

Original Paper

Influence of Bologna Process on the Academic Mobility of Students in the Siberian Universities

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Abstract

In the article the change students mobility level after the entry of Russia in Bologna Process is considered. The difficulties of the Russian higher education in the organization of the academic exchange of students—geographical remoteness of universities of Siberia from the intellectual centers of Europe and Russia are investigated.

In this article we will pay special attention to the proceeding mobility of programs. Students of universities of the city of Novosibirsk are the object of the research. To study their mobility the data from Novosibirsk State University of Economics and Management was used. Method of a research was induction, to study mass behavior of students on the example of one organization introduction was used as a method of a research. Also we used analysis, synthesis, mathematical modeling. For descriptive reasons we constructed schedules and charts.

Keywords

Bologna process, system of the higher education, academic mobility, Siberian region

1. Introduction

It is known that the Soviet system of the higher education considerably differed from formation of the European countries and the USA. After the collapse of the USSR the higher education still kept structure: the expert—the candidate of science—the doctor of science. But about 10 years ago Russia joined Bologna Process. Thereof the system of Russian education completely exchanged. Bologna Process brought as the positive, as well as negative moments. In our article we will study one of the elements characterizing integration of Russian education in international—the academic mobility of students.

After signing of the Bologna declaration by Russia its universities got an opportunity for creation of the educational programs focused on the world labour market and meeting the European educational standards. The Bologna process also influences on the opportunities for increasing in the academic mobility of students and teachers.

The academic mobility is training, teaching, carrying out researches abroad after which the student, the teacher or the researcher comes back to the main educational or scientific institution. It can be implemented through special programs of exchanges within government agreements, agreements between higher education institutions or associations of higher education institutions, and also individually by students/teachers/researchers with higher education institutions or the scientific organizations. Let's note that the academic mobility can be *entering*—arrival of foreign teachers, the researchers studying to the country or *proceeding*—departure of teachers, researchers, pupils abroad. Besides physical mobility mark out institutional mobility (creation of branches of educational institutions in other countries, cross-border campuses) and mobility of programs (implementation by educational institutions of joint educational programs, programs of double diplomas) (The concept of development of the academic mobility in the Russian Federation, 2013, p. 2).

According to the Institute of International Education the numbers of international students in European countries increase from 565,039 in 2005 to 974,926 in 2015 (Institute of International Education, 2016). Accession of Russia in September, 2003 to Bologna Process was an important step on the way of association of higher educational institutions of Russia with the European system of the higher education (Varaksa, 2015).

It is necessary to place emphasis to the fact that the big area of the country is among unique factors of the Russian higher education. Because of this factor, universities of Siberia and the Far East are at rather long distance from the largest and popular universities of the country.

2. Method & Materials

2.1 Siberian Universities

It is the thesis we will illustrate with comparison of the students' mobility of two Russian universities: Novosibirsk State University (NSU), Novosibirsk State University of Economics and Management (NSUEM).

Originally we will allocate the directions of the academic mobility and we will specify what motives induce students to leave for study to other country. Further we will consider what students of specialties are most inclined to training abroad, and also financing sources for training of students. As a result we will have to define what advantages the academic mobility at the macro and micro levels gives.

The international educational programs in the following countries are provided for students of NSU: Japan, Korea, China, France, Germany, and the Netherlands. Conditions of participation vary depending on the country. Practically of all countries is among the main requirements: excellent progress and knowledge of English at the high level, and also compliance of the directions of training.

Among other things, makes a reservation that it is possible to take part in the program only after receiving consent of the dean of faculty and the research supervisor. In some countries there is a possibility of receiving a grant on a competitive basis. At the same time, students are given an opportunity to live in the hostel (both on paid, and on a free basis). Knowledge of national language of the country is required only for the students studying on exchange in Germany. And for participation in the educational program of the Netherlands only graduates of a bachelor degree or magistracy are accepted (Website of Novosibirsk State University).

The object of the research is exchange programmers for Russian students in NSUEM. The period of research is the last three academic years, from 2015 till 2018.

2.2 Importance of Cooperation

High-quality international cooperation of universities is very important for realization of the purposes of Bologna Process. That merging of universities did not cause problems further, it is important to agree initially about mutual recognition of diplomas and the credits, to develop joint programs, and also to think over various joint researches. Besides, you should not forget that planned schedules of training in the different countries in practice differ. It is worth dealing with this problem, it can affect interest of students. Owing to not joining of curricula on a semester the student can be forced to study less a part of a semester in the country, and then, upon return, to pass a part of other semester.

Bologna Process acted as one of the ways to increase competitiveness of Russian universities on a global scale and an opportunity to use and develop the most valuable national resource—human capital. It should be noted that development of the academic mobility acts as one of necessary conditions for improving of the Russian education quality system and, as a result, export promotion of Russian universities educational services.

3. Results

Let's consider mobility of students of Novosibirsk State University of Economics and Management. Within student's exchange students of NSUEM can master a part of the educational program or pass language training in foreign partner universities. At choice China, South Korea, Germany, the Republic of South Africa, the USA, India are offered. Let's note that it is possible to pass only a language training (Chinese courses) in China. In addition, an opportunity to participate in exchange programs of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation is given.

The total of students annually increases in a geometrical progression. This fact demonstrates the growth of interest in the international programs of training. And also that training abroad becomes more available to Siberian students. Foreign researcher Van Mol noticed that "those who engage in international academic mobility might experience their investment as a way of differentiation, associated with better educational and labour market perspectives compared to their non-mobile counterparts" (Van Mol, 2017).

Main motives of students' participating in foreign exchange programs are following:

- desire to gain the foreign diploma about education.
- an opportunity to learn (or to improve) a foreign language.
- to get acquainted with foreign culture. And also get new experience, communicating with students and professors from other countries, testing new methods of teaching in different disciplines, which use foreign professors.
- to improve a portfolio while try themselves in various competitions, contests and conferences during training in foreign higher education institutions.
- to accumulate experience in the field of specialization.
- to find more prestigious work after the termination of the university because a lot of employers in different countries and in Russia as well value International Study and Internships.

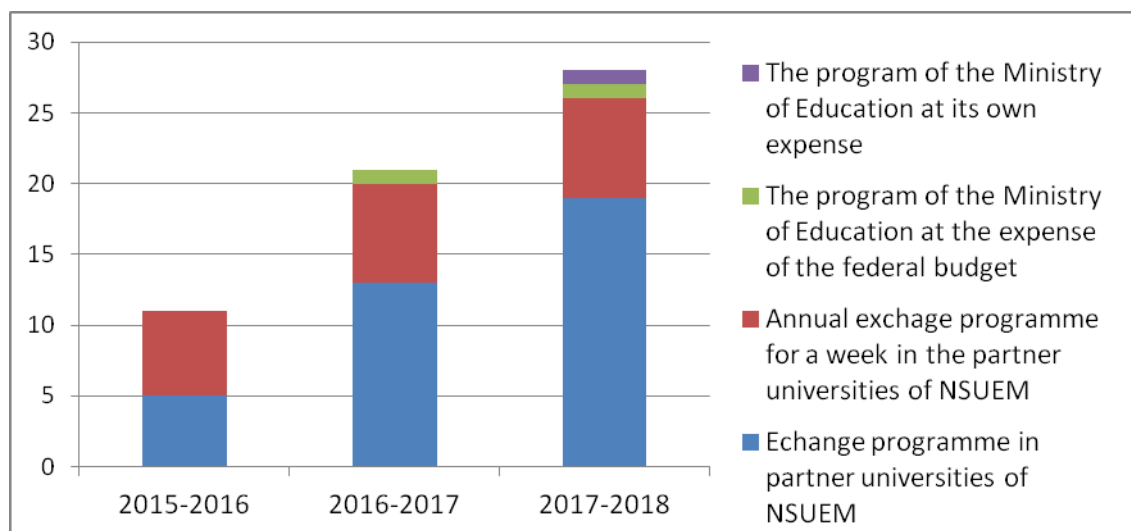


Figure 1. Students—Participants of Exchange Programs in NSUEM during 3 Academic Years

Lörz, M., Nicolai, N., & Heiko, Q., 2016.

General conditions of exchange programs of NSUEM:

- Good level of knowledge of language (national or English) the participant of the program has to be not below B1/B2 on the European scale (Intermediate);
- the direction of training in the accepting higher education institution has to correspond to the direction of training of the student in NSUEM;
- the exchange programs training in the accepting university is carried out free of charge, at the same time training in NSUEM is paid in full. Costs of journey, accommodation, food, execution of the visa and other documents are paid by the student independently [Website of Novosibirsk State University of Economics and Management & Website of Novosibirsk State University]. The structure of expenses for academic mobile programs is presented in Figure 2.

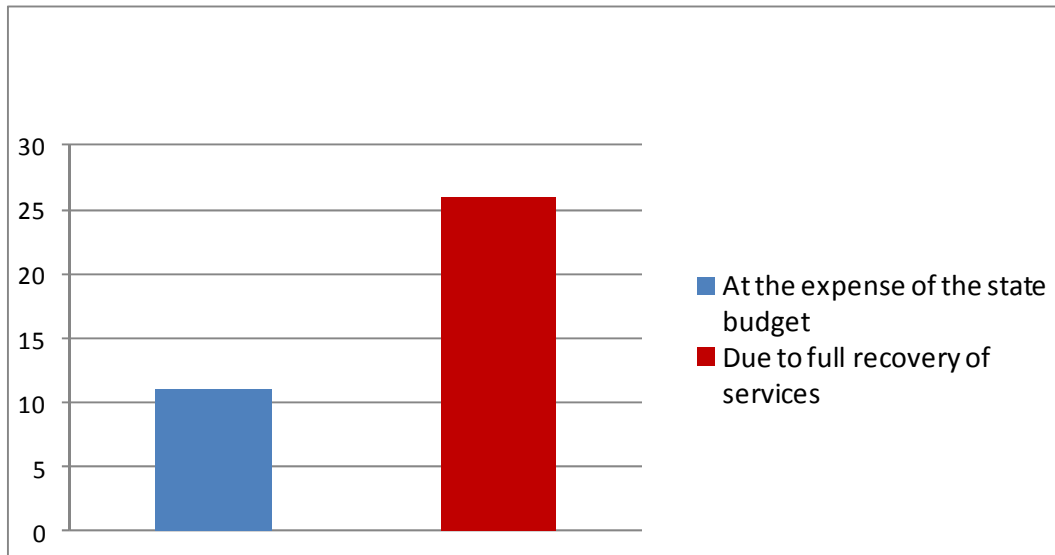


Figure 2. The Number of Students at the Expense of the State Budget Means and at the Expense of a Full Recovery

Lörz, M., Nicolai, N., & Heiko, Q., 2016.

Over the countries the greatest number of students is trained in China (see Figure 3). Also popularity among the students of NSUEM is also given to training in programs of exchange in higher education institutions of Germany and Spain.

In comparison with world students mobility as Başak Bilecen notes more than half of all international students move to the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, France, and German (OECD Education at a Glance, 2012).

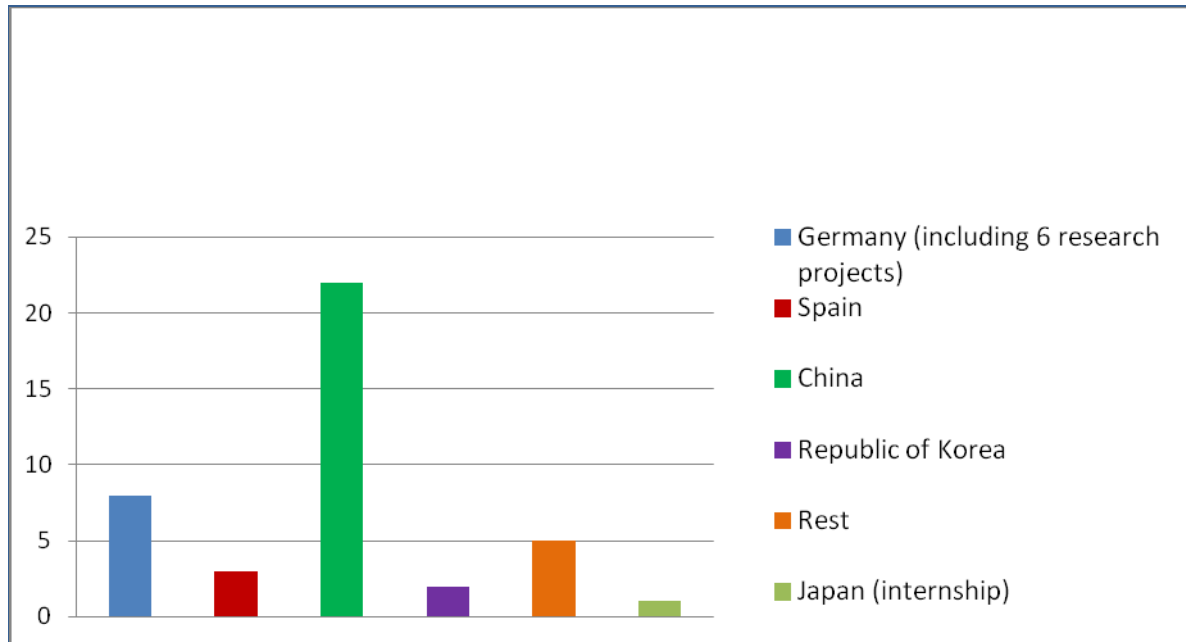


Figure 3. The Choice by Students of Countries of Residence according to Programs of the Academic Exchange

Lörz, M., Nicolai, N., & Heiko, Q., 2016.

But despite successful participation in integration processes, Russia it is necessary to make additional efforts on activation of the academic mobility, being guided by the international tendencies of internationalization of education. According to data of OECD, now, the share of foreign students in Russia makes 3,9% of total of students while in the USA this indicator reaches 16,6%, in Great Britain—13%, Australia—6,6% (Plaksy, 2012). Only 0,8% of the Russian students whereas in the European countries, such as Austria, Estonia, Germany, this indicator makes from 5 to 7% study abroad [OESD Education at a Glance 2012, & Report of the Department of external relations of Novosibirsk State University of Economics and Management 2015-2016/2015-2016/2017-2018 academic year].

We are interested in fact who participated in programs of exchange in NSUEM and what programs they are interested in (see Figure 4) and whether students and faculty members improve their skills and CVs through mobility.

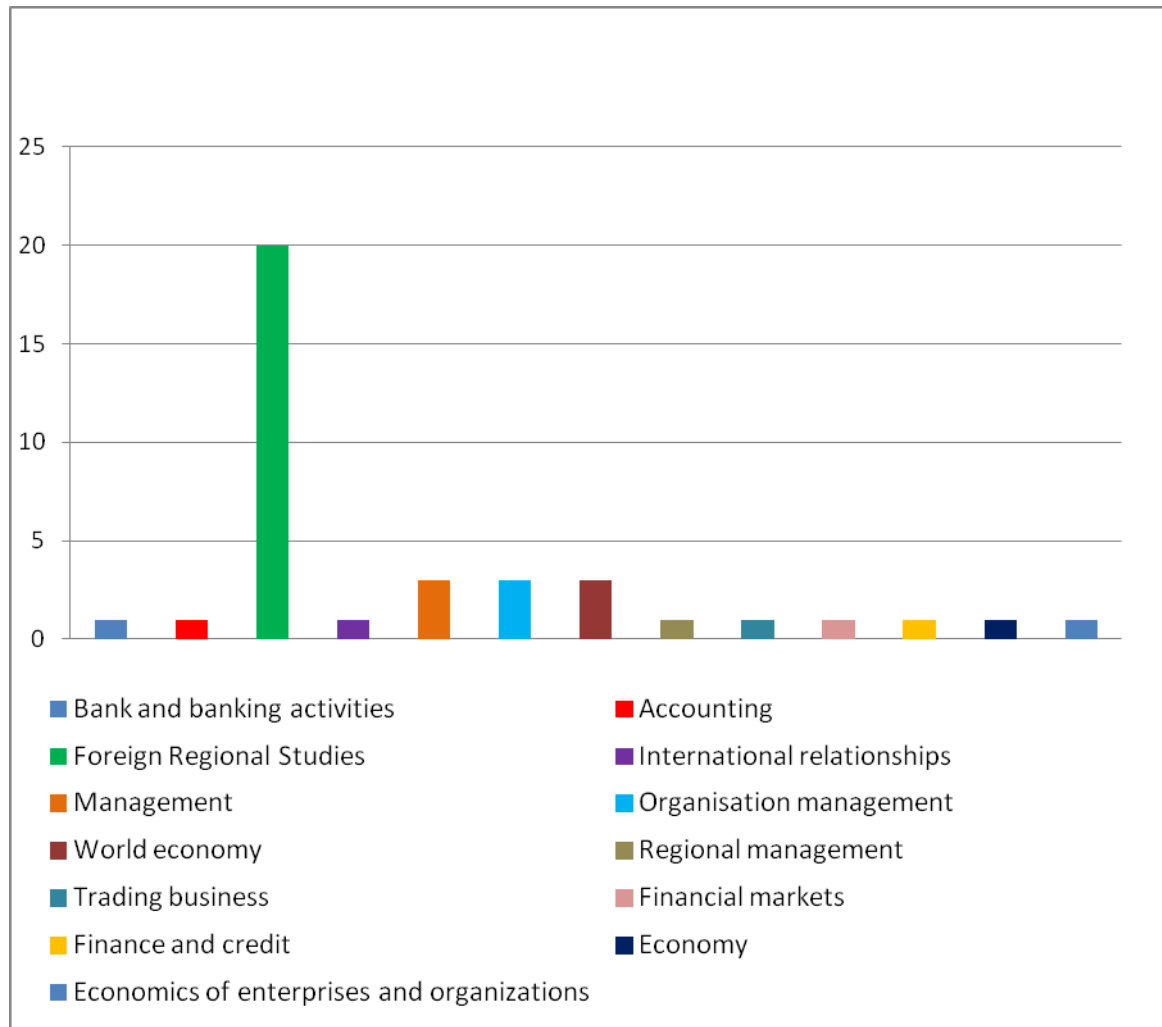


Figure 4. Participating Students in Programs of Exchange: Differentiation in Specialties

Report of the Department of external relations of Novosibirsk State University of Economics and Management 2015-2016/ 2015-2016/2017-2018 academic year.

The entry of Russia into the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the planned accession to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) causes importance and priority of growth of efforts on increase in competitiveness of Russian education in the conditions of the open international environment. Especially it should be noted that interchange by students is important in various directions—economy, mathematics, biology: to humanitarian and technical science. From these positions it is interesting to review what students of what directions are chosen foreign training. Apparently from the Figure 4, regional studies enjoy the greatest popularity that to a wave it is logical from positions of the choice of a further profession.

4. Discussions

For comparison we will specify possibilities of mobility for students of the most high-rating Russian higher education institution—St. Petersburg State University (St. Petersburg State University). At students of St. Petersburg State University is much more opportunities for training abroad. Partners of St. Petersburg State University are 350 higher education institutions from 60 countries of the world among which there are higher educational institutions of Europe, America and Asia. Among them there are leading higher education institutions of Europe, such as Sorbonne, Humboldt, (Humboldt University of Berlin), Free University of Amsterdam, Austrian national university, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich and others (The concept of development of the academic mobility in the Russian Federation, 2013). In a semester about three-four places on which it is possible to get are allocated for each specialty of universities having GPA not less than four and the good level of knowledge of English. Here it is necessary to emphasize that also the grant and the place of residence is provided to especially caused a stir students that considerably cuts personal expenses of the student. The university promotes exchange not only students, but also professorial and scientific shots, and also participates in the international scientific educational programs and exhibitions. In St. Petersburg State University more than ten joint educational programs are implemented, we will note importance of the fact that according to fifteen programs training are in whole or in part conducted in English.

From stated above we see that mobility of the students studying in university, being not in the European part of Russia is much lower, than the students who are trained in larger and more prestigious universities of Russia. About the same idea in European countries wrote Lörz Markus and his colleagues (Lörz, Nicolai, & Heiko, 2016). They point out that students mobility is more developed in more prestigious universities and students from underprivileged families less often intend to study abroad.

But despite geographical remoteness, Novosibirsk State University has rather high rating among higher educational institutions of Russia and Europe. And students of NSU have rather wide choice of the countries for training on exchange.

5. Conclusion

It is worth to remember that territorial remoteness of Siberia from the intellectual centers of Europe and Russia at the organization of the academic exchange of students demands big material inputs. At the same time, if to resolve the matter at the expense of students and not to give opportunities on free or preferential participation in exchange, the probability that only wealthy students will be able to get a better and convertible education is high, and clever and capable students from needy families will have no mobile opportunity.

Thus, as showed our research, the academic mobility of the Siberian students annually increases. They are attracted both by the study fact abroad, and an opportunity to get additional experience of

communication. China and Germany act as the most attractive countries for students from Siberian universities.

In the conclusion we would like to note that connection the scientific and educational capacity of Siberia and the Far East to capacities of the Russian western region can possibly create powerful educational and research bases which will provide complex advancing of the Russian universities to the leading positions of the educational services world market.

Let's consider merits and demerits of signing of the Bologna declaration by Russia for student's mobility.

Advantages:

- First, possible improving of the Russian education quality due to using in educational process modern educational technologies and innovations; sharing of experience with western colleagues can enlarge possibilities for professional developments.
- Secondly, increasing mobility of students and staff in universities and expansion of opportunities to have internship or to find a job in the European countries for professors and graduates of the Russian higher education institutions.
- Thirdly, increasing the export of educational services (Abeysekera & Dawson, 2014).

Limitations:

- Reduction training time (and, as a result, and decreasing in education level) due to introduction of two-level system (a bachelor degree and a magistracy).
- Academic and scientific society accepted two-level system of training and adopt their educational programs to it with great difficulty.
- Discrepancy of planned schedules of training in various countries makes it difficult to organize the process of students' exchange. The Bologna process attempts to lower these obstacles within the European higher education. But in cooperation with Russian universities partnership relations with concrete organization is more valuable.
- Recognition of Russian universities diplomas in European countries can lead to considerable outflow of young engineers, doctors, and teachers, especially highly qualified stuff, from Russia. We focus attention on the main reasons for "brain drain" from our country and they are not only in the Bologna Process. Scientists and teachers want to work in better conditions, to have prospects and high level of the salary.

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