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**Abstract**

The article describes transformations of the Russian education system during the past decades and discusses the role of the Bologna process, and particularly the introduction of a new degree system, in the course of the higher education reforms. Two new types of the Russian universities introduced ? federal universities and national research universities ? should become engines in the realization of the tasks under reform. The role of universities and their development programmes increases, a new funding model should give more autonomy to the HEIs and secure sustainability in the implementation of their development strategies. The Bologna process has definitely served as a catalyst in the course of the modernization of the Russian education sector and everybody would benefit if it were more coordinated with general reforms. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)