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## ANALYZING THE PATHWAYS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN CHINA AND UZBEKISTAN IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The article deals with the writing of central Asia as an important bridge for China to unleash its influence on the West and to realize connectivity with European countries. Developing cooperation and maintaining close contact with Central Asia is one of the issues that China needs to address urgently. Uzbekistan is an important country in Central Asia. China is Uzbekistan's largest trading partner, and the enhancement of cooperation between China and Uzbekistan is the result of mutual choices. Uzbekistan is carrying out a new round of education reform, it is of great practical significance to seize the opportunity to expand China-Uzbekistan higher educational cooperation. This paper will focus on the theme of higher education cooperation, discuss the current situation of higher education in Uzbekistan, and through the comparative analysis of Uzbekistan's higher education cooperation with Russia, the United States, the European Union and Turkey, analyzes the ways of China-Uzbekistan higher educational cooperation at the macro and micro levels, including the establishment of private universities and university branch campuses.

**Key words:** Uzbekistan, China-Uzbekistan cooperation, higher education cooperations.

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### Қытай мен Өзбекстан арасындағы жоғары білім саласындағы ынтымақтастықты талдау жолдары

Мақалада Орталық Азия Қытай үшін батысқа әсерін ашуға және Еуропа елдерімен байланысты жүзеге асыруға мүмкіндік беретін маңызды көпір болып табылады. Ынтымақтастықты дамыту және Орталық Азиямен тығыз байланыста болу-Қытайдың ең маңызды қаралуы керек мәселелердің бірі. Өзбекстан Орталық Азиядағы маңызды ел болып табылады. Қытай Өзбекстанның ең ірі сауда серіктесі болып табылады және Қытай мен Өзбекстан арасындағы ынтымақтастықтың кеңеюі екі жақты таңдаудың нәтижесі болып табылады. Өзбекстанда білім беру реформасының жаңа кезеңі жүргізілуде, жоғары білім беру саласындағы Қытай-Өзбекстан ынтымақтастығын кеңейту мүмкіндігін пайдаланудың практикалық маңызы зор. Бұл мақалада жоғары білім саласындағы ынтымақтастық тақырыбына, Өзбекстандағы жоғары білім саласындағы ағымдағы жағдайды талқылауға, сондай-ақ Өзбекстанның Ресей, АҚШ, Еуропалық Одақ және Түркиямен жоғары білім саласындағы ынтымақтастығын салыстырмалы түрде талқылайды. Жеке университеттер мен университеттік кампус филиалдарын құруды қоса алғанда, макро және микро деңгейлердегі Қытай мен Өзбекстанның жоғары білім саласындағы ынтымақтастығына анализ жасау.

**Түйін сөздер:** Өзбекстан, Қытай-Өзбекстан ынтымақтастығы, жоғары білім саласындағы ынтымақтастық.

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### **Анализ направлений сотрудничества между Китаем и Узбекистаном в сфере высшего образования**

В статье рассматривается важная роль Центральной Азии как стратегического моста для Китая, который стремится расширить свое влияние на Запад и укрепить связи с европейскими странами. Центральная Азия, и особенно Узбекистан, играет ключевую роль в этих процессах. Узбекистан, являясь важным партнером Китая в регионе, проводит реформы в системе образования, что создает благоприятные условия для расширения китайско-узбекского сотрудничества в сфере высшего образования. В статье основное внимание уделяется анализу текущего состояния высшего образования в Узбекистане и возможностям для его дальнейшего развития через сотрудничество с Китаем. В рамках исследования также проводится сравнительный анализ сотрудничества Узбекистана с Россией, США, Европейским Союзом и Турцией, что позволяет более глубоко понять перспективы взаимодействия с Китаем. Особое внимание уделяется сотрудничеству на макро- и микроуровнях, включая создание частных университетов и филиалов китайских университетов в Узбекистане.

**Ключевые слова:** Узбекистан, китайско-узбекское сотрудничество, сотрудничество в сфере высшего образования.

#### **Introduction**

Uzbekistan is located in Central Asia, and as an important part of the five Central Asian countries, it is not only a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, but also an important node in the core area of the Silk Road Economic Belt initiative. As the world's second-largest economy, how China can utilize the Silk Road Economic Belt as a top-level cooperation initiative to inject new impetus into the economic and social development of both China and the participating countries has become an important issue for the China's leadership. Therefore, it has become an unavoidable option to start all-round cooperation with Uzbekistan, one of the participating countries, and enhance China's influence in the country. Education plays a "fundamental", "overall" and "pioneering" role in the Belt and Road Initiative. (Liu Baocun, 2015)

Consequently, the study of China-Uzbekistan higher educational cooperation is of great significance to the all-round development of cooperation between China and Uzbekistan.

#### **Scientific research methodology**

The authors of this article use the literature analysis methodology, such as by analyzing and organizing the relevant journals, web sites, official

websites, laws, outlines, monographs and other literature on the cooperation between China and Uzbekistan in higher education, analyzing the importance of educational cooperation between China and Uzbekistan, and summarizing the current status of the development of education in Uzbekistan and the main problems that exist in the current development of education in Uzbekistan. For example, the first three parts of the article.

In addition, the method of comparative analysis was used, in which the methods of educational cooperation between extra-territorial countries and organizations and Uzbekistan were analyzed before exploring the ways of educational cooperation between China and Uzbekistan. For example, Uzbekistan's model of educational cooperation with Russia, the United States, the European Union, Turkey and other countries. China can learn from the experience and lessons learned from them, so that China-Uzbekistan educational cooperation can take less detours and better and faster push the educational cooperation between the two countries to a higher and deeper level. For example, the fourth and fifth parts of the article analyze the paths of Sino-Ukrainian cooperation in higher education from the macro and micro levels, including the construction of private colleges and universities, the establishment of branch campuses of colleges and universities, and so on.

### **Results and discussion. Significance of higher educational cooperation between China and Uzbekistan**

Education, as the foundation of a country, has a long-term and even lifelong impact on the educated, and the degree of a country's educational development is directly related to the country's comprehensive strength. Higher education is an important part of the modern national education system, and it produces higher-level talents for the country than compulsory education and basic education. These higher-level talents usually master more social resources and have a more important influence on the future development direction of the country. As the trend of globalization of higher education grows, the importance of cooperation in higher education between countries is becoming more and more important.

There are three significant reasons for carrying out higher educational cooperation between China and Uzbekistan: First, higher educational cooperation between China and Uzbekistan is conducive to promoting the construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt. Higher educational cooperation is an important aspect of humanistic exchanges, and humanistic exchanges are the social foundation for the construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt, and an important carrier to build people-to-people contacts. It will also clear the obstacles for the implementation of the Silk Road Economic Belt initiative, continue to promote the economic and cultural development of China's western provinces, and promote the deepening of the reform of these provinces.

Second, the higher educational cooperation between China and Uzbekistan can combat the spread of terrorist forces. For a long time, the "three forces" entrenched in Central Asia have been in contact with some extremists in China, and the western region of China has been deeply victimized by them. China-Uzbekistan higher educational cooperation can deepen the friendship between the people of China and Uzbekistan, and curb the development of terrorist forces, thus contributing to the maintenance of long-term peace and security in the western region of China.

The last, China-Uzbekistan higher educational cooperation can help show the real situation of China. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Western forces have spared no effort to attack China by public opinion in the international community. Higher educational cooperation can show the real image of China to the government and people of

Uzbekistan, and provides a new growth point for further all-round communications and cooperation between China and Uzbekistan in the future.

### **The current situation and main problems of the higher educational development in Uzbekistan**

In 2004, the promulgation of ON THE STATE NATIONWIDE PROGRAM FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION FOR 2004-2009 led to significant changes in the educational system of Uzbekistan. As of January 2021, there were three national education authorities concerned in Uzbekistan: The Ministry of Preschool Education, the Ministry of National Education (responsible for primary and secondary education) and the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education (responsible for specialized secondary and higher education and training). Over the years, Uzbekistan has vigorously pursued educational reforms, including the adjustment of compulsory education from nine years to eleven years, the shortening of primary and secondary education from 12 to 11 years, and the introduction of branch campuses of foreign universities and colleges. As of February 17, 2022, there are 105 public universities, 30 foreign universities and branch campuses, and 24 private universities in Uzbekistan. (List of universities in Uzbekistan (2022-02-17) (2022-09-09)). In Uzbekistan's public schools, instruction is conducted in seven languages: Uzbek, Russian, Karakalpak, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Tajik, and Turkmen. (Wang Xi, 2020). With the improvement and reform of Uzbekistan's education system, significant changes have taken place in the country's foreign language teaching policy. ON MEASURES TO FURTHER IMPROVE THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING SYSTEM, promulgated in 2012, established that the learning of foreign languages would be carried out at different stages throughout the country, determined the diversification of the route of development of foreign language education, in which Chinese is one of the optional languages. Educational reform in Uzbekistan, especially the inclusion of Chinese in foreign language teaching, makes it possible for China-Uzbekistan higher educational cooperation.

The following data are used to analyze the problems of higher educational development in Uzbekistan: the proportion of urban population in the total population of Uzbekistan has been maintained at around 50% since 2009 until 2021 (World bank [2022-07-16]); at the same time, the proportion of the population aged 0-14 years in the total popula-

tion of Uzbekistan has been maintained at around 29% since 2016 until 2021 (World bank[2022-8-3]). According to this data, Uzbekistan has a huge number of populations in educational age, and the level of urbanization in Uzbekistan is average, about half of the population is distributed in rural areas. This also means that Uzbekistan will have a continuous demand for the quantity and quality of higher education in the present and in the coming years. However, the geographical distribution of higher education resources in Uzbekistan is uneven, with high quality higher education resources concentrated in the major cities. Although the Government has responded to this problem by building a number of new higher education establishments in the regions, this regional imbalance persists.

At the same time, the outbreak of the novel coronavirus has put a great deal of pressure on Uzbekistan's economy, and employment opportunities have been reduced as a result of the outbreak. Although Uzbek government has an emergency economic reserve, it is relatively small, making it difficult for the Government to intervene strongly in the country's economic situation. At this time, the role of universities should be actively utilized to recruit young people with good academic performance, which on the one hand will reduce the number of idle people and contribute to the social stability of Uzbekistan, and on the other hand will cultivate highly educated people for Uzbekistan, which is of positive significance for the economic recovery of Uzbekistan in the post-pandemic era.

Furthermore, there is a gender imbalance in the educational system of Uzbekistan. As a result of traditional concepts and the specialties offered at the secondary educational stage, the number of women declines at the secondary educational stage, which leads directly to a decline in the number of women at the higher educational stage. In addition, at the higher educational stage in Uzbekistan, scholarships are often awarded to students who have performed military service, and the majority of students who have performed military service are men. (Ma Jing, 2012) The combination of these factors has led to a serious imbalance in the gender ratio at the higher educational stage.

Additionally, affected by the novel coronavirus, Uzbekistan's public education expenditure as a percentage of government expenditure in 2020 has declined significantly, from 25.6% in 2019 to 20.5% in 2020(World bank[2022-07-16]), and also in 2020, Uzbekistan's GNI has shown a small decline 1.55%(World bank[2022-07-16]) compared to 2019, the total amount of expenditure on educa-

tion is quite limited, and out of this, the educational funds flowing to universities can only account for a relatively small part.

In Uzbekistan's higher education system, public universities in Uzbekistan are facing problems such as school corruption, inefficient use of educational funds, aging school facilities, and aging highly educated teaching staff. In addition, the contribution of education to the economy in Uzbekistan is low, the quality of human resources in educational institutions is relatively low (Li Yuyu, 2020) the talents these institutions cultivate cannot meet the needs of its domestic market, and the content of highly educated talents in educational and scientific institutions is low. These problems create certain difficulties for the development of higher education in Uzbekistan.

However, according to the latest education law of Uzbekistan, the Uzbekistan government allows the establishment of private universities. At the same time, the government of Uzbekistan has established a special education fund for sending teachers to developed countries for training and inviting foreign experts to teach in Uzbekistan. As for high-level interactions between China and Uzbekistan on higher educational cooperation, the two sides have signed a number of "joint statements", such as the Joint Statement of the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Uzbekistan on Further Deepening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership signed in 2017. The Minister of Education of Uzbekistan has also clearly expressed his wish to develop long-term cooperation with China in the field of education. This has opened the door for higher educational cooperation between China and Uzbekistan at the official level, and the future of cooperation between China and Uzbekistan in the field of higher education is bright.

### **Overview of international higher educational cooperation of Uzbekistan**

With the economic development of the Central Asian region and changes of the world situation, the Central Asian region's position in the world pattern is becoming more and more prominent, and many extra-territorial countries have carried out higher educational cooperation with Central Asian countries. "History is a mirror of the past", before analyzing the ways in which China and Uzbekistan can cooperate in the field of higher education, it is particularly important to analyze the ways in which extra-territorial countries and organizations are cooperating with Uzbekistan in the field of higher education, so that China can learn

from their experiences, it can also avoid detours in China-Uzbekistan higher educational cooperation, and accelerate the promotion of cooperation in the construction of the community of higher education along the Silk Road Economic Belt.

Constrained by its educational level, Uzbekistan is not a competitive country in the international higher educational field, therefore Uzbekistan participates in the higher educational cooperation programs of other countries as a means of promoting the reform and development of higher education in the country.

### **I. Higher educational cooperation between Russia and Uzbekistan**

Russia offers a large number of scholarships every year to attract students from Central Asia, and the number of students studying in Russia is much higher than in China and the United States, with students from Central Asian countries preferring to study in Russia. (Zhu Yongbiao, Wei Lijun, 2019) Russia-Uzbekistan higher educational cooperation includes the projects and programs of Rossotrudnichestvo in Uzbekistan, the activities of Russian university branch campuses, the establishment of new branch campuses, joint faculties and higher educational programs, systematic work to popularize the Russian language, and training and retraining programs for secondary school teachers. Today, Uzbekistan is the CIS country with the largest number of students in Russian universities, more than 25,000 students of Uzbek nationality are studying in Russia, and the quota for admission of Uzbek applicants to Russian universities has increased. (Sayfullovna M L, Tulkunovna T N, Yashnarovna I M., 2020)

In addition, higher educational cooperation between Russia and Uzbekistan is reflected in the special status of the Russian language in the Uzbek universities system, with Uzbekistan even inviting Russian experts to revise Russian curricula and textbooks and test the standards of Russian language teachers. (Shneider V. M., 2019) At the same time, the Russian government has signed a series of documented agreements with the Uzbek government, laying the foundation for the establishment of its universities branch campuses in Uzbekistan. In 2020, universities from Russia have nine branch campuses in Tashkent city, Tashkent and Samarkand oblasts of Uzbekistan, with almost 3,000 students. The diplomas granted to graduates of these universities, namely the Plekhanov Russian University of Economics, Moscow State University, Gubkin Russian State University of Oil and Gas,

the National University of Science and Technology, National Research Nuclear University and others, are valid both in Uzbekistan and in Russia. (Hanwen Y, 2022)

### **II. The United States' higher educational export to Uzbekistan**

The United States is engaged in a great deal of cooperation with Uzbekistan. For example, based on the funding of the U.S. Embassy in Uzbekistan, the ACCESS program, which provides free intensive English language training courses for outstanding students in intermediate junior colleges. (Khodzhanizayov S U., 2012) In addition, there are programs such as the Fulbright Program (which includes inviting experienced Uzbek scholars to the United States to teach and providing opportunities for Uzbek graduate students and young professionals to study and obtain master's degrees in the United States) and the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program (designed to select mid-level officials with strong academic records and outstanding leadership skills through a rigorous review and examination process for one year of professionally relevant study, research, and study tours in the United States), (Zhang Xiaobao, 2020) and so on. The establishment of these programs contributed to mutual understanding between Uzbekistan and the U.S., as well as to the identification of Uzbekistanis with American values.

### **III. European Union's assistance to Uzbekistan in the field of higher education**

International cooperation between Uzbekistan and the European Union in higher education has its own value. (Uralov O S. 2020) In 1994, the European Union launched the TEMPUS program for Uzbekistan, the primary goal is to promote the modernization of higher education in the neighboring partner countries, and improvement the quality of higher education. (Liu Jiye, 2010) During the 20-year period from 1994 to 2013, the TEMPUS Program provided 81 higher education assistance projects in Uzbekistan, ranking first in the number of projects provided by the European Union to the five Central Asian countries (Li Dan, 2017), which strongly contributed to the reform of Uzbekistan's education system and the continuous modernization of higher education in Uzbekistan. In 2014, the European Union launched the Erasmus+ program, which is designed to be implemented for a period of seven years (2014-2020), emphasizing

the development of international perspectives and awareness of internationalization among educators and students, the building of strategic partnerships, and policy reforms in the field of higher education (Li Qian, 2021). The Uzbek universities are actively participating in all fields of the European Union Erasmus+ program, and on this occasion the higher education in Uzbekistan has been significantly developed.

#### **IV. Higher educational cooperation between Turkey and Uzbekistan**

Turkey has always had its own demands on Central Asia in terms of its own interests, as a result of which it has carried out a series of explicit and implicit activities towards the Central Asian countries.

In view of the common Islamic background of the two sides, Turkey provided assistance for the construction of mosques in Central Asia. At the same time, Turkey has launched the “Gülen Movement” and established “Gülen schools” in Central Asia, attracting local students with low tuition fees, educating them, promoting Turkish-style Islamic culture through these methods, and taking advantage of the opportunity to expand its influence. An important aim of the Gülen school curriculum was to spread Turkish culture and cultivate a Turkish identity among the Central Asian countries. (Li Guannan, 2019) Although the Gülen movement was eventually destroyed due to political struggles in Turkey, its impact is worth pondering. In addition, in 1992, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Turkish company Silm approved a program of cooperation in the field of education for the years 1992-2000. (Khojanazarovich I B., 2021) Uzbekistan and Turkey have also jointly established a number of cultural centers in Uzbekistan and Turkey. (Rajabov Q, Bekmuratov X., 2017)

In 2009, the Summit of Turkic-speaking States decided to establish the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking States on the basis of the previous model of cooperation, with priority given to the field of humanistic cooperation: the preparation of the history textbook “General History of the Turkic World”, the establishment of the Turkic Academy, the creation of the Union of Universities of Turkic-speaking Countries, and the launch of the Joint Tourism Project “The Modern Silk Road.” (Ma Qiang., 2019) With the help of this project, Turkey has been able to increase its influence in Central Asia to a relatively significant extent.

#### **V. Current higher educational cooperation between China and Uzbekistan**

Currently, China and Uzbekistan have carried out a certain scale of cooperation in the field of higher education: in 1993, China and Uzbekistan signed an agreement on mutual recognition of academic degrees of higher education and scientific research institutions, and in December 2013, the University of World Economy and Diplomacy of Uzbekistan set up the “China Pavilion”, which is the first China Pavilion in Central Asia. In the same year, Shanghai University established the Center for Uzbek Studies and Educational Exchanges, and in 2014, Tashkent State University of Oriental Studies established the Department of Sinology, the first department of Sinology established in a university in Central Asia. (Ma Jianmin, 2021)

In the aspect of “go global” of Chinese education, China has established two Confucius Institutes in Uzbekistan, namely Tashkent Confucius Institute and Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages Confucius Institute. In 2017, China and Uzbekistan signed the Joint Statement of the People’s Republic of China and the Republic of Uzbekistan on Further Deepening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, which states, “The two sides will continue to expand cooperation in the fields of culture, education, science, sports, and tourism, strengthen friendly exchanges among the news media, academic institutions, civil friendship organizations, and performing arts groups, and jointly run the Confucius Institute in Uzbekistan.” (Joint Statement between the People’s Republic of China and the Republic of Uzbekistan on Further Deepening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership [N]. People’s Daily, 2017-05-13(3).

At the same time, the cooperation between Chinese and Uzbek universities has also made initial progress, such as: Beijing Second Institute of Foreign Languages participated in the establishment of the “Silk Road” International University of Tourism and Cultural Heritage in Uzbekistan (Beijing International Studies University (2020-02-27). and its professors have also served as special advisors to the president of the university; Shanghai University and the University of World Economy and Diplomacy of Uzbekistan cooperated to establish the Shanghai University International Business College in the capital city of Tashkent, Uzbekistan. (Shanghai University, (2017-09-30) [2022-7-17]).

In addition, the establishment of university alliance has become an important way of China-

Uzbekistan higher educational cooperation, such as: “China-Central Asian Countries University Alliance”, “University Alliance of the Silk Road”, “Teacher Education Union” etc. Based on the framework of the Belt and Road Education Community, the mutual sending of international exchange students between China and Uzbekistan has begun to take shape. By the end of July 2019, there were 6500 Uzbek students studying in Chinese universities (Ministry of Commerce of the People’s Republic of China, (2019-11-01) and China-Uzbekistan higher educational cooperation is advancing steadily. At the same time, with the help of the university alliance, a series of exchange activity programs have been carried out, such as the Silk Road Soaring Young Leaders Program, Silk Road Robotics Creative Competition and so on.

### **Analyzing the future ways of higher educational cooperation between China and Uzbekistan**

Although China has made some progress on higher educational cooperation with Uzbekistan, there are still obvious shortcomings compared with other extra-territorial countries: Russia has an inherent political and cultural advantage in higher educational cooperation with Uzbekistan; the United States has the political advantage of mastering Internet resources and a large number of non-governmental organizations; Turkey has the advantage of common Islamic culture and history; and the European Union has the advantage of advanced education. Compared with the above-mentioned countries, China’s advantages lie in its economic and geographic advantages. Based on the problems of higher education in Uzbekistan and the current situation of China-Uzbekistan higher educational cooperation, we have analyzed the ways of further higher educational cooperation between China and Uzbekistan.

#### **I. National level**

1. The country should focus on improving the level of top-level higher educational cooperation design between China and Uzbekistan, extensively learn the experience from the higher educational cooperation of various countries, open up all-round, multi-level and wide-field cooperation methods, and formulate new cooperation policies.

In the field of higher educational cooperation, the country’s perspective and policy design will have a direct impact on the level of higher educational

cooperation between the two sides. Based on the educational integration framework of the Silk Road Economic Belt, the country should launch all-round, multi-level and wide-field consultations with the Uzbek government on higher educational cooperation, constantly open up new ways of higher educational cooperation, and promulgate relevant policies to guide the Chinese cooperation entities, so as to ensure that China-Uzbekistan higher educational cooperation is steadily advancing and the quality of cooperation is constantly rising.

2. Increase the number of national scholarships and the number of their quotas, improve the quality of higher education cooperation and attract higher-level international exchange students to study in China.

The number of international exchange students is an important indicator of the process of higher educational cooperation, and increasing the number of scholarships and quotas is conducive to raising the number of international exchange students, which is one of the initiatives utilized by Russia. At the same time, the number of scholarships for highly educated international students should be continuously raised, and the number of high-level, highly educated educational cooperation programs should be increased. The 2022 National Educational Work Conference pointed out the need to accelerate the high-quality development of education and promote education modernization. China’s higher education is now facing a leap from quantity to quality, and likewise, in terms of higher education cooperation, quality has become another important indicator in addition to quantity. Setting the number of scholarships in segments is conducive to attracting international students with higher academic qualifications to China, leading to the improvement of higher education quality.

In addition, besides the explicit attribute of academic exchange, international exchange students also have the implicit attribute of cultural exchange. One of the implicit functions of attracting international students to China is to promote cultural exchanges between China and Uzbekistan, which is conducive to accelerating the realization of people-to-people contacts under the framework of the Silk Road Economic Belt.

3. Learn from the United States and Russia, and utilize the national power to establish and promote China’s media in Uzbekistan. Tell the China story well and enhance the international influence of China’s media.

The establishment of China’s media can enable Uzbekistan to receive China’s voice more

directly and tell China's story in Uzbek. China Global Television Network (CGTN), a subsidiary of China Media Group, has now built channels in many languages. China can continue to improve CGTN's Russian-language channel, promoting the channel in Uzbekistan by adding higher educational TV programs and broadcasting Chinese documentaries, thus increasing China's influence in Uzbekistan and benefiting China-Uzbekistan higher educational cooperation. In addition, when the time is appropriate, China can build a specialized Uzbek language channel for Uzbekistan to deepen the friendship between China and Uzbekistan. At the same time, China needs to realize that it is lagging far behind the United States and Russia in terms of media construction in Uzbekistan. What China needs to do now is to learn from the experience of the United States and Russia, and establish China's media in Uzbekistan to publicize China's relevant policies, so as to win more possibilities for China.

4. Widely establish non-governmental organizations in various fields.

Through the experience of the United States, we can find that non-governmental organizations have played a significant role in the implementation of American world policy. It is undeniable that the existence of non-governmental organizations is an important social force to deal with social problems such as environmental protection, education, health, etc., but these non-governmental organizations also have the "special mission" of "exporting" Western values. (Sun Fafeng, 2022). From this perspective, China should establish non-governmental organizations that do not contain too much ideology. Currently, China has established several non-governmental organizations, such as the China Association for Science and Technology, the China Education Development Foundation, the China Youth Development Foundation, the Chinese Young Volunteers Association, the China Disabled Persons' Federation, the China Women's Development Foundation, the China International Mining Group, and the China Association for NGO Cooperation. These non-governmental organizations cover a wide range of fields, from science and education to human rights cooperation, and from economic cooperation to people-to-people contacts. In future higher educational cooperation with Uzbekistan and even the whole Central Asia, we should fully utilize the role of educational non-governmental organizations such as the China Association for Science and Technology and the China Education Development Foundation, and actively connect international non-governmental organizations with

those that tend to provide a platform for cooperation among young people, such as the Chinese Young Volunteers Association, not only to increase the breadth of non-governmental organizations, but also to enhance their professional depth and ability to participate in international governance. As agents of the country, non-governmental organizations can avoid the counterproductive effects of the excessive appearance of the country's image, and the appropriate construction and utilization of non-governmental organizations can better help China-Uzbekistan higher educational cooperation and the implementation of the top-level design of the two countries.

## II. Social entity level

In addition to higher educational cooperation at the national level, social entities also play an important role in China-Uzbekistan higher educational cooperation, and the paper will analyze the role of social entities from two perspectives:

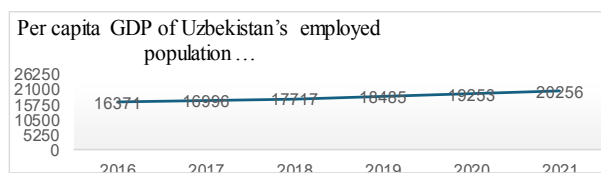
1. The feasibility of establishing private universities in Uzbekistan and recommendations

About the feasibility, firstly, the law of Uzbekistan does not prohibit the creation of private universities, and the government of Uzbekistan has eased the restrictions on the establishment of institutions in the field of education, allowing individuals/social groups/business sectors/foreign donors to invest in education in Uzbekistan, but the qualification audit, the matching of funds, the type of investment, the form of establishment of the institutions, and the criteria for evaluation still need to be refined. Secondly, the policy of internationalization of higher education in the Republic of Uzbekistan emphasizes increasing the number of foreign universities and branch campuses and the cooperation with developed countries. Further, the establishment of private universities is conducive to continuing to improve the layout of the network of universities in Uzbekistan and to achieve a rational distribution of higher educational resources. In addition, as shown in the chart below, the people of Uzbekistan are becoming increasingly affluent and their spending power is rising, which has the potential capacity to spend on education.

In Uzbekistan, its Cabinet of Ministers is responsible for granting licenses to educational institutions abroad to engage in educational activities and establishing procedures for the equivalence of documents of foreign educational institutions in accordance with the law (Zakhidova G E, Khakimova L Y, Rashidova D I. , 2020).the



Chinese government should actively coordinate with the Uzbek government on the possibilities for the establishment of private universities, reach a consensus on opening up new ways of higher educational cooperation, and guide Chinese educational capital into the Uzbek educational market to establish private universities.



Chart

With regard to the details of the establishment of private universities, our main recommendations are as follows:

First, with regard to the choice of sites for the establishment of private universities, we think that priority should be given to emerging cities with a large population concentration and high potential for economic development. In Uzbekistan, constrained by its low level of urbanization, a large number of people are distributed in its rural areas, and as the concentration of resources in the surrounding rural areas – emerging cities, the establishment of private universities in these places can, on the one hand, to a large extent, guarantee the source of students and assist the government of Uzbekistan in improving the optimization of the distribution of higher educational resources; on the other hand, these emerging cities often have high development potential, low construction costs and enjoy more national policies, which can satisfy the profit-seeking nature of capital.

Second, with regard to tuition, it is possible in the early stages to learn from the experience of the “Gülen schools” of Turkey, where lower tuition is used to attract students. Private universities require enough students to operate normally, lower tuition can open up the way for private universities in the early stage, if necessary, these universities should be subsidized by the government. In the case of private universities in the United States, they have a high percentage of investment income in addition to tuition income. Private universities constructed in Uzbekistan can learn the experience of the United States and set up appropriate funds to invest in the operation of the university. In addition, private universities can try to set up academic loan subsidies, charging a lower interest rate supplemented by the

additional policy of giving priority to enter Chinese companies or work and study in China, which can not only recruit more students to meet the profit-seeking nature of educational capital, but also attract talents for China and enhance China’s influence.

Third, with regard to the setting of specialties, market-oriented analysis of market demand should be undertaken to optimize the structure of specialties. The setting of specialties in universities is very important, and at the pre-construction stage, big data and other methods should be used to analyze the demands of the domestic market in Uzbekistan, build a dynamic market information network and make timely adjustments to the specialties. The more popular disciplines in Uzbekistan’s universities are Medicine, Economics, Finance and Jurisprudence. According to the data, a new trend in the demand for labor in Uzbekistan has emerged since the autumn of 2021: the demand for sales managers, finance professionals, IT specialists, logisticians and bank clerks continues to increase. In terms of salaries, the insurance, IT, transportation and logistics sectors are in the first, second and third places of salary growth, while at the same time the traditional sectors, such as raw material extraction, have seen their salaries fall by -15%. In the face of such a market environment, “private universities” should choose future-oriented fields when setting up specialties.

Fourth, with regard to teaching force, Uzbekistan currently has a serious problem of aging highly educated teaching force, private universities should actively employ young Uzbek teachers and Chinese teachers, and carry out a series of lectures and lessons online or offline on a regular basis. Still taking the construction of the teaching force of private universities in the United States as an example: their teacher recruitment standards are strict, emphasizing teacher training and development, with clear promotion channels and generous salaries for teachers (Dong Jiaqiang, 2019). Chinese private universities built in Uzbekistan can learn from the U.S. experience, a comprehensive and complete faculty system is a prerequisite for the success of private universities.

Fifth, with regard to admission, private universities should guarantee the fairness and openness of admission. When admitting students, sufficient transparency should be ensured to avoid the appearance of educational corruption. At the same time, private universities should ensure equal treatment in terms of gender and the awarding of scholarships.

2. The feasibility of establishment branch campuses in Uzbekistan and recommendations

In addition to the establishment of private universities, Chinese universities, as social entities, also play an important role in China-Uzbekistan higher educational cooperation, and they should be given full autonomy to stimulate their vitality. Uzbekistan attaches importance to communication with universities of other countries and actively cooperates with foreign schools. Chinese universities can cooperate with Uzbek universities on the basis of the framework of various university alliances, including the mutual sending of exchange students and teachers to study and work, cooperation in building academic think tanks, sharing of educational resources, and exchanges of superior disciplines. In addition, it is also possible to establish branch campuses of universities in Uzbekistan, which has already been practiced by many universities in other countries.

With regard to the details of the establishment of branch campuses, our main recommendations are as follows:

First, with regard to the choice of sites for branch campuses, the advantages and vitality of universities should be brought into full play. Chinese universities that are able to establish branch campuses must have their own superior disciplines, they should give full consideration to the compatibility between their superior disciplines and the city's orientation when choosing cities to establish their branch campuses in Uzbekistan. For example, universities with advantages in engineering disciplines should give priority to the establishment of branch campuses in industrial centers in Uzbekistan, while universities with advantages in textile disciplines should give priority to the establishment of branch campuses in textile industry centers in Uzbekistan.

Second, with regard to the choice of establishing branch campuses, it should be guided by market demand and the policies of the target country.

When choosing whether to establish a branch campus in Uzbekistan, priority should be given to researching the Uzbek market and determining if the disciplines demanded by the market are the ones in which the university has an advantage. In addition, Uzbekistan's national policies should also be taken into consideration, and universities with superior disciplines in industries that are the focus of Uzbekistan's development should also consider establishing branch campuses in Uzbekistan.

### Conclusion

At the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Xi Jinping put forward "Two Overall Situations", namely, the strategic overall situation of realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, and the unprecedented change in the world in the past century. To this day, the novel coronavirus is still raging globally, bringing crises to the world, and intensifying the two overall situations. However, crises often go together with opportunities, and China, as the country with the fastest control of the epidemic, has made remarkable achievements in economic recovery and other aspects. Seizing the opportunity brought by this global crisis will bring new growth points for China and the world.

As the trend of globalization is deepening in today's world, proactive higher educational cooperation with Uzbekistan can not only deepen the friendship between China and Uzbekistan, but also inject new vitality into the development of the two countries, and even open up new ideas for possible cooperation between China and other countries. In short, higher educational cooperation between China and Uzbekistan will be of great significance to China's breakthrough and even to the world's breakthrough.

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