

# 4<sup>th</sup> Conference of the International Ranking Expert Group (IREG-4)

on

*International and National Academic Ranking:  
Commonalities and Differences*

**14-16 June 2009**

Astana, Kazakhstan

A wide-angle photograph of the Astana skyline in Kazakhstan, featuring several prominent skyscrapers with modern architectural designs, including two distinctive golden cylindrical towers. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. In the foreground, there is a paved area and some greenery.

**Programme**

[www.ireg-observatory.org](http://www.ireg-observatory.org)

**Organisers:**

*IREG/International Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence  
Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan  
in collaboration with UNESCO-CEPES*

*“The main criterion of success of educational reforms is an achievement of such a level where each citizen of our country having acquired appropriate education and qualification may become a demanded specialist in any country of the world.*

*We have to give educational services of good quality all over the country according to the world standards”.*

*The Message of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan to kazakh people  
“New Kazakhstan in the new world”  
(March, 2007).*



***Dear participants and guests,***

The tendencies of international integration can be observed in all spheres of societies and states since the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The sphere of education is not an exception. Today the development of national educational systems is not possible without integration into the world education space.

This is why one of the most important direction of the new development strategy of Kazakhstan is "the adoption of educational system, as well as the system of specialist retraining to the world standards".

Kazakhstan system of higher education is developing according to the world tendencies, using the best world practice for formation the society based on knowledge.

One of the indicators determining the quality of rendered educational services is conducting university ratings by specialized agencies, the results of which are made public to state bodies and business community.

We are happy to welcome on the ancient Kazakh land the 4<sup>th</sup> conference of the international rating expert group (IREG-4, Astana, June 14-16, 2009), during which the important issues concerning the commonalities and differences of international and national ratings will be discussed.

The Conference of such a high level on university ratings is going to be held the forth time in the world and for the first time on the territory of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries.

The aim of the conference is not just to develop comparable methods of conducting national and international ratings. Uppermost, the IREG-4 conference is a good platform for the dialogue between the Rectors of Higher Education Institutions of Kazakhstan and foreign rating agencies and an opportunity to discuss the ways of integration of home universities into the world rating systems.

For foreign participants the conference presents an unique opportunity to learn more about higher education system of the Republic of Kazakhstan, its priorities, achievements and potential.

*With best wishes and hope for fruitful work in the future,*

*Minister of Education and Science  
of the Republic of Kazakhstan  
**Zhanseit Tuimebayev.***



**Zhanseit Tuimebayev**

**4<sup>th</sup> Conference  
of the International Ranking Expert Group  
(IREG-4)  
14-16 June 2009**



**IREG-3 Conference in Shanghai, 2007**

*From left to right:*

**Liu Nian Cai**

Director, Center for World-Class Universities  
Jiao Tong University, Shanghai, China

**Jamie P. Merisotis**

President, Institute for Higher Education Policy, USA  
(Presently President, Lumina Foundation)

**Jan Sadlak**

Director, UNESCO-CEPES, Bucharest, Romania

## **IREG-4 Conference = Expert discussion on academic ranking**

The message in the earlier version of a similar publication about our meeting was entitled "Why participate in IREG-4 Conference?" We think that at least two reasons can be identified in a foresight of our meeting in a hospitable capital of Kazakhstan: relevance of expert discussions about "academic ranking", and the overall quality of its programme.

The ranking – or "league tables", as they are known in the United Kingdom – have in a short period of time become an important feature in policy-making and practice in higher education. They are now a global phenomenon serving different purposes for different and varied audiences. Even if they are not necessarily universally appreciated, there is an increasing understanding that they have become one of the tools for transparency as well as quality assurance.

It should be appreciated that realistic approach about what ranking can do and how it can be used for improving performance of higher education institutions is gaining ground, and that it is less frequent, but still present, to encounter a dogmatic argument that "quantitative concepts are inapplicable to the university evaluation"... Indisputably a "good ranking" can contribute to the way higher education institutions and their activities are being presented, perceived and assessed at the institutional, local, national and international levels. For this reason there is a need to continue the expert dialogue and there is hardly a better platform to do it than meeting convened by the International Rankings Expert Group – IREG, and its International Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence, and in collaboration with the partners like those we have managed to associate with this meeting in Astana.

# International and National Academic Ranking: Commonalities and Differences

The IREG – 4 is taking place in Astana, the thriving capital of the Republic of Kazakhstan. This meeting has been made mostly possible due to a financial support of the Government of Kazakhstan, more specifically the Ministry of Education and Science. Thanks to its rich natural resources and appropriate policy, Kazakhstan is making great efforts to look outwards and create solid foundations for its economic, social and cultural development. Higher education and research is part of this strategy. Hosting of our meeting should be seen in an overall interest and efforts in continuous enhancement of the country's higher education and research.

The second reason for participation in IREG-4 is the quality of the programme and high caliber of the speakers.

There are following three main topical lines of our meeting:

- international/regional rankings;
- national rankings;
- approaches and measurements for developing comparable transnational data while respecting the limitations of a "culture of numbers" in assessing quality of research or other activities carried out by higher education institutions.

In addition, those participating in IREG-4 can benefit from reflections on such issues as: the increasing use of rankings as a policy tool for national governments, and the use of rankings in developing countries as a means for urging institutions to improve individual and collective performance. Participants will also have first hand access to the efforts being made by those involved in the elaboration of rankings to increase the respectability of ranking and league tables via comprehensive and open reflection on various quality aspects in higher education.

On behalf of the organizers we welcome you at IREG-4 Conference in Astana!

**Dr. Jan Sadlak**

Chairman of the IREG/International Observatory

## Organisers:

**IREG**

**IREG/International Observatory  
on Academic Ranking and Excellence**  
[www.ireg-observatory.org](http://www.ireg-observatory.org)



**Ministry of Education and Science  
of the Republic of Kazakhstan**  
[www.edu.gov.kz](http://www.edu.gov.kz)

*In collaboration with*



**European Center of Higher Education  
UNESCO-CEPES**  
[www.cepes.ro](http://www.cepes.ro)



## Programme

Location: Hotel "Diplomat"  
Astana, 29/1 Tauelsyzdyk Street  
Tel: +7 (7172) 55 00 01; Fax: +7 (7172) 55 00 05;  
E-mail: diplomathotel@mail.ru  
www.diplomathotel.kz

### Saturday, June 13<sup>rd</sup>

- 9:30-14:00 **Special Workshop:** *Introduction to Academic Rankings for the Rectors of Universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan*  
(with a simultaneous interpretation in Russian)  
Location: Hotel „Diplomat“, Astana, 29/1 Tauelsyzdyk Street, Baiterek Hall (2<sup>nd</sup> floor)
- Chair: **Serik Omirbayev**, Director, Department of Higher and Postgraduate Education, Ministry of Education and Science, Republic of Kazakhstan
- Speakers:
- **Farhad Kuanganov**, Executive Secretary, Ministry of Education and Science, Republic of Kazakhstan:  
*Welcoming Remarks*
  - **Jamil Salmi**, Tertiary Education Coordinator, Human Development Network, The World Bank:  
*The Challenges of Establishing World-Class Universities*
  - **Gero Federkeil**, Manager in Charge of Rankings, CHE-Centre for Educational Development, Germany:  
*Multi-dimensional Rankings and Its Advantages*
  - **Liu Nian Cai**, Director, Center for World-Class Universities and Dean of Graduate School of Education, Jiao Tong University in Shanghai, China:  
*Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU): Purpose and Methodology*
  - **Waldemar Siwiński**, President, Perspektywy Education Foundation, Poland:  
*The Influence of Perspektywy Ranking on the Development of Higher Education System in Poland*
- 11:00-11:30 Coffee-break, Baiterek Hall
- 14:00-15:30 Lunch for Rectors and Speakers  
Location: 29 Tauelsyzdyk Street, Hotel "Diplomat", "Famous" coffee house
- Whole day Arrival of Members of the Executive Committee of IREG/International Observatory and Invited Speakers
- 19:00-21:00 Dinner for Members of the Executive Committee of IREG/International Observatory and Invited Speakers  
Location: Restaurant "Capital", Nursaya 1, Water-Green Boulevard

### Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup>

- Whole day Arrival and registration of participants in Hotel "Diplomat" or Hotel "Duman"
- 9:30-13:30 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Executive Committee of IREG/International Observatory  
(closed session)  
Location: Hotel „Diplomat“, Conference Room "Astana"
- 14:00-15:30 Lunch for Members of the Executive Committee of IREG/International Observatory  
Location: Hotel „Diplomat“, Room "Almaty"
- 19:00-21:00 **Welcome Reception** for all participants  
Location: 29 Tauelsyzdyk Street, Hotel "Diplomat", "Famous" coffee house

# International and National Academic Ranking: Commonalities and Differences

Conference venue: Diplomat Hotel, 29/1, Tauelsyzdyk St., Astana

## Monday, June 15<sup>th</sup>

8:00-9:00 Registration of participants (late arrivals)

### 9:00-9:30 **Opening Session – Welcoming Remarks**

Chair: **Farhad Kuanganov**, Executive Secretary, Ministry of Education and Science, Republic of Kazakhstan

Speakers:

- **Zhanseit Tuimebayev**, Minister of Education and Science, Republic of Kazakhstan
- **Jan Sadlak**, Director, UNESCO-CEPES; Chairperson of IREG/International Observatory

### 9:30-11:15 **First Session: Policy Context and International Developments in Academic Ranking**

Chair: **Liu Nian Cai**, Director, Center for World-Class Universities and Dean of Graduate School of Education, Jiao Tong University in Shanghai, China

Speakers:

- **Jamil Salmi**, Tertiary Education Coordinator, Human Development Network, The World Bank:  
*Tertiary Education Coordinator – Emergence of Rankings of Higher Education Systems*
- **Peer Eider**, Lisbon Council, Belgium:  
*The Lisbon Council University Systems Ranking: Measuring the Contribution of Tertiary Education Beyond Research*
- **Claude Sauvageot**, Division of Evaluation and Foresight, French Ministry of Higher Education and Research, France, and **Gero Federkeil**, Manager in Charge of Rankings, CHE-Centre for Educational Development, Germany:  
*Mapping, Ranking and Typology of Higher Education Institutions: the European Approach*
- **Stefaan Hermans**, Head of Unit, Universities and Researchers, DG Research, European Commission, Belgium:  
*Sustainable Data Collection as the Basis for Classification and Ranking – New perspectives – New Initiatives*

11:15-11:30 Coffee-break

### 11:30-14:00 **Second Session: New National Initiatives in Academic Rankings and Their Policy Background**

Chair: **Michelle Asha Cooper**, President, Institute for Higher Education Policy, USA

Speakers:

- **Luis Adolfo Piscoya Hermoza**, Member of the National Education Council of Peru: University Ranking in Peru:  
*A Rigors Performance Analysis and Its Outcomes*
  - **Olessia Linevitskaya** and **Natalia Pankratova**, National Technical University of Ukraine “Kyiv Polytechnic Institute”, Ukraine:  
*TOP 200 Ukraine – Third University Ranking*
  - **Waldemar Siwiński**, President, Perspektywy Education Foundation, Poland:  
*“Perspektywy Ranking 2009” – Updated Methodological Approach*
- Discussant: **Robert J. Morse**, Director of Data Research, U.S. News & World Report, USA

14:00-15:00 Lunch, hotel “Diplomat”, “Famous” coffee house

### 15:00 -18:30 **Third Session: New National Initiatives in Academic Rankings and Their Policy Background (continuation)**

Chair: **Klaus Hüfner**, Chairperson of the Advisory Board of UNESCO-CEPES, Germany

Speakers:

- **Yung-chi Hou** (Angela), Director of International Exchange, Higher Education Evaluation Council of Taiwan & Professor of Fu Jen Catholic University, Taiwan-China:  
*New Personalized Ranking of the Taiwanese Universities*
  - **Nova Jayne Heath**, Constable & Robinson Publishers, United Kingdom:  
*Complete University Guide and Its Interactivity and Accessibility*
  - **Natalya Kryvulina**, Project Manager, System Capital Management, Ukraine:  
*Your University Compass’ Project – Ranking of Ukrainian Higher Education Institutions*
  - **Richard Vedder**, Center for College Affordability and Productivity, Ohio University, USA:  
*The Forbes Rankings and Beyond: The Future of Rankings in the United States*
- Discussant: **Ferdinand Devinsky**, President, Slovak Academic Ranking and Rating Agency (ARRA), Slovak Republic

### 19:30-21:30 **Conference dinner**

Location: Restaurant “Orda”, Nursaya 1, Water-Green Boulevard



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## Tuesday, June 16<sup>th</sup>

9:00-11:15 **Fourth Session: Approaches and Means for Measurement of Academic Productivity in the Context of Developing Comparable Transnational Data for Ranking**

Chair: **Marko Marhl**, Vice-Rector for International Affairs, University of Maribor, Slovenia

Speakers:

- **Koenraad Debackere**, Faculty of Economics and Applied Economics, Catholic University Leuven, Belgium:  
*Bibliometric and the "Multi-dimensionality" of Research Activity: Implications for University Ranking*
  - **Jeffrey Clovis**, Senior Director, Research Evaluation and Bibliometric Data, Thomson Reuters, UK:  
*Assessing Faculty Productivity and Institutional Research Performance: Using Publication and Citation Key Performance Indicators*
  - **Robert Reisz**, Institute for Research on Higher Education, Martin-Luther University, Germany:  
*Soft and Hard Data and Definitions for University Ranking*
  - **Yukum Harsono**, Vice President Product Marketing, Elsevier, the Netherlands:  
*How Can "Research Leadership" be Measured – The View of the Scientific Publisher*
- Discussant: **Paul Serban Agachi**, President of the Academic Council, Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania

11:15-11:30 Coffee-break

11:30-13:30 **Final Session: Conclusions and Agenda for the Future**

Chair: **Jan Sadlak**, Director, UNESCO-CEPES, Romania

Speakers:

- **Ying Cheng**, Jiao Tong University in Shanghai, China:  
*International and National Academic Rankings: Commonalities and Differences in Ranking Indicators*
- **Andrea Saltelli**, Head of the Unit of Econometric and Applied Statistics Unit of the European Commission at the Joint Research Centre, Italy:  
*Robustness Issues and Critical Assessment: How Much Confidence Can We Have in Higher Education Rankings?*
- **Robin van Ijperen**, Policy Officer, Higher Education, Directorate General for Education and Culture, European Commission, Belgium:  
*Towards a Multi-dimensional Ranking: The View of the European Commission on Transparency in Missions and Performances of Higher Education Institution*
- **Robert J. Morse**, Director of Data Research, U.S. News & World Report, USA:  
*Why Academic Rankers Should Not Stop Publishing New Rankings until the Financial and Economic Crisis Ends*

Discussants views from previous sessions reflecting on major developments, policy implications, and recommendations for IREG and its Members

14:00-15:00 Lunch, hotel "Diplomat", "Famous" coffee house

Afternoon: Optional sightseeing program: Bus tour of Astana

16:00-18:30 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Executive Committee of IREG/International Observatory (*closed session*)

19:30-22:00 **Gala Dinner** hosted by **Zhanseit Tuimebayev**, Minister of Education and Science, Republic of Kazakhstan, Location: 29/1 Tauelsyzdyk Street, Hotel "Diplomat", Baiterek Hall

Guest Speaker:

**Dewayne Matthews**, Vice President for Policy and Strategy, Lumina Foundation, USA:  
*Regulation versus Institutional Autonomy: Is Transparency a Third Way for Higher Education?*

## Wednesday, June 17<sup>th</sup>

Departure of participants or optional tourist programme

# IREG/International Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence

IREG-International Observatory on Academic Ranking and Excellence was created by the International Ranking Expert Group (IREG) in Warsaw Poland in April, 2008.

The idea to continue the work of IREG in a more structured format was initially discussed during IREG-3 Conference in Shanghai, 2007. It received support from participants representing major national and international academic rankings, and leading analysts.

The Observatory represents a formula for establishing academic ranking as a credible instrument of qualitative performance for higher education at the institutional and program levels.

The Observatory will review the conduct of "academic ranking" and expressions of "academic excellence" for the benefit of higher education, its stake-holders and the general public by way of:

- improving the standards, theory and practice in line with the Berlin Principles on Ranking of Higher Education Institutions;
- initiating research and training related to ranking excellence;
- analyzing the impact of ranking on access, recruitment and practices;
- analyzing the role of ranking on institutional behavior;
- enhancing public awareness and understanding of academic work.

The Observatory will review and assess selected rankings, based on methodological criteria and deontological standards of the Berlin Principles by treefold approach:

- accountability and transparency (what gets measured);
- quality measurement issues (how to measure it); and
- universities, competitiveness and the market (how data gets portrayed and used).

The legal location of the IREG-Observatory is Warsaw, Poland, and secretarial assistance will be provided by the Perspektywy Education Foundation.

## Executive Committee

### Chairman:

**Jan Sadlak**, Director UNESCO-CEPES, Bucharest, Romania

### Vice-chairmen:

**Gero Federkeil**, Manager in Charge of Rankings, CHE-Centre for Educational Development, Gütersloh, Germany

**Liu Nian Cai**, Director, Center for World-Class Universities, Jiao Tong University, Shanghai, China

**Waldemar Siwiński**, President, Perspektywy Education Foundation, Warsaw, Poland

**Alex Usher**, Vice-President, Educational Policy Institute, Toronto, Canada.

### Members:

**Tom Parker**, Institute for Higher Education Policy Washington, DC, USA, *Ex-officio Member of the Executive Committee*

**Sholpan Kalanova**, President of the Independent Kazakhstan Quality Assurance Agency in Education (IQAA.KZ), Astana, Kazakhstan

**Paul Serban Agachi**, President of the Academic Council, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

**Ferdinand Devinsky**, President, Slovak Academic Ranking and Rating Agency (ARRA), Bratislava, Slovak Republic

**David Jobbins**, London, UK

**Marko Marhl**, Vice-Rector for International Affairs, University of Maribor, Slovenia

**Robert J. Morse**, Director of Data Research, U.S. News & World Report, Washington, DC, USA

**Mihailo Zgurovsky**, Rector, National Technical University, Kiev, Ukraine.

## Inaugural IREG Observatory Executive Committee meeting Warsaw, April 2008

*Standing, left to right:*

Marko Marhl, Paul Serban Agachi, Tom Parker,  
Igor Ostrovski (on behalf of Ferdinand Devinsky),  
Sholpan M. Kalanova, Mihailo Zgurovsky

*Sitting, left to right:*

Alex Usher, Gero Federkeil,  
Jan Sadlak, Liu Nian Cai, Waldemar Siwiński



# BERLIN PRINCIPLES

## ON RANKING OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Rankings and league tables of higher education institutions (HEIs) and programs are a global phenomenon. They serve many purposes: they respond to demands from consumers for easily interpretable information on the standing of higher education institutions; they stimulate competition among them; they provide some of the rationale for allocation of funds; and they help differentiate among different types of institutions and different programs and disciplines. In addition, when correctly understood and interpreted, they contribute to the definition of "quality" of higher education institutions within a particular country, complementing the rigorous work conducted in the context of quality assessment and review performed by public and independent accrediting agencies. This is why rankings of HEIs have become part of the framework of national accountability and quality assurance processes, and why more nations are likely to see the development of rankings in the future. Given this trend, it is important that those producing rankings and league tables hold themselves accountable for quality in their own data collection, methodology, and dissemination.

In view of the above, the International Ranking Expert Group (IREG) was founded in 2004 by the UNESCO European Centre for Higher Education (UNESCO-CEPES) in Bucharest and the Institute for Higher Education Policy in Washington, DC. It is upon this initiative that IREG's second meeting (Berlin, 18 to 20 May, 2006) has been convened to consider a set of principles of quality and good practice in HEI rankings - **the Berlin Principles on Ranking of Higher Education Institutions**.

It is expected that this initiative has set a framework for the elaboration and dissemination of rankings - whether they are national, regional, or global in scope - that ultimately will lead to a system of continuous improvement and refinement of the methodologies used to conduct these rankings. Given the heterogeneity of methodologies of rankings, these principles for good ranking practice will be useful for the improvement and evaluation of ranking. **Rankings and league tables should:**

### A) Purposes and Goals of Rankings

1. *Be one of a number of diverse approaches to the assessment of higher education inputs, processes, and outputs.* Rankings can provide comparative information and improved understanding of higher education, but should not be the main method for assessing what higher education is and does. Rankings provide a market-based perspective that can complement the work of government, accrediting authorities, and independent review agencies.
2. *Be clear about their purpose and their target groups.* Rankings have to be designed with due regard to their purpose. Indicators designed to meet a particular objective or to inform one target group may not be adequate for different purposes or target groups.
3. *Recognize the diversity of institutions and take the different missions and goals of institutions into account.* Quality measures for research-oriented institutions, for example, are quite different from those that are appropriate for institutions that provide broad access to underserved communities. Institutions that are being ranked and the experts that inform the ranking process should be consulted often.
4. *Provide clarity about the range of information sources for rankings and the messages each source generates.* The relevance of ranking results depends on the audiences receiving the information and the sources of that information (such as databases, students, professors, employers). Good practice would be to combine the different perspectives provided by those sources in order to get a more complete view of each higher education institution included in the ranking.

5. *Specify the linguistic, cultural, economic, and historical contexts of the educational systems being ranked.* International rankings in particular should be aware of possible biases and be precise about their objective. Not all nations or systems share the same values and beliefs about what constitutes "quality" in tertiary institutions, and ranking systems should not be devised to force such comparisons.

### B) Design and Weighting of Indicators

6. *Be transparent regarding the methodology used for creating the rankings.* The choice of methods used to prepare rankings should be clear and unambiguous. This transparency should include the calculation of indicators as well as the origin of data.
7. *Choose indicators according to their relevance and validity.* The choice of data should be grounded in recognition of the ability of each measure to represent quality and academic and institutional strengths, and not availability of data. Be clear about why measures were included and what they are meant to represent.
8. *Measure outcomes in preference to inputs whenever possible.* Data on inputs are relevant as they reflect the general condition of a given establishment and are more frequently available. Measures of outcomes provide a more accurate assessment of the standing and/or quality of a given institution or program, and compilers of rankings should ensure that an appropriate balance is achieved.

9. *Make the weights assigned to different indicators (if used) prominent and limit changes to them.* Changes in weights make it difficult for consumers to discern whether an institution's or program's status changed in the rankings due to an inherent difference or due to a methodological change.

#### C) Collection and Processing of Data

10. *Pay due attention to ethical standards and the good practice recommendations articulated in these Principles.* In order to assure the credibility of each ranking, those responsible for collecting and using data and undertaking on-site visits should be as objective and impartial as possible.
11. *Use audited and verifiable data whenever possible.* Such data have several advantages, including the fact that they have been accepted by institutions and that they are comparable and compatible across institutions.
12. *Include data that are collected with proper procedures for scientific data collection.* Data collected from an unrepresentative or skewed subset of students, faculty, or other parties may not accurately represent an institution or program and should be excluded.
13. *Apply measures of quality assurance to ranking processes themselves.* These processes should take note of the expertise that is being applied to evaluate institutions and use this knowledge to evaluate the ranking itself. Rankings should be learning systems continuously utilizing this expertise to develop methodology.
14. *Apply organizational measures that enhance the credibility of rankings.* These measures could include advisory or even supervisory bodies, preferably with some international participation.

#### D) Presentation of Ranking Results

15. *Provide consumers with a clear understanding of all of the factors used to develop a ranking, and offer them a choice in how rankings are displayed.* This way, the users of rankings would have a better understanding of the indicators that are used to rank institutions or programs. In addition, they should have some opportunity to make their own decisions about how these indicators should be weighted.
16. *Be compiled in a way that eliminates or reduces errors in original data, and be organized and published in a way that errors and faults can be corrected.* Institutions and the public should be informed about errors that have occurred.

Berlin, 20 May 2006



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#### Conference secretariat:

**Perspektywy Education Foundation** ([www.perspektywy.org](http://www.perspektywy.org)) is an independent, non profit organization established to advance and support higher education in Poland and abroad. The Foundation in cooperation with the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland runs a multi-year program *Study in Poland* promoting Polish universities abroad. The "Perspektywy" Education Foundation plays an important role on the domestic scene actively promoting quality of education. It organizes public debates and seminars on education and does a yearly national ranking of universities, and a ranking of best secondary schools in the country. It also organizes conferences and seminars on higher education. "Perspektywy" Education Foundation is acting as Secretariat of IREG International Observatory.

**Perspektywy**



## Welcome to Astana!

Since acquiring the status of the capital of Kazakhstan in 1997 the Astana (population 700.000) face has changed dramatically. The architects and builders working in the capital create wonderful architectural ensembles, harmoniously combining modern design with oriental color.

The Baiterek Tower has become the city's symbol and its visiting card. The height of the construction is 105 meters. At the mark of 97 meters there is an observation deck providing a bird's eye view of the city. The figure of 97 was not chosen at random. It symbolizes the year of moving the capital from Almaty to Astana. The Baiterek Tower accommodates an art gallery, a large aquarium and a restaurant.

Astana is turning into one of the main business centers. All governmental

organizations, diplomatic missions of 44 countries and 113 joint ventures and foreign businesses are located there.

The city has an opera and ballet theater, a drama theater and a variety of museums. Monuments of Astana are a linking element between the new capital and its history held in esteem by all peoples of Kazakhstan.

Currently many administrative buildings, business and entertainment centers of the capital of Kazakhstan are under construction. Another attraction of Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan, is the ethnopark "Map of Kazakhstan-Atameken" representing a unique outdoor museum. The map area of 1.7 hectares features cities and historical memorials of Kazakhstan. The climate of the region is continental with moderately hot summer and long hard winter.



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