

Journalism education survey: Russia

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1. What is the framework of higher education and situating journalism education in that? Brief description of the national system will do.

National system of education in Russian Federation legally operates in the frames of Constitution (1993) and the Law on Education (2012). Constitution of Russian Federation guarantees the right to education and general access to free pre-school, secondary and high vocational education. A free higher education degree could be achieved on a competitive basis (article 43). The Constitution also assumes that the state guarantees the quality of educational programs by establishing Federal state educational standards and supports various forms of education and self-education. The Law on Education regulates relations between the main stakeholders of educational process – educators and students, frames the state and public control for quality of education including licensing, accreditation system, independent expertise and obligation for information transparency. Financial background of higher education is shaped by both allocations from the state and local treasury and private investments from individuals and entities as well. Admission quotas from the state budget are openly distributed on a competitive basis and annually published on the website of the Russian government.

Journalism education in Russia is available within the system of higher education and operates in its frames. Out of 134 Russian universities where journalists are being trained, 105 are state and 29 – private. To open a higher educational program in journalism, both state and private universities must get a license and pass accreditation procedure. The Russian Ministry of Education is responsible for state accreditation which is obligatory to all educational institutions, though professional and public accreditation provided by a number of non-governmental expert organizations is a recommended criterion in the rating system. Russian education system and journalism programs in higher education are open to international expertise as well. For example, two Russian state universities – Moscow and North-Caucasian (Stavropol) became members of the European journalism training association (EJTA) after a quality evaluation procedure.

Besides higher education journalists in Russia have an opportunity to pass midcareer and vocational training in media or non-governmental organizations. However, university journalism programs are the main contributors to the future journalism corps.

2. What are the levels at which journalism education is offered?

Journalism higher education is offered at two qualification levels – bachelors and masters. Several universities offer a third qualification level – for journalism and communication research and teaching with the possibility of PhD academic degree.

3. How many institutions are offering these programmes and at what level?

Bachelor programs are offered at 134 institutions, master – at 40.

4. What is the national intake of students at different levels?

The Ministry of Education annually announces admission quotas from the state budget for every program. For the 2016-17 academic year these quotas have been distributed between the enlarged groups of education, in Russian classification it is named “Mass Media and Library Studies” including “Journalism”, “Advertising and Public Relations”, “Television”, “Media Communications”, and “Publishing”. All in all for these five programs high education institution will get 2979 for bachelor programs, 2898 – for master, 87 – for postgraduate. Those universities which applied for quotas from the state budget have the right to share places according to their needs. Besides so-called “budget places” there is an opportunity to enter journalism program as a private or entity investor. Some schools have students only on a non-budgetary basis. The largest school which trains journalists is Lomonosov Moscow State University which annually opens on a competitive 195 “budget” places plus approximately 100 places on a non-budgetary basis.

5. What are the main components of the curricula at different levels?

Education standard for all levels in journalism includes 4 components: 1) the basic part obligatory to all schools, 2) the optional part enriching the program with its own specifics, 3) internships, 4) final exam and a qualification paper.

The basic part in bachelor’s level includes academic disciplines on humanities and social studies and a big percent of languages and literature. Debates on whether these subjects are required for a modern journalism education till now are on academic agenda. Another topic of discussions is about the balanced combination of theoretical disciplines and practical training in classes and during internships, and the focus on information technologies. The basic part also covers journalism theory and ethics, media economics and media systems, etc. Elective part varies from school to school but usually is focused on local culture, demands of labor market, and depends from schools’ human resources and facilities.

Master journalism programs in a basic part includes communication theories, intercultural communication, philosophy, deontology, etc. For optional part each school chooses what corresponds to its profile and the labor market. Master in journalism means training media managers, researchers, media analytics.

6. What is the response/attitude towards these programmes by professional journalists and media industry?

Two-level system in journalism education is a new form for employers, in 2014 there was the first graduation of bachelors all over the country. Before that 5-year specialists were a familiar type of graduates and they easily got jobs. Till now industry is still evaluating new graduates – bachelors and masters, and there is no statistics about their recruitment. Anyway the abovementioned federal

standard in journalism education was evaluated by representatives of industry and adopted for implementation. Professional journalists and media managers are the main experts for journalism study programs. Program creators and think tanks gather in an expert network for regular meetings and discussions. As a rule professional journalists and top media managers should enter the final examination commission, evaluate and assess final papers and exams.

7. Give a profile of the human resources involved in teaching/training in terms of permanent faculty and visiting faculty.

Federal educational standard for journalism programs obliges universities to employ 70 % of the staff with profile education, not less than 60% of them should obtain an academic degree. The proportion of employees who have worked at least three years in media industry should be not less than 10% to the whole staff. These requirements are necessary to pass the accreditation procedure.

8. Provide a short assessment of journalism education in your country.

Journalism education in Russia is nearly hundred years old. Founded during the socialist revolution as an ideological framework for journalists, it grew within the system of Russian higher education in more than 130 institutions. In the beginning of 1990s, journalism education changed its strategies from promoting a mandatory ideological component to standards adopted in journalism schools worldwide. Today journalism education in Russia is framed by two driving forces: media revolutionary changes and educational reforms. The first concerns reconfiguration of the media industry, reconstruction of newsrooms, new patterns of content production, and interaction with audiences. The second deals with curriculum development, more independence in program construction, opportunities for exchanges of teachers and students. Hopefully, all these factors will meet the needs of diverse media markets, create new opportunities for improvement of journalism culture, and finally fulfill the media's professional public service obligations.