

The Comparative Historical Analysis of Education Systems in the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan (1990–2000)

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The objective of the article is to examine patterns of similarities and differences across educational reforms in the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan in post-socialist context. The study conducted a comparative-historical analysis of the development of education systems in Kazakhstan and the Czech Republic in the 1990s when there was a transition of these countries from the socialist to the capitalist regime.

The comparative historical analysis of the educational reforms of these two countries identified a number of similar patterns and considerable differences in the development of their education systems due to many contextual and structural factors and historical prerequisites. The comparative analysis demonstrated that both in the educational systems of the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan democratization, humanization and differentiation were taken as main principles of the reforms, but these processes developed in different levels and directions.

As a result, it was stated that both the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan intended to democratize educational systems in the post-socialist context. While the Czech Republic tended to decentralize and diversify the school system, delegating the practical implementation of educational policies to various organizations and lobbying groups, however, Kazakhstan maintains a highly centralized system from top to bottom, which leaves little administrative, financial, managerial, executive authority for the low structures of the state apparatus and the public, which limits the system to strict planning and standards.

Key words: *education; comparative historical analysis; the Czech Republic; Kazakhstan; post-socialist*

Introduction

In the context of globalization, the issue of how the educational systems of post-socialist countries develop is of great interest. In this context, the potential of

comparative historical analysis can be widely used not only to describe the development of educational systems of post-socialist countries, but also to compare the patterns of differences and similarities in the process of modernization and reform of educational systems. In addition, quite a few works have already been written in this direction, which cause substantial interest not only in their subject matter, but also in the design of the study. For instance, the work dedicated to a comparative study of the educational systems of Denmark, Nepal, and China, which sanctifies how much the processes of globalization affect the course of reforms of the countries that are completely different in political, economic and cultural features.¹

In the article we conducted the comparative historical analysis of the development of education in Kazakhstan and the Czech Republic in the 1990s, when there was a transition of these countries from the socialist to the capitalist system. This research is also relevant in the framework of transitology, which studies the transition of countries from one political regime to another. Most of the researches are devoted specifically to political development in the transition period of Southern and Eastern Europe, including the comparative analysis of the transitional stage from socialism to capitalism of these countries. However, fewer scientific works are dedicated specifically to the comparison of Central Asian countries and East European countries in transition, including in education.

A comparative historical analysis, in addition to the general that mentioned about the circle of compared processes, considers what characterizes each given subject separately as well.

The study consists of four stages of a systematic qualitative comparative historical research: (1) development of prerequisites, identification of processes, concepts, patterns, etc., that can explain the phenomena; (2) selection of objects for study; (3) a study of the similarities and differences of systems; and (4) analysis and interpretation of information to explain phenomena.²

In the post-socialist period, both the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan tried to preserve the already achieved experience in education, but they also rapidly aimed to reform their education systems in the context of the transition to a market economy and modern development trends. In view of this, the question arises: what are the patterns of similarities and differences between educational reforms in the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan in the post-socialist context?

¹ Carney, S. (2009). *Negotiating Policy in an Age of Globalization: Exploring Educational "Policyscapes" in Denmark, Nepal, and China*. *Comparative Education Review*, 53(1), p. 63–88.

² Schutt, R. K. (2006). *Investigating the Social World The Process and Practice of Research*. 5th Edition, London: SAGE Publications, p. 688.

As a result of the study, it was revealed that domestic and foreign policy, as well as the economic and cultural factors, had a significant impact on the educational reforms of Kazakhstan and the Czech Republic. The comparative analysis demonstrated that in the educational reforms of the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan processes of democratization, humanization and differentiation were observed. However, it should be noted that in both countries these processes proceeded differently, having peculiar patterns of development. In addition, liberalism was also characteristic of the formation of the Czech Republic.

The educational reforms of the Czech Republic in the 90s were carried out not only by the state apparatus of the country, but also by various organizations and lobby groups. However in Kazakhstan, the state executed and implemented educational reforms in a directive manner. Even today, the educational system of Kazakhstan is highly centralized.³

Therefore, the desire to democratize the educational system cannot be limited only by the adoption of legislative norms, it is necessary that this process is launched in practice, that is, part of the functions of the central government must be transferred to local authorities and the public. Without the democratization of education, its humanization is also impossible. If the humanization of education is manifested in the view on the transformation of a professional school from the point of view of the interests of the individual, then the democratization of education is in the view on its transformation from the point of view of establishing relations between society, the state and educational institutions. Without consistent democratization of education, countries are at great risk of repeating the mistakes of the Soviet model of education.

1. The development of the education system of the Czech Republic (1990–2000)

In the late 80s of the 20th century, radical changes took place in Czechoslovakia, which led to the collapse of the totalitarian system and communist ideology. From that moment, large-scale transformations began in politics, economics, social relations and culture.

In this period Czechoslovakia made cardinal steps in the economy, it began the transition from a planned to a market type of economy. This process affected the educational system, which was adapted to meet the requirements of the socialist

³ International bank for reconstruction and development (2017). *International bank for reconstruction and development project appraisal document on a proposed loan to the Republic of Kazakhstan for an education modernization project*, February 6, 2017 education global practice Europe and Central Asia region. <https://www.worldbank.org>

type of economy. First of all, it was necessary to decide how to reform, what to focus on and what to change. In addition, the solution to educational problems has become more complicated against the background of political, economic and other problems in society.

So in the public and pedagogical communities, the media there were discussions analyzing the situation of education in Czechoslovakia at the end of the 80s. Among them, there were prominent researchers as B. Blažek,⁴ B. Blížkovský,⁵ M. Koláb,⁶ F. Singule⁷ and others.

First of all, scientists criticized the domination of Marxism ideology over education and upbringing; unification of the content of education; emphasis on collective education as opposed to individual personality development; centralism and bureaucracy in the management of education, the prevalence of the directive method of leadership; lag in the vocational training system, as well as a lack of new modern specialties.

In the face of dramatic changes in society and pressing problems in education, the Czech Republic is taking the first steps towards reforming the school. For starters, the 1990 Unified School Act was halted.⁸

However, it should be noted that in the early 90s there was a lack of a concrete, scientifically-based concept for reforming the education system, which contributed to the emergence of a large number of projects for reforming education.

The new educational legislation changed step by step, which was expressed in the adoption of a number of important laws and regulations. The legislative provisions mainly affected the following provisions:

- 1) the elimination of marxist ideology from educational programs;
- 2) the creation of conditions for the establishment of alternative schools;
- 3) the establishment of mechanisms aimed at decentralizing the management of educational institutions;
- 4) giving institutes of higher education institutions autonomous status;
- 5) updating the teaching of foreign languages at school.

⁴ Blažek, B. (1990/91). *Co nám škola nedala*. Nezávislá revue pro výchovu a vzdělání. №1. <https://www.mzk.cz/>

⁵ Blížkovský, B. (1991). *Demokracie, odbornost a výchova*. Pedagogická revue. №9. <https://www.mzk.cz/>

⁶ Koláb M. (1990) *Perspektivy a bariéry rozvoje vzdělání*. Pedagogika. №3. <https://www.mzk.cz/>

⁷ Singule, F. (1990/91). *Jak s reformou naší školy?* Nezávislá revue pro výchovu a vzdělání. № 1. <https://www.mzk.cz/>

⁸ The School Law of the Czech Republic (1990). Sb. zákonů ČR. Praha. www.msmt.cz

Reforming the education system faced a few difficulties in its path. First of all, it was necessary to revise many concepts and scientific works, a need arose for updating a huge layer of the knowledge system. A course was taken to strengthen the democratic aspect of teaching subjects through introducing youths to humanism, charity, ethics, patriotism, aesthetic feelings, environmental thinking, family education, and the values of world religions.

In 1990, the Ministry of Education issued several important decrees that allowed the creation of church and private schools. The first important document was the Proposal to update Act No. 29 of 1984 on the Primary and Secondary School System, where it was announced that it was allowed to establish private schools and schools run by the church or religious communities. So, for the first time since 1948, alternative schools in Czechoslovakia began to operate on a par with public schools. In the 1991–1992 academic year 20 private gymnasiums, 32 vocational schools and 25 vocational training schools were registered in the country.⁹

One of the significant documents that played a significant role in the decentralization of the school system was the Act of the National Council on the State Administration of the Education and on School-Based Management in December 1990. In a socialistic period, school principals and teachers had limited rights to manage the school. However, the December act changed the situation dramatically, giving more responsibility to teachers, directors and local authorities. From now on, school management was transferred to the Municipal School Councils. School management by the Ministry of Education had been significantly reduced. In practice, this meant that funding for schools was guaranteed by the state through the allocation of funds for education in the annual budget, however, the municipality and school councils took a dominant role in the distribution of finances to educational institutions.

The quality of school work was regulated by national school inspections under the Ministry of Education. Their tasks were to coordinate and evaluate the educational activities of schools, such as the management of educational institutions, to establish the conformity of schools with technical regulations and legislative standards.

In the 1990–1991 academic year, 261,327 teachers served in Czechoslovakia schools, 53% of them were women: in kindergartens – 100%, in primary schools – 83%, in gymnasiums – 65%, in vocational schools – 42% and in universities – 31%.¹⁰

⁹ Průcha, J. – Walterová, E. (1992) *Education in a changing society: Czechoslovakia*. Jinočany: H & H, p. 53.

¹⁰ Průcha, J. – Walterová, E. (1992) *Education in a changing society: Czechoslovakia*. Jinočany: H & H, p. 62.

The salaries of teachers depended on the level of education and the length of service. The fees of teachers in private schools relied on the decision of the director of the institution.

The most important value of the Act was that it expanded the rights of teachers and parents, members were elected to local school councils in such a way that 1/3 represented the interests of the municipal Council, 1/3 represented teachers and 1/3 represented parents.¹¹

Significant changes have occurred in the higher education sector of the country. During the totalitarian regime, all higher education institutions were under heavy pressure from the Communist Party. Universities did not have academic freedoms. In May 1990, the Federal Parliament approved the Higher Education Act. In accordance with the Act, higher education institutions have become autonomous and independent of politics. Universities were governed by the Academic Senates, which elected members of the academic community (university staff and students). In addition, both the deans of the faculties and the rectors were not appointed for political reasons, as it was during the previous regime, but rather were elected democratically. It was stated that universities should function in the spirit of democratic and humanistic traditions and serve for the benefit of the development of science, education and culture of society.

Higher educational institutions in Czechoslovakia were funded by the state, their number was more than 30, but it continued to grow slowly.¹²

The next changes in education have affected the teaching of foreign languages. Until November 1989, Russian was the first and compulsory foreign language for study in all types of schools. Teaching the Russian language began in elementary school, continued throughout high school and ended at the university. For many children, Russian was the only foreign language that they could learn at school. After November 1989, the law made it possible to revise the country's language policy; moreover, decisive steps were taken so that students could choose which foreign language to study at school themselves. The most common languages are English, French, German, Russian, and in some public and private schools Spanish, Italian and Latin. Changes in the program of teaching foreign languages at the school encountered difficulties in the lack of staff who could teach English or German, in addition, it was necessary to retrain a large number of Russian language teachers, whose popularity continued to decline day by day. Involved teacher volunteers from abroad (USA, Canada and other countries), who taught mainly university students.

¹¹ Ibidem, p. 68.

¹² Ibidem, p. 69.

Two events had a fundamental impact on the further development of Czech society: first of all, the collapse of Czechoslovakia at the end of 1992, as well as the emergence of an independent Czech Republic in early 1993.

Following many European scholars, Czech researchers came to the conclusion that there should not be a common understanding of the role and functions of the basic school, satisfying all students, teachers, and meeting certain local conditions. Comprehension of this idea has become one of the significant theoretical prerequisites for creating the conditions for the formation of pluralism in the field of education. The creation of various models of the basic school, the elimination of uniformity, was called in the legislation a strategic direction in the field of basic education in the country.¹³ However, this trend in education found outrageous critics who argued that the development of pluralism in the school system would certainly affect the quality of education, and this in turn would slow down the development of gifted children.¹⁴

Thus, the important strategic direction of the development of the Czech education system, laws and other projects developed in the 90s are seen in the formation of a variety of educational institutions, educational programs at all levels of education, from basic to higher.

In the first half of the 1990s, the prerequisites and principles of the transformation of the school were considered, which was part of the educational policy of the state. Such important factors as the growth of information technologies in modern society, integration processes in Europe, cultural development and globalization, the emergence of innovative scientific directions, the course towards building a democratic state, the complexity and practical importance of the knowledge system have come to the attention of the reforms. Much attention was paid to the realization that education is a key factor in transforming the economy from a planned type to a market type. Education was recognized as a driving factor in preparing the country for competitiveness, adaptation and self-affirmation against the background of integration into the European Economic Space. It became apparent that further reforms in education were needed.

Reviewing the steps and results of the preparatory period for reforms, it can be summarized that in the period 1990–1992, 138 different projects and 6 comprehensive projects aimed at reforming education were prepared. The main ideas of the projects were published in press and actively covered in the media. At the end, an independent working group evaluated the projects of the educational program.¹⁵

¹³ Principles of the development of the Czech education system (1994) [Otevřenost, rozmanitost a kvalita. Zásady rozvoje české vzdělávací soustavy. Učitel'ské noviny. 05. 04. 1994]. www.msmt.cz

¹⁴ Průcha, J. – Walterová, E. (1992), p. 71.

¹⁵ Průcha, J. – Walterová, E. (1992), p. 89.

The key factor in the implementation of educational reforms was called – the attitude of teachers. The main reasons for the failure of all previous educational reforms were recognized – the indifference of teachers and ignoring pedagogical opinions. The main tasks for the future were: improving teacher education and training; the creation of professional teacher associations; introducing teachers to educational reforms. The organization of management courses in education for directors and senior teachers became the most important task of 1992.

It became clear that it was necessary to develop a partnership between school-parent communities as the first step towards creating School boards and suitable parent organizations at the national and regional levels to assist the Ministry of Education.

Timeline for the implementation of educational reforms 1991–1992 – discussions, preparation of teachers and schools for reform:

- significant changes in the climate of schools;
- identification of parents willing to cooperate;
- creation of alternative schools;
- initiation of research processes and experiments in education.

1992–1993 – the first steps of organizational transformation;

- the beginning of updating the content of school programs (preparation of draft programs, copies of syllabuses);
- development of educational standards.

1993–1994 preparation of technical equipment and improvement of the school environment

- approval of educational standards;
- The second stage of organizational transformation.

1995–1996 – the final stage of organizational transformation:

- concretization of training programs, manuals and textbooks.

Undoubtedly, before starting educational reforms in the country, it was necessary to conduct a thorough analysis and research to develop specific recommendations for improving the education system. In Czechoslovakia, there were historical traditions of research in the field of education, which were rooted in the 19th century.

Since January 1991, institutions and research centers have begun to revive in the Czech Republic, similar to the modern model of research institutions. Thus, theoretical and empirical studies in the field of education began in the country, which were aimed at the analysis of textbooks, programs, syllabuses and other important educational materials. An important step towards the establishment of modern research in Czechoslovakia was the application of research methods of Western European countries and the United States. In addition, Czechoslovakia began international cooperation with well-known educational research centers in Europe and other parts of the world. Czechoslovakia has become involved in an

international network of cooperation in the field of educational research, establishing contacts with such important international organizations as UNESCO, the European Union and others.¹⁶

One of the first steps on the path to transformation was the 1990 school law, adopted in the spirit of the humanization and democratization of education. The Law proclaims the goals and objectives of education such as: «schools educate young people on the basis of scientific knowledge and in accordance with the principles of patriotism, humanism and democracy, contribute to its intellectual and moral development, prepare for creative professional activities, provide aesthetic, health, physical and environmental education».¹⁷

For the first time, the law declared the principles of democracy and humanism as the central values of education, the tasks of which included promoting a healthy lifestyle, creating environmental awareness and culture, and creating the conditions for learning about one's potential and interests. The Czech Republic's intention to join the EU required the promotion of such qualities as tolerance, respect for other traditions, cultures and worldviews. In addition, the young generation should have been fully aware of the responsibility for their own, social and world harmonious development.

The Czech government was well aware of the fact that the education and upbringing of the young generation is an integral part of the implementation of important state tasks. Over the years, the government has been looking for the most optimal and efficient way to modernize education. One of the significant results in the search for educational reform was the «Concept of state policy regarding the young generation in the Czech Republic until 2002», adopted in 1995.¹⁸

The Concept notes that the goal of state policy towards the young generation is not only the development of conditions for the optimal spiritual, physical and social development of youth, but also the formation of the creative potential of the younger generation for the subsequent prosperity of society. The latest statement emphasizes the need to change Czech society itself, in which, for all the need for youth independence, they still remain economically, socially and psychologically dependent on their parents, unlike the younger generation in the EU countries.¹⁹

¹⁶ UNESCO (1997). Education: a hidden treasure. Report of the 21st Century International Commission on Education. UNESCO. <https://en.unesco.org>

¹⁷ The School Law of the Czech Republic (1990). Sb. zákonů ČR. Praha. www.msmt.cz

¹⁸ Concept of state policy regarding the young generation in the Czech Republic until 2002 (1995) [Koncepce státní politiky ve vztahu k mladé generaci v České republice do roku 2002. MSMT. 1995]. www.msmt.cz

¹⁹ Concept of state policy regarding the young generation in the Czech Republic until 2002 (1995). www.msmt.cz

The solution of this and other issues is a significant task for the Czech Republic, however, the government is aware that in order to eliminate these problems it is necessary to work together with non-governmental, public organizations, as well as the parents themselves.

When setting the goals of state policy in the Concept, the government took into account the fact that the influence of the state on youth should be differentiated and targeted, as well as carried out in two orientations: support – solving problems that complicate the development of the young generation (for example, problem families; children with health problems, etc.), and the protection of young people from the effects of negative phenomena and the results of their influence.²⁰

Public spending on education (share of GNP)²¹

State	1995	1997–1998
Hungary	6,6	
Poland	4,6	4,6
Russia	4,1	
Romania	3,2	
Czech Republic	6,1	4,6

As the table shows, as of 1995, the level of funding for Czech education was not poor compared to other countries at the transitional stage of development. Although due to the economic crisis, the share of GDP allocated to education begins to decline in subsequent years. So in 2000, the government set itself the task of securing state funding for education in the Czech Republic at the level of at least 6% of GNP.

One of the important tasks of state policy in the field of education is the training of teachers, which is emphasized in all documents related to education. The education of teachers was required to be brought in line with the goals and objectives of the modern school system. In addition, the need to increase the proportion of men among teachers was increasingly recognized, in the mid-90s, 86.2% of all teachers in the state's main schools were women, this indicator was slightly lower in secondary schools.

In 90s the sharp transition from a planned to a market economy, profound cultural and social changes required the formation of a completely new concept in the development of education in the Czech Republic. The new law on education was supposed to optimize the education system based on existing traditions and successes already achieved, taking into account the world experience and trends in the field of modernization of education.

²⁰ Ibidem.

²¹ UNESCO (1998). UNESCO World Education Report. <https://en.unesco.org>

2. The development of the education system of the Republic of Kazakhstan (1991–2000)

After the collapse of the Soviet Union a subsequent reformation of the entire educational system to the level of the most developed countries of the world began in Kazakhstan. However, after 1991, the quality of education in the country began to be quickly degraded because of poor funding, inadvertent state regulation, privatization of educational institutions and outflow of specialists from educational institutions.

In the first half of 1990 in Kazakhstan, there were many actual problems concerning the national issue, including, and in the educational sphere. The transition to a market economy in the beginning of 1990 objectively led the Kazakh community to disintegration. So, in the first years of independence, one of the actual tasks of education was its co-leading force, including through the organization of ethnocultural education. There was a need for a new education system that would bring together all the members of the community, regardless of their nationality and status.

Since 1990, Kazakhstan has become actively developing an alternative system of preschool education – family, commercial, and state-owned educational institutions. But the most significant change that happened in education of Kazakhstan was rejection of Marxist ideology, and its turn to secular and diverse education. In particular, only about the years of reconstruction and independence, people of Kazakhstan learned about the terrible years of Stalinism, the deaths of millions of people in the years of the Second World War.

In post-socialist context for Kazakhstan, it was necessary to cultivate the material technologies of the modern and western civilization, while preserving and strengthening a certain spiritual and cultural self-reliance.²²

There were three topical issues related to the cultural aspect of the country's development for Kazakhstan: first of all, the state needs to leave the ideological frames of the Soviet period, secondly, it was necessary to revive national culture and history, which was destroyed during the construction of socialism-communism, and finally, state had to maintain its national policy in the context of globalization.

It is necessary to note that Kazakhstan has chosen the right way to resolve the national issue. A terrifying experience of infringement of the Kazakh language and culture, ethnocide, prompted a decision in the form of the creation of a union of all nationalities living in the country on the basis of welfare and equity. Including

²² Adams, L. (2009). *Is postcolonial theory applicable to Central Eurasia?* «Neprikosnovenniy zapas», №4(66), p. 120.

the tolerant policy, the state received its own reflection in education. Kazakhstan promoted Russian, Uzbek, Uyghur and other national schools to teach their own languages and bring up national values.

The reform of the educational system in Kazakhstan began with the adoption of a legal base. In 1992, the Law on Education was adopted, and the next year, the Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan²³ was enacted.

Starting from 1992 new educational institutions and specialized secondary schools: lyceums, gymnasiums, professional and technical schools, colleges appeared in the country. Despite the appearance and successful functioning of private schools and colleges, the Constitution of Kazakhstan, adopted in 1995²⁴ emphasizes that school education in Kazakhstan remains unpaid and compulsory.

The basis of these legislative acts included the following principles: mass access to education, secular, humanistic and developing character of education, continuous process of education, diverse forms of institutions.

The Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan from January 18, 1992, has expired – instead the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated June 7, 1999 No. 390 was adopted. So, the system of education in the Republic of Kazakhstan is based on the principle of continuity and sequence of general educational programs and is introduced in the following structure: 2) initial education; 3) basic secondary education; 4) secondary education (general secondary education, technical and vocational education); 5) post-secondary education; 6) higher education; 7) post-graduate education. By the idea of reformers, such a division will help students to fully open their capacities at most.²⁵

After the adoption of the Laws “On Languages” of 1989 and 1997 as well as with their consolidation in the articles of the Constitution of 1993 and 1995, many new Kazakh and mixed schools opened in the Republic of Kazakhstan, which provided education in Kazakh language. Because of this process Kazakhstan needed textbooks written in Kazakh language.²⁶

As a result of economic instability schools in Kazakhstan continued to use Soviet textbooks as well as textbooks of the Russian Federation. For instance, in the 1994/95 academic year, The World history subject in schools was taught with textbooks published in Russia in 1991–1993.²⁷

²³ Education Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan (1992). <https://online.zakon.kz> › document

²⁴ Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan (1995). <https://online.zakon.kz> › document

²⁵ Education Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan (1999). <https://online.zakon.kz> › document

²⁶ The Law on Languages (1997). <https://online.zakon.kz> › document

²⁷ Zueva, L. I. (2004). The development of a comprehensive school in Kazakhstan in 1991–2001. Bulletin of the Karaganda State University. Series history, philosophy, law. Number 2. Karaganda. pp. 25–34.

Textbooks and teaching materials of the Russian Federation, especially on subjects such as history, geography, Russian language and literature did not correspond to the requirements of the national Standards of the Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan.²⁸ In September 26, 1996 the government approved a targeted program for the preparation and production of a set of textbooks and teaching materials for secondary schools.

Because of the facts of corruption in the admission to the budgetary form of education in the country's universities, as well as need in the General control and evaluation of students' progress by all types of external examinations and monitoring in the education system of Kazakhstan, as well as the formation of a database of test tasks for them, has increased. For this purpose in 1992 the "National testing center" under supervision of the Ministry of education and science of the Republic of Kazakhstan was established.

Especially for the support of gifted children, in 1996 the Decree of the first President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev "On state support and development of schools for gifted children" was issued.²⁹

In the framework of this program, boarding schools were created in all regional centers. The establishment of a special network really allowed the selection of the most talented students to obtain a higher and special education.

To educate talented children and youth in Kazakhstan the Government adopted a resolution in March 1998 to open a fundamentally new scientific-educational center "Daryn" under the supervision of the Ministry of education and science of the Republic of Kazakhstan.³⁰

Taking into account the increase in the number of Kazakhs returning to a historical homeland from countries far and near abroad, in late 1996 a state program was adopted.³¹

The issue about further development of education was introduced in the address of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev in October 16, 1997, a Message from the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, N.A. Nazarbayev to people of Kazakhstan.³²

²⁸ Ibidem, pp. 25–34.

²⁹ Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan (1996). <https://online.zakon.kz> › document

³⁰ The order of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan (1998). <https://online.zakon.kz> › document

³¹ Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan (1996). <https://online.zakon.kz> › document

³² Nazarbayev, N. (1997). Kazakhstan 2030 Strategy: Prosperity, Security and Improvement of the Well-Being of all Kazakhstan Citizens. Annual State of the Nation Address, Astana, October 1997. www.akorda.kz

Despite the many social and economic problems of the country, global challenges of our time, the First President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev has designated the Health, education and well-being of citizens of Kazakhstan as the fourth long-term priority in the Strategy "Kazakhstan-2030".

As a result, 26,642 children were returned to school in 1998–1999, which helped to reduce one of the urgent problems in education. The reforms of education carried out within the framework of the medium-term program helped to correct the situation: since 1996, there has been a gradual increase in the coverage rate, which in 1999 amounted to 93.4 %.³³

In order to rapidly master the achievements of world civilization, the state program of Informatisation of the secondary education system was adopted in 1997. Schools, including rural ones, were equipped with computers and other office equipment in a very short time. However, this was not enough to informatise the education system, since most of the teachers did not have the appropriate skills to use computers, so many of them just stood idle.³⁴

In 1998, the government of Kazakhstan was tasked to launch a large-scale program of computerization of schools, especially in rural areas, allocating for this purpose in 1998 at least 22 million us dollars, as well as to ensure full attendance of children in school.

Profound reforms have dramatically changed the face of higher education institutions. For example, since the 90s of the XX century, private universities competed with state higher education institutions. By the decree of the President of the Republic N. A. Nazarbayev eight higher educational institutions performing significant work on training of highly qualified specialists were given a special status. The ministries of defense and the interior have begun training to meet their requests. Higher education institutions of the Republic thus gradually reorganized according to the requirements of the market.

In 1992, the first among the CIS countries Kazakhstan by the Decree of the First President of the Republic Nursultan Nazarbayev in Almaty opened the Institute of Economics and strategic studies, as well as new types of higher education institutions. This University introduced the original at the time North American education Credit system. Leading teachers from abroad were invited; in addition, education was carried out in English. Higher education institutions began to open specialties necessary for the new market economic system, which were not taught in universities during the Soviet period.

In 1994, a new State standard of Higher education of the Republic of Kazakhstan was approved. The document for the first time announced the

³³ Zueva, L. I. (2004). p. 25–34.

³⁴ State Programme of Informatisation of Secondary Education (1997). <https://online.zakon.kz/document>

multilevel structure of higher education, and approved the academic degrees of bachelor's and master's degrees.

Applicants for the first time began to take entrance exams to the University on the system of testing. This method of admission to universities allowed to prevent corruption and objectively assess the knowledge of applicants.

Since 1995, the first Kazakhstani standards for 310 specialties of higher professional education were introduced.

At the end of the 1997–1998 academic year in Kazakhstan there were 133 universities in the higher education system, of which 51 higher educational institutions, including 29 universities, 11 academies, 10 institutes and 1 Conservatory. There were educated 251,000 students (67% in Russian, 33% – in Kazakh), including 164 thousand at the expense of the state budget.³⁵

In order to prevent corruption and create equal conditions for admission to universities, since 1999, the allocation of special grants and loans has been introduced.

Kazakhstan's participation in global international cooperation in these areas is closely linked to the establishment of the National Commission of Kazakhstan for UNESCO and the signing of the Memorandum of cooperation between Kazakhstan and UNESCO on 9 August 1995. In the field of education, the Memorandum provided for the involvement of the Republic of Kazakhstan in UNESCO projects and programs, as well as in its individual units. In addition, the parties recognized the need for reform and modernization of education in Kazakhstan and participation in these processes of the UN specialized Agency. One of the key agreements of the parties to the Memorandum proclaimed the need for UNESCO to cooperate with relevant national institutions and bodies for the sharing of information and training.

The most noticeable part of the effectiveness of the state policy in education is the international program “Bolashak”.³⁶ The first President of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev believed that “Bolashak People are the vanguard of the driving forces of the country's development”. To this end, in 1994 the first group consisting of 187 young Kazakhstanis went to study at universities in the USA, Great Britain, Germany and France.

One of the educational institutions that emerged due to close cooperation between Kazakhstan and Turkey, as well as contributing to the development of the country's education, were the Kazakh-Turkish board schools, opened in 1992. To date, there are 29 Kazakh-Turkish lyceums in all regions of Kazakhstan, where

³⁵ Ayagan, B. G. (2016). *Contemporary history of Kazakhstan: textbook for the students of bachelor degree of universities*. Astana.

³⁶ Resolution of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated November 5, 1993 No. 1394 “on the establishment of international scholarships of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan ‘Bolashak’ for training abroad”. <https://online.zakon.kz> › document

more than 10 thousand students study. One of the important features of the Kazakh-Turkish board schools is the use of specialized programs and teaching methods, visuals and other educational materials along with the most advanced technologies in the world. Their content meets international standards that have achieved success in many countries.³⁷

Kazakh-Turkish lyceums were among the first schools that brought medals to Kazakhstan in international educational Olympiads.³⁸

Cooperation within the framework of the program “TACIS” and “TEMPUS” of the European Union aimed at establishing academic ties between universities of Kazakhstan and European cooperation countries is effective. From 1995 to 2000, Kazakhstan implemented 10 projects under the TEMPUS program. The positions of Kazakhstan's science within the common scientific and technological space of the CIS member States are being strengthened, cooperation with the Central Asian States in the field of new technologies, system technological research and project analysis is developing.

In General, in 1990 the international cooperation of Kazakhstan with many countries in the field of education was quite productive, which cannot be stated about the cooperation of the Republic with Central Asian countries.³⁹

In conclusion, in the first decade of independence, despite the material, personnel and moral losses, the education of Kazakhstan was able to maintain its main priorities. At the first stage of the formation of the national education system, a legal framework was created, the management structure for education at various levels was determined, and regional programs for the development of general secondary education for the short and long terms were introduced. However, there were still several cases in the education system that required an immediate and high-quality resolution.

3. Comparing the educational systems of the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan in 1990–2000

By the mid-1980s, the countries of socialism entered a period of crisis. The bureaucratic economy could no longer meet the growing needs of the population, the uneconomical expenditure of resources led to their significant reduction, the cultural level of people grew so much that they began to realize their lack of rights, the need for change. In 1990, supporters of speedy Westernization, that is,

³⁷ The National Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan Fund-27, List-1; Case-5.

³⁸ The National Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan Fund-27, List-1; Case-5.

³⁹ Dodhudoeva, L. (2013). *Dialog I obmen dukhovnimi tsennostyami v Tsentralnoy Aziyi [Dialogue and exchange of spiritual values in Central Asia]*. Transformations of Central Asian Societies: Socio-Cultural Aspects. Materials of the international seminar of UNESCO. Almaty: Dyke Press. p. 196.

restructuring along with the Western pattern, came to the governments of most countries of Eastern Europe. The reforms that they began to carry out led to changes in society and the sphere of education.

In the late 1980s, the USSR entered a period of acute socio-economic crisis. Reforms began in the USSR, including Kazakh SSR affecting all aspects of society and the system of education.

Political processes took place in different ways in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, but those processes that encompassed the education sector of post-socialist countries are of great scientific interest. In this context, we conducted a comparative historical analysis of the development of the education systems of the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan.

Undoubtedly one of the important results of educational reforms in the Czech Republic was the eradication of Marxist ideology, which until November 1989 was mandatory for study at all universities in the country, in addition, this ideology was the only philosophical basis for important subjects in secondary and higher educational institutions. In January 1991, the Federal Parliament approved the Document on the Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Human, which in article 33 proclaimed the democracy and pluralism of the education system in Czechoslovakia. Marxism has been replaced by new subjects, such as social sciences, political and economic theory, the history of culture and religions, aimed at the formation of diverse thinking and self-determination of students. Many textbooks and scientific works that covered the Marxist ideology were demolished.

In the socialist period in Kazakhstan, the humanities and social sciences were influenced by Marxist-Leninist ideology;^{40, 41} moreover, even science was influenced by ideological qualifications. Another important characteristic of Soviet educational philosophy was the concentration of teaching on the study of “facts.” It was believed that knowledge should be interpreted through a teacher, armed with the theory of Marxism-Leninism.⁴²

However, at the first stage of the development of education in independent Kazakhstan, the Law “On Education” was adopted. The law formulated an educational policy, which was based on the idea of preserving the positive experience of the Soviet educational system and the inclusion of a national component in its content. New secondary education standards were introduced and new textbooks were written. The government decided to remove “socialist-

⁴⁰ Kanaev, A. – Daun, H. (2002). *Nationalism and educational transition in Central Asia*. In H. Daun (Ed.), *Educational restructuring in the context of globalization and national policy*. New York: Poutledge Falmer. p. 265.

⁴¹ DeYoung (2006), 500). *Problems and trends in Education in Central Asia since 1990: The case of General Education in Kyrgyzstan*. *Central Asia Survey*, 25: 4, 499-14, p. 500.

⁴² *Ibidem*, p. 500.

communist ideology” from educational institutions, weakening the influence of Marxism-Leninism on students. The contents of the courses, which were under the pressure of communist ideology, such as the history of Kazakhstan, the Kazakh language and culture, were revised.

Under socialism in Kazakhstan, as in Czechoslovakia, there was a model of a single school. There were no alternative textbooks and especially schools.

An important change in Czechoslovakia in the post-socialist period was the development of pluralism in the educational system. The system of a single school in the country has been changed. This was especially strongly expressed in the primary school curriculum, which had the same subjects, textbooks and content. The new school system was aimed at a differentiated education, which took into account the opportunities and interests of students. In addition, it became clear that it was necessary to take into account the material capabilities of schools. In 1990, the country issued several important decrees that allowed the creation of private (alternative) schools.

Since 1992, alternative schools have begun to develop in Kazakhstan, including private schools, despite having a high tuition fee, had become very popular. There was also an increase in the number of schools where teaching was conducted in native languages: Uzbek, Uyghur, Tajik, etc. In a number of schools Azerbaijan, Greek, Korean, Turkish, Polish, Tatar languages began to be studied as native and were introduced into the curricula.

The language policy in the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan in the post-socialist period had its own differences, it concerned the Russian language. In Kazakhstan, the Russian language still occupies an important position; the Russian language continues to be taught in schools, which cannot be said about Czechoslovakia, after 1989, the Russian language lost its importance in the country.

The post-socialist period, when ideological and linguistic bonds of the process of Russification of education were destroyed in Kazakhstan, the process of disintegration on ethnic grounds, which determines the situation in the education system, became quite obvious. This process was most clearly manifested in the division of the school into Kazakh and Russian or Russian-speaking. The revival of the Kazakh school is accompanied by the opposition of its Russian-language school. This is primarily due to the elimination of previous dominance in the teaching of the Russian language. On the other hand, in accordance with the Constitution of Kazakhstan (1995), the Russian language receives the status of “officially used in state organizations and local governments,” and is compulsorily studied in all types of schools (Russian, national, mixed). In the first years of independence, compulsory subjects such as the Kazakh language and Kazakh literature were introduced in all schools of Kazakhstan.

With in the integration of the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan into the international educational space, the relations of these countries with

international educational organizations such as UNESCO and others improved consistently.

The integration and deepening of international cooperation in the field of education is promoted in various directions and has a positive impact on the development of whole education, the promotion of academic mobility, the introduction of integrated curricula, the change in the management system of institutions, and the improvement of the quality of education.

The determining factor in the development of education in the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan was played by the foreign and domestic policies of countries, for example, the Czech Republic sought to become a member of the EU, which required decisive reforms from it in many areas, including education. After gaining independence, Kazakhstan primarily intended to ensure interethnic harmony in the country. At the dawn of independence, many foreign experts predicted a split in Kazakhstan on a national basis, since about 130 different nationalities lived in the country. The establishment of a balanced international policy was reflected in the educational policy of the government of Kazakhstan, which facilitated the opening of ethnic schools and the provision of teaching the mother tongue of various ethnic groups.

The issue of school autonomy has been developed differently in Kazakhstan and the Czech Republic. The first educational reforms in the Czech Republic announced the autonomy of schools, significant functions for managing educational institutions were transferred to the public. Educational reforms in Kazakhstan announced the democratization of the school system, but institution management continued to be centrally supervised by government agencies.

Higher educational institutions in the Czech Republic received autonomy, academic senates were formed in universities, which had the right to appoint rectors and deans of universities, but in Kazakhstan the main leadership of universities was appointed by the President of Kazakhstan.

In the post-socialist period, the Czech Republic restored research centers and established past ties with research centers in the near and far abroad. The consistent development of the research sphere in the country was facilitated by the vast historical experience in these areas, which allowed the Czech Republic to actively integrate into modern trends in the development of global science. In Kazakhstan, science was strongly under the impact of socialist-communist ideology that it greatly impeded the mastery of modern experience in the academic and scientific environment of the country. However, Kazakhstan is actively taking steps for the consistent development of science in the country.

The key factor in the implementation of educational reforms in the Czech Republic was called – the attitude of teachers towards them. The main reasons for the failure of all previous educational reforms were recognized – the indifference of teachers and ignoring pedagogical opinions. The main tasks for the future were:

improving teacher education and training; the creation of professional teacher associations; introducing teachers to educational reforms. The organization of management courses in education for directors and senior teachers became the most important task of 1992. However, in Kazakhstan, when reforming the educational system, the opinion of teachers was not taken into account. Perhaps that is why the educational reforms of the 1990s did not have a high effect. The educational system in Kazakhstan required a radical change not only in structure and organization, but also in management approaches, the content of standards and programs, and a conceptual orientation.

One of the important initiatives of Kazakhstan in the field of education is the international program “Bolashak”, which still has no analogues in the world. This dynamic program was adopted in 1993, when Kazakhstan survived difficult economic times. Despite this, the first President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev decided to allocate funds for training talented Kazakh students in the best universities in the world. “Bolashak” was adopted to provide the most talented youth of the country with the opportunity to go abroad to receive education completely at the expense of the state budget. After graduation, young people had to return to their homeland and apply the knowledge gained for the wealth of the country. The international “Bolashak” program had no analogues in the world.

In addition, it must be emphasized that, at the end of the 1990s, in Kazakhstan, specialized schools were opened, which are the initiators of many innovative projects in the field of education.

A comparative analysis of education in the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan allows us to identify 4 priority areas in the educational reforms of these countries:

1) Administration and management in education. A focus on democratization in education in the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan required the formation of precise rules and an organization for managing education in order to determine the role of the state in this direction. A comparative analysis allows us to determine that in the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan, state control has extended to ensuring standards, the issue of the quantity, quality and essence of curricula, the basic rules of the school organization and the school network, the basic rules of student mobility. However, changes in the rules of school management and administration, financing and budget planning policies in the two countries developed in opposite directions. In the Czech Republic, management and financing were transferred to the public, but in Kazakhstan they remain in the hands of the state.

The mandatory state standard in the two countries was developed by experts. It should be noted that in the Czech Republic representatives of various social groups (scientists, artists, teachers, businessmen, psychologists, sociologists, doctors, etc.) were involved in the creation of state standards under the leadership of the Ministry of Education. In Kazakhstan, the adoption of educational standards was carried out with the great participation of the state.

Another significant difference in the direction of the educational reforms of the two countries is that the educational system of the Czech Republic was oriented towards liberalism. Liberalism in the education of the Czech Republic was aimed at an individual curriculum that provides students with the greatest possible freedom of choice, encompassing the breadth of subject scope with in-depth study. In Czech liberal education, methodology is based on the importance of education as a creative process. The goal of liberal education is aimed at developing the unique personality of each student. However, in the legislation of Kazakhstan, although the principle of the democratization of education was declared, liberalism was not widely developed.

2) School environment, climate and philosophy

The fundamental question that needs to be answered in this direction is whether the life, philosophy and climate of the school are democratic. Thus, changes in this direction of the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan affected the relationship between teachers and students, a reassessment of the attitude of society towards school, and the democratization of all school life. It should be noted that the transformation of the school is a developing process that changes the conditions for the existence of the school, in which many significant factors must be taken into account, aimed at the prospects for the development of society in the future. The Czech Republic, a country that was in the sphere of influence of the developed democratic countries of Europe, democratized the educational system much faster than Kazakhstan. However, it should be noted that democracy in the education of Kazakhstan was declared as one of the fundamental signs. Although, as we observe, educational institutions in Kazakhstan were not granted autonomy, which was widely distributed in the Czech Republic, where control was transferred to the public, these are municipal councils at schools and Academic Senates at universities.

3) Program

It was clear that it was necessary to thoroughly change the school curriculum, but the key questions were - in what direction and quality? The starting point in this direction was the concept of “an educated man”. One of the instant tasks of the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan in the 1990s was the creation of educational programs. First of all, scientists from the two countries criticized the ideological censorship and politicization of education and upbringing; unification of the content of education, teaching methods, textbooks, curricula and plans; excessive emphasis on memorization of knowledge. A comparative analysis allows us to conclude that updating the content and programs in education in the Czech Republic proceeded much faster than it did in Kazakhstan. In the Czech Republic, it was decided to focus on the integration and interconnection of civic and national education, respect for human rights in education and borrowing international best practices. In Kazakhstan, although the programs of the Soviet period were revised and new educational

standards were adopted, the program still remained overloaded and with an emphasis on knowledge.

4) Structure in education

The transitional education system was to become flexible, dynamic and create opportunities for alternative development paths.

For the socialist model of education both in Czech Republic and in Kazakhstan, there was an ambiguity in the structure, functioning, division and weak continuity of the levels of education, there was uncertainty in the typology of educational institutions, and unresolved issues of assigning academic titles at the highest level of education. However, in 1990, with the adoption of new laws on education, both countries took significant steps in this direction. First of all, in the legislative acts of the two countries, the terminological clarity of the concept of education was defined, the principle of continuity and sequence in education was announced, and the educational institutions of the countries were structured and classified according to the general type.

Under the socialist model of education, there was no scientific mechanism and infrastructure for the development of a competitive educational system that could allow the implementation of the training of qualified personnel to meet the needs of the market. This problem remained one of the most topical during the 1990s both for the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan.

Conclusion

In the 90s, education policy in the Czech Republic mainly developed under the influence of two factors: the desire to become an equal member of the EU and the desire to solve the problems of youth. Thus, the Czech Republic set itself the task of developing conditions for the physical, spiritual and creative potential of young people, to educate the young generation in the spirits of citizens not only of their country, but also of the European community. Education is developing on the basis of the principles of democracy, humanism, respect for human rights, which creates the conditions for student-centered learning, the expansion of local self-government and the independence of educational institutions.

Despite this, insufficient financing of education, the system of training pedagogical personnel remained unsolved and did not correspond to modern requirements of global trends in education.

Thus, in the 1990s, Kazakhstan began to build the national education system at the legislative and infrastructural level. Kazakhstan has formed an intellectual elite, material base, advanced experience in the development of education.

At the turn of the century, Kazakhstan has identified key priorities for the development of school education, which are the transformation of the educational paradigm, the reduction of the learning gap, the development of ICT technologies

in education, as well as the further strengthening of school infrastructure. In turn, the targets for the development of higher education in Kazakhstan were built taking into account world trends. The priorities in the development of higher education were determined by the massification of higher education, internationalization and integration of education, science and production. Kazakhstan has established and expanded cooperation with countries of near and far abroad, as well as international organizations in the field of education.

Educational reforms in the post-socialist period were essential for the dynamic development of the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan. A comparative historical analysis of the educational systems of these two countries revealed a number of similar patterns in development. However, it should be noted that due to many contextual and structural factors, there were substantial differences as well. Thus, due to historical prerequisites and various political, economic, social and cultural causes, the educational systems of the Czech Republic and Kazakhstan developed with their own distinctive features.