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**Abstract**

This article describes the nature and impact of a major recent education policy aimed to transform higher education in Kazakhstan, the State Program of Industrial Innovative Development 2015 to 2019 (SPIID-2). This inquiry sought to understand and describe the role of internationalization of higher education in SPIID-2, and more specifically its role for developing university research. Kazakhstan's industrial innovative development program promotes university–industry collaboration and universities' international partnerships to enhance the role of the university in the economic development of the country, consistent with the imperatives and opportunities of the knowledge-based economy. The role of internationalization, particularly, involving international partner institutions, in this policy, contributes to quality assurance and informed decision making. Findings are based on content analysis of policy texts and interviews with university representatives. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)