
The Ministry of Education presents brief highlights of the reforms and measures taken in 2015-2016 academic year in order to apply modern governance model in education, increase quality of education, improve staff skills and competence, ensure transparency and fulfill other tasks.

- Under President Ilham Aliyev's Order "To grant presidential stipends to students who entered higher education institutions in the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2015-2016 academic year", students who gave the best performance at entrance exams were awarded presidential stipends.

- Under President Ilham Aliyev's Order, a group of education workers were awarded "Merited Teacher" title on the eve of October 5 – International Teachers' Day.

- In accordance with the President's Order, a group of education workers were awarded "Taraggi" medals on the eve of October 5 – International Teachers' Day.

- Under the order of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan Teachers' Institute was incorporated into Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University.

- Under President Ilham Aliyev's orders, 50 secondary schools, which succeeded in "Best secondary school" competition, received 10,000 manats each, and 100 teachers, who won "Best teacher" competition, received 5,000 manats each.

- Under President Ilham Aliyev's order, monthly average wage (tariff) of workers at state budget-funded education institutions (except for higher education institutions) was increased 10 per cent from February 1, 2016.

- President of the Republic of Azerbaijan ordered to increase – by 10 per cent – stipends of doctoral students and students and pupils of higher, secondary and vocational education institutions from February 1, 2016.

- Under President Ilham Aliyev's order, on the occasion of the International Women's Day a group of women were decorated with honorary titles for their outstanding role in the country's education, healthcare and culture.

- President Ilham Aliyev signed a decree approving a new composition of the State Committee for the Award in the fields of science, technology, architecture, culture and literature.

- Under the President's order, monthly wages of teachers at state secondary education institutions, whose knowledge and skills were evaluated, will be increased 10 per cent on average from April 1, 2016.

- Under the presidential decree, State Vocational Education Agency was established under the Ministry of Education with the aim of increasing effectiveness of professional training and preparing competitive and skilled specialists in the field of primary vocational education.

- On Knowledge Day, President Ilham Aliyev inspected repair and reconstruction work at secondary school No. 148 in Sabunchu, Baku.

- President Ilham Aliyev attended the opening of Atakishili village school named after Mohubbat Azimov in Kurdamir district.

- President Ilham Aliyev inaugurated Gokhmukh village secondary school in Shaki district.

- Baku branch of I. M. Sechenov First Moscow State Medical University opened. Azerbaijan's first lady, president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Mehriban Aliyeva attended the solemn opening ceremony.

- Republican Special Boarding School No. 4 opened in Shuvalan, Khazar district after reconstruction under "Development of orphanages and boarding schools" program of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation. Azerbaijan's first lady,

president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Mehriban Aliyeva attended the opening ceremony.

- Azerbaijan's first lady, president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Mehriban Aliyeva attended the opening of the newly-reconstructed special boarding school for children with physical disabilities in Shuvalan, Khazar district.

- 52 more "healthy classes" were created in 2015-2016 academic year under "Healthy education + healthy nation" program. There are currently 67 "healthy classes" in 34 educational institutions, of them 33 in Baku and 1 in Sumgayit. Fifteen such classes were created in the previous academic year.

- 4,095,370,141 copies of textbooks for 4th, 6th and 8th grades and methodology handbooks for teachers were published in 2015-2016 academic year. 70 textbooks for 8th grades, where curriculum was introduced for the first time, and methodology handbooks for teachers were published and circulated to schools.

- Minister of Education Mikayil Jabbarov attended the High-Level Meeting of Education Ministers as part of the 38th session of the UNESCO General Conference. "A child uneducated is a child lost. To lose a child is to lose the future," quote made by Mikayil Jabbarov during his speech at the event was tweeted by UNESCO as a key challenge facing modern education.

- Financial Laboratory was launched at Azerbaijan State Economic University under a memorandum signed by the education institution and the State Securities Committee under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

- Environmental Education and Training Center of the Ministry of Education organized the first summer environmental school – education camp in Guba district. Held at education, sport and recreation complex of Azerbaijan State Economic University, the summer school involved 30 most active schoolchildren aged 8-14 representing nature conservation organizations and young naturalists clubs.

- First 300 students, who scored 500 and above points at exams to higher education pedagogical institutions and who prioritized teaching in their profession choice during the exams, received "Teacher of future" stipend in the amount of 100 manats. The number of students receiving "Teacher of future" stipend reached 600. The average point scored by those, who prefer teaching profession, grew 16 points to reach 364, while the number of students, who scored 500 or more points, increased 37 per cent against previous year.

- Azerbaijani-Italian Inter-University Forum was held in Milan. The forum aimed to expand ties between Azerbaijani and Italian higher education institutions, build new relations and explore opportunities for conducting experience exchange and implementing joint projects.

- 9th Azerbaijan International Education and Career Exhibition was organized at Baku Expo Center in partnership with the Ministry of Education.

- Diagnostic evaluation was conducted for teachers, who work at general education institutions in Baku, who had not previously sat exams or scored few points, as well as those, who changed their workplace or were newly recruited through competitions held by the Ministry of Education.

- Department of Literature and Culture named after Nizami Ganjavi opened at the University of Upper Alsace in Mulhouse, France.

- Heydar Aliyev Center in partnership with the Ministry of Education held "Heydar Aliyev and history of Azerbaijan" 2nd students' countrywide quiz. The project aims to study life and activity of national leader Heydar Aliyev, revive and promote his legacy among young generation.

- The Ministry of Education and National Flag Square Complex co-organized "Flag march". Marking the National Flag Day of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the march involved employees of the Ministry of Education, university rectors, parliamentarians, intelligentsia, teachers, mass media executives, representatives of non-governmental organizations, pupils and students of general, extra-curricular, primary, secondary and higher education institutions.

- On November 10, 2015 President Ilham Aliyev signed an order to make amendments to the Order of the

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan "To increase stipends of doctoral students, and students and pupils of higher, secondary vocational and primary vocational education institutions" dated August 30, 2013. Under the order, full-time students at free and for-profit higher and secondary vocational education institutions will receive stipends based on their average performance score irrespective of the type of study (both free and for-profit). In accordance with the State Education Development Strategy, the order will contribute to increasing government support for students, encouraging their interest in education, building competitive environment in order to increase the quality of education and strengthening social security of students.

- Azerbaijan-Russia Inter-University Forum was held. The forum saw the founding of Azerbaijani-Russian Association of Educational Institutions and the signing of a memorandum on expansion of cooperation between the two countries' universities.

- Diagnostic Evaluation of Teachers involved nearly 26,000 teachers at general education institutions in the cities of Ganja, Sumgayit and Shirvan and in Khachmaz, Masalli, Jalilabad, Hajigabul, Sabirabad, Imishli, Saatli, Absheron and Gubadli districts. The computer-based evaluation was held under the Order of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan "To increase workload and wages of the teachers who passed diagnostic evaluation of their knowledge and skills" and a relevant order of the minister of education.

- 25,431 teachers in 12 cities and districts (99 per cent of the evaluated teachers), who passed diagnostic evaluation, had their wages increased. Wages grew 30-40 per cent based on teachers' workload, teaching experience, academic degree, honorary titles and other criteria.

- The Ministry of Education organized the second SABAH Forum. The event aimed to involve SABAH group students in discussions, support the development of their intellectual and creative potential, and build an active dialogue environment.

- The Ministry of Education launched School Communities project with the aim of building a better school life through pupil, parent and teacher communities.

- Anbu village secondary school opened in Lerik district.

- First Forum of Azerbaijani Student Volunteers was held. The forum featured the launch of BIR Student Volunteering Program. Forum participants were informed of the goals, priorities and opportunities of the program.

- The process of selecting students under "2007-2015 State Program for Education of Azerbaijani Youth Abroad" ended. It was the last selection under the program, and a total of 373 students were included in the list of those who will receive stipends. Post-bachelor education remained a priority in the program in 2015-2016 academic year. 176 students will study for a master's degree, 25 students will seek a PhD degree, 70 students applied for residency program, and 102 students will get basic higher medical education. Experts of the Ministry of Education, relevant government bodies and higher education institutions selected a total of 3558 students, who will study priority specialties at the world's leading higher education institutions under the state program. The top five countries chosen by the students are the United Kingdom, Turkey, Germany, Canada and the Netherlands. Most of the students will study for a master's degree. Under the program, Azerbaijani students study at Harvard University, University of Cambridge, University of Oxford, Imperial College London, Moscow State Institute of International Relations, Middle East Technical University, University of Toronto, Nanyang Technological University, Kyoto University and other leading higher education institutions. A total of 1294 graduates have been registered for the program so far. Sixty per cent of students, who completed their education with high scores under the program, are engaged in the private sector, while 40 per cent in the public sector. Students, who studied under the state program, are admitted directly to the interview stage of civil service employment exam, which creates broad opportunities for them to apply their skills and knowledge in public management. The last student, who was sent abroad under the program, will graduate in 2021 (residency level of medical education).

- The Ministry of Education signed an agreement on cooperation with Thomson Reuters. Under the agreement, requested by the Ministry, 40 higher education institutions in Azerbaijan received access to products and services of Thomson Reuters, including Web of Science®, the most comprehensive and versatile research platform available. Apart from this database, Azerbaijani scientists also received access to the most recently published issues of leading scholarly journals. It's no coincidence that the number of scholarly articles published by Azerbaijani scientists in indexed journals increased. Scientists at Azerbaijani educational institutions published 242 papers in

impact-factor journals in 2011, 300 papers in 2014, and 604 papers in 2015.

- Yengiyan village secondary school was inaugurated in Zagatala district.
- Artupa village secondary school was inaugurated in Astara district.
- Garatorpag village secondary school opened in Shaki district.
- Sharadil village secondary school was inaugurated in Shamakhi district.
- In accordance with Minister Mikayil Jabbarov's initiative under "From Education to Science" program, famous scientists of ANAS gave classes at general education institutions.
- Garadagh district special boarding school for children with physical disabilities was inaugurated in Baku after major overhaul.
- The Ministry of Education conducted "Novruz lectures" involving renowned scientists. The lectures provided different points of view on a range of areas of science and education, and featured discussions on an array of issues of interest.
- From January 14-29, 2016, on its Facebook account, the ministry responded to questions of users on diagnostic evaluation of teachers' skills and knowledge.
- From February 15-19, 2016, the Ministry of Education responded to questions of Facebook users about amendments made to students' stipends. A total of 300 questions came from students, representatives of higher education institutions, and parents.
- The Ministry of Education launched a project to learn public opinion on draft textbooks. Draft textbooks are uploaded on www.e-resurs.edu.az, where they are available for recommendations and proposals. Recommendations and proposals can be made on the webpage of the selected draft textbook or through sending an email to derslik@edu.gov.az.
- Common Reception Portal was set up in order to ease the process of reception of citizens by government executives, improve the process of registration for reception, speed up and improve the process of consideration of requests, as well as to sum up data. The establishment of the portal aims to increase the effectiveness of the fulfillment of the tasks set by Decree of President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev on "Provision of electronic services by government bodies" and Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on "Requests of citizens". This portal allows to control the process of citizens' registration for reception at bodies within and under the Ministry of Education, their notification through SMS service of the date and time of reception, as well as to measure customer satisfaction. Statistics of requests made through the portal are analyzed and then summarized in reports.
- S Startup school was launched at Azerbaijan State University of Oil and Industry. The school allows creative youth to convert their ideas into business projects.
- The Ministry of Education conducted trainings for principals of general education institutions and those who want to be employed in this position. The trainings were held in the city of Ganja, and Goygol, Samukh, Goranboy and Dashkasan districts, and aimed to train highly-qualified school principals, improve their knowledge and ICT skills, and boost their capabilities of contributing to the development of the country's education and social life.
- The Ministry of Education and Caspian Business Club co-organized a business forum. The issues discussed at the forum included reforms and development prospects in education, expansion of cooperation between the Ministry of Education and business communities, organization of active dialogue between government bodies and business circles.
- The Ministry of Education started to recruit school principals. In accordance with the new rules of recruitment and transfer of principals of general education institutions, the ministry conducted a competition for vacant school

principal positions.

- Employees of educational institutions and athletes, including Namiq Asadov, Tural Sadiqli, Elman Abishov, Ra Rida Aslanova, Raqsana Rajabli, Lala Pirumova succeeded at Baku Marathon 2016, which was initiated by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation.

- The Ministry of Education, Heydar Aliyev Foundation, New Azerbaijan Party, Ministry of Communications and High Technologies, Azerbaijan Education Workers Free Trade Unions Republican Committee co-organized "Best presentation" competition, which marked the 93rd anniversary of national leader Heydar Aliyev.

- An Azerbaijani delegation led by Minister of Education Mikayil Jabbarov attended the 15th General Assembly Meeting of the Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) (COMSTech) in Islamabad, Pakistan. Azerbaijan was elected as one of the deputy co-chairs of the COMSTech General Assembly Meeting.

- The Ministry of Education and ASAN Radio launched "ASAN school" project. It aims to inform citizens of the latest developments in education and organizes question-and-answer sessions with officials of the Ministry of Education.

- Nearly 3700 10th grade schoolchildren in 176 classes in 58 schools were involved in the specialized education program in 2015-2016 academic year. 124 schools in five cities and 36 districts will have an extra emphasis in certain subjects starting from 2016-2017 academic year.

- Azerbaijani pupils claimed a historic success at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (Intel ISEF) in the city of Phoenix, the U.S. state of Arizona. Narmin Aydarova and Arzu Mammadova ranked fourth in physics and materials science categories, while Nigar and Madat Sardarlis won a special award of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development.

- The Ministry of Education launched "History of Motherland" seminars. The seminars aim to provide a platform for interactive discussion of realities of Azerbaijan's history and the processes playing a crucial role in the country's destiny, as well as to ensure continuity of measures to encourage patriotic upbringing of the young generation, and increase teachers' involvement in this process.

- The Ministry of Education offers 8 interactive and over 20 informative electronic services.

- In accordance with 2015-2016 timetable of reception hours of government executives, Minister of Education Mikayil Jabbarov received nearly 300 citizens. The majority of citizens' requests were immediately dealt with. Minister Mikayil Jabbarov instructed relevant bodies of the Ministry of Education to deal with several other requests. Some requests, which were out of the Ministry's area of competence, and personal requests, were brought to the notice of relevant authorities.

- The Ministry of Education received 31,352 requests from citizens, 6,072 letters and 11,096 electronic requests from different bodies (15.09.2015-06.06.2016).

- Call Center ("Hotline" service, phone: 146) of the Ministry of Education received 99,981 calls (15.09.2015-06.06.2016).

- Citizens Reception Center of the Ministry of Education served 20,282 citizens (15.09.2015-06.06.2016).

- The vast majority of requests to the Call Center and Citizens Reception Center were immediately dealt with. 44,365 citizens registered for reception by officials of the Ministry of Education. 762 citizens requested meetings with the ministry officials though e-mail.

- In 2015-2016, the Ministry of Education built 12 general education schools, and reconstructed 2 boarding and 3 vocational schools.

- Construction and major overhaul of 18 education institutions continues. State-of-the-art laboratories were established in 60 schools as part of measures to improve financial and technical capabilities of educational institutions.

- In 2015-2016 academic year, the Ministry of Education continued its tradition of responding to questions from media representatives through e-mail correspondence with the aim of building more fruitful relations with the mass media.

- The ministry organized round tables, seminars, press conferences and briefings involving media representatives, and also held media tours to education institutions.

- "Media and education dialogue" training conferences were attended by heads of press services of higher education institutions and media bodies, famous education experts, and journalists.

- Programs such as "Basics", "Question of the week", "Out of class", "Education agenda" and "Special report" aired on "Tahsil" online television channel were broadcast by all internet resources and news portals of the ministry.

- "A working day with a school principal" project continues. It aims to promote heads of leading general education institutions.

- "Success formula" project continues to promote Azerbaijani students and graduates involved in the State education abroad program.

These highlights are just part of numerous measures and projects carried out in 2015-2016 academic year. President Mr. Ilham Aliyev's attention to education paved the way for the development of this sector. We believe that next year the tasks stipulated by the "State Education Development Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan" will be fulfilled in a more successful manner.