

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND THE NORDIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ON COOPERATION IN EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

The Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation and the Nordic Council of Ministers, hereinafter referred to as the Parties,

recognizing the increasing role of education, research and innovation at the current stage of social and economic development of our countries, and the importance of a comprehensive approach to multilateral cooperation in this field during the period marked by dynamic expansion and advancement of scientific knowledge and by internationalisation of research and development,

acknowledging the successful cooperation and positive experiences gained between the Parties in the period of implementation of the existing Memorandum of understanding between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Nordic Council of Ministers from 25 August 1997, and through the implementation of previous projects and programmes,

hereby express their intention to provide a new impetus to multifaceted contacts in the field of education and research in the interests of sustainable social and economic development.

Targeting the above goals, when implementing cooperation in education and research the Parties will direct their efforts towards:

- efficient and practical application of experience gained through multilateral cooperation in the training of highly qualified experts, exchange of undergraduate and postgraduate students and university faculty, as well as joint research and promotion of innovations;
- enhancement of direct links between educational institutions, research organisations and companies, specialising in the introduction of innovative technologies, as well as on enhancing efficient cooperation in the interests of economic development of their countries.

It is also recognised that use should be made of the entire set of existing instruments to support the multilateral cooperation in education and research.

I. General provisions

1. This Memorandum will set up general conditions for multilateral cooperation in the sphere of education and research that the Parties intend to use as a framework to continue their cooperation.

2. The Parties intent to cooperate within specific projects of mutual interest and based on the international and European achievements in education and research. A special emphasis will be put to attract to such cooperation students, young faculty members and researchers.

3. The cooperation directions will be defined jointly in the course of negotiations. The Parties through mutual effort will try to establish long term and beneficial cooperation.

4. The Parties will strive to expand the circle of governmental and private partners participating in cooperation in the area of education and research in order to increase intellectual and financial resources made available for the implementation of joint projects.

5. The Parties will focus their efforts on cooperation in the priority areas of education and research listed in the clauses II and III to maximize their efficiency.

II. Education

1. The Parties will implement joint projects and programmes in education, targeting primarily in the following areas:

- reform of the educational system (management, funding and improving the quality of education), with regard to the aims of the Bologna process;
- implementation of cooperation programmes and projects in the area of vocational training;
- widening of access to education for people with special needs;
- development of the attitude of tolerance and preservation of cultural diversity, as well as the development of intercultural and inter-religious dialogue through education;
- promotion of the social integration of children from migrants families and forced migrants;
- implementation of modern information, communication and training technologies, particularly eLearning, in the field of education and personal development of children and adult education;
- educational statistics.

The Parties will also promote implementation of joint educational projects and programmes aiming at studying the languages, literature and culture of the Parties;

2. The Parties will promote strengthening of direct links between educational

institutions of their countries, as well as consolidation and dissemination of results achieved through joint efforts in the educational field, and to this end will undertake correspondence organisational measures;

3. In order to ensure a favourable environment for the development of long-term cooperation in the field of industries and innovation, the necessary measures will be undertaken to activate interaction in the area of technical and vocational training.

III. Research

1. The Parties will pursue cooperation in the scientific spheres as established by the national priorities of their countries, using the cooperation vehicles offered by the European and international programmes.

2. The Parties will assist research and development organisations in establishing links with enterprises and entities interested in implementing results of scientific research and development, with the purpose of creating new knowledge and transfer of know-how.

IV. Forms of cooperation

Cooperation under this Memorandum can take the following forms:

- assistance to joint programmes and projects in the field of education and science involving educational institutions and scientific organisations of the two Parties and joint research and development teams, to be provided within the existing national systems for promotion of international cooperation, including joint competitions initiated to select the best projects;
- participation of educational and research organisations and joint teams in European programmes in the interest of integration in the European research and educational environment;
- postgraduate student exchange within the framework of research and academic mobility programmes which are relevant to the implementation of joint projects and programmes;
- joint contests and quizzes on various topics and in different areas within relevant fields in education;
- jointly organised specialized scientific conferences and technical meetings in promising research areas;
- exchange of educational and research policy papers;
- support to participation of young faculty members and researchers in joint projects and programmes.

V. Implementation of the memorandum

In order to ensure the implementation of this Memorandum the Parties will create a joint working group which will be responsible for:

- discussion of the progress of cooperation in education and science;
- preparation and coordination of cooperation plans between the Parties;
- coordination of communication with national and multilateral programs for cooperation in education and research;
- preparation of documents for making decision on funding projects and programs;
- discussion of other issues pertaining to the implementation of this Memorandum.

VI. Funding

The funding of cooperation activities under this Memorandum will be provided through the existing mechanisms which the Russian Federation and the Nordic Council of Ministers currently employ to support international cooperation in education and research, subject to availability of funds.

VII. FINAL PROVISIONS

This Memorandum will be applied upon signature. This Memorandum automatically shall remain in force after the end of this period for successive periods of three years each, if there is none of the Parties upon not less than six months prior to the end of the period send advance notification in writing on its wish to terminate the Memorandum.

This Memorandum is not an international treaty and will not establish any rights or obligations binding under international law.

Signed in Saint-Petersburg on 29 September 2011 in two original copies in the English and Russian languages, both texts being equally authentic.

For the Ministry of
Education and Science of
the Russian Federation

For the Nordic Council of
Ministers

Deputy Minister of Education
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