

Education system in the Republic of Uzbekistan

During 15 years of independence deep structural and substantial reforms and transformations in the system of higher education has taken place in the Republic of Uzbekistan. Main purpose of these reforms were to provide the adequate place of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the world community. Indeed, it was impossible to provide the independent economy, social and political stability, development of intellectual and spiritual potential of the nation without rebuilding the system of education and upbringing. The first President of Independent Republic of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov, understanding this reality from the first days of independence, stated the necessity of deep reforms in the system of education and upbringing of new generation. The state policy in the field of education that could transform it into the priority sphere has been developed and conducted.

Thus, beginning from 1991 the system of education has been reconstructed according to the requirements of independent state meeting the needs of the new era. This process was carried out step-by-step in correlation with the types and forms of education— pre-school education, secondary school education, secondary specialised, professional (vocational) education, higher education.

Before the independence 42 higher educational institutions, including three state Universities (Tashkent, Samarkand and Karakalpak), 14 pedagogical or language, 9 engineering-technical, 3 agricultural, 7 medical-pharmaceutical, 3 culture and arts institutions, as well as one economical, cooperative, physical culture and sports were functioning in the republic. Almost half of these institutions were situated in Tashkent (19), the rest were in Samarkand-5, Andijan-4, Bukhara-3. Thus, the third of higher educational institutions of the republic were situated in four cities.

Existing structural system of higher education and fields of its activity didn't meet the needs and requirements of economic, national, natural-intellectual, spiritual potential of the republic. Preparation of specialists on actual specializations directed to material production were mostly carried out in centralized higher educational institutions. Curricula and teaching programs on the subjects taught in the educational institutions of the republic were approved by the centre-Moscow, and it was not allowed to make any changes taking into account the regional requirements.

The way to provide the priority of education, transform the education into the democratic, humanitarian, create intellectual-social oriented system capable to open all the possibilities of the person was chosen during the first years of independence. The task was to train the young generation on the basis of national traditions and common to humanity values, patriots of their country with high moral qualities, as well as competent specialists possessing

up-to-date knowledge and skills in chosen field, with initiative, and creative thinking. The above mentioned requirements were reflected in the decrees of the President, Resolutions of the Government as concrete programs of actions to reform the system of higher education.

The first document– Decree of the President dated September 17, 1991 «On releasing Republican state administrative bodies, as well as the system of public education from political parties » was dedicated to these goals. From this date it was prohibited for political parties to interfere with the activity of educational institution.

Since 1991 the structural reconstruction of higher educational institutions has been commenced. Three independent institutions – the Tashkent State Technical University, the Tashkent Chemical-Technological Institute and the Tashkent Architecture and Building Institute were established on the basis of the big Tashkent Polytechnic Institute. The Tashkent State University of Economics and the Tashkent Financial Institute were established on the basis of the Tashkent Institute of Public Economy. The Tashkent State Institute of Oriental Studies became independent from Tashkent State University. In 1992 on the bases of branches of higher educational institutions of Tashkent were established the Jizzakh Polytechnic Institute, the Karshi Engineering-Economic Institute, the Namangan Engineering-Economic Institute, the Navoi State Pedagogical Institute, and on the bases of the appropriate regional pedagogical institutions were established Andijan, Bukhara, Gulistan, Karshi, Namangan, Ferghana, Urgench Universities. The status of University were also given to the Tashkent State Institute of Foreign Languages, the Tashkent Institute of Agriculture. New higher educational institutions were established. The University of World Economy and Diplomacy was set up to prepare economists and diplomatic personnel of international level. The Tashkent Islam University prepares specialists on Islam and rules of Islam. Each higher educational institution had a specific programme of reconstruction of form and content of education according to its new status.

With the purpose of providing the renewal of educational system the first law - «Law on Education» of the Republic of Uzbekistan was adopted on July 2, 1992. The priority of the sphere of education in social-economic and spiritual-cultural development of the country was stated in this law. Main directions of educational policy, structure and system of administration, rights and obligations of participants of education were defined in this document.

“The Institute for problems of higher and secondary school” set up on the basis of the Resolution of the Government of 1995 considered to be the basic research organization dealing with the development of perspectives of the development of higher and secondary specialised education, which developed its content and regulative-methodical documents.

On the initiative of the Ministry of higher and secondary specialised education the creative group to develop the complex republican programme on

the development of higher education was formed in 1996. This group, on the basis of analysis of local and foreign experience, as well as the tendency of the development of higher education, worked out the programme in the form of “Concept of higher education”. After the discussions in higher educational institutions this document was published in republican newspapers for wide discussion taking into account the wide strata of society. Numerous feed backs and proposals confirmed the actuality of reconstruction of higher education along with all types and forms of education as a whole system.

Development and approbation of bachelor’s programme took place in 1996 in the Tashkent State University.

Thirst for science, education, knowledge is in the blood of Uzbek people. All the time enlightenment/spiritual sophistication, qualified education and professionalism of Uzbek people were, and is remaining today as criteria to evaluate the person and respect to him. On the initiative and active participation of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov the “National Programme for Specialist Training” was developed and adopted by the Oliy Majlis (Parliament) in 1997.

Main purpose of this Programme is to train spiritually rich and morally mature, possessing up-to-date knowledge and taking active civil position, independently thinking specialists, capable of taking decision deliberately, or, in other words, upbringing harmoniously developed generation, capable of providing the progress and prosperity of Motherland in the new historical era.

The proper model of the system of continuing education aiming at training the personnel were developed on the basis of deep and wide scale studies of foreign experience, critical analysis of existing system of education. Thus, continuing system of education of Uzbekistan has been adopted. It included 12 years education consisting of 9 years general secondary and 3 years secondary specialised vocational education. Then comes the higher education consisting of two levels – Bachelor’s and Master’s Degree studies. National model also includes the pre-school education for the children of 6 or 7 years old, extracurricular (non-school) education to define the talent and interests of children, additional education for elder people for retraining and upgrading the qualification, as well as further education for preparation of scientific and scientific-pedagogical staff.

Implementation of National programme is carried out in three phases. Structural reconstruction of the system of education, reorganization of existing educational institutions into principally new ones (academic lyceum and vocational colleges) were carried out during the first phase (1997-2001). As a result, nowadays 63 higher educational institutions and about 1100 vocational colleges and academic lyceum are functioning in Uzbekistan. 1 million 220 thousand young people are studying in these educational institutions.

During five years the normative-legal basis for the system of preparation of personnel were fully renewed and brought in line with the requirements of

social and economic development of the country, new educational standards were developed and introduced into practice, unique concept of creating the educational literature of new generation has been implemented.

Key elements of the first phase of implementation of National programme were the preparation and upgrading the qualification of pedagogical and scientific-pedagogical staff who could meet the modern requirements. State requirements as to upgrading the qualification, educational programmes for the different categories of specialists were developed and introduced. The structural reconstruction of the institutions was carried out with the aim of upgrading the qualification, focusing on distance education on the scheme 2+2 or 3+3, i.e. the work of the teacher in his/her work place on the tasks set by the institution for upgrading the qualification during two weeks and defense of individual papers during the other two weeks. The Republican Fund “Ustoz” (in English “Teacher”) was set up in order to provide state support in upgrading the qualification of pedagogical staff». More than 600 teachers had a chance to upgrade their qualification in the higher educational institutions of developed countries using the grants of this Fund. More than 3000 teachers could upgrade their qualification using the grants of other funds and institutions. Besides, almost 1000 foreign teachers and specialists were invited to the Uzbek institutions for upgrading the qualification for short term teaching activities.

Introduction of new model and educational standards required the creation of textbooks and teaching-methodological literature of new generation. The Government adopted a special resolution to solve this problem. This resolution stipulates the revision of existing textbooks and creation of new ones, as well as financial and moral stimulating of authors of educational literature. It was decided to develop cycle of lectures with their further publication. After the approbation they were gradually changed into manuals and textbooks. Until the end of 2003 higher educational institutions were fully provided with the educational literature on all disciplines (subjects). The work on creation of electronic textbooks, multimedia educational complexes including virtual laboratories and stands were widely carried out. This type of textbooks created the preconditions for approbation of distance education for the students of some disciplines. To discuss the content and quality of texts of lectures, textbooks and manuals, their electronic versions were placed in the central portals (web-sites) of the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education. Every teacher or student had a chance to use with the working outs of not only his/her institutions but educational materials of other educational institutions as well..

Practically all the higher educational institutions of the republic created their local area network and have an access to global network - Internet. Part of higher educational institutions are already connected to Republican educational network. Nowadays it is widening and modernizing. Educational laboratories of higher educational institutions along with the traditional laboratory facilities widely use virtual laboratory stands on the basis of ICT. The branches of chairs and laboratories are created in scientific laboratories

and sectoral scientific research institutes of the Academy of Science aiming at efficient use of laboratory bases.

Fundamental libraries of higher educational institutions are equipped with computer, copying facilities and the means of exchange and transmission of information. The system of automatic forming the funds and search for information “IRBIS” is introduced in these institutions. Modern libraries, along with traditional funds of paper forms, have e-books, e-textbooks, which are developed by the higher educational institutions as well as purchased from abroad.

International relations of higher educational institutions of Uzbekistan are developing year by year. Branches of International Westminster University and Russian Academy of Economics named after G.V. Plekhanov were set up in 2002 in Tashkent. Branch of Moscow State University named after M. Lomonosov opened in Tashkent in 2006. Nowadays Ministry of higher and secondary specialised education is working on the establishment of the branch of Russian State University of Oil and Gas named after I. Gubkin.

Samarkand State University is conducting Master’s degree courses together with the Bologna University (Italy). Higher educational institutions are also working on preparation of highly qualified specialists together with the Universities in Japan, China, France, Germany, Netherlands, Spain, etc. For instance, Weihenstephan University of Applied Sciences is conducting double degree master courses on agriculture and irrigation together with several agricultural institutions of Uzbekistan. Universities from Spain allocated a grant to develop the joint forms of preparation of specialists together with the Uzbek State World Languages University. Close cooperation is established and developing with the number of leading Universities of foreign countries such as Belgian Institute of Translation/Interpretation in Brussels, Sorbonna University, Weihenstephan University of Applied Sciences, Humboldt, Berlin and Munich Universities, etc. The Government of Japan rendered an assistance to the Tashkent Institute of Textile and Light Industry in the amount of 440 million yen to equip the Institute with modern textile equipment. Distance learning of educational programs is carried out in collaboration with Massachusetts Technological University and some other Universities of foreign countries. There are many citizens of foreign countries studying in the higher educational institutions of Uzbekistan.

Reforms in the field of education conducted in the Republic of Uzbekistan allow the national system of continuing education integrate into world educational area.

The “Law on Education” and “National Programme for Training Personnel” of the Republic of Uzbekistan, adopted on August 29, 1997, are the main normative-legal basis determining the reforms and substance of the sphere of education in the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Number of sub-legislative directive and normative acts in the field of education are adopted with the purpose to implement the above mentioned basic documents during the recent years:

Administering the system of education;

Reforming the content of educational process;

Financing and material-technical provision;

Training, retraining and upgrading the qualification of pedagogical and scientific-pedagogical staff;

Development of labour market services;

International cooperation in the sphere of education and personnel training;

Provision of social guaranties and state support in the sphere of education and others.

Dozens of Decrees and Resolutions of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, more than 70 regulations and resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers, as well as normative-legal documents adopted in the framework of the authority of the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education of Uzbekistan are among them.

Ministry is conducting purposeful systematic development of new generation of State educational standards of higher education. Joint working groups of specialists with the Ministry of Public Education to provide efficiency and quality of preparing specialists. This group began the work on the development of unique indissoluble model educational programs which cover the general secondary, secondary specialised, vocational and higher education. Taking into account the importance of the sphere "Informatics and information technologies" was taken as a first subject to start with.

The dynamics of the number of state higher educational institutions by years, regions (for the period of 2000-2006)

Higher education in the republic is carried out by 12 organizations. Three higher educational institutions are set up as a result of international cooperation. They are: the Tashkent branch of Russian Economic Academy named after G.V. Plekhanov, the branch of Moscow State University named after M. Lomonosov in the city of Tashkent and International Westminster University in Tashkent.

Distribution of higher educational institutions subordinated to different ministries, agencies and organizations

Table 1

№	Ministries, agencies and organizations	Total number	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003 – 2004	2004 - 2005	2005 – 2006
1	Cabinet of Ministers	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
3	Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education	32	33	33	33	32	32	32
4	Ministry of Health	10	10	10	10	10	10	9
6	Ministry for Cultural and Sports Affairs	6	6	6	6	6*	6*	6*
7	Agency for Post and Telecommunications	1	1	1	1	1	1	1*
8	Ministry of Justice	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
9	State Stock-Holding Company «Uzbekistan Railways »	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
10	Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources	4	4	4	4	4*	4*	4*
11	Ministry of Public Education	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
12	Navoi Mining-Metallurgical Industrial Complex	-	-			1	1	1
13	Tashkent Branch of Russian Economic Academy named after G.V. Pltlanov	1*	-	-	1	1	1	1
14	International Westminster University in the city of Tashkent	1*	-	-	1	1	1	1
15	The branch of Moscow State University named after M. Lomonosov in the city of Tashkent	1						1
Total		66	62	62	64	65	65	66

Notes:

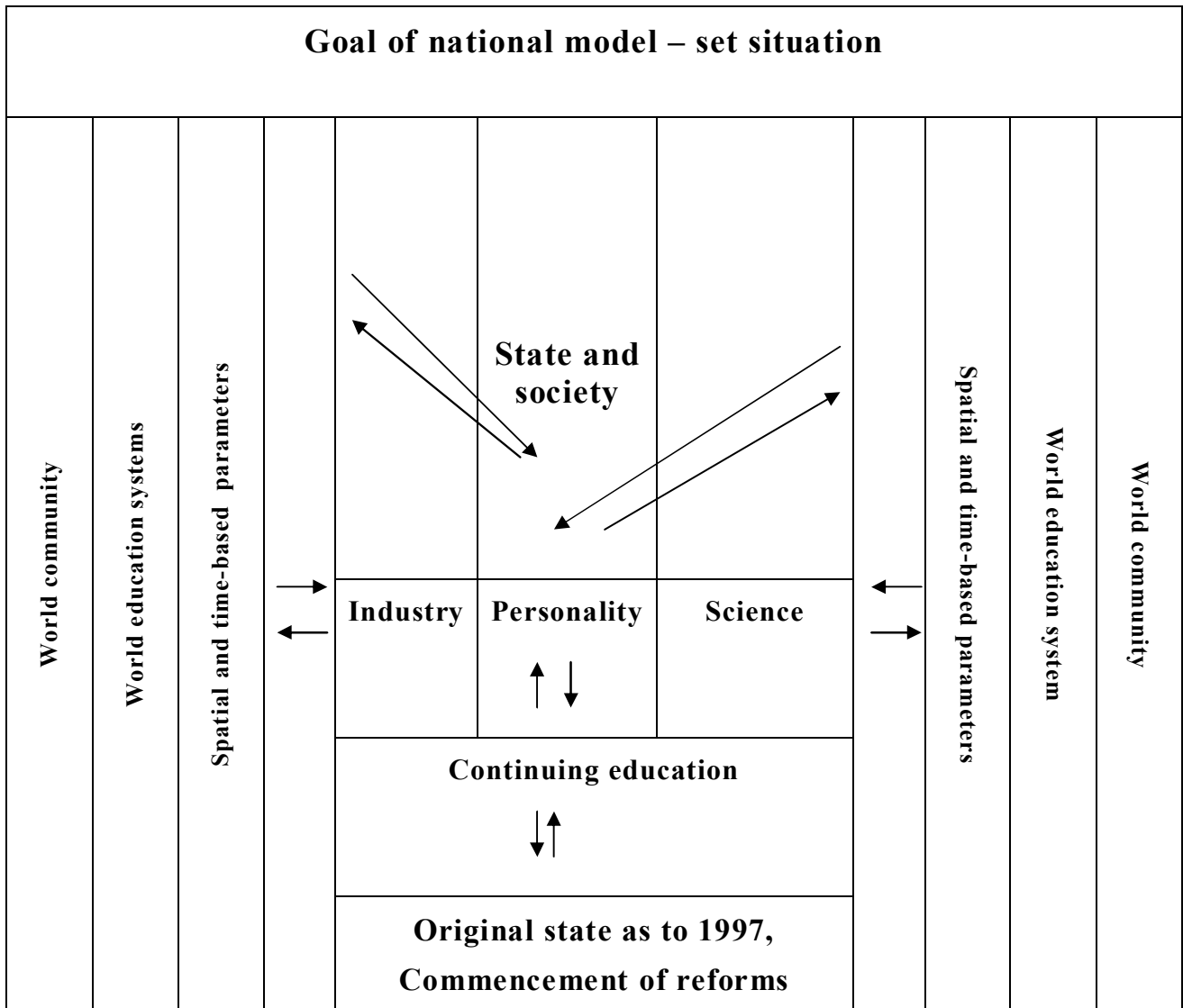
*) these higher educational institutions have regional branches

4	City of Tashkent	4	4	4	4	3	3
	Total number as to Ministry of Health	7	7	7	7	6	6
	Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources						
1	Andijan	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	Samarkand	1	1	1	1	1	1
3	City of Tashkent	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Total number as to Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources	4	4	4	4	4	4
	Other agencies and organizations						
1	Navoi region (Mining and Metallurgical Industrial Complex)	-	1	1	1	1	1
2	Branch in Zarafshan	1	1	1	1	1	1
3	Branch in Almalik	-	-	1	1	1	1
4	Branch of Russian Economic Academy	-	-	1	1	1	1
5	Tashkent International Westminster University	-	-	1	1	1	1
6.	Branch of Moscow State University in the city of Tashkent	-	-	-	-	-	1
	Total number as to other agencies and organizations	1	2	5	5	5	6
	Total number as to regions	32	32	35	35	35	
	Total number as to city of Tashkent	32	32	32	32	37	
	Total number in the Republic of Uzbekistan	64	64	67	67	72	

THE NATIONAL MODEL OF EDUCATION – THE WAY TO ACHIEVE STABILITY AND PROGRESS

Scheme 1

National model of training personnel



NATIONAL MODEL OF TRAINING PERSONNEL

Personality stands in the system of continuing training of personnel and education as a consumer and producer of educational services.

State and society stands as a guarantor of functioning and development of the system of training personnel, coordinator of activity of educational institutions training competitive highly qualified specialists.

Continuing education – basic component of National model of training personnel, creates the necessary conditions to form creative, socially active, spiritually rich personality and advanced training of competitive highly qualified specialists.

Science and industry take the function of the customer and consumer in the system of training personnel taking active part in training, retraining and upgrading the qualification of specialists of appropriate level and profile.

Comparative assessment of the system before reforms and current situation of continuing education in the Republic of Uzbekistan

Acting system of continuing education

Preschool education (up to 6-7 years)	General secondary education (1-9 forms)	Three year secondary specialised, vocational education
---------------------------------------	---	--

*

**

higher education	Post graduate studies	Upgrading the qualification and retraining of specialists
------------------	-----------------------	---

* General education programmes

** Vocational education programmes

Place of secondary specialised, professional education in the process of the movement of graduates of 9th form to the labor market

LABOR MARKET

Educational and professional programmes for retraining and upgrading the qualification of personnel

Educational and professional programmes of post-graduate studies

Educational and professional programmes for higher education

2

1

3

Academic lyceum

Professional college

9th form

1. Educational programmes (identical and taught in academic lyceum and professional colleges)
2. Deepened, profiled educational programmes on the disciplines and directions of studies in academic lyceum
3. Professional programmes for professional colleges

**Main indicators in the sphere of education
in the Republic of Uzbekistan**

Indicators	1997	1998	2000	2003
State budget expenditure for the sector of education (% from the total budget expenditures)	24,27	24,44	36,00	38,2
Expenditure to the sector of education (% from IGO without capital investment)	7,89	8,06	11,28	12,56
- governmental schools (coverage in %)	100	100	100	100
Number of governmental higher educational institutions	60	60	61	64
- Number of students in higher educational institutions	158206	158686	183576	237160
- number of teachers in higher educational institutions	17791	17435	18432	19520
Number of secondary, secondary specialised, vocational schools	727	743	796	856
- number of students	454415	491626	532075	566140
- number of teachers	36814	39009	44778	49310
Number of general education schools	9019	9617	9639	9987
Number of pupil in all schools	5442882	5641300	6017582	6157600
Number of teachers in all schools	435046	445853	443016	455540
Number of kindergartens	7546	6911	6704	6895
Number of children in kindergartens	681200	675795	624652	649480
Number of teachers in kindergartens	71252	65780	64123	65940

THE MOST IMPORTANT INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- ▶ Priority of University education
- ▶ Development and introduction of new educational standards and educational programmes – for Bachelor’s degree -149, Master’s degree-650
- ▶ Aiming at increasing the quality of education and protection of the interest of students:
 - written final control exams, rating system of assessing the knowledge of students were introduced,
 - texts of lectures developed by the teachers are prepared on the basis of new textbooks and information from Internet and they are collected, multiplied and reserved in the libraries of higher educational institutions,
 - higher educational institutions exchange the texts of lectures on 12 thousand subjects (titles)
 - competition for the best text of lecture held annually (3200 teachers participated in 2003),
 - Fund of innovations is set up (10 thousand pcs.),
 - attestation of teachers and their rating on the basis of attestation of educational institutions are conducted regularly,
 - informational portal (web-site) of the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education is functioning,
 - mechanisms of decentralization and limitation of authorities in administering education and higher educational institution is introduced,

- ▶ Special curricula and courses are introduced: “Basis of civil society”, “Tolerant consciousness and behavior”, “Basis of legal culture”, “Basis of safe lifestyle”, etc.
- ▶ Collection of normative-legal documents are published – about 100 quires.
- ▶ International Westminster University is set up.
- ▶ Mechanisms of multi-channel financing and educational credits for students are introduced.
- ▶ Bodies of public and self administration over the system of education and higher educational institutions – Association of Rectors of Uzbekistan, Board of Trustees.
- ▶ Systematically teachers and staff of higher educational institutions go abroad for retraining and upgrading their qualification – during the years 1998-2003 more than 5000 people.
- ▶ Agreements on cooperation with more than 15 countries were signed including 100 between the ministries and about 500 between the higher educational institutions
- ▶ Attracting specialists from foreign countries – about 200 in 2003.
- ▶ Attracting foreign investments – about US \$6 million in 2003.

PROPOSALS ON COOPERATION

▶ Assistance in creating information-educational network of Central Asian countries

▶ Increasing the number of foreign and international grants for retraining teachers and study of postgraduate students in the leading Universities of foreign countries

▶ Assistance in re-organisation of the system of upgrading qualification and retraining of personnel in the system of educating elder population according to the principle “Education - the whole life”

▶ Assistance in introducing the mechanisms of decentralization and limitation of authority in administering education and educational institutions.

▶ Support to innovations in the field of administering the quality of education.

▶ Financial, organizational and methodological support in creating electronic textbooks and courses to use in distance education.

▶ Resource, financial and methodological support in creating virtual electronic libraries to upgrade the qualification and retraining teachers.

▶ Rendering methodological, resource and financial assistance in non-governmental public forms of periodical licensing specialists (engineers, economists, doctors, agronomists, teachers, etc.).

▶ increasing foreign and international grants to finance scientific-research projects on humanitarian, natural, technical and technological sciences.