

EDUCATIONAL REFORM AND INTERNATIONALISATION IN KAZAKHSTAN

Setting the Bosphorous alight?

A total of twenty five members of the research partnership formed by the Cambridge Faculty of Education, the UPenn and Nazarbayev University graduate schools of education, the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools and its Centres of Excellence sat down to dinner overlooking the Bosphorous, the Blue Mosque and Aya Sofya on the last night of the European Education Research Conference in Istanbul (9-13 September) to celebrate an impressive set of contributions to this year's conference. These included five symposia and four individual papers, including one by Liz Winter critiquing current national assessment. Among the symposia:

Policy transfer, translation and transferability: A Kazakhstan case, a global phenomenon

Olena Fimyar, David Bridges, Michael Fordham, Colleen McLaughlin (Cambridge); Alan Ruby (UPenn); Kairat Kurakbayev and Assel Kambatyrova (NU).

Educational reform in Kazakhstan from a school perspective (1):

Natallia Yakavets, Nazipa Ayubayeva, Michael Fordham, Ros McLellan, Colleen McLaughlin (Cambridge); Darkhan Bilyalov, Kairat Kurakbayev, Assel Kambatyrova (NU).

Educational reform in Kazakhstan from a school perspective (2)

Natallia Yakavets, David Frost, Olena Fimyar, Elaine Wilson, Fay Turner, Simon Brownhill (Cambridge); Assel Sharimova (NIS); Darkhan Bilyalov (NU).

UPenn colleagues led two symposia on higher education.

Congratulations to all those who contributed impressively at the conference, putting the Faculty's work in international education – and indeed that little known country, Kazakhstan – firmly on the map. It is a particular source of satisfaction that nearly two thirds of our team would identify themselves as early career researchers.

What is more, the research is feeding directly into national policy through both NIS leadership (since Nazipa Ayubayeva is not only a doctoral student in the Faculty but also Deputy Chair of NIS) and through regular reporting to the Deputy Prime Minister ('How did you get such in depth understanding?' he asked us at a recent meeting). We were also glad to hear recently that one of the leading supporters of our research (and also contributor to our forthcoming book), Aslan Sarinzipov, has just been appointed Minister of Education.

With the Faculty's support Kazakhstan is establishing a new Educational Research Association (KERA), and at a meeting with EERA officers it was made clear that the door was open to them (on the back of their stirring entry to the European Football Cup competition!) to become part of EERA – something that we hope will be achieved by the time that we return to ECER in Porto in 2014.