt

3) Future Plans

4) Critical Remarks



Motivation for the JEP „New Curricula in Foreign Trade....

Teaching Economics in FSU countries as a challenging task

- No such subject existed till 1991 – only political economy
- No trained teachers were available at 1991
- Curricula designed, but teachers missing

Analysis of existing curricula

- Curricula meet international/European standards – compliance of contents
- But methods differ substantially!!!!

FSU: preserved descriptive method of teaching economics

EU: teaching economics based on mathematics and models



What we do in our JEP

Introduce one subject of „Economics“ on all three educational levels to demonstrate how teaching „Economics“ works in EU

Participation of Universities of different levels: National, Regional, Private

Eurasian National University

Karaganda Buketova University

Karaganda Economic University

We choose a subject critical to the economic development of KZ: Foreign Trade!

Teachers are trained in course contents on all levels

Bachelor students gain first insights into modelling of foreign trade and results for KZ

Master students deepen knowledge and transit to grounds for scientific work

Ph.D. students are supervised in writing short papers and pass a joint EU/KZ seminar



Intermediate Results

Half way gone at the moment

- Trainings of Bachelor and Master Courses held in DE
- Students finished Bachelor course, are on Master level now
- Introduction of high-quality e-learning poorly working

Future steps to go

- Application of knowledge in econometrics courses
- Joint EU/KZ Supervision of Ph.D. students

Unexpected Result and Sustainability

- Memorandum of Understanding between EU/KZ Universities concluded



Lessons Learnt

Plans to introduce EU standards in teaching economics too ambitious at the moment!!!!

Some talented and engaged young teachers can and do cope with the new methods

But:

many teachers due to high workload (teaching and administrative) and low motivation (low salaries) not able to adopt timely to EU standards

many students lack basic (even school level) knowledge in mathematics

many students are not able/not used to cope with the workload imposed by courses on EU level



Future Plans

A deep and comprehensive reform in teaching economics is needed:

Either „Flagship Concept“

-As e.g. Higher School of Economics/Moscow

- foreign teachers and national teachers with EU/US degrees

Problem: no widespread introduction of „economics“ and lacking knowledge at governmental agencies persist

Or bottom-up approach

-Reform on a broad basis and all educational levels

Problem: learning national teachers need compensation and stimulation



Critical Remarks

The TEMPUS III- Programme sets some unrealistic goals especially for complete new subjects like „Economics“

So-called „Adaptation of New Curricula to local needs“ in many JEPs

Institutional settings like low salaries and non-working of reputation mechanism in science is widely neglected

Preference for administrators over scientists lowers qualitative outcomes of the program

