
CONTRIBUTORS

Ali Ait Si Mhamed is an associate professor of the Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education. Dr. Ait Si Mhamed obtained a PhD in Comparative and International Education Finance from the State University of New York at Buffalo. Dr. Ait Si Mhamed served as a grant coordinator at D'Youville College; a research assistant at University at Buffalo; an assistant professor at Canisius College, Buffalo; and a consultant with the World Bank. His main areas of interest include higher education finance and accessibility, language policy, and internationalization of higher education. He has written about Kazakhstan and Central Asia, the Baltics, and Morocco. His recently published work includes an article about higher education in Morocco in the *Springer Encyclopedia of International Higher Education Institution and Systems* and a chapter on Latvia in *25 Years of Transformations of Higher Education Systems in Post-Soviet Countries*. He is leading a ministerial-funded project on higher education finance in Kazakhstan.

Darkhan Bilyalov is Rector of Abai National Pedagogical University, recognized as the best pedagogical University in the Commonwealth of Independent States. Before assuming the position of rector, Bilyalov taught at Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education. He obtained his PhD in Higher Education from Pennsylvania State University and his Masters of Science in Higher Education from Northwestern University. He has worked to improve various aspects of Kazakhstani education for more than fifteen years. He has taken an active part in multiple initiatives and projects funded by the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, the European Commission, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the Government of Kazakhstan. Dr. Bilyalov has written extensively on Kazakhstan and is expanding his publications to other post-Soviet countries. He is currently implementing a three-year inquiry into faculty service responsibilities in Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Russia. He

acts as a principal investigator on several projects, including nationwide survey research on academics as part of an international Academic Profession in the Knowledge Society project. Dr. Bilyalov's research interests in higher education include the issues of governance, internationalization, various aspects related to the academic profession, organizational change, and world-class universities.

Peter D. Eckel is Senior Fellow and Director of Leadership Programs at the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education. For the past seven years he has been one of the managing principals on a collaboration with Nazarbayev University and the University of Cambridge working to advance University reform in Kazakhstan. This book is an outgrowth of that work. His most recent book, *Practical Wisdom: Thinking Differently about College and University Governance*, focuses on improving University governance. He coedited *Privatizing the Public University* with Chris Mophew and edited *The Shifting Frontiers of Academic Decision Making*. Beyond Kazakhstan, he has served as a consultant to the World Bank in Moldova and he has worked on strengthening University management and governance in a range of countries including most recently in India, Malaysia, UAE, Canada, and the United Kingdom. He has been a fellow at the Centre for Higher Education Transformation in South Africa. He is leading the University of Pennsylvania's effort to offer a new online Executive Master's Degree in Global University Management. Previously, he was the vice president for programs and research at the Association of Governing Boards (AGB). Prior to that position, he worked for sixteen years at the American Council on Education (ACE), finishing his tenure as director of the Center for Effective Leadership. He serves on the board at the University of La Verne in California.

Serik Ivatov recently completed his studies as a doctoral student at Nazarbayev University's Graduate School of Education pursuing a PhD in education. His research and professional interests are in policy analysis and implementation. Prior to his studies at Nazarbayev University, Serik worked as an English instructor in a University setting in Kazakhstan. He has a BA in translation and interpretation and an MA in foreign languages from M. Kozybayev North Kazakhstan State University. For the past few years, as a graduate research assistant, he has participated in government-funded projects on student financial aid in higher education and per capita funding in secondary education in the Kazakhstani context.

Rita Kaša is Assistant Professor at Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education. She holds a PhD in Comparative Education from the State University of New York in Buffalo and an MA and BA in Political Science from the University of Latvia. Her research interests concern educational policy, finance, and governance with specific focus on student financial assistance policies in the circumstances of intensifying transnationalism, and equity and equality in educational access. As a Fulbright scholar to the United States, Rita has worked for the International Comparative Higher Education Finance and Accessibility Project, chaired by Dr.

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Zumrad Kataeva is an assistant professor at the Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education, Kazakhstan. She holds a PhD in Studies in Higher Education from the University of Kentucky. Prior to her current appointment, she worked at the Institute of Education of the National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia, where she was a part of the international project, “25 Years of Transformations of Higher Education in Post-Soviet Countries.” Kataeva is an alumnus of the Doctoral Fellowship Program of the Open Society Foundation and also served as a consultant for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), UNICEF, and the World Bank. Her research interest is in comparative and international higher education, particularly focusing on the academic profession and faculty life, gender, and higher education, and the impact of globalization on higher education in Central Asia and other post-Soviet countries. She has a track record of publishing in leading journals and books on higher education in Central Asia and other post-Soviet states.

Merrey Mussabayeva is a research assistant at Nazarbayev University. She completed her master’s degree in Education Leadership at the University of Manchester and currently is a PhD candidate at Nazarbayev University. Merrey’s research interests include higher education governance, internationalization, and issues related to higher education leadership and management. She wrote several papers on the effect of the Bologna process on the higher education of Kazakhstan as well as the development of inclusive education in Kazakhstan. Merrey is involved in several local and international research projects such as “Examining Leadership and Governance Issues in the Higher Education Sector of Kazakhstan,” “International Faculty Perceptions, Conceptualizations, and Enactment of Institutional Service and Outreach in six Asian Universities with World-Class Aspirations,” “The Role of Faculty Members in Shared Governance at the Universities of Kazakhstan,” and “Academic Profession in Knowledge-based Society (Kazakhstan).”

Leah Shapiro was a master’s student at the University of Pennsylvania’s Graduate School of Education pursuing an MEd in international educational development. Her research and professional interests are in the internationalization of higher education, with a focus on former Soviet countries. Prior to beginning her studies at the University of Pennsylvania, Leah worked with higher education and youth development programs in the United States, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and Georgia. She has a BS in neurobiology and Russian with a minor in global health from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. As an undergraduate student, Leah studied abroad in Russia, Kazakhstan, and Turkey.

