



**New Exam Model:
Reforms, Results,
and Expectations
ANALYTICAL REPORT**



**SOCIAL
RESEARCH
CENTER**



Great attention is paid to the improvement of the education system in Azerbaijan. The level of education will determine the prospects of our country."

*President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mr
Ilham Aliyev*



**SOCIAL
RESEARCH
CENTER**

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**ANALYTICAL REPORT ON THE NEW MODEL OF ENTRANCE
EXAMS ON COMPLETE (11-YEAR) SECONDARY EDUCATION
LEVEL TO HIGH SCHOOL AND SPECIALIZED SECONDARY**

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

(based on the results of sociological survey research)

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I. GENERAL ISSUES OF THE RESEARCH

I.1. Importance and relevance of research

Throughout the 20th century, various concepts emerged, exploring themes such as the information or network society (D. Bell, O. Toffer, Y. Masuda, M. Kastels), the postmodern society (J. Lyotard, U. Eco), and the consumer society (P. Draker, P. Hutkins, T. Husen), among others. Discussions on the nature of education (learning), the new educational paradigm, and global education trends also gained prominence, underscoring values anticipated to shape future societies. A consensus emerged that the establishment of an innovative and entrepreneurial economic system in the 21st century, often termed the «era of education,» would be closely tied to the development of human capital. Education stands as a pivotal driver of economic growth, leveraging high human capital and technologies. As meta-changes continue to unfold in the 21st century, the responsibility for shaping a new world and individual squarely rests on the shoulders of the general, higher, and secondary specialized education systems, integral components of the global education system.

Education was designated a top priority in the social policy agenda of the Republic of Azerbaijan following its restoration of state independence in 1991. The onset of systemic transformation in Azerbaijan's economic and political spheres necessitated comprehensive reforms in education and across all sectors, aligning with the demands of the emerging society. Notably, the overarching goal of the country's education reforms was to realign the cognitive function of education with the new world order and equip it to navigate the challenges posed by a technologically advanced civilization through a creative and adaptive lens.

Substantial changes in Azerbaijan's education system were propelled by the «Reform Program in Field Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan,» sanctioned by national leader Heydar Aliyev on June 15, 1999. This program fundamentally shifted education from a «school of memory» to a «school of thought.» Through collaborative research efforts involving local and international experts in general education during the 1990s, it became evident that existing educational programs in Azerbaijan fell short of contemporary requirements. These programs primarily centred on subjects and failed to cultivate students' cognitive and critical thinking skills adequately. Textbooks were laden with superfluous materials, and insufficient emphasis was placed on nurturing children's life skills, research aptitude, and independence preference is given to memorization, etc. A

new educational program (curricula) was introduced taking into account all of the above-mentioned issues. The «Concept of General Education (National Curriculum) in the Republic of Azerbaijan» was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2006. Afterwards, the same document was updated under the name «State Standard and Programs (curricula) of the General Education Level» in 2010. Subject curricula of general education (for years I-IV) were approved in 2007 by the order of the Minister of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan and were made available for the use of the pedagogical community.

Student enrollment was first implemented in 2008 based on the new curriculum and training methods. Thus, textbooks prepared according to the new content standards began to be used with the introduction of new educational programs (curricula) in the general educational institutions of the Republic, and of course, it became necessary to apply new assessment tools in the educational process.

Conducting monitoring exams was included in the duties of the former SCSA (The State Commission for Student Admission) by amending its Regulations in 2012 according to the relevant decree of the President of the republic. Starting in 2013, the State Examination Center (former SCSA) started to conduct monitoring exams in institutions educational institutions of the Republic (the first students who studied under the new education system were studying in the 5th grade at that time). During those years, monitoring exams were held for about 60,000 students studying in grades V-X through representative selection methods from schools covering all geographical regions of the Republic. It should be noted that the main purpose of conducting monitoring exams is to form an evaluation mechanism for new assignment models as well as to determine the impact of reforms carried out to ensure state standards in the field of education, including the impact of new educational programs (curricula) on the teaching process, to assimilate materials for these programs by students, to measure the formation level of relevant skills and habits in them, and to reveal the difficulties faced by teachers during the teaching process. A joint working group consisting of experts from the Ministry of Education and the SEC has been established since 2015 to ensure cooperation in the direction of assessment of knowledge and skills. The results of the monitoring exams and the preparation of a new model were discussed during the meetings and discussions of this working group. Taking into account all of the above-mentioned, the final assess-

ment exam of the student's knowledge of the general (9-year) secondary educational level was held in 2017 by the SEC based on the new rules. Thus, the following skills such as work on the text, determination of the main idea of the text and the cause-and-effect relationships of the events that occur in the text, explanation of the meaning of words according to the context of the text, building an equation with the ability to perform mathematical assignments related to various life situations were for the first time checked in the final attestation exams of the 9th grade students according to the requirements of the new educational programs (curriculum). The scientific statistical analysis of the results of the monitoring exams played a major role in the preparation of the new exam model. Some experts consider these exams to be the first official assessment of the 10-year reforms of the general education system.

Later, a comprehensive analysis of the results of the final exams was conducted and a database was collected. In October 2017, the final discussion of the new model of graduation exams for the complete (11-year) secondary educational level, entrance exams to higher and specialized secondary educational institutions, which was planned to be implemented in 2019, was held during the meeting between the officials of the SEC and the delegation of the Ministry of Education. The new model was presented to the public. It should be noted that the changes envisaged in the new admission model introduced in 2019 were calculated to reveal the applicants' knowledge more accurately. So, the results obtained by the applicants from the graduation exam are also taken into account and first of all added to the score obtained from the entrance exam during the examination for admission to higher education institutions in I-IV specialty groups. According to the new rules, applicants must score a total maximum of 700 scores, i.e. a maximum of 300 scores from 3 subjects (native language, mathematics, foreign language) in the first round (graduation exam), and a maximum of 400 scores from 3 subjects (according to the speciality groups) in the second round (entrance exam). Thus, applicants can participate in the competition of higher education institutions based on the sum of the scores they have obtained during the graduation and entrance exams. Therefore, the results of the graduation exams are the basis for admission to the final attestation speciality specialty group V and specialized secondary education institutions. Those results also become a component of the competition for speciality groups I-IV. A decrease in the number of entrance exam subjects should also be emphasized here. So, the applicants do not take 3 graduation and 5 entrance exam subjects as in previous years, but instead, they should take 3 graduation and 3 en-

trance exam subjects. The applicants' exam burden has been further reduced. In addition, the new rules stipulate that the results of the first round of the entrance exams (graduation exams) are valid for two years, that is, the applicant will be given the right to participate in the student admission competition for higher education institutions (the applicant will take the second round of the exam without participating in the first round) in the current and next academic years. These exams also use a certain number of assignments that require answers in writing by the applicants themselves. The number of new model assignments are also very small compared to the number of general exam questions. It is planned to use only 3 such assignments for each subject in the entrance exams for now, as the use of such assignments is a requirement of the curriculum standards.

Thus, both paper-based and online test exams were started in February 2019. However, graduation and entrance exams started in March. Thus, the first round of graduation exams for grades 9 in Baku city and regions was held on March 3, 10 and 17, and the second round was held on June 2, 9 and 16. The first round of the general (9-year) secondary education base entrance exam for graduates of previous years was held on March 31, and the second round was held on June 30. Graduation exams for grades 11 were organized on April 7, 14 and 21. The first round of the entrance exam for groups I-IV for graduates of previous years, as well as the entrance exams for higher education institutions and colleges based on complete (11-year) secondary education for group V, was held on April 28. The first (spring) entrance exam for higher education institutions in speciality groups I and IV was held on May 12 and for speciality groups II and III on May 19. The second exam (summer exam) for speciality groups I and IV was held on June 23 and for speciality groups II and III on July 7. The acceptance process of student applications to specialized secondary educational institutions based on speciality groups I-V and complete (11-year) secondary education was conducted online via the Internet from March 15 to April 15.

The Azerbaijani language exam for applicants in the Russian section (the first exam for undergraduate and specialized secondary educational institutions) was held on May 5th. Registration for applicants who received an "unsatisfactory" mark in the first exam or did not participate in it was conducted from May 8th to May 14th. The second exam for registered applicants took place on May 26th. Registration for applicants who chose journalism as their speciality was conducted from July 22nd to July 25th. The aptitude test for applicants who chose this speciality was held on August 1st.

Electronic registration for specialties requiring

special abilities was conducted for Group V (physical education speciality) from June 24th to June 28th. Registration for Group V, except for the physical education speciality, started on June 24th and continued until July 3rd.

The exams were held for group I from July 12 to 17, for group V (physical education speciality) from July 1 to 7, and for group V (except for physical education speciality) from July 7 to August 2.

After the completion of the general examination process, the SEC published the booklet "What should you pay attention to while choosing a speciality?" for the applicants who obtained the right to participate in the competition by speciality groups I, II, III and IV. The applicants chose their specialty from July 24 until August 6. The list of specialties was presented in the 4th edition of "Abituriyent" magazine. The announcement of speciality selection to participate in the competition for student admission to higher education institutions, the procedure for filling out "Applicant's electronic speciality selection application", the codes of the specialties admitted to higher education institutions and the forecast of student admission by state order was indicated in the magazine.

It should be noted that about 100,000 applicants took part in the graduation exams and about 70,000 applicants took part in the entrance exams for four groups. About 58,300 applicants took part in the competition of higher education institutions.

43,780 applicants (including 4774 sub-bachelors) were admitted to higher education institutions after the main and additional admission. 17,947 applicants (including 632 sub-bachelors) got the right to study based on a state order and 25,533 applicants (including 4,142 sub-bachelors) obtained the right to study on a paid basis.

It should be noted that this year 3 people won international competitions in art, 3 - world science olympiads, 21 - national science olympiads, 71 - international competitions in the field of sports, and 1 student studied at the internationally accredited "International Baccalaureate" educational program, they were directly admitted to higher education institutions without participating in the competition.

104 applicants were admitted to ADA University based on the results of the SAT exam. In addition, 139 applicants were admitted in speciality group I to Azerbaijan-French University (UFAZ), 125 applicants - in speciality group IV to the Baku branch of the First Moscow State Medical University named after I.M. Sechenov, 128 applicants - (in the speciality groups I-IV) to the Baku branch of Moscow State University named after M.V. Lomonosov.

A list of vacant plan seats of higher educational institutions was published in the 8th issue of "Abituriyent" magazine.

The speciality selection process for those places was conducted online via the Internet from August 15 to 19. The applicants had an opportunity to indicate the codes of the specialties of the secondary vocational education institutions (colleges) as well as the specialties of the vacant plan seats of the higher education institutions in the electronic application. The admission specialties of secondary vocational education institutions were published in the 5th issue of "Abituriyent" magazine.

The SEC announced the results of the placement to vacant plan seats in higher education institutions of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the academic year 2019/2020 on August 20. 1,359 applicants (including 1,232 sub-bachelors) were admitted to the vacant plan seats of higher education institutions as a result of the competition. 42 thousand 62 students (including 3542 sub-bachelors) were admitted to higher education institutions after the first round.

The pass percentage after the first round was 88.06%.

43480 students (including 4774 sub-bachelors) were admitted to higher education institutions after both rounds. 17 thousand 947 students (including 632 sub-bachelors) obtained a right to study based on the state order and 25 thousand 533 (including 4,142 sub-bachelors) received the right to study on a paid basis. As a result, the percentage of admission to higher education institutions increased and became 91.03%.

It should be noted that the planned seats in 7 out of 42 higher educational institutions where students were admitted were filled 100 per cent, in 20 higher educational institutions - more than 90 per cent and in 9 higher educational institutions - more than 80 per cent. In general, the plan seats of other higher education institutions were filled by more than 70 per cent except for Baku Choreography Academy where the admission specialties require special abilities.

Thus, the model applied in 2019 in the graduation and entrance exams by the SEC differed from the admission model of previous years both in terms of its form and content. Research and surveys conducted during the graduation and entrance exams prove that the attitude towards the application of this model in society is not at all unambiguous and diversity of opinions is observed. Discussions around the pros and cons of this new model continue today, as well. The need to conduct a public opinion poll in this case becomes urgent taking into account these factors. Social Research Center conducted a public opinion poll among members of the Science and Education Committee of the Milli Majlis (National Assembly), representatives of the Ministry of Education and the State Examination Center, applicants,

parents, teachers and education experts to examine the pros and cons of the new model applied this year during the graduation and entrance exams, the current state of Azerbaijan's education system in general and the society's attitude to these innovations.

The results are for studying and analyzing the level of education in our country, the form and content of exams, and improving all of these based on specific proposals.

1.2. Purpose and tasks of the research

- The main purpose of the conducted sociological research was to study various target groups, interested parties and, representatives of professional categories' applicants applicants, parents, teachers, members of parliament, representatives of the Ministry of Education and the SEC, educational experts, psychologists sociologists sociologists) opinions, assessments, attitudes, views and about about the new model of graduation and entrance exams, which provides a basis for studying the modern state of education being an integral part of the social policy of the state, in 10 selected cities and regions (Baku, Sumgait, Ganja, Barda, Shaki, Shirvan, Khachmaz, Goychay, Lankaran, Mingachevir) as well as to conduct an analysis based on all of the above-mentioned and to prepare relevant proposals and recommendations.

- **Special tasks** of sociological research are as follows:

1. To study the level of awareness of the target audience involved in the survey about the new model of the graduation and entrance exams, the understanding of the essence of the new model and the current level of knowledge in this field;
2. To study the attitude of the target groups to the changes introduced in the form and content of the graduation and entrance exams: how do respondents perceive and evaluate these innovations (are the changes for the better or the worse)?
3. To study the level of usefulness of the new model for the educational system in Azerbaijan;
4. To study the degree of adoption of the new educational program (curricula) by the applicants: did the expectations come true?
5. To conduct a comparative analysis of graduation and entrance exams separately;
6. To determine the advantages and disadvantages of the new model and the previous model;
7. To clarify the attitude of the respondents to the activities of the Appeals Commission operating under the SEC;
8. To determine the effects of the examination process on the applicants' moral-psychological state and to explore the ways out.

1.3. Methodological principles of research

Quantitative and qualitative research methods were used in the process of data collection and evaluation

1. Respondents' choice

- Approximately 70,000 applicants participated in the entrance exams across four groups. A total of 539 respondents took part in the public opinion poll conducted by SRC, comprising 400 applicants and 139 parents and teachers. Additionally, qualitative research was conducted involving 12 experts.

- After the exam was finished, we approached one out of every 3 applicants leaving the building where the exam was held and offered them to participate in the survey. Applicants who accepted the offer were interviewed in a nearby area where there were fewer people. At this time, considering the large number of applicants leaving the school at the same time after the exam, there was also an additional staff in the area along with the interviewers. Applicants leaving the school building were invited to the survey by additional staff and interviewed by interviewers

- The survey with parents (some of them were also teachers) was conducted by random sampling method in the area where they were waiting for their children during the exam.

- The survey was conducted on several schools in selected regions.

- The margin of error rate in applicant sampling is close to 5%.

- The representativeness of the selection of applicants was provided at a relatively low level due to the small number of parents- and teachers- respondents

- The survey was carried out in the following cities and regions based on the regional centres of the SEC: Baku, Sumgait, Ganja, Barda, Shaki, Shirvan, Khachmaz, Goychay, Lankaran, Mingachevir.

□ A pilot study was conducted among 60 respondents in Baku before the large-scale study. The necessary adjustments were made in the questionnaire as a result of the test.

2. Questionnaire

The questionnaire comprised 36 questions for applicants, including 5 demographic and 31 specific questions. Similarly, for parents and teachers, it consisted of 34 questions, including 3 demographic and 31 specific questions. These questions were designed to gauge the level of awareness about the model applied in this year's graduation and entrance exams, the perceived usefulness of the education system, opinions on the examination process, and attitudes towards innovations in content.

3. Instructions

- Guidelines for interviewers have been prepared.

- The interviewers were trained by the staff of the Centre before starting work.
- The interviewers familiarized themselves with the questionnaire and instructions during the training and were fully prepared to conduct the survey.
- Extensive explanations were given for each question in the survey questionnaire and a test survey was conducted by the interviewers.

• 4. Method of conducting the survey

The survey was conducted using both “face-to-face” interviews and questionnaire distribution methods. Modern technologies were employed during the survey process, utilizing tablets instead of traditional paper formats. In recent years, the SurveyToGo software program, widely recognized as a modern survey tool in the United States and Great Britain, was utilized. This software offers numerous advantages, including the ability to monitor fieldwork across wide geographies, maintain online monitoring of the survey process, and gather reliable information.

5. Fieldwork

Fieldwork was conducted within the period covering June 23 - July 25, 2019. The survey was conducted in 2 stages: 1st the stage was held on June 23 (second exam for I and IV speciality groups) and July 7 (second exam for II and III speciality groups) among applicants, parents and teachers based on pre-prepared survey questions; the 2nd stage was held between members of the Science and Education Committee of the Milli Majlis, representatives of the Ministry of Education and the State Examination Center, educational experts, psychologists and sociologists using the interview (qualitative interview) method.

6. Data processing and analysis

The data collected directly in the database were analyzed using a special program SPSS - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences after the completion of the survey. A number of correlations (relationships) between variables were determined in addition to descriptive analysis.

1.4. Analysis of international experience

Many local characteristics are taken into account for the transparent and maximally objective conduct of university entrance exams in almost all countries of the world. Here, the main focus is addressed on the correct preparation of assignments, the creation of a concrete environment for the timely and incorrect conduct of exams and other issues. The listed conditions are considered the main factors affecting results. For example, if the exam consists of only tests, then applicants should maximize the activation of mental properties such as attention, memory and logical thinking. If the exam is conducted verbally,

then they should be required to develop the qualities related to memory, rhetoric and acting. All these issues are approached differently in each of the world countries. We will try to look at the exams held in other countries in this part of the study.

PRC

“Gaokao” - this is what state exams are called in China. Traditionally, exams are held on the same day and at the same time in all Chinese schools. Students are allowed to take only the most important items, i.e. pens, pencils, erasers, rulers and compasses. It is forbidden to bring other items into the exam room. Even drinking water in glass containers is not allowed in the examination room. Detectors, cameras, and devices that repel mobile signals are placed in the exam rooms. School teachers cannot observe the progress of exams, they are replaced by teachers invited from outside. In addition, employees from the education department and other officials also monitor the exams. Exams last for two days. 2.5 hours are devoted to answering questions on literature and the Chinese language in the first half of the first day and questions on foreign language and mathematics in the afternoon.

An exam on one more compulsory subject, as well as on one of the subjects chosen by the student of the higher education institution is conducted on the second day. Results are checked and determined only by computer. This approach aims to eliminate the human factor in the examination process. One notable aspect of exams held in China is the strict policy regarding cheating, the use of crib notes, or other fraudulent activities. Individuals caught engaging in such actions are not granted a second chance to retake the exam. The concept of gaining entry to a higher educational institution through bribery is strictly prohibited and not even entertained. Interestingly, the Chinese government allocates special funds from the budget to maintain the confidentiality of all exam materials.

The United States of America

The entrance exams in the United States of America are very easy for certain reasons. Studies conducted have shown that the 12th-grade graduation math exams for American students are equal to the level of exams held in Europe for 7th-8th-grade students.

All graduates, without exception, must pass a standardized test exam for admission to universities and colleges in the USA. The exam comprises three main sections: mathematics, text analysis, and composition writing, each featuring questions with five possible options. Scores range from 200 to 800 in each subject, contributing to the applicant's personal

“account” for university admissions. With the test exams held six times a year, individuals seeking admission to American universities have the opportunity to retake the exams if dissatisfied with their results.

American applicants are adept at finding indirect methods to take the test, utilizing various devices such as tablets, phones, “crib notes,” online services, and even cognitive enhancers. Notably, the most severe penalty for American applicants is being denied the opportunity to take the exams in the future.

Finland

Applicants in Finland are incredibly fortunate. If they choose to, they can bypass the exam entirely, as it is sufficient to submit their school leaving certificate to gain entry into vocational schools. Finnish students enter university after only three years of studying in the gymnasium. Therefore, it is required to pass only one national exam in Finnish language, Swedish language, foreign language, mathematics and natural sciences. It is considered a fairly simple exam and the vast majority of graduates pass it without any problems.

The exam is approximately conducted like this: only two teachers monitor the process so that the applicant does not carry all the personal belongings with him to the exam room.

Everything necessary has already been placed in the exam room in advance. Only any dictionary and questionnaire are allowed to be taken into the examination room.

Consulting with anyone or copying is strictly prohibited, otherwise the applicant will be expelled from the examination room. Interestingly, the results of these exams do not affect admission to higher education in any way. It is necessary to take additional entrance exams to enter university.

By the way, most gymnasiums in Finland have switched to the system of electronic graduation exams since 2016.

Israel

The situation regarding the exam in Israel is indeed intriguing. Applicants are required to pass a psychometric test to gain entry into higher education institutions in the country. The results of these exams remain valid for 7 years. While it's permissible to take the exams multiple times, there must be a minimum interval of six months between attempts. The exams are conducted by experts from the Israel Center for Examinations and Statistics. The exam consists of 165 assignments and is aimed at checking the following qualities:

- Ability to think logically in mother tongue (40% of questions)
- Level of English language proficiency (20%)

- Mathematical abilities (40%)

The exam consists of a set of tests in three main areas: English language, mathematical ability and verbal thinking. Exams are held in different languages for different applicants: Spanish (once a year), French (once a year), Arabic (4 times a year), Russian (twice a year), Hebrew (5 times a year).

Despite the fairly favourable conditions, Israeli applicants have attempted to pass exams by cheating on multiple occasions. For instance, in 2010, students hijacked their class teacher's email and impersonated the teacher to request test answers from the Department of Education.

South Korea

There are no such graduation exams in this country, secondary education is a guarantee for everyone and almost everyone is awarded a diploma. Since education is almost a requirement of life in South Korea, most of the applicants intend to enter higher education institutions and the majority participate in the unified exams of state exam type.

The state itself is paying great attention to this. For example, aeroplanes are prohibited from landing, all flights are postponed for half an hour in the morning and in the afternoon and construction work is stopped all over the country in order not to distract applicants' attention during exams. As for the exams, they are held in four main subjects: Korean, English, history and mathematics as well as three different optional subjects. Only teachers invited from outside take part in the exams and the questions in the packages are opened at the same time throughout the country. Applicant can bring to the exam only an ID card, pen, pencil and eraser. It is not possible to enter the exam room with either a tablet or a phone.

Cases of suicide of graduates who did not get a good result in the exams have been recorded many times in various regions of the country. This shows that applicants are extremely serious about education because education is truly the way to the future here.

Brief information about exams held in other countries:

- In Norway, graduates and applicants take exams on study laptops equipped with special software that prevents cheating.
- Participation in ENEM (unified state exam) in Brazil is optional. Therefore, it is necessary to register for six months and pay the exam participation fee. It is enough to pass the regular school exam to enter some universities. By the way, only free education is provided in these universities.
- Each school has different exams in Switzerland, Iceland, the Philippines and Cyprus.
- It is necessary to pass a school first and then a

university exam to enter a university in Japan. Even those who graduate with honours must pass these tests.

- Graduates must pass two ordinary and two advanced exams after completing 28 courses to enter higher education institutions in Germany.
- There are two exams in Thailand and Hong Kong: one at centralized and one at each secondary school.
- Both oral and written exams are required to be passed in Canada, Italy, Scandinavian countries, Germany and Austria.

Comparative analysis

The goals and objectives of the entrance exams to higher schools are formulated as follows:

- ✓ Applicant - tries to approve his knowledge and skills;
- ✓ School - strives to demonstrate the level of teaching;
- ✓ Higher school - initiates to see the best students in its ranks;
- ✓ State - tries to assess the quality of the education system as a whole.

Let's have a brief look at what awaits the graduates of the schools of other countries in the future and which examination system they prefer.

Centralized or individual?

Fully centralized exams are conducted in Colombia, China, Iran, and 16 other countries worldwide. This means that applicants must pass a unique state exam. While this approach is convenient and creates equal conditions for all graduates, it may not always be entirely equitable, as applicants do not have the same opportunities from the outset. For example, a prestigious school in Beijing may offer different advantages compared to a provincial school in China.

Graduates in Thailand and Hong Kong must take one centralized and one optional exam at the end of their studies, while students in Japan typically face 5 exams. In Switzerland, Iceland, Cyprus, and several other countries, each school decides which exams its students will take. Additionally, applicants may be required to take an additional exam based on the requirements of their chosen university to ensure uniform conditions for admission to higher education.

Specialized representatives from external organizations conduct the final graduation exams at schools in the United Kingdom and the United States of America. In France, exams are held at the school itself, with test-takers invited from other educational institutions.

Written or oral?

Written exams are widespread in most world

countries, but the examiner accepts the answers orally in some educational systems. For example, exams are held only in writing in Japan, the Republic of South Africa and Singapore, while exam answers are given in oral form in Germany, Canada, Italy, Scandinavian countries and Austria. By the way, an applicant who fails a written exam in Switzerland can take an oral exam.

Graduation or entrance?

As mentioned above, there are countries where the results of school graduation exams are not enough for admission to higher education institutions. It is necessary to take entrance exams to enter a higher school. For example, graduates who want to become students in Japan pass through two examination stages: the first stage - The nationwide exam is conducted by the Ministry of Education, and the second stage is - the university exam.

Quantity or quality?

The number of graduation exams in different countries is also variable. If schoolchildren must demonstrate their academic knowledge on only 2-3 subjects in France, on 28 (!) subjects combined in 4 exams in Germany.

However, the purpose of the American examination tests is not only to evaluate the applicant's knowledge of the main subjects but also to predict his opportunities and readiness to study in higher education institutions. Such an approach has significant advantages because it is not enough to be satisfied only with theory to become a high-level expert. Being disciplined, creative, success-oriented and self-confident are among the main criteria in the USA.

The experience of neighbouring states Turkey

Higher education in Turkey ensures that high school graduates have relevant qualifications and grow as high-level specialists. When the Republic of Turkey was founded in 1923, it made some changes in its educational system by choosing the German model as its model. Universities accepted their students themselves until 1974. Serious setbacks were observed in this field due to the lack of central management at all levels of higher education in Turkey. It was decided to conduct the exams from a unified centre in 1974 to avoid this confusion. The Inter-University Student Selection and Placement Center (SSPC) was established on this date and began to carry out organizational work. This centre continued its operation until 1981. In 1974 and 1975, university exams were held in two sessions, morning and afternoon, in 1976-1980 on the same day and

centrally, since 1981 a two-level examination system has been implemented. At the same time, the Higher Education Committee of the Republic of Turkey was established after the reforms held in the field of higher education in 1981 and all higher education institutions were subordinated to this organization. It was decided to hold the first two-stage exam in April (ÖSS) and the second in June (ÖYS). The application of the system of necessary test answering by speciality was launched in 1987. In 1999, "ÖYS" was cancelled and became a single exam under the name of "ÖSS".

Students were given the right to receive higher education according to the lyceum field with the application of OBP (Secondary Education Achievement Score) that year. Afterwards, a lot of minor adjustments have been made to the system. However, the last and most important change was the transition to a single exam system consisting of two parts in 2006. As a result of this change, candidates got the right to answer general and field-oriented tests.

Attention is paid to 2 main results to get higher education in Turkey:

1) SAT - mathematics (in English) and English.

An official exam is held every 2 months.

2) YÖS - logics and mathematics. Registration for the exam is carried out in January-March. The exam is usually held in April-May and consists of 80-100 questions. It is important to score above 90 for admission to medicine and above 80 for admission to law and engineering.

Presently, Turkey's higher education institutions encompass universities, institutes, conservatories, and vocational higher schools. The country boasts 183 universities, comprising 118 state-run institutions and 65 private ones. Despite changes implemented since 1974, the root problems persist. Universities continuously strive to refine their entrance exams for accuracy and fairness, yet each modification uncovers new needs and unforeseen challenges.

Russia

The Unified State Exam (USE), the primary method of knowledge evaluation in Russia, has employed a consistent assessment approach since 2009. Nevertheless, some alterations have been introduced since 2015, including the following:

- Students who obtained the minimum score are now permitted to retake the USE. USE can be taken from April to June, that is, it is held on the condition that it is an early and main exam.

USE cannot be taken after July.

- ✓ Graduates of the year 2015 must write an essay to pass the USE.

- ✓ It is known that the attitude towards new changes is negative according to surveys conducted

in Russia. Because this system does not allow to objectively assess the applicant's knowledge. In many cases, the issue of admission to higher schools is solved in other ways.

Change in results was observed in some cases during the conduct of USE.

Kazakhstan

School graduates take graduation and entrance exams in the form of a unified national test (UNT) to enter a higher education institution in Kazakhstan, or graduates of previous years pass the applicant's complex testing (ACT). Kazakhstan citizens have the right to study abroad thanks to the "Bolashak" international scholarship based on competition. A graduate of a higher education institution gets a bachelor's (4 years), specialist (5 years) or master's degree (6 years). It is possible to get a second higher education only on a paid basis in an accelerated manner (2-3 years) in Kazakhstan.

UNT is conducted voluntarily, a graduate can enter the higher education institutions of Kazakhstan according to its results. UNT rules were determined by the order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 506 dated December 5, 2011. UNT was introduced in 1999.

UNT is held for the following people:

Graduates who want to enter the universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the current academic year;

- Winners of school and republican science Olympiads in general education subjects during the current year;

- Those awarded with the "Altın Belgi" certificate on general secondary education and those who graduated from general secondary education with a certificate of distinction.

Applications for participation in UNT are accepted from March 10 to April 25 and are filled out independently by graduates of their schools. All test participants are divided into groups according to a pre-scheduled table in advance and each group takes the exam on a specified day between June 1 and June 15.

UNT is conducted in five subjects:

Teaching language (Russian or Kazakh);

- Mathematics;

- History of Kazakhstan;

- Russian for schoolchildren studying in Kazakh language, Kazakh language for those studying in Russian-speaking secondary schools;

- Optional subject physics, chemistry, world history, literature, foreign language, geography).

Test assignments are compiled by the National Testing Centre, incorporating questions aligned with the curriculum taught in grades 1-11. Each year,

tests are updated by 25%. There are 25 questions per subject, totalling 125 questions. The exam duration is 210 minutes (3.5 hours).

Exams are not held at schools but at UNT's designated locations, where employees enter the building under a special regime. All unused rooms and auditoriums in the building are kept closed. Except for the main entrance, all other entrances and exits are sealed shut. Applicants enter the auditorium individually and are identified by their identity documents. Bringing calculators, crib notes, textbooks, books, mobile phones, laptops, and other items to the examination hall is prohibited, except for pen and paper. If foreign objects are discovered, examiners draw up an act, and the individual's results are nullified.

Applicants are given a general secondary education certificate and graduation certificate after completing UNT. The certificate is submitted by the centre conducting the UNT within 3 calendar days after the exam. The certificate contains the total score for each exam subject and the score in total.

Graduates who failed UNT are given a second chance to retake the test starting in 2016. The above-said exam is held at the university designated by the Ministry of Education and Science.

It is necessary to take an exam in four subjects in the repeated test exam:

- Teaching language; mathematics; History of Kazakhstan; Optional subject.

Georgia

Applicants must pass four exams in the Unified National Examination (UNE) to become a student in Georgia since 2005. Three of them are compulsory - Georgian language and literature, general knowledge, foreign language and one exam can be optional. Literature mathematics, history, geography, chemistry, physics, biology, fine and applied arts, or civics.

It should be noted that a major educational reform is currently being implemented in Georgia. Experts have prepared 10 reform packages covering all areas. The reforms will last 4 years. One of the most serious decisions of the Ministry of Education is the cancellation of graduation exams for schoolchildren. Additionally, applicants take three exams instead of four starting from 2020. It is proposed to remove the subject of general knowledge, which is not taught in national schools, from UNE.

Georgian language and literature, as well as the foreign language exams, will remain mandatory for applicants, as before. However, the third compulsory subject, previously chosen by applicants, will now be determined by the university based on the curriculum. For instance, applicants in the technical direction will take the exam in mathematics, while applicants in the humanitarian direction will take the exam in history.

II. ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY RESULTS

II.1. Demographics

The 1st round of the sociological survey was conducted on June 23 and July 7, 2019, among approximately 400 applicants in Baku (150 people), Sumgait (26 people), Ganja (49 people), Barda (25 people), Sheki (29 people), Shirvan (24 people), Khachmaz (13 people), Goy chay (20 people), Lankaran (40 people) and Mingachevir (24 people) based on the questionnaire surveys. 370 applicants (92.5%) studied in the Azerbaijani section and 30 applicants

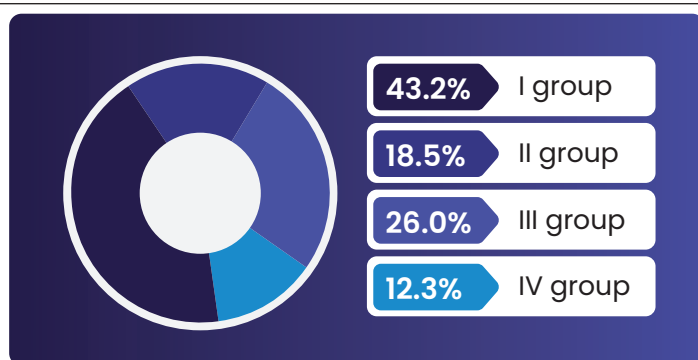
(7.5%) studied in the Russian section. 173 of them (43.2%) submitted their documents to Group I, 74 people (18.5%) to Group II, 104 people (26%) to Group III and 49 people (12.3%) to Group IV.

221 applicants (55.2%) were men, 179 (44.8%) were women. The applicants' age range involved in the survey was 15-25.

The number of parent- and teacher-respondents was 139 people (61.8% were men and 38.2% were women), and their age range was 31-64.

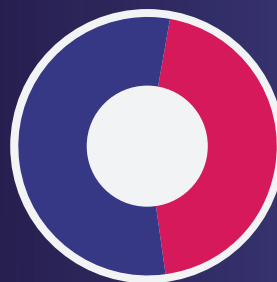


DIVISION OF RESPONDENTS BY GROUPS





DIVISION OF RESPONDENTS BY GENDER



55.2% Male

44.8% Female

Table 1. Grouping of respondents according to different criteria



TABLE 1. GROUPING OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO DIFFERENT CRITERIA

Criteria	Number of respondents / as per target groups	By percentage
Applicants		
Men	221	55.2%
Women	179	44.8%
Division of respondents as per groups		
Group I	73	43.2%
Group II	74	18.5%
Group III	104	26.0%
Group IV	49	12.3%
Division of respondents as per cities and regions		
Baku	150	37.5%
Sumgait	26	6.5%
Ganja	49	12.2%
Barda	25	6.3%
Sheki	29	7.3%
Shirvan	24	6%
Khachmaz	13	3.2%
Goychay	20	5%
Lankaran	40	10%
Mingachevir	24	6%
Division of respondents as per sections		
Azerbaijan section	370	92.5%
Russian section	30	7.5%
Teachers and parents		
Men	86	61.8%
Women	53	38.2%

II.2. Level of awareness of the new model of entrance exams on complete secondary education to high and specialized secondary educational institutions

One of the main objections stated in the discussions about the introduction of the new model was that the applicants could not fully grasp the essence of the new model. The results of the questionnaire survey show that 67% (267 people) of the applicants were fully informed, 24% (98 people) were partially informed about the new model applied in 2019 in the graduation and entrance exams to higher education institutions and 9% (35 people) had no information about it.

According to the results of the survey conducted among parents and teachers, 42% of the respondents were fully informed about the new model applied in this year's exams, 40% were partially informed and 18% had no information about it.

Experts think that the SEC held tests and monitoring exams so that applicants could master the new model.

In general, the analysis of the survey results suggests that despite several measures implemented by the SEC in this regard, the level of adoption of the new model could not encompass all applicants, primarily due to various reasons originating from within the education system. It is evident from the questions related to open-ended assignments that many applicants encountered difficulty in answering these types of questions, likely because they had not fully mastered the new educational program.



More than 85% of the respondents are aware of the new exam model.

The SEC's position regarding this issue is that the Center has taken appropriate measures since 2012 for the application of the test model by modern technology in Azerbaijan, its adoption by the applicants and the society as a whole, monitoring and test exams covering most of the Republic's secondary schools, preparatory courses and scientific-methodical semi-

nars were held since the end of last year in various subjects about the new rules and models to be applied in the exams. Reports were also heard on the topics of "Programs of graduation exams, examples of assignments and evaluation criteria" in the seminars. As a result of the discussions, decisions were made to prepare recommendations about controversial scores, errors and inconsistencies in the textbooks, to consider the recommendations in the improvement of the test bank and the design of new assignments.

Furthermore, a new type of application line, which includes open-type test assignments, was continued in forming the content of the exams alongside traditional test assignments. To enhance students' and applicants' understanding of these new test models and cultivate their proficiency in working with them, samples of such tests by subjects were published in the "Abituriyent" magazine at the beginning of the year. These samples were also incorporated into mock exams and included in test collections for classes. Open-type test assignments were integrated into the test block of each speciality group.

Open-type tests serve to comprehensively unveil applicants' knowledge and skills, foster mechanisms for applying acquired knowledge in practice, and assess the four levels of mastery: knowledge, understanding, application, and ability. They are particularly useful in distinguishing highly proficient applicants during assessment.

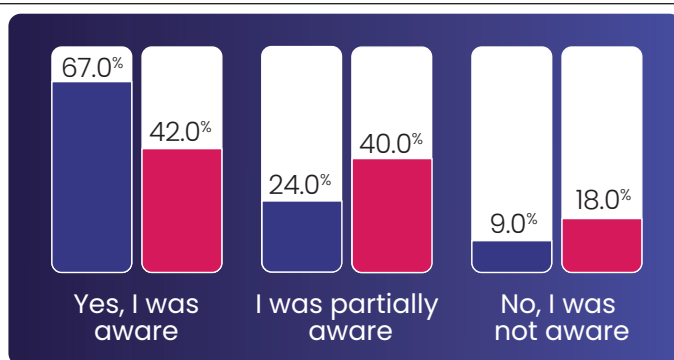
Books comprising two parts were published to equip students (future applicants) and teachers with assessment tools based on the new educational programs (curriculum). Part I of the book presented closed (multiple-choice) and open-type test assignments for relevant classes and subjects, while Part II provided assessment assignments for the new educational program (curriculum).

The workload undertaken by regional branches of the SEC operating in cities such as Nakhchivan, Ganja, Sheki, Lankaran, Khachmaz, Goychay, Shirvan, and Barda has significantly increased. Teachers in these regions were engaged not only in organizational events but also in scientific and methodological endeavours, thanks to the efficient operation of the departments.



WERE YOU AWARE OF THE NEW MODEL APPLIED IN EXAMS IN 2019?

■ Applicants
■ Parents / teachers



Mock exams were organized across all regions of the Republic to allow youth to assess their knowledge level, become familiar with the test exam format, and acclimate themselves psychologically to the exam during their preparation for entrance exams.

“Applicant Counseling Centers” have been established free of charge at Azerbaijan University, Baku Business University, Caspian University, Od-lar Yurdu University, and Cooperation University, as well as at regional branches, since March 15th. These centres aim to assist applicants seeking admission to higher and specialized secondary educational institutions. The specially trained staff at the “Applicant Counseling Centers” offer free guidance and support to applicants regarding student admission rules, application procedures for higher and secondary education institutions, filling and confirming the “Applicant’s electronic application,” resolving technical issues that may arise during this process, competition conditions, considerations for selecting majors (specialities), and more.

It’s worth noting that in the 1st round of the entrance exam (graduation exam), exams are taken in 3 subjects, with a maximum possible score of 300. Twenty out of 30 assignments in the teaching language subject are closed-type assignments, accounting for 50.00 scores. In the mathematics subject, 18 out of 25 assignments are closed-type, while the remaining are open-type requiring coded answers, offering 56.25 scores. For the foreign language subject, 23 out of 30 assignments are closed-type, yielding 62.16 scores. Applicants can obtain 168.41 scores out of 300 for this round, from both closed-type assignments, which have been used for many years, and open-type assignments requiring coded answers.

In the 2nd round of the entrance exam, exams are taken in 3 subjects, with a maximum possible score of 400.

It is possible to obtain 81.82 scores from 27

open-ended assignments which are required to be coded (22 closed + 5 traditional open-ended) and closed-type assignments per subject. It is possible to score 327.28 scores in total taking into account that the weighting factor for 3 subjects and 2 main subjects in the exam is 1.5. That is, applicants get 327.28 scores out of 400 scores they can obtain in the second round of the exam from closed and open-type assignments in which answers can be coded.

Thus, the applicants get 495.69 scores out of the 700 scores they can obtain on both rounds of the exam from the closed-type questions having been used for many years and open-type questions with answers to be coded. They can obtain 204.31 scores from the new type, i.e. open-type assignments requiring written answers.

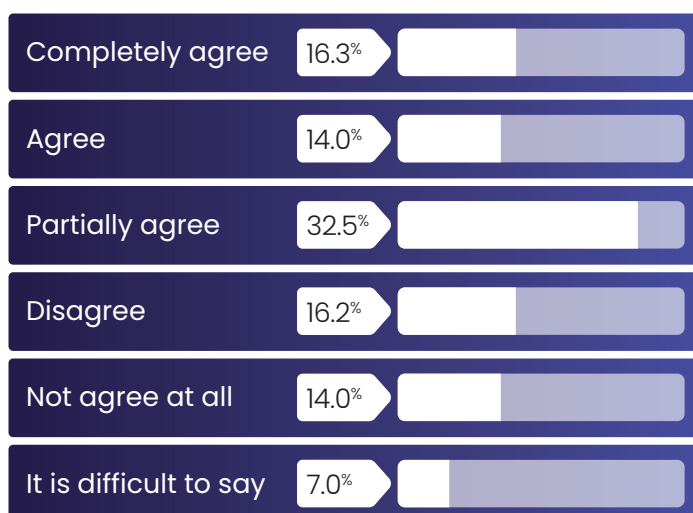
II.3. The main goal of implementing the new model

According to the results of the survey conducted among parents and teachers, it became evident that the introduction of the new exam model aims to strengthen the relationship between secondary schools and higher education institutions, as perceived by 16.3% of the respondents. Additionally, 14% of the respondents agreed with this perspective, while 32.5% partially agreed. On the contrary, 16.2% of the respondents did not support this opinion, 14% completely disagreed, and 7% found it challenging to express their views.

Differences of opinions were observed among the members of the Science and Education Committee of the Milli Majlis taking part in the interview with the opinion that “The introduction of the new model in the exams is to strengthen the relationship between secondary school and higher education institution”: “This is not directly related to the connection of entrance exams with higher education institution, but mainly related to the transition into new exam model in connection with the implementation of the curricu-



TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH THE OPINION THAT “THE MAIN GOAL OF THE NEW MODEL IS TO STRENGTHEN THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SECONDARY SCHOOL AND HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION”?



lum program. Because the new program has different requirements. In general, one of the main aspects of this educational program is to develop children's thinking and ideas, to teach them how to acquire knowledge themselves, not ready-made knowledge. In this regard, the model of current questions has also changed. It is a thought-provoking, open-ended, more logical and reasoning-based exam model that reveals one's opinions. The exam is indeed checked according to certain criteria there, teachers were given recommendations for checking. However, this was directly related to the implementation of the new educational program in secondary schools in each case. Because the exam model according to that program was applied for the first time" (*Sona Aliyeva*); "A collection of graduation and entrance exam scores of secondary general education institutions for admission to higher education institutions has once again brought up the importance of communication between both educational institutions. The new model revealed the wrongness of the opinion that emerged in recent years that "students cannot enter any higher education institution by only preparing according to the secondary school program and without going to any tutor". Thus, consideration of the results obtained by the students in the graduation exam during entrance exams directly serves to strengthen the relationship between secondary schools and higher education institutions. Changing the model of graduation and entrance exams mainly serves to improve the quality of education in secondary schools and eliminate existing deficiencies. The combination of the results obtained by the students in the graduation exam and the results obtained in the entrance exams strengthened the relationship between secondary general education schools and higher education institutions. Moreover, the new model raised the status of certification exams in addition to the demand for a more responsible approach to teaching in secondary general education institutions. The new model raised the prestige of secondary schools, and consideration of the graduation exam results during admission to higher education institutions increased students' responsibility for the graduation exams" (*Parvin Karimzadeh*).



More than 60% of respondents think that the main goal of the new model is

The position of the **Ministry of Education** on this issue is as follows: "The new model includes more knowledge-based education and it is not possible to measure skills with the old model, that is, it requires a slightly different approach. This was the second necessity. The first necessity is that graduates have

studied with a new program on the one hand, and a new model and measurement tools are needed when they graduate from this program. At the same time, the demands of the market, society and time change and the measurement of those demands and changes require a necessity for innovations. It is known that the children finishing the 11th grade took the exam twice. The graduation exam did not affect their later lives that much. Then they were admitted to higher education institutions based on entrance exams. The graduation exams are considered part of the entrance exams after the innovations. In general, one of the main consequences of this change is an increase in the role of the school in some sense. Because the results obtained in the graduation exams begin to play an important role in the graduate's admission

to higher education institutions. Of course, it is the first year and there are certain difficulties. However, the direction is right in general and teachers, students, parents and the community will gradually get used to this change. Exams or measurements and evaluations should be relevant to the content. That is, the measurement and evaluation should also change if the content changes".

Thus, the results of both the survey and the interview show that the introduction of of generally general strengthens the relationship between secondary school and higher institutions institution as the role of secondary -in a certain sense, and it demands a more responsible approach to the teaching of the new program - curricula, especially in schools.

II.3.1. Level of usefulness of the new model for the educational system of Azerbaijan

Out of the respondents, 52% (203 people) do not find this year's new admission model useful for Azerbaijan's education system, while 35% (138 people) consider it partially useful, and 13% (50 people) find it very useful.

Regarding parent and teacher respondents, only 10% perceive the new admission model as very useful for Azerbaijan's educational system, while 32.5% view it as partially useful. Additionally, 42.5% of respondents believe that the new model offers no benefit to our education system, and 15% encountered difficulty in answering this question.

It is clear from the results of the survey that more than 50% of the respondents in total do not consider the new model useful for our education system.

The members of the Science and Education Committee of the MM, who participated in the interview, think that it is still too early to say something about the usefulness of the new model: "Azerbaijani education should also have a system that meets international standards accordingly. It is too early to

say whether this model is useful or not. Because this model has been applied for the first time and it is not yet known what results it will give" (Kamila Aliyeva); "Improving the quality of education, development, elimination of shortcomings should not only concern the education workers, scientific workers, authors of textbooks and parents. Since the education system and its content serve the future of the country, this area worries the entire public, makes them think and forces them to look for ways out. We hope that the research and reforms carried out in the new admission model will serve to improve the quality of education. In the future, it will be able to make new contributions to the knowledge and skills of young people, who are the future of our country and to achieve high in results entrance entrance exams" (Parvin Karimzadeh); "I consider the idea of cumulating the scores obtained by

students in the secondary school graduation exams together with the scores obtained in the entrance exams to higher education institutions useful. This can have a positive impact on the quality of education in secondary schools and increase students' enthusiasm for studying in higher education institutions (Musa Gasimli); "This model is also an innovation for teachers, children and schools and even for the SEC. We are still developing this system, so I cannot say anything about its efficiency or usefulness. Either time will fit this model into the system in a good way, or it will smooth out and fix its bad points. We will see which way will be taken as time goes by. However, it will not affect the students' results with high achievements. Talented children will be admitted to universities again, probably the scores will be lower than last year. In any case, the passing scores will be lower as well. I do not think it will have any effect on university admissions in general. It is possible that the number of those who received the presidential scholarship and scored 700 scores would be lower. However, it will not have any harmful effects in general" (Sona Aliyeva).

Maleyka Abbaszadeh, the chairman of the SEC's Board of Directors, stated in her interview to APA in June, this year that "innovations are a must. Each living system must change over time. As for the examination and admission system, each model works for a minimum of 2 years and a maximum of 5 years. It should be checked and revised after 5 years. Certain changes may occur every 5 years. Time goes on, and the demands of time change too. Changes are inevitable if we want to join the global race. History taught us very serious lessons in the 80s and early 90s of the 20th century. We still feel and live the bitter consequences of those lessons. We should learn from what happened and work harder to prevent it from happening again."



More than 50% of respondents do not consider the new exam model

As the expert of the Ministry of Education's opinion, this exam model is unequivocally useful for the educational system of Azerbaijan: "Education is becoming increasingly internationalized. What does it mean? The systems are very close to each other. For example, Azerbaijan participates in the international assessment, but our results are not very high there. Because our teachers' approach and the content of teaching at school do not meet that standard. We believe that a child should know lipped and unlipped vowels in grade 1. According to international standards, a child should read and understand a text of about 100-150 words and answer questions about it by the end of grade 1. We say that we will be measured by this test at the end of grade 1 whether we like it or not. And the fact that it is difficult is an emotional position. The reality is that we have to adapt ourselves to this case if we decide to participate in an international assessment. Because this does not depend on our desire, the teacher's approach should change."



DO YOU CONSIDER THE NEW ADMISSION MODEL USEFUL FOR THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF AZERBAIJAN?

Very useful Partially useful Not useful at all Difficult to say

Applicants

13.0% 35.0% 52.0%

Parents / Teachers

10.0% 32.5% 42.5% 15.0%

Education experts also believe that while the new exam model may not be perfect, it represents the most optimal model available at the moment, with the process of improvement in this area being inevitable. In addition, Nathan Carr, an American expert who visited Baku as part of the “English Language Specialist” program supported by the US Embassy in Azerbaijan, provided insights on the evaluation of English language skills within the exam framework. He remarked, “Based on my observations and discussions, I can affirm that Azerbaijan employs a test model aligned with modern technology standards. Considering Azerbaijan’s size and the limited number of test preparation experts, the progress made in this area is commendable.”

II.4. A “trial” test version of the new curriculum (curricula): Have 10 years of experience and expectations justified themselves?

This year’s new exam model can also be noted as the second wider “trial” exam of the new curriculum - curricula, which has been implemented in the Azerbaijani education system since 2008. The point is that the model which was applied only in the graduation exam of grade 9 in 2017 was “tested” at the level of the entire republic this year. The following should be added in this context the Concept Concept of General Education National Curriculum Curriculum) in the Republic of Azerbaijan” was approved in 2006 by the Cabinet of Ministers the of Republic Republic of Azerbaijan and that document was improved and renamed “State Standards and Programs (Curricula) of the General Education Level in in 2010. The document envisaged the application of the result-oriented and integrative principles as the main requirements aimed at general education, revealing the students’ potential and ensuring the inculcation of the necessary knowledge and mental, informative and communicative skills necessary for an independent life. According to the new state standards, the management of general education should be carried out based on the principles of accountability, responsibility division and monitoring of development, and accountability should ensure each team member’s responsibility in the institution where general education is implemented as a result.

At the same time, the document defines in detail what students who have completed general secondary education should be able to do. A person who has reached this level of education should be able to analyze the texts of different styles and genres that he listens to and reads, convey their content to someone else in a concise and partially extended form, use monologue and dialogue forms of speech,

prepare a plan, thesis, project and opinion, justify his opinions logically through evidence and examples, summarize the main points expressed in different opinions, make calculations and predictions, use mathematical language, build algorithms, put forward probabilities, independently perform tasks that require creativity in the learning process, communicate in a foreign language, etc.

In addition, important directions have been identified such as the creation of personalized educational content, the modernization of human resources in the field of education, and the creation of responsible, transparent and efficient management mechanisms due to the results of education as the strategic goals of the “State Strategy for the Development of Education” approved by the President’s decree dated October 24, 2013. It is envisaged to implement directions such as raising the educators’ professionalism, establishing new systems for evaluating the learners’ achievements, identifying the learners’ talents, developing curricula for all levels of education and creating new information and reporting systems for ensuring and managing the quality of education within the framework of these goals.

However, what is the real picture in the country regarding the 10-year experience of new educational programs? Have the applicants been able to master the essence of the curricula?

29% (117 people) of the respondents who took part in the survey thought that the content of the new entrance exam was fully designed by the subjects taught to them and the new program (curricula), 32% (127 people) thought that they were designed according to it, 29% (117 people)) thought that it was partially suitable. 6% of applicants (22 people) thought that the content of the new entrance exam was not designed according to the subjects taught to them and the new program (curricula), and 4% (17 people) thought that it was not designed according to them at all.



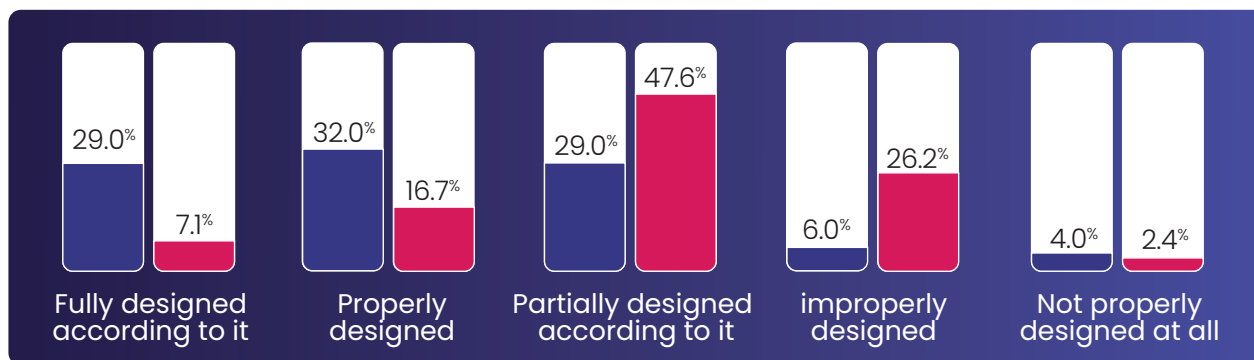
Nearly 90% of the respondents think that the content of the new entrance exam is designed according to the subjects taught to them and the new program (curricula).

According to the results of the survey conducted among parents and teachers, 7.1% of the respondents thought that the content of the new entrance exam was completely designed by the subjects taught to students and the new program (curricula), 16.7% said that it was designed according to them, 47.6% stated that it was partially designed according to them.



IS THE CONTENT OF THE NEW ENTRANCE EXAM DESIGNED ACCORDING TO THE SUBJECTS (CURRICULA) HELD?

■ Applicants ■ Parents / teachers



26.2% of the respondents said their opinion that “it is not properly designed” and 2.4% stated that “it is not properly designed at all”.

Thus, 90% of applicants and 71.4% of parents and teachers whose opinions were asked, stated that the content of the new entrance exam was almost designed by the subjects taught in secondary general education institutions and the new program (curricula).

Interestingly, findings from interviews with parents reveal widespread dissatisfaction with the implementation of the curriculum system in secondary schools. Many parents express concern that students struggle to grasp the essence of the curriculum, particularly regarding open-type questions, which results in difficulty answering them and ineffective time management.

Official explanations suggest that the introduction of the new national curriculum aimed to enhance subjects taught in secondary schools in alignment with societal needs. The goal was to foster interactive teaching methods, moving away from rote memorization and instead emphasizing critical thinking and reasoning skills. The new system sought to encourage group discussions, brainstorming sessions, and individualized learning, thereby engaging students more actively in the learning process. This shift away from traditional mechanisms also brought about new standards for assessing student knowledge and understanding.

The differences between the proposed new methods for knowledge assessment and the previous (traditional) methods are highlighted in the official explanations. For example, it is emphasized that the traditional assessment mainly assesses the students’ knowledge while the new mechanism evaluates their achievements. The previous system relied solely on daily and final assessments,

whereas the new system incorporates diagnostic (measuring initial knowledge and skills), formative (monitoring progress throughout the course to identify weaknesses and strengths), and summative (both internal and external evaluations to measure final results) assessments at all stages of the educational process. The new content standards aim to enhance students’ logical thinking skills through practical application of knowledge gained. Additionally, the changes prioritize students’ ability to make judgments about visual imagery, encourage the extensive use of artistic expressions and emotional engagement (such as commentary, reactions, and dancing) in their communication, and strengthen their oral proficiency.

The members of the Science and Education Committee believe that there are still problems related to the new program (curricula) applied in secondary general education institutions: “The large amount of summative related to the curricula is a cause for concern. The situation is still not satisfactory although some problems in this field have been partially eliminated by the Ministry of Education, so the number of summatives should be reduced. Because this creates psychological problems in children” (Kamila Aliyeva); “In general, the program is good, but there are certain mistakes in the subject curricula, therefore the Ministry of Education is working on them again. Education is such a field that we cannot apply a certain model ourselves. We should adapt it to ourselves over time. The aspects that are not compatible with our mentality, and our national and moral values will be out of order. Because every nation has its specific characteristics even at the level of education. I do not think that subject curricula have exactly been great for us. There are some advantages to this, but there are also some disadvantages which are our implementation problems.

Because most of the teachers do not understand the philosophy of curricula they try to give children only ready knowledge under the name of curriculum. The teacher seems to show his knowledge here and competition between them appears as a result. Therefore, it is necessary to work on it and change the teachers' way of thinking. Because the children's age characteristics, both physiologically and intellectually, are so that they will perceive what and how we give them. Therefore, the problems in education should not be found in children, but in teachers and the implementation of educational programs. For example, there are such schools that give very high results and there are schools that do not give good results. In general, subject curricula need to be improved every year. Monitoring should be conducted every year and research should be conducted based on it. Generally, the program is certainly not ideal, though I like its philosophy. It is necessary to work with teachers, train them and give them training courses to make the program effective. It is necessary to find out where and why the program is not effective as a result of the studies to be conducted.

I think that it will be possible to improve the program based on monitoring" (Sona Aliyeva);

"Azerbaijani education is integrated into world education today. German educational model was approved and implemented when the Soviet government was established. However, that model was identified during its application.

We created our national education model during the years of independence, by benefiting from the most advanced educational systems of the developed countries in the world. The curriculum system has been applied in Azerbaijani education for more than ten years. Curriculum reforms were also updated and developed according to the requirements of the day during that period. It goes without saying that where there is work, there are also flaws. The reforms carried out during ten years, the results obtained proved that curriculum reforms have positive and negative aspects" (Parvin Karimzadeh); "We are not satisfied with the level of secondary schools. We need to work very seriously on the education and teaching process" (Asim Mollazadeh); "The curriculum has been under one or another name and level since the foundation of the schools.

Curriculum means a teaching, or educational program. No education should be possible without it. I have always been against the artificial application of any form without taking into account local conditions. Local conditions, opportunities and personnel should be taken into account first for the implementation of any system or form. Everything is solved by personnel. There is no revolution in the education system. Everything must go gradually

and through reforms with evolution. Whatever does not benefit, should be corrected quietly and calmly" (Musa Qasimli).

The expert from the Ministry of Education said that the problems with the new curriculum are closely related to the transition from an old system to a new system: "This is a period of transition. Such changes do not happen in a very short time. People had certain concerns when the current system was introduced in the 90s under the name of the test system. However, testing is required everywhere 28 years later, nowadays. Everyone adapts to changes when time passes and the main thing is that the right changes should go in the right direction. The answer to that question today is yes, it corresponds. At the same time, the adaptation will gradually improve."

Education experts take a firm stance, asserting: "The principles of continuity and consistency were disregarded in textbooks written post the 2008 curriculum introduction. This disruption severed the generational connection, leading graduates of previous years to struggle with comprehending newer textbooks. Textbooks should serve as idea laboratories, offering additional guidance in assignments and granting students the freedom to choose. Through this approach, students won't just learn mathematics, but they'll also learn about life through mathematics. Presently, educational materials designed for secondary school students are unsuitable for the cognitive development of individuals aged 6-17. The logic embedded in textbook content implies that a student completing these materials should hold a scientific degree, as they cover topics akin to those found at the bachelor's and master's levels" (Kamran Asadov).

It should also be added that registration launched by the SRC started in January 2019 for preparatory courses on the development of evaluation tools based on the new educational program (curriculum) and their verification based on criteria. The participants data who completed the course were entered into the electronic "Database system" of the Center and

they were given a certificate at the end. They were involved as experts or markers based on the contract in cooperation with the Center. The course period for each subject was 2 months.

The courses were organized in Baku, Nakhchivan, Ganja, Sheki, Lankaran, Khachmaz, Barda, Goychay, Shirvan and Shamkir regional divisions of the Center. Teachers who know subject curricula, methodologists and pedagogic-oriented final year students of higher education institutions bachelor's level studies in the relevant subject and masters studying in those institutions also had the opportunity to participate in preparatory courses.



IS IT POSSIBLE TO ACCEPT THE APPLICATION OF THE NEW MODEL IN THE GRADUATION AND ENTRANCE EXAMS AS "THE END OF THE TEST METHOD"?

■ Fully agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Partially agree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Do not agree at all

Applicants

7.5% 22.5% 30.0% 32.5% 7.5%

Parents / Teachers

17.0% 22.5% 30.5% 21.5% 8.5%

II.5. Implementation of the new model: is it the end of the test method or the transition to a new stage?

17% of respondents (68 people) fully agree with the opinion "Can the application of the new model in graduation and entrance exams be considered as the "end of the test method"?". However, 22.5% (90 people) agree and 30.5% (122 people) partially agree. 21.5% of respondents (84 people) disagree with this opinion and 8.5% (31 people) do not agree. 7.5% of the parent and teacher respondents think that the application of the new model can be accepted as the end of the test method, 22.5% agree with this opinion, 30% partially agree, 32.5% disagree, and 7.5% do not agree at all.



More than 50% of respondents consider the introduction of the new model as "the end of the test method".

The members of the Science and Education Committee, MM, expressed their stance on the matter as follows: "I am opposed to reverting to the entrance exam method used during the Soviet era. The testing method proved effective and fair, offering opportunities for students from disadvantaged backgrounds to access higher education while ensuring objectivity. In my view, we should focus on enhancing the testing method further. Access to higher education should be available to all applicants, coupled with a concerted effort to elevate the quality of education. Fostering a cadre of educated professionals hinges on this approach. It's no secret that applicants unable to secure admission to domestic higher education institutions seek opportunities in neighbouring or foreign countries, relying solely on their school-leaving certificates. This not only drains foreign currency from our nation but also poses challenges regarding the recognition of such diplomas later on, leading to parental concerns. As a representative, I often field inquiries from parents whose children have graduated from foreign higher education institutions, only to find their diplomas unrecognized by the Ministry of Education. Many are unaware of this issue, while some knowingly opt for foreign education solely for the diploma's sake. Educating parents on these matters is imperative." The admission process should be simplified to avoid all these flows. That is, everyone can enter the university, but the main thing is to graduate from it" (Kamila Aliyeva); "I don't think that the test method will be ever abolished. Because the test itself has many thought-provoking points. For example, there are such issues in various subjects - history, and geography that children should solve and find by themselves and there is no memorization in this case. The test method is an exam method applied all over the world. However, this is a new approach in any case and it will be improved over time (Sona Aliyeva); "The new model is not the end of the test method, but there is a need to form an even more perfect system" (Asim Mollazade).

Some educational experts think that "this model was chosen because we could not come up with a better system than the test method." (Elshan Gafarov).

II.5.1. Do test-based admissions produce a memorizing generation?

25.5% of respondents (102 people) fully agree with the opinion that "Test-based admissions produce a memorizing generation," while 15% (59 people) agree and 22.5% (90 people) partially agree with this viewpoint. On the contrary, 21% of respondents (83 people) do not agree with this opinion, and 16% (64 people) strongly disagree.

Among parent and teacher respondents, 20% fully agree with the opinion, 20% agree, and 22.5% partially agree. Conversely, 15% disagree, and 22.5% do not agree at all.



DO YOU AGREE WITH THE OPINION "TEST-BASED ADMISSIONS PRODUCE A MEMORIZING GENERATION"

■ Fully agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Partially agree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Do not agree at all

Applicants



Parents / Teachers



Interestingly, the degree of agreement with the statement "Test-based admissions produce a memorizing generation" was more pronounced among applicants who chose the III group compared to other groups.

Some parents noted in the interview survey that the test method has positive aspects along with the negative aspects such as causing memorization in students and hurting the poor development of writing and other habits. Even some parents said that it is in the Soviet era. The students will be both educated and well-mannered in writing in such a case as to the parents' opinion who think in this way.

The members of the Science and Education Committee of the MM think that the test method leads to memorization and the introduction of open-ended questions in the exams will help to eliminate this problem: "The children had almost memorized the closed tests and memorization was widely spread. Most of the high-scored applicants already knew the exam question forms from year to year. Of course, children with high knowledge showed high results. An average child can't achieve high results. However, closed tests led to memorization in each case. The importance of the new model is that it makes children think and distracts them from memorization. However, we need time to improve this model" (*Sona Aliyeva*); "Applicants who entered higher institutions institution through the test method cannot write and, their oral speech is poor. It is very important to develop the written and oral speech of the future generation" (*Parvin Karimzadeh*).



More than 60% of respondents think that test-based admissions produce a memorizing generation.

As to educational experts' opinions, open-type assignments were added to the exams in addition to closed-type tests to develop writing habits "since the test mainly develops logical thinking and tends

to memorization more. This created certain difficulties for the examinees because they did not acquire the necessary habits and it affected the scores they would get in some cases. Dissatisfaction occurred is natural, and improvement and optimization work will inevitably be carried out in this direction. (*Nadir Israfilov*); "Conducting entrance exams based only on a closed-type test is not correct. This is not an indicator of education, so the number of open and situation-type questions should be increased over time. If we want to see more thoughtful and creative young people in universities, the number of closed-type questions should not exceed 40 per cent" (*Elshan Gafarov*).

Most of the respondents participating in the survey agreed with the opinion that "the test method produces a memorizing generation" and it is important to increase the number of open-ended questions to prevent this case.

It should be added that the test method is a broad concept and includes various types of assignments. As can be seen from this year's admission model, the number of open-ended questions has been increased to measure the knowledge and skills of applicants by the requirements of the new curriculum. Therefore, both questions asked to the respondents regarding the test method were mostly closed-type questions.

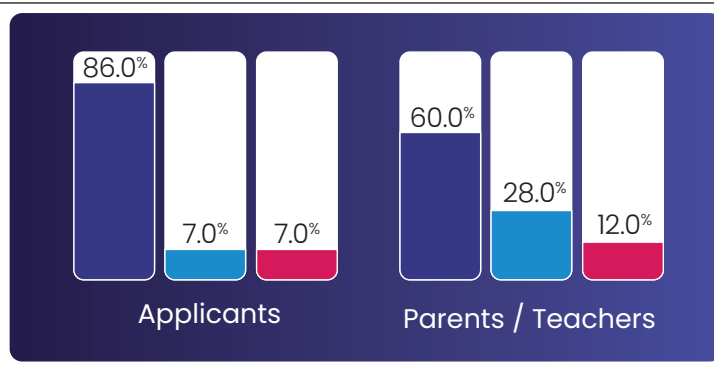
II.5.2. Level of confidence in the test method

The results of the survey prove that the majority of respondents are for keeping the test method but improving it. Undoubtedly, the high level of confidence in the test method is influenced by the bureaucratic obstacles that existed in the admission process during the Soviet era and the minimal level of the human factor in the admission process by the test method. Test-based admission made university admission accessible to all members of society. Therefore, 86% of the respondents accept the test method, 7% partially accept it and the remaining 7% do not accept it.



DO YOU ACCEPT A TEST METHOD?

- Accept
- Partially accept
- Do not accept



Based on the analysis, the applicant's attitude towards the level of usefulness of the new model for the educational system of Azerbaijan is not influenced in any way by his level of confidence in the traditional test method.

Although the level of trust in the test method among the parent and teacher respondents is low compared to the applicants, it is generally high. Thus, 60% of the respondents accept the test method, 28% partially accept it, and 12% do not accept it.



More than 90% of respondents accept the test method.

The members of the Science and Education Committee of the MM generally consider the test method to be a progressive method for admission to higher and specialized secondary schools:

"The test method is a progressive method applied in the most developed countries of the world. The main advantages of the test exam are the minimal level of dependence on the human factor, and the implementation of the results in a certain sense independent of the human factor." (Parvin Karimzade); "I consider conducting entrance exams by the test method to be more progressive and successful than other forms of exams. The system in the Sovi-

et era created opportunities for all known negativity. The influence of the human factor is small in test exams and those who are knowledgeable pass. It is better to include questions that inculcate analytical, logical thinking instead of "puzzle" questions that do not give knowledge and skills to make the test exams more efficient" (Musa Gasimli).

The expert on the Ministry of Education's approach to this issue is as follows: "This process will, of course, be further improved. Habits also play an important role here, because there is a model that everyone is used to. I think that there will be certain improvements in writing answers and texts."

II.6. Applicants' exam preparation process

II.6.1. Selection of speciality group

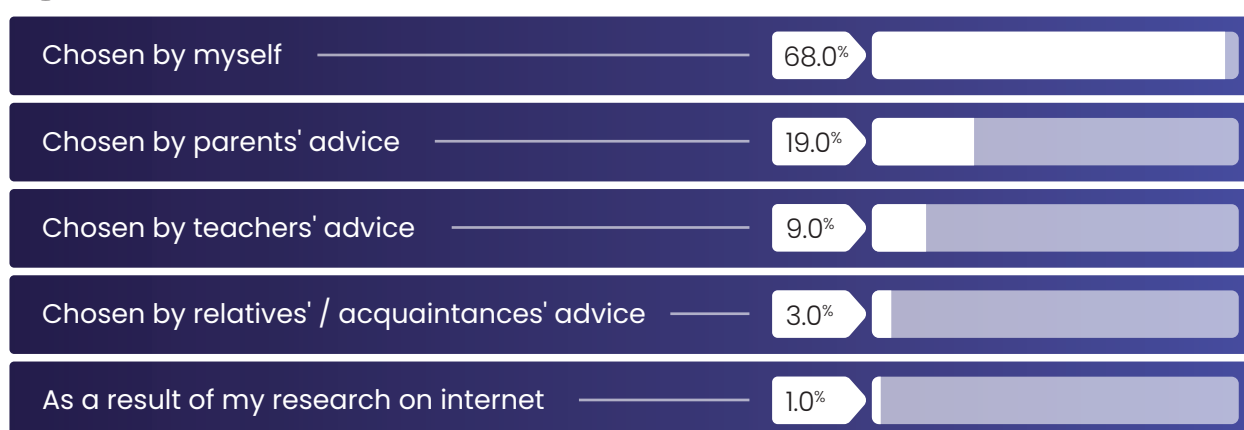
The results of the survey show that 68% of applicants (299 people) chose the speciality group by themselves, 19% (85 people) with their parents' advice, 9% (39 people) with their teachers' advice, 3% (12 people) with their relatives' / acquaintances' advice, 1% (7 people) as a result of their research on the Internet.



68% of respondents chose the speciality group themselves.

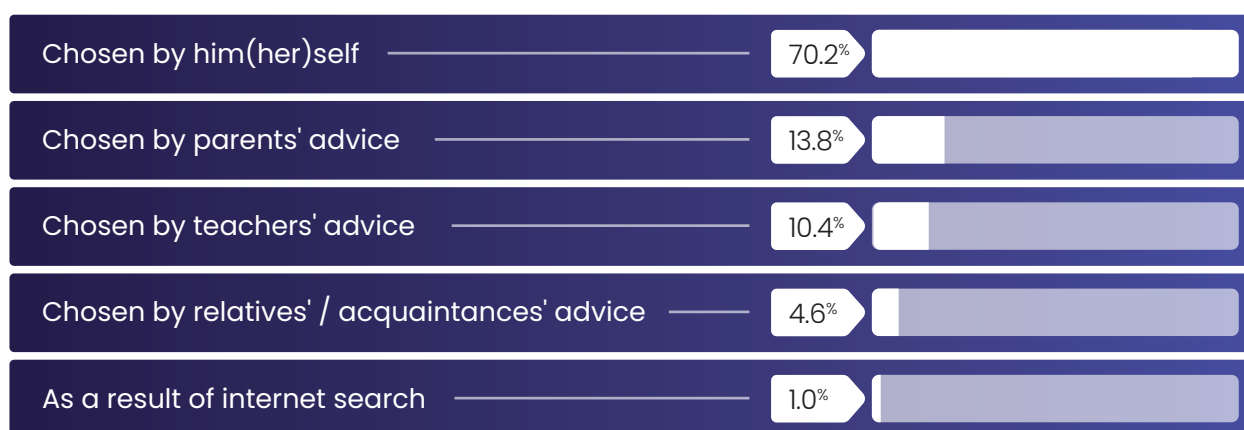


HOW DID YOU CHOOSE YOUR SPECIALIZATION GROUP?





HOW DID YOUR CHILD CHOOSE THE SPECIALIZATION GROUP?



It's interesting to note that the share of applicants who chose their speciality in group II (74%) by themselves is higher than in other groups. Conversely, in group IV, the share of those who chose their speciality is the lowest, with only 33% of applicants making this decision with their parents' advice. Gender does not significantly influence the choice of speciality group among applicants. According to 70.2% of parent respondents, their children chose the speciality group independently. 13.8% mentioned that they chose with their parents' advice, 10.4% with their teachers' guidance, 4.6% with advice from relatives or acquaintances, and 1% as a result of their research on the Internet.

II.6.2. Preparation with tutors

Tutor training is one of the most frequently discussed topics in discussions about education in Azerbaijani society. Tutor activity, which is a nationwide campaign, is related to the lack of the same quality of teaching in schools in all subjects, low of of teachers, even though the method has become a kind of habit, etc. The results of the survey also prove that the majority of applicants used tutoring services. 86% of applicants answered the question "How did you prepare for the exams?" that they prepared with the tutor's help, 8% - via lessons held at school, 6% answered: "I prepared myself".

94% of parents said that their children used tutor services, and only 6% of parents said that their children prepared for the exams on their own.

Some educational experts think that "most of the approximately 45 thousand applicants who have entered the university this year are the products of tutors and courses.

It is the result of the low-level teaching in secondary schools that today all students are in shadow education only at the expense of their parents'

finances" (*Elshan Gafarov*); "Recently, one of the reasons that keep students away from school and education is "bunker teachers" and "tutor" training. So, some of the students who prepare for higher education institutions go to additional training instead of school lessons. Indeed, the help of additional preparations cannot be denied, but their results are not always heartwarming. It is not difficult for a student who studies and works hard to enter a university, but how is it possible for a student who has not read a book for 11 years to learn everything in 5 subjects instead of 8 in just 2 years? We often witness that some parents lose their money along with their hopes" (*Kamran Asadov*).



86% of the respondents used a tutoring service.

Note: On April 29, a press conference was held at the State Examination Centre (SEC) regarding the graduation exams held in March and April 2019. Maleyka Abbaszadeh, the Chairman of the board of Directors of the State Examination Center, speaking at the press conference, pointed out that a total of 31 applicants were expelled from the exam and their results were cancelled in the graduation exams for the full (11-year) secondary education level held on April 7, 14 and 21 due to changing question books, detecting mobile phones and other reasons: "According to preliminary information, the following cases of violation were encountered in the exams held yesterday (April 28-teach.), i.e. 17 people violated the exam rules (5 - mobile phones, 10 - changing question books, 1 - multifunctional electronic device, 1 - trying to enter the exam building instead of someone else) As a result of the investigations conducted after these exams, it was discovered that the applicants



DID YOU PREPARE FOR EXAMS WITH THE TUTOR'S HELP?

☒ I prepared with a tutor
 ☐ I prepared by means of school lessons
 ☐ I prepared by myself

86.0%

8.0%

6.0%

were encouraged to commit various rule violations by various courses operating for commercial purposes and by people -engaged in tutoring activities there. Employees of various preparatory courses are active in obtaining and sharing exam questions on pages and groups created in social networks, and even in finding and introducing applicants to one another before the exam who will take the exam in a building and a hall and organizing other activities. Last year, the process of arranging to send someone else instead of the applicant who had to take the exam (currently a criminal case has been opened against those people) during admission to higher education institutions was also done by the staff of preparatory courses and the photo of the question book was also shared for the first time on social networks after the final exam held on April 7 of this year by the staff of the preparatory courses. The main goal of these people is to get financial profit by gathering more applicants and unfortunately, they are not interested in the applicants' future fate."

II.6.3. Participation in mock exams: did the small number of mock exams make it difficult to adopt the new model?



85% of the respondents participated in the test exams to master the new model.

85% (340 people) of the applicants who were asked for their opinion took part in the trial exams to master the new model. 15% (60 people) of the applicants did not take part in the test exams.

The small number of mock exams "created a lot of difficulty" for 20% of respondents and "some difficulty" for 62% of respondents in mastering the model applied this year. 18% of respondents thought that the small number of mock exams "did not create any difficulties" for them in mastering the model applied this year.

No connection was found between the applicant's participation in the mock exams and his attitude towards the degree of difficulty of the test assignments used in the graduation exams. In other words, there are no different opinions about whether test assignments used in graduation exams are difficult or easy between those who participated in the mock exams and those who did not. Moreover, no difference was found between the answers to



DID YOUR CHILD PREPARE WITH A TUTOR WHILE HIS EXAM PREPARATION?

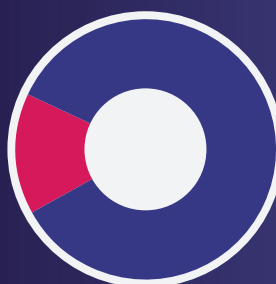
☒ Yes, he prepared with a tutor
 ☐ No, he prepared individually by himself

94.0%

6.0%



DID YOU PARTICIPATE IN TEST EXAMS?

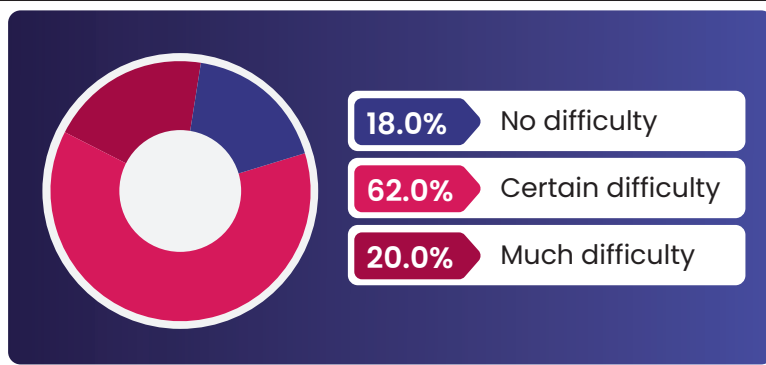


85.0% Yes

15.0% No



DID THE SMALL NUMBER OF MOCK EXAMS MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO ADOPT THE NEW MODEL?



the question “Are you satisfied with the distribution of subjects applied in the graduation exams?” among the applicants who participated in the mock exams or not.

48.8% of teacher and parent respondents think that the small number of mock exams held for the new model created obstacles for applicants to adopt innovations. 20.9% agree with this opinion, 18.6% partially agree, 9.3% disagree with this opinion and 2.4% do not agree at all.



A small number of mock exams was held through paper carriers and this case created difficulties for more than 80% of applicants.

During the interview survey with applicants and parents, there was a consensus on the importance of conducting additional mock exams through paper carriers to fully grasp the new model. In response, the SEC clarified the limited number of such mock exams, stating that exams are scheduled on weekends to avoid disruption to the teaching process in schools and higher education institutions. The sheer volume and frequency of graduation exams, entrance exams (offered twice), and other exams with diverse purposes restrict the organization of additional mock exams through paper carriers for secondary and full secondary school levels by the SEC.

It's worth noting that the SEC organized three mock exams, including written work in all subjects, leading up to this year's entrance exam. For instance, on February 10, mock exams were con-

ducted in 26 cities and districts of the Republic, following the 2019 entrance exam model for new educational programs (curricula). Out of the 28,337 applicants registered to participate, 211 individuals did not attend the mock exam.

Furthermore, the SEC conducted 5 online mock exams for 2019, accessible to applicants via the <http://otk.az> portal. The portal regularly featured new question packages for both the I and II rounds of the entrance exams.

Payment for paper-based mock exams was facilitated through the personal cabinet and payment methods on the SEC website, while registration and payment for online mock exams were processed on the otk.az portal.

II.7. Difficulty level of graduation or entrance exams

Entrance exams were difficult for 62% (248 people) of applicants whose opinions were asked and graduation exams for 29% (116 people), and both were difficult for 6% (24 people). No exam was difficult for only 3% (10 people) of applicants.

Regarding the opinions of parents and teachers, 33% said that the graduation exam and 37% said that the entrance exam was difficult for applicants. 14% of respondents said that both were difficult, and 2% said that neither is difficult. 14% of respondents had difficulty to answer this question.

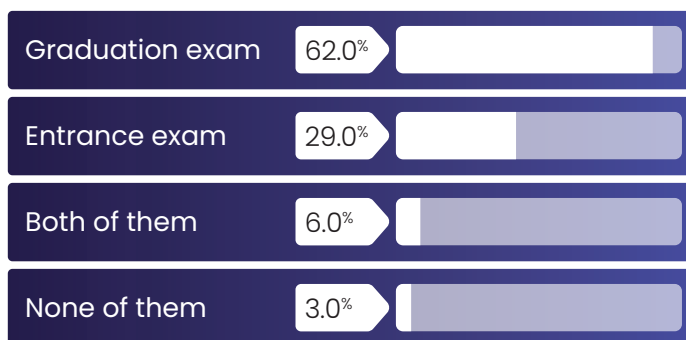


TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH THE OPINION THAT "THE SMALL NUMBER OF MOCK EXAMS HELD ACCORDING TO THE NEW EXAM MODEL CREATED OBSTACLES FOR APPLICANTS TO ADOPT THE INNOVATIONS"?





WHICH ONE WAS DIFFICULT FOR YOU IF WE COMPARE GRADUATION EXAM WITH ENTRANCE EXAM?



62% of respondents said that the entrance exam was difficult, and **29%** said that the graduation exam was difficult.

Education experts have different opinions on this issue: "Both exams are conducted by the SEC and there are different opinions in the society about whether the graduation or entrance exams are difficult or easy. The most important thing is that the spokespersons of the SEC make regular statements about each position and clarify the issue" (Nadir Israfilov); "In general, the entrance and graduation exams held in 2019 will be characterized by low results compared to previous years. Because the innovations applied this year have not been fully adopted by the exam participants. Even though there were no high results in the graduation exams held in March for grade IX and in April for grade XI. Only 2 students showed the maximum result, which was a very low result, in the exam held on April 7. However, the announcement of the exam results after two months passed created a psychological tension among the students. I would also like to mention one more point the new traditions in education have not yet been fully settled. April (at the same time, the graduation exam). Only two

applicants were able to show this result. This is an indirect indication of the imperfection of the secondary education system and the very low level of preparation of students. It is futile to expect more results as long as there will be negative situations in secondary schools and education in general" (Kamran Asadov); "Since this model is being applied for the first time, applicants and parents are not fully accustomed to the system. Similarly, it was the innovation for tutors and courses. However, I don't think it is very difficult, certain difficulties arose just because it was a new model applied in Azerbaijan. However, it is temporary, courses, tutors, parents, and students will get used to it in the following years" (Elshan Gafarov).

II.7.1. Division of subjects

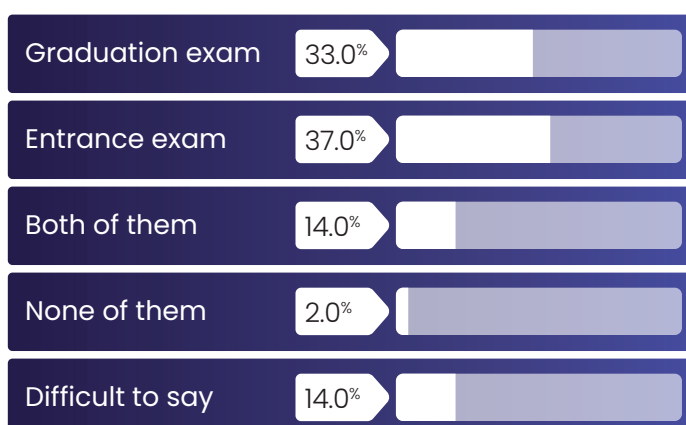
30.5% of applicants (122 people) were completely satisfied with the distribution of subjects applied in the graduation exams,

22.5% (90 people) were satisfied, 30.5% were partially satisfied, 10.5% (42 people) were not satisfied and 6% were not satisfied at all.

Regarding the distribution of subjects in the entrance exams, 30% of applicants (120 people) were completely satisfied with the distribution of applied subjects, 22% (88 people) were satisfied



WHICH ONE WAS DIFFICULT FOR APPLICANTS IF WE COMPARE GRADUATION EXAM WITH ENTRANCE EXAM?





ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE DIVISION OF SUBJECTS APPLIED IN GRADUATION AND ENTRANCE EXAMS?

Fully satisfied
 Satisfied
 Partially satisfied
 Not satisfied
 Not satisfied at all

Graduation exams

30.5%

22.5%

30.5%

10.5%

6.0%

Entrance exams

30.0%

22.0%

29.0%

12.0%

7.0%



More than **80%** of respondents were satisfied with the distribution of subjects applied in graduation and entrance exams.

and 29% (116 people) were partially satisfied", 12% (49 people) were not satisfied, 7% (27 people) were not satisfied at all.

The attitude of the applicants to the inclusion of the same subject (for example, mathematics) in both the graduation and entrance exams was as follows: 38.5% (154 people) were for keeping it at one round, 56% (224 people) for keeping it at both rounds, 5.5% (22 people) for adding new subjects



38% of respondents do not think it is correct to include the same subject in both graduation and entrance exams.

No difference was found between different geographical regions regarding the applicants' attitude to the inclusion of the same subject (for example, mathematics) in both the graduation and entrance exams.

II.7.2. Complexity level of assignments

24% of applicants (95 people) think that easy questions prevailed among the test assignments used in the graduation exams. 52% of the respondents (210 people) think that there were questions of medium difficulty level and 24% (95 people) think that there were difficult questions.

The attitude to the entrance exams was as follows: 40% of the applicants (160 people) thought that the test assignments used in the exams contained difficult questions, 51% (205 people) thought that it was of medium difficulty and 9% (35 people) think that there were easy questions.

In general, it is clear from the applicants' answers that difficult questions were used in both the graduation and entrance exams.



More than **50%** of the respondents thought that there were questions of medium difficulty level in the graduation and entrance exams.

A statistically significant difference was determined among the applicants in the speciality



WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE ABOUT THE SAME SUBJECT (FOR EXAMPLE, MATHEMATICS) BEING INCLUDED IN BOTH THE GRADUATION AND ENTRANCE EXAMS?

New subjects should be added

5.5%

Should be included in both exams

56.0%

Should be included in one exam

38.5%



WHAT LEVEL OF QUESTIONS PREVAILED AMONG THE TEST ASSIGNMENTS USED IN THE GRADUATION AND ENTRANCE EXAMS?



Easy questions



Questions of medium difficulty level



Difficult questions

Graduation exams

24.0%

52.0%

24.0%

Entrance exams

9.0%

51.0%

40.0%

groups about the degree of difficulty of the test assignments used in the graduation exams. So, if the questions were easy for 23% of applicants who chose group III, this indicator was 3%, 8%, and 0% for applicants who chose groups I, II, and IV, respectively.



Presentation of assignments in the exams at different levels of complexity, including easy, medium and difficult levels, created difficulty for about 80% of respondents.

The presentation of the test assignments used in the graduation exams at different levels of complexity, including easy, medium and difficult levels, created a lot of difficulty for 11% of applicants (45 people), created difficulty for 21% (83 people), and partial difficulties for 46% (183 people), no difficulties for 18% (74 people) and no difficulties for 4% (15 people) at all.

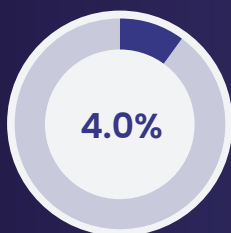
The test assignments used in the entrance ex-

ams were presented at different levels of complexity as follows: easy, medium and difficult. 18% of applicants (72 people) said it was very difficult for them, 26% (103 people) said it was difficult, 39% (156 people) said it was partially difficult, 13% (53 people) said it was not difficult and 4% (16 people) stated that it was not difficult at all.

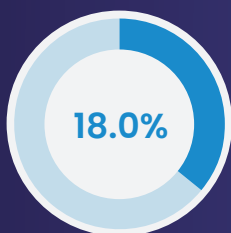
As to some educational experts' opinions, "the questions of graduation and entrance exams were difficult. Admission questions cover the entire secondary education course. We are talking about the fact that a graduate aspiring to get higher education has difficulties in front of these questions and cannot cope with them. Because the knowledge he acquired at secondary school does not create such an opportunity" (*Kamran Asadov*).



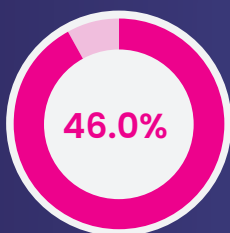
WAS IT DIFFICULT FOR YOU THAT THE TEST PAPERS AND ASSIGNMENTS USED IN THE GRADUATION EXAMS WERE PRESENTED AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COMPLEXITY, SUCH AS EASY, MEDIUM AND DIFFICULT?



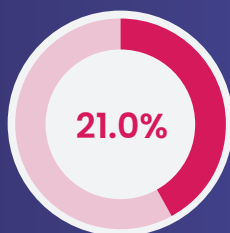
It was not difficult at all



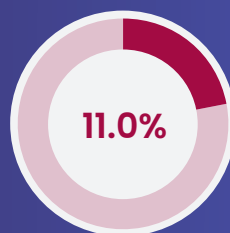
It was not difficult



It was partially difficult



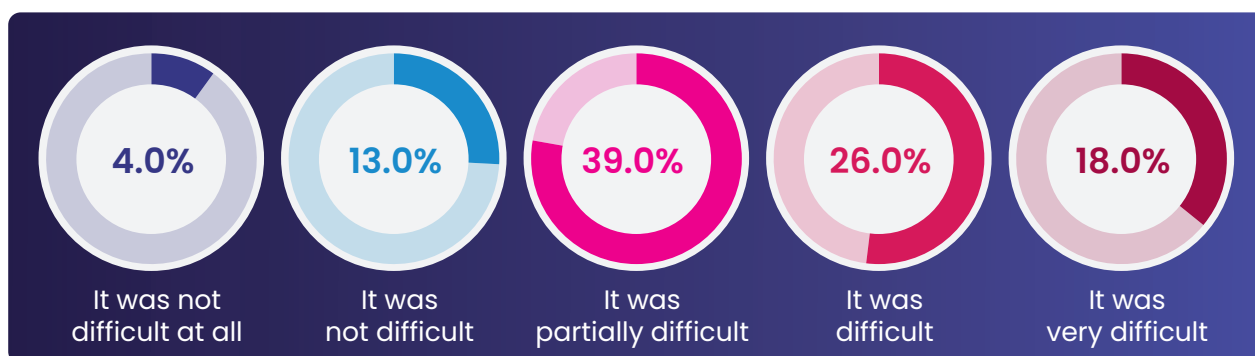
It was difficult



It was very difficult



WAS IT DIFFICULT FOR YOU THAT THE TEST PAPERS AND ASSIGNMENTS USED IN THE ENTRANCE EXAMS WERE PRESENTED AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COMPLEXITY, SUCH AS EASY, MEDIUM AND DIFFICULT?



II.8. Tradition and innovation in Azerbaijan technology

II.8.1. Open-ended test assignments: resistance to digesting innovation or difficulty? Where does the problem come from?

The survey results and conversations conducted with applicants and parents show that there are always difficulties in mastering innovations. The main difference between the new model and the previous model is that open-type test assignments were included in the exams along with closed test assignments by the requirements and essence of the new educational program (curricula). This difference was in the proportion of 70% of closed-test assignments and 30% of open-type assignments. Considering this factor, the respondents were addressed with several questions related to open-type test assignments. Thus, for 54% of the applicants (217 people), shortcomings were observed related to the open-type assignments used in the exams, and for 46% (183 people), there were no shortcomings.



More than 50% of the respondents think that there were shortcomings related to the open-type assignments used in the exams.

As for the shortcomings of the open-type assignments used in the exams, 37% of the applicants mentioned that the open-type assignments requiring written answers take time, 21% said that the compatibility-type assignments were not concrete, and 17% said that the assignments requiring a choice were complicated and 25% indicated the difficulty of calculation-type assignments.

Regarding the disadvantages of the open-type assignments, 18.6% of parent and teacher respondents mentioned the difficulty of calculation-type assignments, 37.2% the complexity of assignments requiring a choice, 2.6% the lack of concreteness of matching-type assignments and 62.8% noted that open-ended assignments requiring written answers were time-consuming. 2.3% of the respondents said that they were generally against the inclusion of open-ended questions in exams.



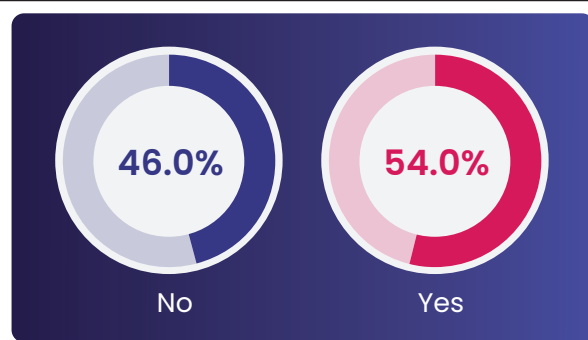
According to 37% of respondents/applicants, open-ended assignments requiring written answers take too much time.

The position of the SEC is as follows about this issue: "In general, why are open-ended assignments applied? The essence of this system is that certain skills - mathematical abilities, way of thinking, and creative thinking will be formed in children in addition to knowledge. That is a transition from the school of "memory" to the school of "thinking". Open-ended assignments are applied and are required to be answered in writing. Here, unlike the old closed-type assignments, there are no options, the student just has to think and solve the equation suitable for any situation. The student's mathematical skills should show themselves here. At the same time, he should be able to establish the logical connection between the given text in Azerbaijani language and its parts. We check the extent to which students' skills are formed with several other assignments. On the other hand, the ratio of the number of open- and closed-type assignments has been preserved here.

The number of open-type assignments in subjects was formed based on the statistical analysis



ARE THERE ANY SHORTCOMINGS RELATED TO OPEN-TYPE ASSIGNMENTS USED IN EXAMS?



of the results of the monitoring and final exams. In total, a scale of 700 scores was maintained. As you know applicants can score 700 scores in the 1st and 2nd rounds of the exam.

They get 495 scores out of these 700 scores from traditional closed-type assignments or open-type assignments that can be coded, and the remaining 205 scores from open-type assignments. The aim here is that the ratio should be applied in such a way that the applicants can answer those assignments. The main goal that we face as an organization in the assessment is to be able to rank the examinees according to their knowledge and skills as per the given scale. These open-ended assignments were used to identify the more knowledgeable and skilled applicants, and the ratio was also expected so that there would be no difficulty. However, it was the first year that the graduation and entrance exams in grade 11 have been held according to this model. Afterwards, more in-depth research will be carried out so that it would be possible to determine the nuances, pros and cons of what you said. The SEC conducts scientific and statistical analyses every year after the completion of all examinations within 5-6 months. More extensive analyses will be conducted after the end of the competition and will be published in the 12th issue of "Abituriyent" magazine.

II.8.2. Evaluation criteria of open-ended test assignments (situational, textual and source-based): is it possible to talk about objectivity where there is a human intervention?

The examination practices across various countries globally demonstrate the diverse methods employed to evaluate answers based on the type of exams administered. Human involvement in the

assessment process can often raise doubts or concerns among individuals. Bearing these considerations in mind, respondents were prompted with several inquiries regarding this matter.

19% (77 people) of the applicants who were asked to evaluate situational, textual and source-based assignments were completely satisfied, 18% (72 people) were satisfied, 27% (108 people) were partially satisfied, 25% (99 people) were not satisfied, 11% (44 people) were not satisfied at all.



More than 80% of the respondents were aware of the scores given to the subjects in advance.

57% of the applicants (228 people) had no information about the scores given to the subjects, 24% (96 people) were partially aware of them and 19% (76 people) had no information at all.

12.5% of the applicants (50 people) strongly believed in the objective conduct process of question assessment in the exams, 37% (148 people) believed in it, 27.5% (110 people) partially believed in it, 12% (47 people) did not believe and 11% (45 people) said that they did not believe in it at all.

According to the results of the survey conducted among parents and teachers, 2.4% of the respondents who were asked their opinion on the objective conduct of the assessment process said that they strongly believed, 39.5% believed, 30.2% partially believed, 16.3% did not believe, 11.6% did not believe at all.

37.2% of parent and teacher respondents stated that they were aware of the scores given to subjects in advance, 44.2% were partially aware of them and 18.6% were not aware of them at all.

Research shows that one of the main concerns among respondents is related to problems in



More than 35% of respondents were not satisfied with the assessment of situational, textual and source-based assignments.

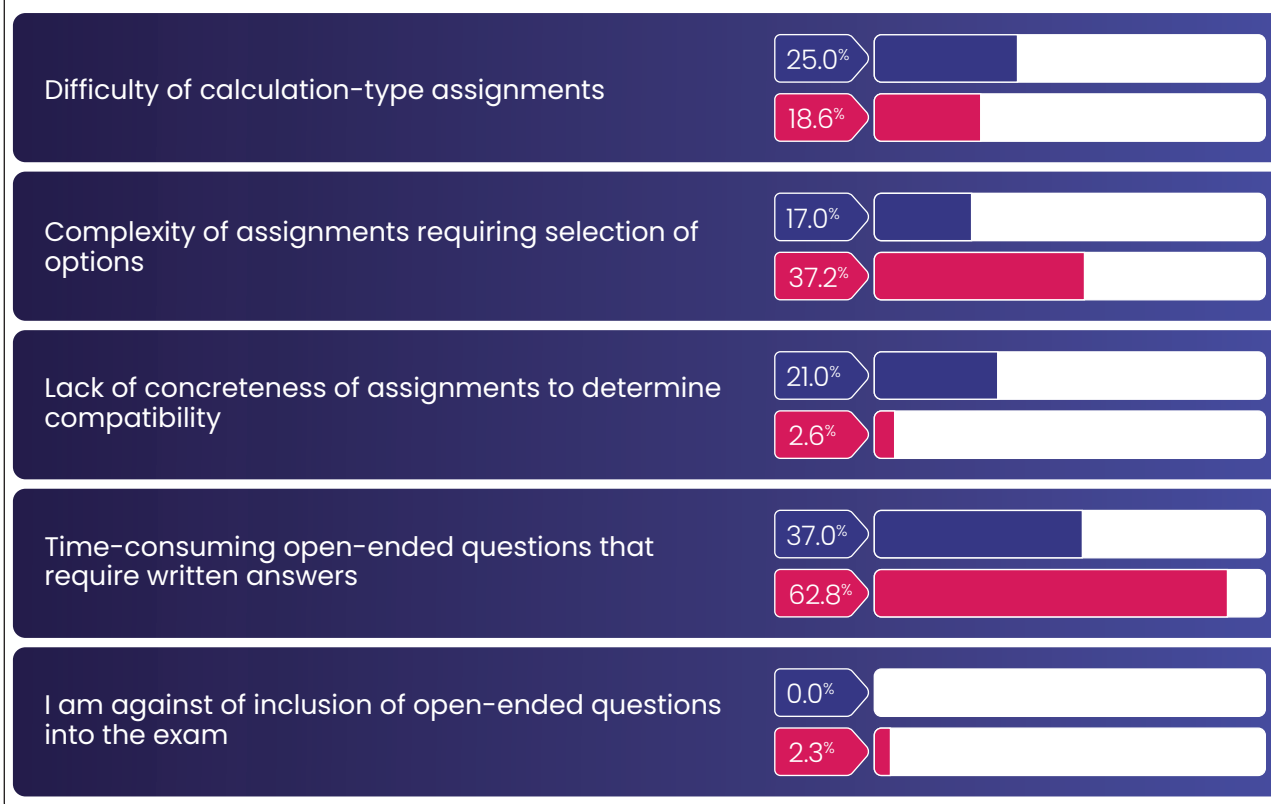


More than 75% of respondents believed in the objective conduct of the assessment process.



IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT SHORTCOMINGS WERE OBSERVED IN OPEN-ENDED ASSIGNMENTS?

■ Applicants ■ Parents / teachers



checking written assignments after graduation and entrance exams. There are mainly two issues of concern here: firstly, the human factor in the checking process and secondly, the long duration of the checking period. These two issues cause psychological stress in applicants, parents and teachers. The experts and parents who participated in the interview noted that “the answers were announced 3 days after the exam in the previous years and the students felt relaxed as they knew how much they scored. However, the applicant is aware of their results too late now and therefore he feels extra excited. This is one of the shortcomings of the new model. It is an inevitable factor that writing assignments take a long time to check. Considering all these factors, the SEC should think about reducing the number of these assignments. In general, there are a lot of such questions. As a result, both the examiner and the examinee are in trouble.”

The position of the SEC on this issue is that written assignments (answers to open-ended assignments) are checked by markers behind the computer in the examination (checking) halls in, a closed environment that meets the relevant security requirements in the SEC and its regional units. The software for checking the written work was de-

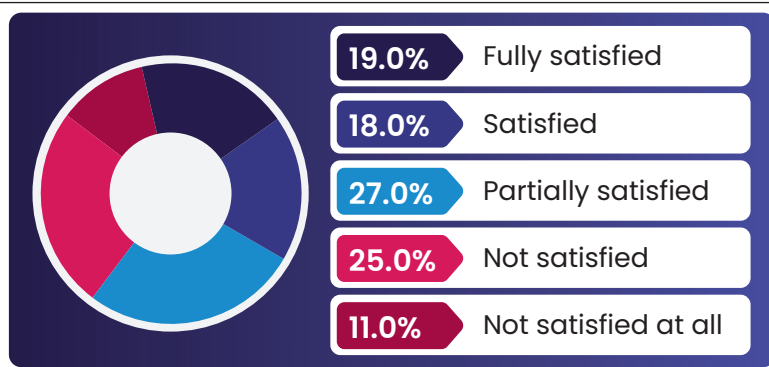
veloped by the specialists of the SEC. Each writing work is first “scanned” and evaluated by 2 markers (when there is a difference between the values of the markers, the writing work is sent by the program to the 3rd marker). No information about the author of the written work (name, surname, patronymic, student code, address, etc.) is displayed on the monitor of the marker’s computer during the check. Only the writing work, the criteria for evaluating the writing work, and the corresponding field for entering the value are displayed on the monitor.

Furthermore, a distinct assessment criterion has been formulated for each assignment provided to students during the examination. Markers evaluating the written work of any assignment adhere to the specific assessment criterion established for that assignment. These criteria encompass potential solutions and anticipated answers to the assignments. The assessment criterion is a comprehensive guide to the assessment of the assignment and the marker does not deviate from the assessment criteria of that assignment when evaluating the writing work.

In this context, the SEC emphasized that certain stages in the checking process follow a standard timeframe. For instance, upon receipt of documents,



ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE ASSESSMENT OF SITUATIONAL, TEXTUAL AND SOURCE-BASED ASSIGNMENTS?



It typically takes 2-3 days to scan each of them (considering the workload of 40,000-45,000 students), separate them into electronic files, segment them according to assignments, and integrate them into the database for an additional day. Moreover, selecting benchmarks for ensuring the quality conduct of the checking process and the calibration stage also requires 1-2 days. These processes are integral for ensuring the thoroughness of the checking process and the separate assessment of assignments. Each work undergoes scanning to streamline the checking process electronically and mitigate potential confusion.

Calibration sessions are conducted to enable markers to adapt to the process through periodic training, thereby enhancing the quality of their work. The time-intensive nature of these processes contributes to the overall quality of the work. The preparation process, lasting 4-5 days, precedes the checking process, which typically concludes in 2-3 days. For instance, the Azerbaijani language subject requires a 3-day checking process, while mathematics and foreign language subjects necessitate 1 or 2 days for evaluation. Without the preparation process, the volume of appeals would increase significantly, complicating the appeal process and potentially compromising the quality of the checking process.

It should also be added that Maleyka Abbaszadeh, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the

SEC, noted at the press conference held on April 29 regarding the graduation exams conducted in March and April 2019 that 6125092 checking works were at least performed taking into account that each writing paper is evaluated by 2 markers (as we mentioned, if there is a difference between the values of the markers, that writing paper is sent by the program to the 3rd marker) although the total number of written papers was 3062546.

The representative of the Ministry of Education outlines his perspective on the matter, emphasizing the significance of technology and adherence to international assessment standards. He acknowledges the scarcity of individuals specializing in this field within Azerbaijan, attributing it to the novelty of the subject matter. He underscores the importance of aligning Azerbaijani education with global standards and suggests areas for improvement within the assessment process.

In his explanation, he provides an example related to quadratic equations, illustrating how the new model allows for more nuanced evaluation compared to the previous system. In the previous model, candidates were awarded scores based solely on correctness, without differentiation between various stages of problem-solving. However, the revised approach evaluates candidates based on their ability to perform distinct components of



WERE YOU AWARE OF THE SCORES GIVEN TO THE SUBJECTS?



I was aware

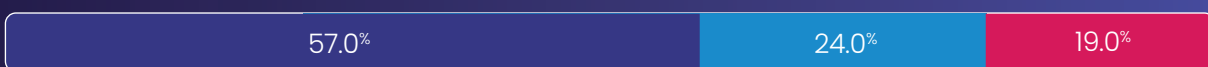


I was partially aware



I was not aware at all

Applicants



Parents / Teachers





DO YOU BELIEVE IN OBJECTIVE CONDUCT OF ASSESSMENT PROCESS?

Strongly believe
 Believe
 Partially believe
 Do not believe
 Do not believe at all

Applicants

12.5% 37.0% 27.5% 12.0% 11.0%

Parents / Teachers

2.4% 39.5% 30.2% 16.3% 11.6%

the problem-solving process, such as calculating the discriminant, finding the root, and correctly multiplying the roots together.

This new method enables a more refined assessment, distinguishing between individuals who demonstrate different levels of understanding and proficiency. While acknowledging the complexity of the issue, the representative highlights the importance of recognizing partial knowledge and rewarding candidates accordingly. He concludes by emphasizing the potential for significant improvement in the assessment process through the adoption of such practices.

Educational experts think that “One of the greatest achievements of the SEC is the measures taken to limit the interference of the human factor in the examination process as much as possible and ensure transparency. The results of the examination process and the assessment are carried out mainly by the application of high technologies. Finally, a third marker is involved in the process to achieve a more objective result if a different approach is recorded in the assessment between the markers” (Nadir Israfilov); “I agree with the opinion that ideal objectivity is impossible where there is a human factor. The SEC has a large infrastructure and a large material and technical base. The main root of these dissatisfactions must be sought and found. If we cannot adapt to it in the initial period when new mechanisms are introduced, this does not mean that these mechanisms are 100% problematic or unacceptable, we will get used to it over time. The goal is to choose young people who are more creative and productive” (*Elshan Gafarov*).

II.8.3. Application of listening device for foreign languages

The survey results obtained through qualitative interviews highlight a significant concern regarding

the implementation of listening and comprehension devices for foreign language exams, particularly in regional and rural schools. Parents expressed apprehension about the readiness of teachers in these areas to effectively teach and prepare students for such exams. They emphasized the need for adequate testing and implementation of listening devices across all secondary schools before incorporating listening and comprehension texts into exams.

In response to these concerns, the SEC’s representative provided clarification regarding the implementation of the new curriculum. He emphasized that the curriculum, which has been in effect since 2019, aims to develop knowledge and skills according to established standards, including proficiency in listening and comprehension for foreign language education. The representative noted that the curriculum has been integrated into educational programs and textbooks, indicating that students should have acquired these skills over their 11 years of schooling.

Regarding the availability of equipment and resources in different regions, the representative acknowledged this as a separate issue. However, he highlighted the extensive capabilities of information technologies, suggesting that schools can leverage these resources to address any material and technical limitations. Overall, while acknowledging the challenges related to the implementation of listening and comprehension devices, the SEC emphasizes the importance of adhering to curriculum standards and leveraging technological resources to support students’ educational needs. There is no school without computers and the Internet there. Even if there is no Internet, only a computer is enough to listen to any text and express its content or perform assignments based on that text. These all are reflected in the curriculum. Those skills

should be developed in students according to the state standards. There is a certain part of foreign language assignments, 6 out of 30 assignments determine the listening ability checking. Speaking ability may also be tested in the future. Knowing a foreign language, mastering various components, reading, writing, speaking and listening skills - these four components are world standards. The ability to speak should also be tested in the future as opportunities expand to know at what level they express their opinions. We do not check anything outside the syllabus in the exam. All test assignments are prepared by the valid textbooks and educational programs”.

The SEC clarified this issue after the completion of the examination process that there is only one foreign language exam in each hall and pre-checked devices are installed in each hall for listening material. 10,000 devices have been prepared and submitted for use by the SEC for this year's exams according to the official protocols (the 1st stage of the master's degree, the graduation exams in 4 areas of grades 9 and 11 as well as autumn exams).

The SEC received only 4 complaints regarding sound devices during this year's exams and technical problems were indicated in the protocols of the head and supervisor of the exam. As spare devices were placed in each building in advance by the SEC, the problem with devices was solved on-site and 4 faulty devices were replaced with new and spare ones.

The Ministry of Education emphasizes the importance of listening and comprehension skills, noting that these abilities are crucial for a native speaker to master both the grammar and understanding of a language. They highlight that listening comprehension tasks constitute only 5% of the maximum score for graduates preparing for admission exams, representing a small part of the overall foreign language assessment. The Ministry clarifies that while this innovation has altered a minor aspect of the general exam, it remains relatively unchanged.

Regarding the use of devices, the Ministry points out that traditional language labs are outdated, and students can now access listening comprehension texts easily with mobile phones. They highlight the widespread smartphone coverage in Azerbaijan, making such materials more accessible than ever. Access to teaching materials for English and other foreign languages is virtually limitless, with digital resources offering extensive options. The Ministry stresses that their aim is not to impose rigid guide-

lines but to encourage students to develop listening and comprehension skills independently.

Additionally, the Ministry conducts professional development training and provides methodical recommendations to support educators. However, they emphasize that these resources are straightforward and easily learnable, allowing teachers and students to adapt them to their needs. There should be no such expectation in society that the Ministry will come and train them on how to use the device. People learn in some form, when necessary. People copied a test and distributed it as there were very few tests in any form. There are enough tests nowadays. In general, it is a mistake to link the content of modern education to one source. The situations that a person faces in life are not predetermined, but unknown situations. Every change and innovation creates anxiety in people. The process is not easy and the scores show that the students have difficulty in some sense. However, it is a matter of time and each successive class will answer it more easily”.

Educational experts are also of the opinion that “any innovation in society is not unilaterally welcomed by the whole society and is inevitably accompanied by the appearance of certain problems, which, as a result, does not pass without dissatisfaction. However, test exams based on the new model, including monitoring exams on the English language subject were held and appropriate measures were taken, albeit partially to help the students and applicants who will take part in the graduation and entrance exams”(Nadir Israfilov); “This is a delayed step, it should have been taken a long time ago. I welcome this step. There are 151 thousand teachers in the country, and approximately the largest number of teachers is in foreign language after primary school teachers. Their number is between 2025 thousand. 95 per cent of these teachers cannot speak a foreign language. Students who have completed full secondary education must be able to communicate in at least one or several foreign languages according to Article 19 of the Law “On Education”, including the newly adopted law on general education. It is possible to explain the low level of teachers' professionalism in this field with the above figure”(Elshan Gafarov).

It should also be added in this context that Nathan Carr, an American specialist in the English language, has given training at SEC. The training was organized within the “English Language Specialist” (ELS) program of the embassy with the support of the US Embassy in Azerbaijan to help the work done by the centre in the direction of the assessment of knowledge and skills in the English

language subject. The first phase of the project started on April 1 and lasted until April 12. This stage was mainly a review of the assessment experience of the SEC on the English language subject, including familiarization with the assessment skills of local teachers (writing, reading, listening). Nathan Carr participated in the process of preparation of materials for the graduation exam in the full (11-year) secondary education base within the framework of his visit, which was held by the SEC on April 7. Nathan Carr noted that an independent exam on the English language subject is held in the graduation exam in most cases in international practice: "Currently, the English language exam is conducted in Azerbaijan as a part of the graduation exam. It would be better if the English language results showed all the language skills, i.e. writing, reading, listening and speaking abilities. For example, some universities value a specific writing score because this quality helps the student while studying there. Therefore, it is important to give results according to different skills in the English language exam, which makes it necessary to conduct an independent exam on that subject in the future."

On the other hand, it is recommended to spend 3 hours on the exam according to international standards. The duration of the exam will increase if additional skills related to English are included and this will cause anxiety to the students. All these should be taken into account."

II.9. Comparative analysis of exams held in 2018 and 2019: "700 scores" problem, reasons for low scores, level of complexity between the new model and the previous model

One of the notable points in the discussions around the new model of this year's graduation and entrance exams was related to the number of those who scored 700 points.

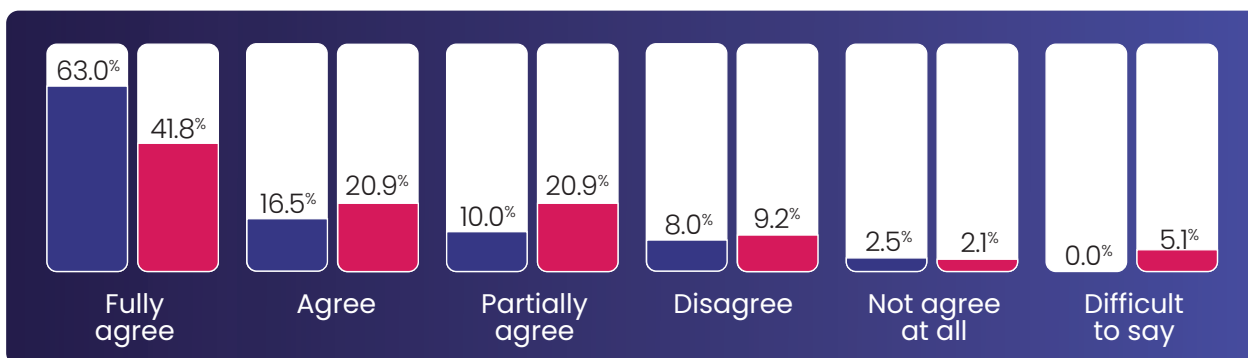
In response to discussions among members of the National Assembly (Milli Majlis), educational experts and media representatives, Maleyka Abbaszadeh, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the SEC, concluded the discussions with an article entitled "Sighs" for those who scored 700 points". According to the SEC's head, the first 700 scores were registered in 2007 although the test exams have been held since 1992: "It should be emphasized that the applicants who scored the highest points in the entrance exams were awarded the President scholarship before according to the relevant Decree of the country's President in 2001. All these motivated the applicants not only to collect the scores required for admission to this or that speciality but also to be the first in their speciality group to receive a scholarship. As a result, we observed the first "700 scores" in 2007. It should be noted that it is not correct from the pedagogical point of view to separate applicants who have scored above 650 points. All of them are very educated and purposeful people. However, the characteristics of the competition and the limited number of places in the various specialities claimed by the applicants dictate the need for a specific parameter, that is, a score that allows ranking the applicants without the notorious human factor (the human factor means solving something with a request or bribery). That's exactly why points are needed."

Some educational experts think that there is no need to turn a decrease in scores into a tragedy or

700 ★

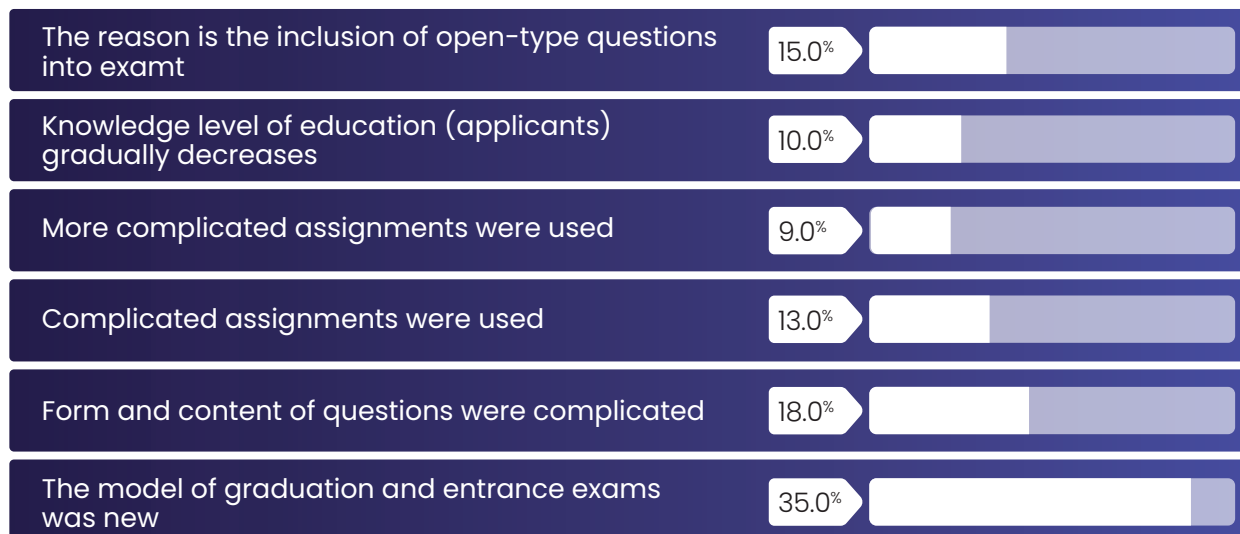
TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE WITH THE OPINION THAT "PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF GRADUATION AND ENTRANCE EXAMS GIVES THE BASIS TO THE SAYING THAT NOBODY WILL SCORE 700 POINTS THIS YEAR"?

■ Applicants ■ Parents / teachers





HOW DO YOU THINK WHAT THE REASONS OF NOT COLLECTING 700 SCORES IN EXAMS ARE?



to evaluate it as a disaster, or to make a fuss due to 700 scores: "This is mainly an issue related to the transition to a new model and lack of adaptation to open-ended tasks. Of course, there were cases related to the distribution of the assignments' difficulty level and the existence of wrong questions and the SEC acknowledged some of them, and clarified some points; however, some points were taken into account during appeals. As for the decrease in the level of knowledge, the level of knowledge can neither decrease nor increase sharply in one year. It takes years, even decades" (*Nadir Israfilov*).

However, some educational experts think differently: "A decrease in scores this year is related to a decrease in the level of education year by year, even month by month, and a sign that the model of graduation and entrance exams has become new at the same time." (*Elshan Gafarov*).

Regarding the results of the survey, 63% of applicants (251 people) fully agreed with the opinion that "Preliminary results of graduation and entrance exams gives the basis to the saying that nobody will score 700 points this year", 16.5% (66 people) agreed, 10% (40 people) partially agreed, 8% (33 people) did not agree and 2.5% (9 people) did not agree at all.

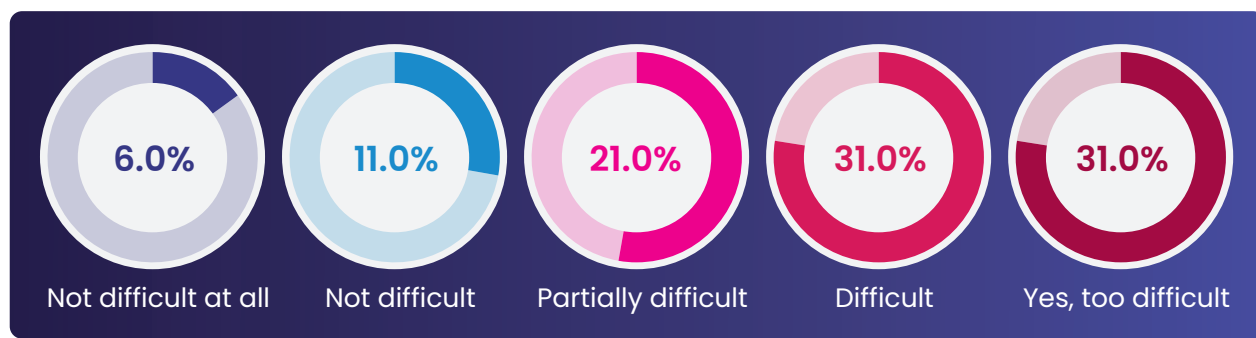
According to 41.8% of parent and teacher respondents, there will be no one who will score 700 points this year. 20.9% of respondents agree with this opinion, 20.9% partially agree, 9.2% disagree, 2.1% do not agree at all, and 5.1% had difficulty answering.



85% of the respondents stated that they agree with the opinion "Preliminary results of graduation and entrance exams give the basis to the saying that nobody will score 700 points this year".

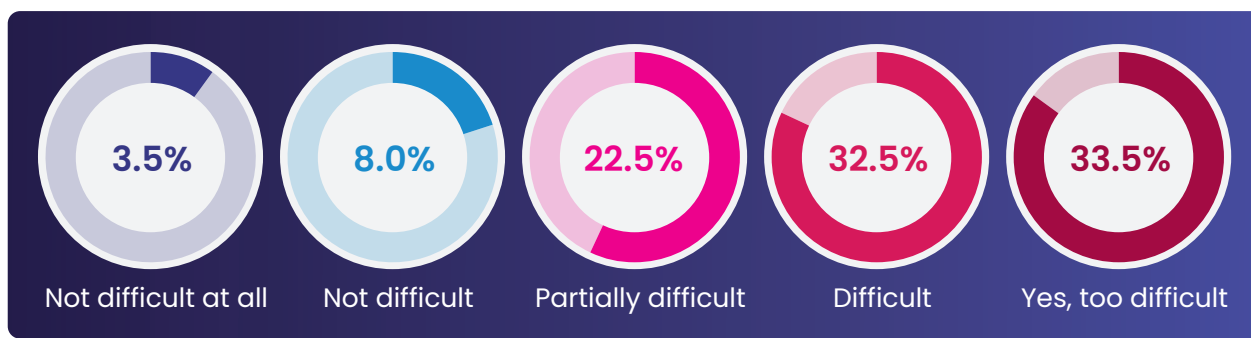


WAS THE NEW MODEL OF GRADUATION EXAMS COMPLICATED COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS YEARS' ADMISSION MODEL?





WAS THE NEW MODEL OF ENTRANCE EXAMS COMPLICATED COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS YEARS' ADMISSION MODEL?



35% of the respondents mentioned the novelty of the model of graduation and entrance exams among the reasons for not allowing to score 700 points.

35% (193 people) of the applicants said that the novelty of the model of the graduation and entrance exams was among the reasons for not being able to score 700 points in the exams, 18% (102 people) said that it was due to the complexity of form and content of the questions, 13% (70 people) stated that it was due to the existence of difficult assignments, 9% (49 people) - due to existence of more difficult tasks, 10% (56 people) - due to the decrease in level of educational (applicants) knowledge and 15% (81 people) - due to inclusion and use of open-ended questions in the exam.

In general, the result of the survey shows that the main reason for a decrease in scores is the novelty of the graduation and entrance exam model and in this regard, the complexity of the form and content of the questions.

The applicants' answers to the question "Was

the new model of graduation and entrance exams complicated compared to the previous years' admission model?" were as follows:

31% of the respondents (123 people) said that the new model of the graduation exams is very complicated compared to the entrance exam model of previous years, 31% (123 people) said that it is complicated, 21% (83 people) said that it is partially complicated, 11% (43 people) think that it is not complicated, 6% (26 people) think that it is not complicated at all.



For more than 80% of the respondents, the new model of graduation and entrance exams was complicated compared to the entrance exam model of previous years.

As for **the entrance exams**, 33.5% (133 people) of the respondents said that the new model of the entrance exams was very complicated compared to the admission model of previous years, 32.5% (130 people) stated that it was complicated, 22.5% (90 people) thought that it was partially



ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE TIMING OF ENTRANCE AND GRADUATION EXAMS?

Fully satisfied
 Satisfied
 Partially satisfied
 Not satisfied
 Not satisfied at all

Graduation exam

35.0% 28.0% 12.5% 15.0% 9.5%

Entrance exam

40.5% 29.0% 15.0% 9.5% 6.0%

complicated, 8% (43 people) said that it was not complicated, 3.5% (14 people) thought that it was not complicated at all.

The new model of both entrance and graduation exams was complicated for more than 80% of the applicants compared to the model of previous years.

II.10. Attitude to the time of graduation and entrance exams: How fair is it to hold exams before the end of the academic year? What does the SEC say about it?

35% of the respondents (140 people) were completely satisfied with the time of the graduation exams, 28% (112 people) were satisfied, 12.5% (50 people) were partially satisfied, 15% (60 people) were not satisfied and 9.5% (38 people) were not satisfied at all.

40.5% of the respondents (162 people) were completely satisfied with the time of entrance exams, 29% (116 people) were satisfied, 15% (59 people) were partially satisfied, 9.5% (38 people) were not satisfied and 6% (25 people) were not satisfied at all.



More than 70% of the respondents were satisfied with the time of graduation exam and more than 80% were satisfied with the time of the entrance exams.

More than 75% of applicants were almost satisfied with the time of graduation and entrance exams. However, some parents who participated in the survey thought that holding the exams twice caused tension in the applicants' moods. Even there were those people among them who pointed out that it was wrong to hold the exams in the summer.



The majority of educational experts think that it is not correct to hold exams before the end of the academic year.

Educational experts think that "one of the most common issues among the general public is the issue of conducting exams before the end of the academic year. This can be considered as a consequence of increasing two academic weeks during the year and moving the start of the school year to September 15 instead of September 1. International experience and the climate factor are mainly

cited here. The SEC explains that the exams are held before the end of the academic year because the work schedule is overloaded" (Nadir Israfilov); "One of the innovations in higher education entrance exams in 2019 was that the graduation exams were held before the end of the academic year, that is before the grade 11th program was fully mastered. It should be noted that the entrance exams were held before the end of the academic year in May of previous

years, but the graduation exams were held in June after the end of the academic year. Both the graduation exam and the entrance exam were held before the end of the academic year starting this year. Mastering the educational program before the end of the academic year was only possible by using tutoring and preparatory course services. During the entrance exams held in 2017-2018, 5 applicants for the I speciality group, 2 applicants for the II speciality group, 1 applicant for the III speciality group and 2 applicants for the IV speciality group correctly answered the presented test assignments in all subjects despite their studying at secondary school and not having completed the educational program. 19 applicants mastered the educational program and scored 700 points before the end of the academic year in the 2018-2019 academic year. Of course, it is gratifying that the applicants scored high points. A contradictory aspect emerges here. If a student scores high on the graduation exam held in April and the entrance exam held in May and meets the competition requirements, he or she may not attend high school because he or she is considered a prospective student. Conducting entrance and graduation exams before the end of the academic year can hurt attendance in the 11th grade of secondary schools" (Kamran Asadov).

The SEC's attitude to this issue is that the 1st round of the graduation exams was held from the beginning of April to the end of April in 4 directions and the results were announced on May 12. Afterwards, the 1st round of the entrance exams was held on May 12 and 19. The results of the exams held on May 12 were announced within 9 days and the results of the exams held on May 19 (for the 3rd group) were announced within 10-13 days. After the student's results are known, it is not correct to associate the student's poor school attendance with the university entrance exams. If the student does not attend school regularly, other problems may arise here (for example, the student may not receive a school-leaving certificate).

II.11. Attitude to the activity of the Appeals Commission

As mentioned here above, the survey was held on June 23 (second exam for I and IV speciality groups) and July 7 (second exam for II and III speciality groups - summer exam). Applicants took the first (spring) entrance exam for higher education institutions for I and IV speciality groups on May 12, and for II and III speciality groups on May 19 after that. Taking this into account, respondents were asked whether or not they apply to the Appeals Commission and their attitude towards the commission's activities in general.



97% of the respondents did not apply to the Appeals Commission established in the SEC.

97% of the respondents (388 people) did not apply to the Appeals Commission established in the SEC, while only 3% (12 people) did. It should be noted that it is impossible to give a reasonable opinion about the applicant's attitude to the activities of the Appeal Commission due to the small number of appeal applicants in our sample.

Not all the applicants and parents who are dissatisfied with the evaluation process of their answers address the Appeals Commission established under the SEC. For example, one of the parents said: "My child was not satisfied with the results of the graduation exams. He said that his correct answers were wrongly calculated. In particular, the answers to open-ended questions were wrongly calculated rather than closed-ended questions. We appealed to the Appeals Commission. They reviewed our application and indeed it turned out that the answers given were wrongly calculated. That is, we were able to prove that my son wrote correctly, but it was calculated incorrectly. My child himself participated in the process of rechecking the answers, and I, as a parent, was with him. Thus, scores were added

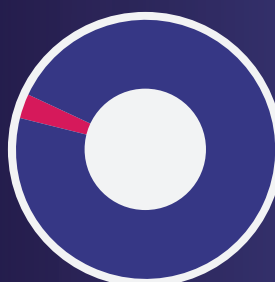
to our score. 90% of applicants get a positive result according to my observations. This problem should be solved once and for all. In particular, there are problems with the correct calculation and assessment of open-ended questions. Thus, there is a gap in the system. I noticed that most of the people checking the answers were young people. It's true, I don't doubt their skills and knowledge. However, in my opinion, more experienced specialists should be involved in this process. Because both applicants and parents suffer from this issue. Not everyone has time to come and apply. I came and went twice. I should also note that some parents say that there is no point in applying. I would like to note that most of the parents do not apply to the Appeals Commission due to lack of time or lack of awareness. I would recommend that parents and applicants use these rights."

Educational experts hold diverse perspectives on the matter. Nadir Israfilov, for instance, stated, "As an expert, I have repeatedly monitored the activities of the Appeals Commission and have not witnessed any violations or unethical behaviour towards the appellants." On the other hand, Elshan Gafarov expressed concerns, noting, "There are people whose position is defended, and their scores are restored by the Appeals Commission. Some cannot go there at all. Sometimes even one score decides a young man's fate. In general, it is not encouraging to have so many complaints in this process."

According to information from the SEC, a total of 1593 graduates or applicants appealed to the Appeals Commission, located in the Nasimi district at 28 Abdulvahab Salamazade Street, regarding the final assessment (attestation) of knowledge for those completing the full (11-year) secondary level of education and the results of entrance exams to higher educational institutions. Among these, 54 graduates or applicants appealed regarding Group I, 111 regarding Group II, 55 regarding Group III, and 45 regarding Group IV. In total, 1858 graduates or applicants (1.11 per cent of all examinees) sub-



DID YOU APPEAL TO THE APPEALS' COMMISSION CREATED IN THE STATE EXAMINATION CENTER?



3.0% Appealed

97.0% Did not appeal



ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE AMOUNT OF PAYMENT APPLIED FOR PARTICIPATION IN ENTRANCE EXAMS?

Fully satisfied
 Satisfied
 Partially satisfied
 Not satisfied
 Not satisfied at all

Applicants

11.0% 21.0% 21.5% 29.5% 17.0%

Parents / Teachers

17.9% 18.0% 33.3% 30.8%

mitted applications for score investigation. These appeals covered approximately 14,000 written papers regarding graduation exams and up to 800 written papers regarding entrance exams, totaling appeals on 14,800 (0.49 per cent of all written papers) written papers (assignments). All appeals underwent investigation, and the appellants were invited to discuss their cases. For those living in the regions, contact was made via phone, and the results of the appeal were communicated along with relevant explanations.

The marks of 726 students or applicants (0.43 per cent of all examinees) who applied for an appeal had changed on a total of 892 assignments (0.03 percent of all assignments), and the mistakes they made in writing were explained to the students in connection with other claims. The correction made in about 70 applications refers to cases where the examinee wrongly wrote the solution (or answer) of the assignment in the space reserved for another assignment.

During the investigation, it came to light that over 200 students or applicants had applied for all assignments in a particular subject, yet they failed to complete any written work for the subject they applied for. Additionally, 58 students or applicants either declined to participate in the appeal process or did not attend the appeal despite their application. However, their applications underwent thorough investigation, and decisions were made based on the assessment criteria.

An intriguing development occurred during the assessment of an exam held on April 7, 2019, where the word “events” was deemed a correct answer for one task by the Appeals Commission (specifically, number 48 in option B, number 47 in option D, number 47 in option F, and number 47 in option H). Consequently, 136 students who responded to the assignment in this manner had their results ad-

justed accordingly.

It is noteworthy that approximately 100,000 students participated in the graduation exams, and around 67,600 students took part in the entrance exams across four groups. The written work of these students underwent meticulous evaluation, encompassing over 3 million assignments in total.

Thus, observations show that the number of applicants addressed to the Appeals Commission this year is greater than in previous years. Moreover, the cases where the applicants were right in the appeals were also observed more this year. As the error of the SEC markers is revealed, the test taker's confidence in the institution taking the exam decreases. It is necessary to seriously eliminate this current problem that is being observed in the following years. Because both the teachers and the applicants have high confidence in the SEC's exam professionalism. Difficulties that appear while checking questions can decrease this confidence. Increasing the professionalism of the markers during inspection should be one of the issues that should be seriously considered by the SEC.

II.12. Attitude to the amount of payment related to participation in entrance exams

11% of the respondents (44 people) were completely satisfied with the amount of the payment charged by the SEC for participation in the entrance exams, 21% (83 people) were satisfied, 21.5% (86 people) were partially satisfied, 29.5% (118 people) were not satisfied, 17% (69 people) were not satisfied at all.

30.8% of the parent- and teacher-respondents were not satisfied at all with the amount of the payment charged by the SEC for participation in the entrance exams, 33.3% were not satisfied, 18% were partially satisfied, 17.9% were satisfied.



More than 60% of respondents (parents and teachers) were not satisfied with the amount of payment related to participation in exams.

Overall, more than 60% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the payment amount related to participation in exams, suggesting that the average payment should be between 19-20 manats.

There was no discernible difference in attitude towards the payment amount among respondents from various geographical regions.

The adjustment of tariffs for paid services offered by the State Examination Centre of the Republic of Azerbaijan was deliberated during a meeting of the Tariff (Price) Council on March 6, 2017, following a presidential decree issued on February 10, 2017. Subsequently, tariffs for paid services linked to student admission were classified into 9 groups, with fees ranging from 10 to 100 manats based on the type of exam. These categories were established in accordance with guidelines approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan on February 8, 2017. Following the inclusion of VAT in some exams, a slight increase in payment amounts was noted in subsequent years.

Regarding participation in this year's entrance exam by Azerbaijani citizens (excluding second attempts in exams for the second stage), first-time applicants to student admission exams for higher educational institutions (limited to graduates of general education institutions) had their fees covered by the state budget, as outlined in the presidential decree titled "On additional measures related to the regulation of the organization of student admission exams to higher and secondary educational institutions in the Republic of Azerbaijan." Other applicants were required to add the necessary amount

(40 AZN) to their cabinet account for application confirmation, with this sum being deducted upon application approval.

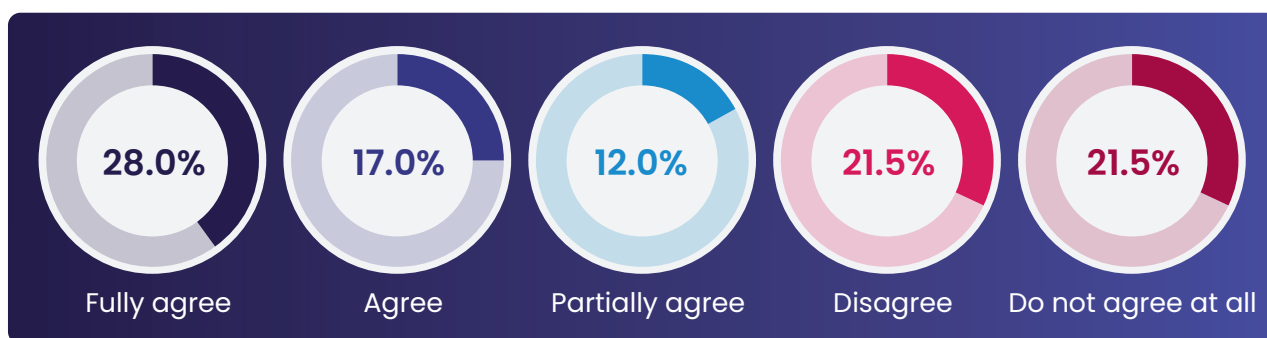
II.13. Impacts of the exam process on the spiritual and psychological state of applicants. Psychologist's and sociologist's feedback

The examination process is usually accompanied by stress and tension for both applicants and parents. The meaning of exams is often distorted under the pressure of the social environment, as a result, young people and adolescents wrongly exams exams as a means of determining their value as a person. Such an approach leads to unnecessary psychological stress both before and after exams, to anxiety during the exam and then to disappointment. The correct management of thoughts and the adjustment of relations with the social environment in such cases can contribute to reducing the tension of the examinees, increasing the efficiency of attention and preparation, improving the exam results and drawing correct conclusions. Sometimes, this sense of tension and responsibility leads to the suicide of applicants who do not succeed in the exam, First of all, this dictates the need to take comprehensive measures in the family-school-society triangle. We cannot grow up a healthy-minded citizen for our country if the relationships within family, school and society are not regulated in the right direction and if the relationships are not transferred to the level of social dialogue. First of all, it is important to ensure the continuity of communication in the socio-psychological direction in order to ensure social dialogue.

Several questions were posed to both the applicants and their parents, considering all these aspects, in order to assess the impacts of the examination process on the applicants' spiritual and

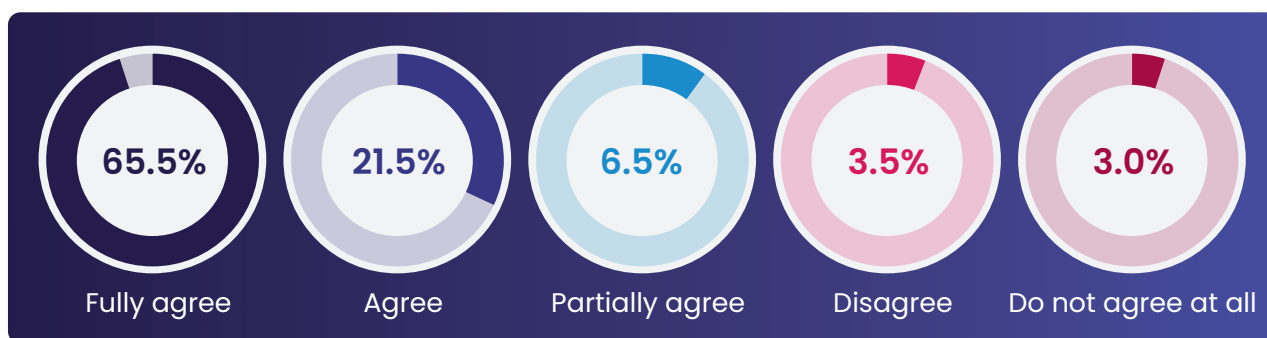


DO YOU AGREE WITH THE OPINION THAT "CONDUCTING EXAMS IN SEVERAL STAGES CREATES TENSION FOR APPLICANTS"?





DO YOU AGREE WITH THE OPINION THAT "CONDUCTION EXAMS IN SEVERAL STAGES GIVES APPLICANTS AN ADDITIONAL CHANCE"?



psychological well-being.

28% of respondents (111 people) fully agree with the opinion that "conducting the exams in several stages creates tension in the applicants", 17% (68 people) agree, 12% (49 people) partially agree, 21.5 % (86 people) do not agree, and 21.5% (86 people) do not agree at all.



More than 55% of the respondents think that conducting exams in several stages creates tension in the applicants.

65.5% of the respondents (262 people) fully agree with the opinion that "conducting exams in several stages gives applicants additional chance", 21.5% (86 people) agree, 6.5% (25 people) partially agree, 3.5% (14 people) do not agree, 3% (12 people) do not agree at all.

The comparison of both opinions shows that

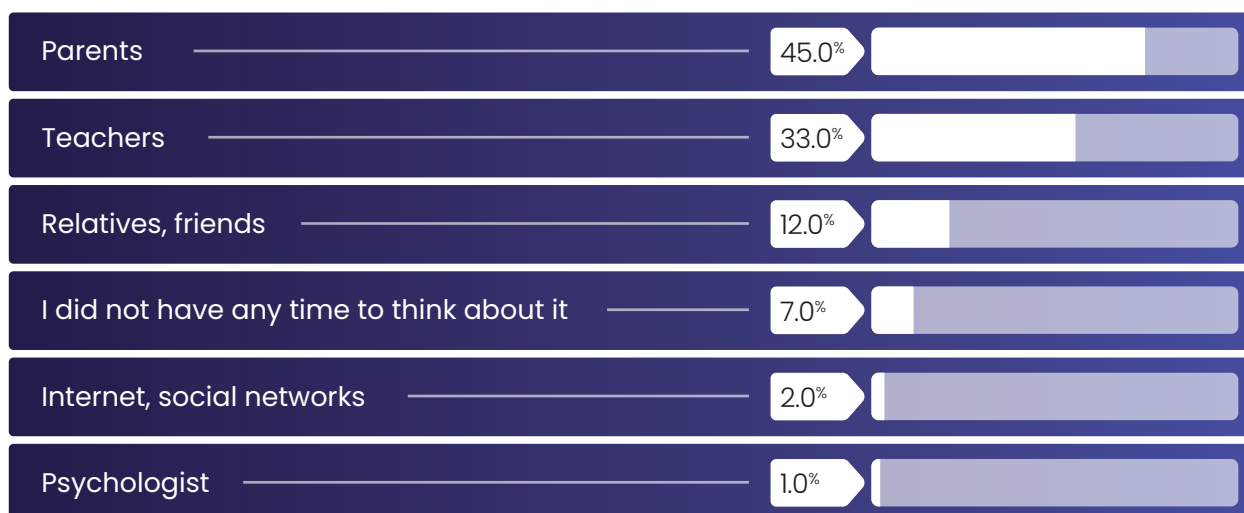
more than 55% of the applicants think that conducting exams in several stages creates tension for the applicant, while more than 90% think that it gives the applicant additional chance.

The SEC's attitude to this issue is that, in addition to mentioning the second chance given to applicants in this year's entrance exam, it is important to present the assessment of the results obtained from both exams by the applicant as per his desired group as a separate favourable opportunity and additional chance. Moreover, an opportunity to be able to choose the specialities of both groups in the coding process is an important factor in the applicant's choice of a specialty. It increases the possibility of access to different and desired higher education fields in the admission model (not only in the exam model) several times.

45% of applicants (237 people) said that their parents helped them spiritually and psychologically to prepare for the exam, 33% (172 people) mentioned that their teachers helped them, 1% (7 people) mentioned

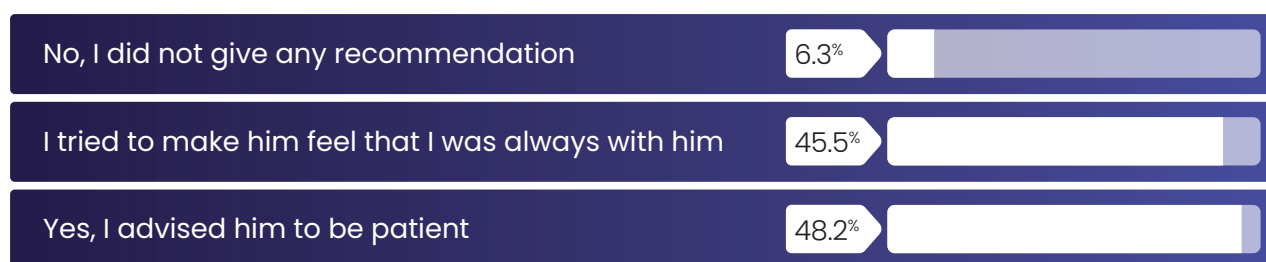


WHO/WHAT PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN YOUR PREPARATION FOR THE EXAM FROM THE PSYCHOLOGICAL POINT OF VIEW?





HAVE YOU HELPED YOUR CHILD TO BE MENTALLY AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY PREPARED FOR THE EXAM AND IF SO, HOW?



their psychologists, 12% (60 people) stated their relatives/friends, 2 % (10 people) mentioned the role of the Internet/social networks and 7% (35 people) said that they did not have any time to think about it.



More than 90% of respondents think that conducting exams in several stages gives applicants additional chances.

48.2% of parent respondents answered to the question "Have you helped your child to be mentally and psychologically prepared for the exam, and if so, how?" like that: "Yes, I advised him to be patient", 45.5% said "I tried to make him feel that I was always with him", 6.3% answered "No, I did not give any advice".



45% of respondents mentioned their parents' role in the preparation for the exams morally and psychologically, 33% mentioned their teachers' role.

56 % of parent-respondents answered the question "Who/what played a role in your child's psychological preparation for the exam?" that their parents, 24% mentioned teachers, 6% mentioned psychologists, 5% mentioned relatives/friends, 3% mentioned the role of the Internet/social networks.

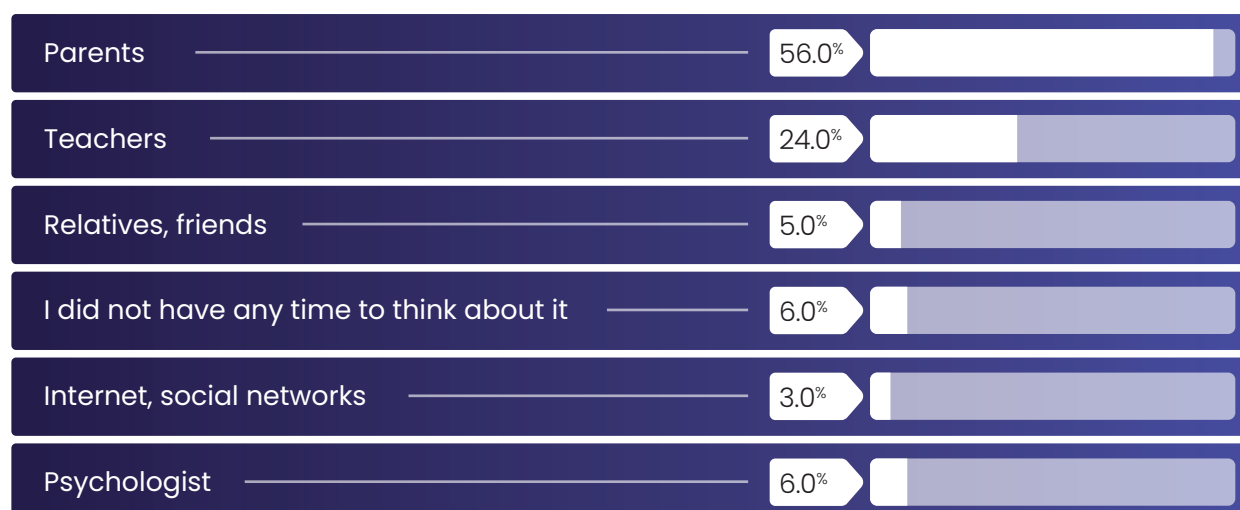
6% of the respondents answered that "they did not even have time to think about it".

36.4% of the respondents answered to the question "What would you do if your child didn't enter the university?" that "I will try not to blame him so that he would not close up", 21.2% said "I will try to reassure", 39.3% said "I would be interested in the reasons why he could not enter", 3.1% said "I wouldn't say a word".

Overall, the survey results and observations indicate that parents and teachers play a significant role in the moral and psychological preparation of applicants for exams. Interestingly, only 1% of applicants sought the help of a psychologist, while 6% of parents reported that their child received assistance from a psychologist during exam preparation. The 5% difference may be attributed to applicants'

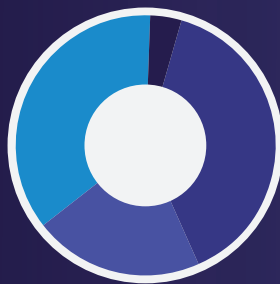


WHO / WHAT PLAYED A ROLE IN YOUR CHILD'S LIFE TO PREPARE HIM PSYCHOLOGICALLY TO THE EXAM?





WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOUR CHILD DIDN'T ENTER THE UNIVERSITY?



3.1% I wouldn't say a word

39.3% I would be interested in the reasons why he could

21.2% I would try to reassure

36.4% I would try not to blame him, so that he would not close up

reluctance to disclose their use of psychological support. Research underscores the importance of each stakeholder in the family-school-society triangle understanding their responsibility to foster students' moral and psychological well-being. Enhancing the role of "school psychologists" in secondary schools, particularly by overseeing the training of specialists in this field and assigning this task to trained professionals, developing psychological profiles of students with input from school administration, teachers, and psychologists, identifying vulnerable student groups, and compiling detailed information about them, are all crucial steps in this regard.

Another point: we must gradually get rid of some mental behaviours and stereotypes. We need to get rid of the mentality that "I am not crazy to use a psychologist's support" and approach with with a European mindset. Every person in normal society goes to a psychologist when he cannot find a way out of problems and when he has a certain "brain crisis". Unfortunately, we still cannot get rid of certain stereotypes and we cannot take this step without a doubt due to the lack of professional psychologists. In addition, although the Law "On Psychological Assistance" was adopted in Azerbaijan at the end of 2018, there is still no progress in practical activities.

Educational psychologists and sociologists provided insightful perspectives on the impact of conducting graduation and entrance exams in multiple stages on the moral and psychological state of applicants:

Javid Imamoglu emphasized that each exam stage introduces new excitement and emotional challenges for applicants. He noted that exams are inherently emotionally difficult and applicants tend to be fragile on the eve of the exam.

Ilaha Dadashova highlighted that a two-stage entrance exam introduces an element of chance

for applicants. From a psychological standpoint, the first exam triggers intense excitement and anxiety, but also provides valuable experience for the applicant.

Experts agree that psychological support, therapy, and consultation should be available to applicants as needed. However, the accessibility of such services is limited, with only 5% of applicants able to afford them due to their expense. Javid Imamoglu also pointed out that many parents lack awareness of how to provide psychological support to their children. While some seek help from psychologists, self-enlightenment cases are rare, indicating a need for increased awareness and access to psychological resources.

The majority try to keep the child under pressure. That is, the words "you are forced to enter, we spend a certain amount of money on you", and "you are our name, you are our honour" are considered a factor of extreme psychological harassment. Therefore, we also have a great need to educate parents taking all these into account" (Ilaha Dadashova).

"The graduation and entrance examinations have already remained behind. The most worrisome point after the completion of this process is that graduates who do not succeed in the exams become depressed and even commit suicide. Experts' answers to the question "How can we prevent such cases which have started to increase among teenagers in recent years?" were as follows: "The examination process is seen in the people's eyes as if it is a life test, it is not instilled by anyone that its purpose is just a test, checking of knowledge. Teenagers are burdened by their parents and surroundings in such a case and everyone expects some results from them. As a result, those who do not get an appropriate result, who cannot achieve their goal, who have a fragile psychology and who are weak in terms of personality

have a nervous breakdown. This can be in different ways: self-loathing, depression, suicide, etc. As long as the way of looking at the exam and expectations from it have not changed, such cases will exist. The exam can always be at any age. For example, we are tested when we go to kindergarten and school. For example, I remember that the process of going to school was so hard for me that I ran away from school while going there. That is, this process should be shown so gently that the excitement should not be so excessive, teenagers should not be burdened and they should not understand it as a test of life. This point should be considered only as a test of knowledge. In general, the entrance exam is currently considered as the biggest test. Nowadays, a child studying in the grade 5 realizes that he will take the exam as an applicant in grade 11 and this has become a separate problem for him. Therefore, everyone is responsible for those who commit suicide" (Javid Imamoglu); "Why does an applicant try to commit suicide after the exam and fall into a deep depression? Because there are words instilled in him in advance: "You must enter the university", "do not let us down in front of relatives-neighbours". These words remain in the child's mind after the exam and open a path to depression in his psychology. The end of this path leads to his commitment to suicide. Or, even if the child does not fall into a deep depression, he falls into a momentary emotional void "What am I going to do". Therefore, psychological work should be done not after the exam, but before it. Thus, its unsuccessful end does not lead to depression at least" (Ilaha Dadashova).

Experts provided valuable recommendations for applicants and their parents to ensure mental and psychological readiness for exams:

Javid Imamoglu advised parents to create an environment where children can relax and relieve themselves of the exam burden a few days before the exams. He stressed the importance of not mentally or emotionally pressuring children during the lengthy preparation process. Instead, parents should offer support and understanding, recognizing that love cannot be forced. Imamoglu also highlighted the need for a change in parenting attitudes from the early stages of a child's life, suggesting that newly married couples should receive guidance on child upbringing and exam preparation.

Ilaha Dadashova emphasized the importance of recognizing and addressing excessive stress and anxiety in children, particularly during the crucial exam period. While some stress is normal, parents should seek professional help if their children experience levels beyond the norm. Dadashova rec-

ommended educating parents on adolescent psychology and providing psychological support within educational institutions. She advocated for constant supervision and diagnosis by psychologists during tutoring courses and emphasized the necessity for parents to learn appropriate approaches to support their children.

Overall, both experts underscored the significance of creating supportive environments and accessing professional psychological resources to navigate the challenges of exam preparation and ensure the well-being of applicants.

"In general, there has been a need to take complex measures in the family-school-society triangle, especially after the suicide of schoolchildren, in recent years. This is also due to the unsatisfactory performance of psychologists in secondary schools or the lack of professional psychologists in general. Experts answered the question "What steps do you think should be taken in this area?" that there should also be social workers at schools in addition to psychologists. Because psychological services are not always needed. In general, social workers at schools should determine the problems of children in the family or some other directions during the child's career and exam preparation process and provide them with the necessary support (Javid Imam Oglu); "The situation of psychological personnel at schools is indeed below the norm. However, the conditions created for psychologists at schools are not good on the other hand. It is true that an educated psychologist works hard and does his job. First of all, the cleaning process of non-specialties should be carried out. There was a certain period when there was a shortage of psychologists, most of the teachers were transferred to this field only after 3-6 months of professional development. Secondly, the role of the psychologist's word at school should be increased. There are schools where psychologists' importance is not taken into account and conditions are not created for them. Certain criteria must be regulated. Because last events have shown that a psychologist's role at school is essential" (Ilaha Dadashova).

II.13.1. Psychological service project implemented by the SEC

The State Examination Centre (SEC) initiated the "Psychological Enlightenment Online and by Phone" project to provide psychological support to examinees from July 3 to August 16, 2019. Professional psychologists volunteered their services in two shifts on weekdays during the project period. The primary focus of the psychologists was to offer

psychological assistance to individuals who sought help through the hotline and educational guidance.

Analysis of the appeals received during the project revealed that most of the concerns revolved around pre-exam anxiety, fear of exams, and stress associated with awaiting results. Both students preparing for exams and their parents sought assistance through the service. Some applicants expressed interest in participating in ongoing psychological sessions, indicating a perceived value in continuous support. Feedback from users of the service indicated overall satisfaction with the assistance provided.

Eight professional psychologists volunteered their time for the project. While fewer appeals concerning genuine psychological issues were received than anticipated, a significant number of applications were related to various other topics. Psychologists observed nervousness among some individuals seeking assistance for non-psychological issues and endeavored to provide reassurance and guidance to help them address their concerns effectively.

The information obtained within the project as well as the content analysis of the comments written and appeals made on the SEC's social media pages show that there is a need to carry out serious

psychological enlightenment work in society, especially in the target population group by the SEC. We can show the following as the most obvious example of this case that the majority of people who use any form of the service, including reading educational articles and listening to video lectures, have established positive feedback such as approval and gratitude, shared materials with friends and tried to get advice by asking questions on topics. The social media blog Pozitiv Zeka (<https://www.facebook.com/pozitivzeka/>), which is a part of the psychological service has collected 5200 regular subscribers up to date, the blog's publications have had a total of about 30 thousand views, and more than 10 thousand active reactions, most of which were positive likes and comments. It was observed among the publications that the greatest interest was shown in the topic "stress in education".

The existence of a small number of people who use psychological support services through the telephone line can be explained as a negative characteristic which seems like a shame to ask for a consultation from a psychologist in our society. The users' satisfaction and even gratitude for the service is an indicator of the efficiency of this service.

CONCLUSION: enough or continue / tradition or innovation

❖ The results of the sociological survey conducted on the new model implemented this year in graduation and entrance exams to higher education institutions underscore the reality that innovations are often met with varied responses from society and are accompanied by certain challenges. One of the primary reasons for this is the low level of awareness among the populace regarding these innovations. Equally important is the need for innovations to be comprehensible and readily adopted by society, as well as the tendency for some to resist change and opt for familiar methods.

❖ The findings of our research on the new admission model can be summarized as follows:

❖ Preparatory courses, scientific-methodological seminars, and test exams were organized by the SEC across most regions and districts of the Republic starting from January to implement the test model based on modern testology in Azerbaijan. These efforts aimed to introduce assessment mechanisms aligned with curriculum standards, new rules, and accepted by applicants and society at large. However, the adoption rate of the new model remained incomplete among applicants, partly due to issues within the educational system.

❖ The inclusion of open-type test assignments alongside traditional closed assignments posed challenges for many applicants, as evidenced by the difficulty encountered in answering such questions. It's worth noting that over four thousand students failed and were retained in their grades in Azerbaijan last year. The Minister of Education highlighted this concern, stating that it reflects a failure to master the curriculum on various subjects or prolonged absences without valid reasons.

❖ A majority of respondents, according to the survey results, agree that the introduction of the new model strengthens the relationship between secondary schools and higher education institutions. Furthermore, it underscores the increased role of secondary general education institutions, demanding a more responsible approach to teaching the new curriculum, particularly at the school level.

❖ It is clear from the survey results that nearly 45% of the respondents in total do not consider the new model useful for our education system. However, experts think that the searches and reforms carried out in the new admission model will serve to improve the quality of education on the contrary. In their opinion, this year's exam model can be considered the optimal model for today although is not ideal and the process of improvement in this area will certainly become inevitable.

❖ Experts think that there are still problems related to the new program (curricula) applied in secondary general education institutions although the majority of applicants who were asked for their opinion noted that the content of the new entrance exam was designed by the subjects taught in secondary general education institutions and the new program (curricula). Although the Ministry of Education related the problems concerning the new curriculum transition from the old system to the new system, educational experts said that the principles of succession and uniformity were not met in the textbooks written since 2008, that is, after the introduction of the curricula, which disrupted intergenerational relations, and it was difficult for those who graduated in previous years to read and understand the new textbooks, in general, both teachers and students could not fully master the textbooks due to the level of difficulty, the participation of higher school teachers in the process of writing textbooks was not appropriate, etc. It is necessary to work with teachers, to provide them with training and courses for the new educational program to be efficient and effective. It is necessary to determine where and why the program is ineffective as a result of research and monitoring conducted. As to experts, a textbook is a laboratory of ideas, there should be additional instructions in the assignments and the student should be allowed to choose.

❖ Regarding the test method applied in Azerbaijan since 1992, experts think that the test method is a progressive method applied in the most developed countries of the world. The main advantages of the test exam are the minimum level of dependence on the human factor, and the implementation of the results in the assessment process independent of the human factor in a certain sense. The survey results prove that the majority of respondents are for keeping the test method but improving it. Most of the respondents participating in the survey agreed with the opinion that "the test method produces a memorizing generation" and it is important to increase the number of open-ended questions to prevent this case. Educational experts think that open-type assignments were added to the exams in addition to closed-type tests to develop writing habits "since the test mainly develops logical thinking and tends to memorization more.

❖ Tutor training is one of the most frequently discussed topics in discussions about education in Azerbaijani society. Tutor activity, which is a nationwide campaign, is related to the lack of the same quality of teaching in schools in all subjects, low salaries of teachers, even though the method has be-

come a kind of habit, etc. The results of the survey also prove that the majority of applicants used tutoring services. 86% of answered to the question "How did you prepare for the exams?" that they prepared with the tutor's help, 8% - via lessons held at school, 6% answered "I prepared myself". It should be noted that it was discovered as a result of the investigations conducted after these exams that the applicants were encouraged to commit various rule violations by various courses operating for commercial purposes and by people engaged in tutoring activities there. Employees of various preparatory courses are active in obtaining and sharing exam questions on pages and groups created in social networks, and even in finding and introducing applicants to one another before the exam who will take the exam in a building and a hall and organizing other activities.

- ❖ It was emphasized by the majority of the respondents that it is necessary to conduct the test exams several times through paper carriers to be able to fully master the new model. The SEC clarified the issue of the small number of mock exams held like this: "Exams are held on weekends in order not to interfere with the teaching process in higher education institutions and schools. Graduation exams, entrance exams (two chances) as well as other exams with various purposes and their massive character limit the holding of additional mock exams through paper carriers organized for secondary and full secondary school levels by the SEC.

- ❖ The entrance exams were difficult for more than 60% of applicants, and the graduation exams were difficult for about 30% of applicants. In general, the entrance and graduation exams held in 2019 are characterized by low results compared to previous years. The main reason for this is that the innovations introduced this year have not been fully adopted by the exam participants.

- ❖ It is clear from the survey results that more than 80% of applicants are satisfied with the distribution of subjects applied in both the graduation and entrance exams. 56% of applicants (224 people) responded positively to the inclusion of the same subject (for example, mathematics) in both the graduation and entrance exams.

38.5% of the respondents (154 people) were for keeping it at one stage and 5.5% (22 people) were for adding new subjects. It should be noted that some experts suggested including the subject of Azerbaijani history in the exams, while others suggested conducting the English language subject as a separate exam, not as a part of the exam.

- ❖ In general, more than 70% of the respondents thought that the test assignments used in the graduation exams were difficult and of medium difficulty. The percentage of those who thought this way about the test assignments used in the entrance exams

was more than 90%. Experts explain its reason with the low level of knowledge acquired by applicants at the secondary school level.

- ❖ As to 54% of the applicants (217 people), there were shortcomings related to the open-type tasks used in the exams. Among these shortcomings,

37% of applicants mentioned the time-consuming nature of the open-ended assignments that require written answers, 25% the difficulty of the calculation-type assignments, 21% the lack of concreteness of the matching-type assignments and 17% of the complexity of the choice-required assignments.

62.8% of parent and teacher respondents mentioned the time-consuming nature of open-ended assignments requiring written answers, 37.2% the complexity of choice-required assignments and 2.6% the lack of concreteness of the matching-type assignments, 18.6% mentioned the difficulty of calculation-type assignments.

- ❖ One of the main concerns among the respondents is related to problems in checking written assignments after graduation and entrance exams. There are mainly two issues of concern here: firstly, the human factor in the checking process and secondly, the long duration of the checking period. These two issues cause psychological tension in applicants, parents and teachers. The experts and parents who participated in the interview noted that the exam results were announced 3 days after the exam before and the students were relieved to know how much they scored. However, the applicant gets extra excited because he learns the exam results too late.

- ❖ The results of the survey conducted among the respondents using the interview method (quality interview) show that one of the problems that arose in connection with the new model in the examination process was related to the application of the listening device for foreign languages. Parents think that the implementation of the listening device has created several problems, especially for students studying in regional and rural schools.

They thought that listening- and comprehension-type texts should be used only after implementation and testing of listening devices in all secondary schools of the Republic.

Even if some teachers in the regional and rural areas do not have any understanding about it, how can they teach it to the students?! The SEC's position regarding this issue was so that the possibilities of information technologies are quite broad nowadays.

Even if there is no Internet, only a computer is enough to listen to any text and express its content or perform assignments based on that text. These all are reflected in the curriculum. Those skills should be developed in students according to the state standards. Only 6 out of 30 assignments determine the listening ability checking. Speaking

ability may also be tested in the future. Knowing a foreign language, mastering various components, reading, writing, speaking and listening skills - these four components are world standards. The Ministry of Education thinks that "Access to materials used in teaching English or any other foreign language is limitless. That is, we are not talking about the Ministry writing a methodical recommendation in a centralized manner and memorizing it by everyone while going to the exam. The essence of the matter is that the student must listen and understand a text he is not familiar with and answer those questions. In addition, the Ministry of Education often conducts professional development training and has methodical recommendations. However, these are simple applications and one can learn them. There should be no such expectation in society that the Ministry will come and train them on how to use the device. If necessary, people learn in any form."

❖ The SEC and some educational experts think that there is no need to turn a decrease in scores into a tragedy evaluate it as a disaster, or make a fuss due to 700 scores. This is mainly an issue related to the transition to a new model and the lack of adaptation to open-ended assignments. Experts thought that the distribution of the assignments' difficulty level and the existence of wrong questions also impacted this case. The SEC acknowledged some points, clarified some of them and some points were taken into account during appeals. It should be noted that some experts thought that a decrease in scores this year has been related to a decrease in the level of education year by year in the whole Republic, others said that it is due to the novelty of the model, because of a decrease in the level of student knowledge, the level of knowledge takes years, even decades. 35% (193 people) of the applicants said that the novelty of the model of the graduation and entrance exams was among the reasons for not being able to score 700 points in the exams, 18% (102 people) said that it was due to the complexity of form and content of the questions, 13% (70 people) stated that it was due to the existence of difficult assignments, 9% (49 people) - due to existence of more difficult tasks, 10% (56 people) - due to the decrease in level of educational (applicants) knowledge and 15% (81 people) - due to inclusion and use of open-ended questions in the exam.

❖ This year's graduation exams were complicated for more than 60% of applicants, and entrance exams for more than 80% compared to the admission model of previous years according to the survey results.

❖ More than 75% of the applicants were almost satisfied with the timing of the graduation and entrance exams. Educational experts think that one of the most common issues among the general public

is the issue of conducting exams before the end of the academic year. This can be considered as a consequence of increasing two academic weeks during the year and moving the start of the school year to September 15 instead of September 1. International experience and the climate factor are mainly cited here. The SEC explains that the exams are held before the end of the academic year because the work schedule is overloaded.

❖ Thus, observations show that the number of applicants addressed to the Appeals Commission this year is greater than in previous years. Moreover, the cases where the applicants were right in the appeals were also observed more this year. The error of the SEC markers related especially to open-type assignments are revealed after the assessment, the test taker's confidence in the institution taking the exam decreases.

❖ More than 60% of respondents (parents and teachers) are not satisfied with the amount of payment related to participation in exams. The respondents wanted the amount of payment to be between 19-20 manats on average.

❖ A comparison of the two considerations put forward in the survey shows that more than 55% of the respondents believe that conducting exams in several stages creates tension for the applicant, while more than 90% think that it gives the applicant an additional chance.

Some parents think that conducting exams twice creates tension in the applicants.

❖ The results of the survey and observations show that parents (45%) and teachers (33%) have a great role in the moral and psychological preparation of applicants for the exam.

❖ It is interesting that 22% of respondents (98 people) thought that the new model of graduation and entrance exams should be improved. 53.5% (242 people) of the respondents were conducting exams according to the previous model, 4.5% (19 people) were for cancelling the admission by test method and 8% (38 people) were for conducting the exams once. There are different opinions on this issue among experts. Thus, some of them accept a two-level exam model but think about analyzing the results of this year's exams eliminating the shortcomings, and further improving the new model by conducting searches and reforms in this field, while others are for conducting one-level, i.e., only entrance exams.

❖ In general, both parties share the opinion that there are serious problems in the teaching programs of secondary schools, in mastering the essence of curricula and in writing textbooks. It is necessary to simplify the heavy process and facilitate the delivery of the result to the student. The main issue is to determine the correct frequency and effectiveness of the exams.

PROPOSALS

It is recommended to implement the following measures regarding the test method used to measure the level of education in Azerbaijan in general by taking into account the survey results conducted on the new model of secondary education level (11-year) graduation exams as well as higher and secondary specialized educational institutions entrance exams to evaluate the applicant's knowledge and skills, the researches and analyses conducted:

- It is recommended to take into account the current reality of technology in Azerbaijan and further improve this model, and prepare new test banks even though there are different opinions regarding the application of the new model (two-stage examination process) in the exams. It is advisable to make the open-type assignments simpler and more understandable that are compiled based on the new educational program (curricula) for this purpose and gradually increase their number.

- It is advisable to increase the number of test exams through paper carriers for the essence of the new model to be fully mastered by the applicants and to prepare more effectively for the entrance exams. The survey results also proved that the majority of the respondents considered it necessary to conduct the test exams several times to fully understand and master a new model.

- It is advisable to reduce the time allocated to the process of checking written assignments. A long examination period causes psychological tension between applicants, parents and teachers.

- It is recommended that the English language test be organized independently, based on international experience, so that the results of the English language reflect all the skills of writing, reading, listening and speaking.

- It is desirable to raise the level of professionalism of the SEC markers who check the open-type assignments and generally to carry out the checking process electronically and not use the human factor. Even though the teachers and the applicants have high confidence in the SEC's professionalism in conducting the exam, the difficulties that arise in the process of checking the questions reduce this confidence.

- It is desirable to organize additional training to raise the professional level of hall supervisors and school teachers in order to eliminate the shortcomings related to the new model.

- It is desirable to lower the amount of payment for participation in the exams (between 20-25 manats) based on the survey results.

- It is appropriate to organize courses and

seminars at secondary schools operating in the Republic, especially in regional and rural schools to eliminate the problems related to the listening device for foreign languages.

- It is a problem if some applicants forget to bring any of the required documents (identity document; applicants without a photo in their ID document, along with other documents, the reference issued by the educational institution with their photos affixed; the exam admission card) while coming to the exam. Taking into account the fact that the facial recognition device that determines the applicant's identity has been applied by the SEC, it is appropriate to allow those applicants to take the exam.

- Observations show that the changes made in the admission programs are not completely clear to all applicants, students experience difficulties in copying the test assignments to the answer paper and answer sheet. Taking into account that applicants are not given question booklets after the exams, it is recommended to give blank answer sheets to schools and organize seminars by teachers to form these habits in them.

- Taking into account the events that occurred during the graduation exam process, it is advisable to strengthen the supervision of tutors and preparatory courses and to organize paid preparatory groups at universities as an alternative. It should be noted that higher education institutions can organize preparatory groups by the regulations according to the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers. The tuition fees in these groups can be determined by educational institutions as it is carried out on a paid basis.

- Research also proves that each party in the family-school-society triangle should understand their responsibility for students to grow up in a morally and psychologically healthy spirit. Strengthening the activities of the "school psychologist" social institution in secondary schools, especially monitoring the training of specialists in this field and entrusting this work to trained specialists, drawing up the psychological "portrait" of schoolchildren with the participation of the secondary school administration, teachers, and psychologists, identifying vulnerable student groups, preparation of detailed information about them, etc. is very important.

- The analysis of applicants' proposals shows that the environmental condition in which the entrance exams are held should be the center of attention. The windows of the halls are usually open during the exam as it is held in the summer months

even though it is against the instructions. As a result, the ongoing construction works and the parents' noise create obstacles to the examination process. Taking all these into account, the construction works should be stopped in the first half of the day in the territory of the Republic (the exams usually start at the same time in the entire territory of the

Republic - at 11:00 a.m. and end at 2:00 p.m.) on the day of the exam and it is recommended to keep parents away from the exam building by the security employees of the law enforcement agencies.

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APPENDICES

The scientific-statistical analysis of the results of student admission to higher and secondary specialized educational institutions of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the graduation exams for general education institutions for the 2018/2019 academic year by the State Examination Center was published in the 12th issue of the "Abituriyent" magazine, year 2018. We present some statistical indicators by the topic of the Analytical report prepared by the Social Research Center's staff.

Gender aspects of the results of entrance and graduation exams

82724 applicants applied to participate in the entrance exams to higher education institutions in 2018. 52.55% of them were male applicants and 47.45% were female applicants. It should be noted that the number of males among the applicants to participate in the entrance exams has exceeded the number of females for the sixth year now. The ratio of male and female applicants was different in the Azerbaijani and Russian sections. Thus, several males (53.06%) prevailed in the Azerbaijani section and several females (53.09%) prevailed in the Russian section.

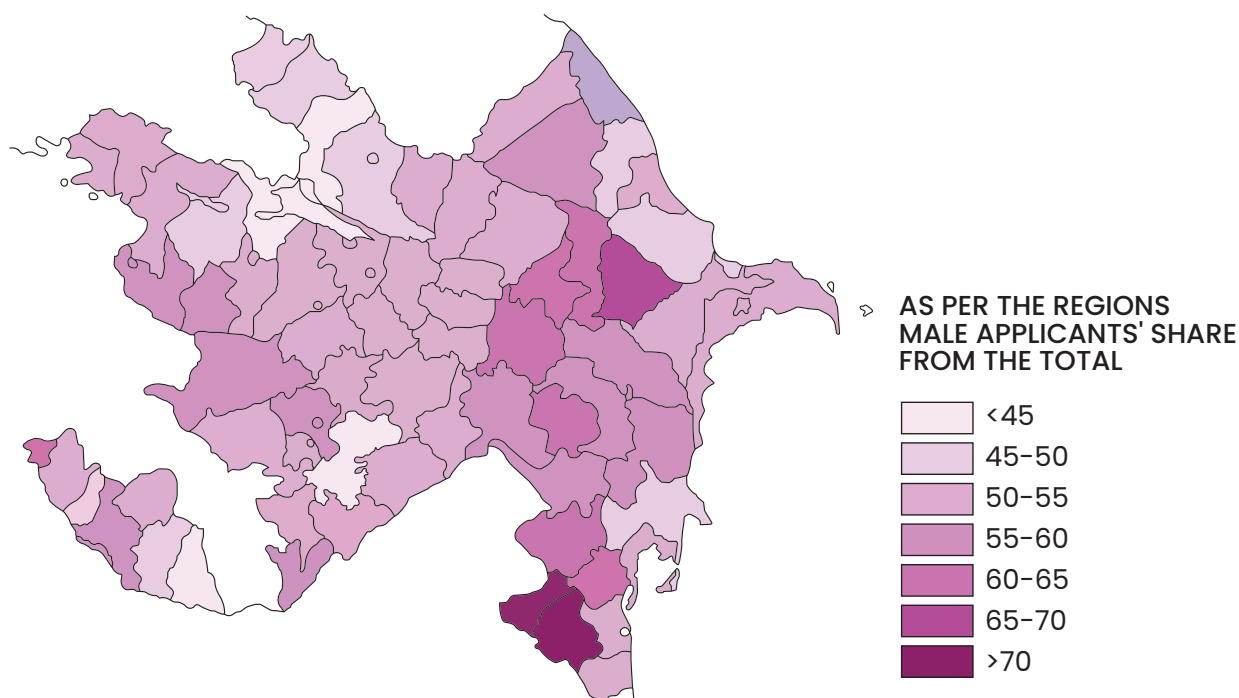
The ratio of the number of male and female applicants representing different regions of the Republic is different and this indicator varies in a wide range. The reason for this can be explained by the participation of males and females repre-

senting different regions of the Republic to different degrees in the admission campaign. If the relative number of females was 22-37% among applicants from Yardimli, Lerik, Jalilabad and Masalli regions belonging to the same zone, their relative number among applicants from Gakh, Zagatala and Balakan regions located in the northwest of the Republic was 54-57%.

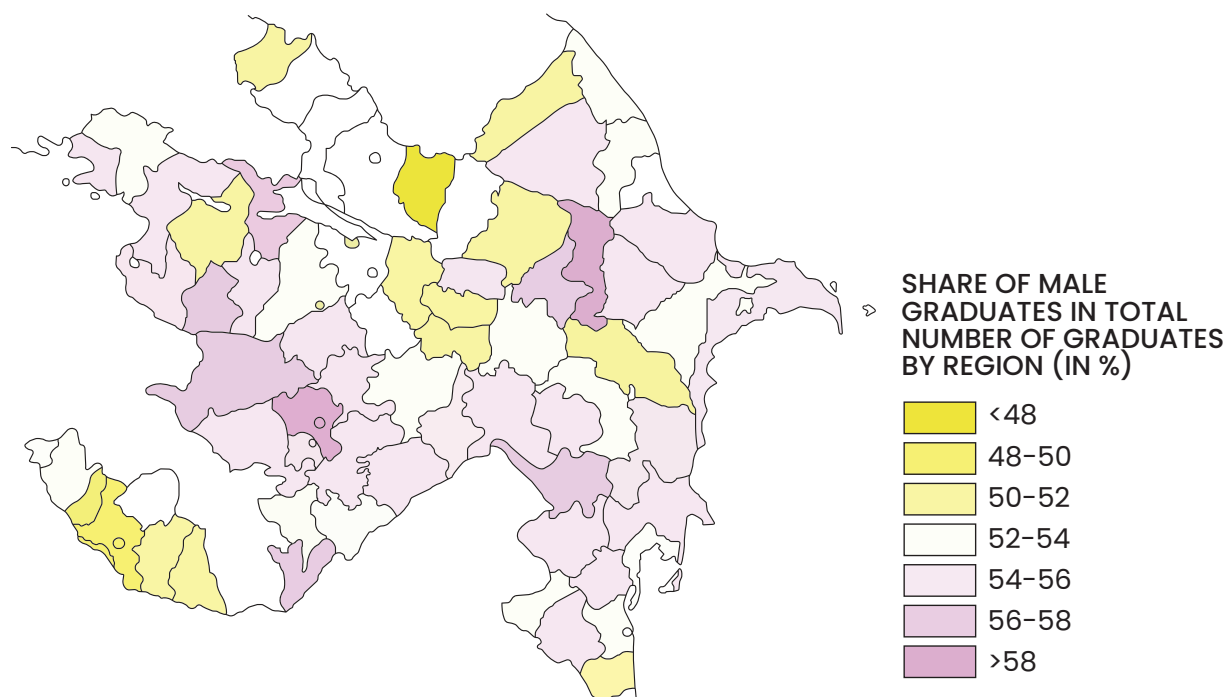
The gender composition of the students participating in the graduation exams shows that 53.94% (58130 people) of the students participating in the 9th-grade graduation exam were males and 46.06% (49638 people) were females. The picture was almost the same in the 11th grade graduation exam 54.99% (44272 people) of the students participating in the exam were males and 45.01% (36230 people) were females. In other words, the ratio of male and female students in both exams is close to each other. It should be noted that 53.93% (56484 people) of students who participated in the 9th-grade graduation exam were male candidates and 46.07% (48245 people) were female candidates in 2016.

As it is known, those who took part in the 11th grade graduation exam in 2018 were those who finished the 9th grade in 2016. Sharp differences between these indicators are observed in individual regions. For example, 47.21 per cent of 9th-grade students were females in 2016 in the southern regions (Lenkaran, Astara, Lerik, Yardimli, Jalilabad and Masalli), while this indicator increased and

RELATIVE NUMBER OF MALE AND FEMALE APPLICANTS AS PER THE REGIONS



RELATIVE NUMBER OF MALE GRADUATES AND FEMALE GRADUATES BY REGION

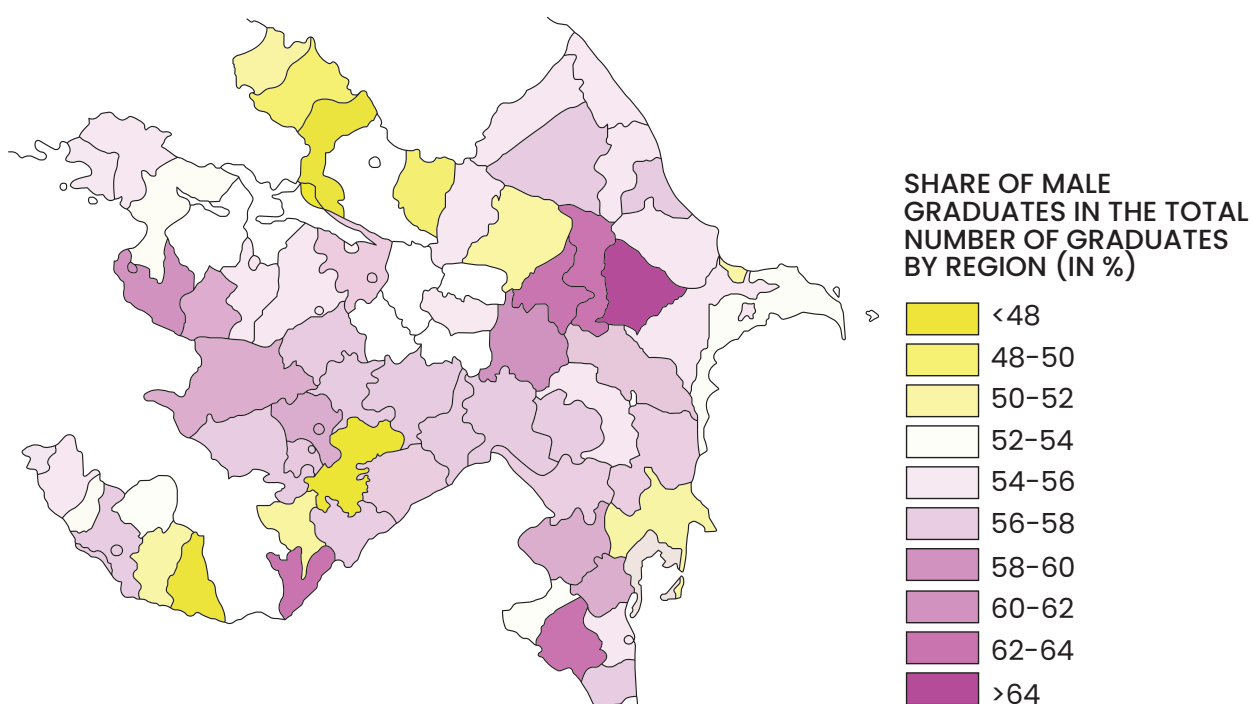


equalled 41.95 per cent among 11th-grade students in 2018. The socio-economic status of families, early marriages, etc. lead to female withdrawal from education as can be seen.

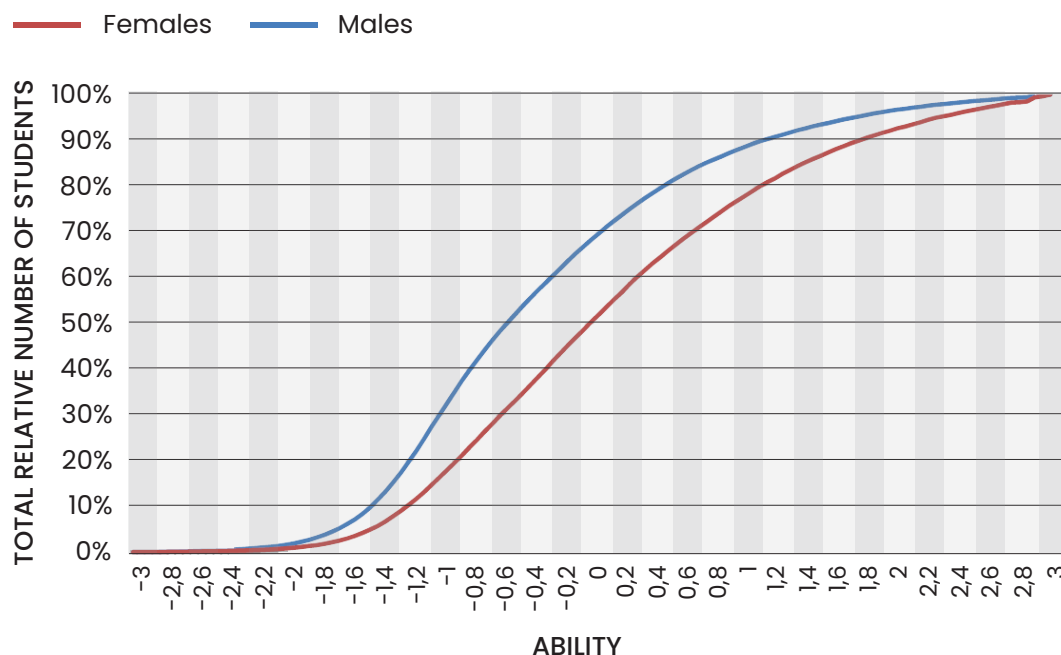
A comparative analysis of the ability indicators of male and female students in the subjects of the graduation exam shows that the knowledge and skills of female candidates in all subjects are rela-

tively high. The integrated curve of the distribution of the ability indicators of the 9th and 11th-grade male and female students in the native language was presented. It should be taken into account during the comparative analysis of integral curves that the higher one curve is than the other curve, the lower the results of the corresponding sub-sample of graduates (boys or girls) compared to the other one are.

RELATIVE NUMBER OF MALE AND FEMALE GRADUATES BY REGIONS (GRADUATION EXAM FOR THE 11TH GRADE)



INTEGRAL CURVE OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF ABILITY INDICATORS OF MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS FROM THE NATIVE LANGUAGE SUBJECT (GRADUATION EXAM FOR 9TH GRADE)



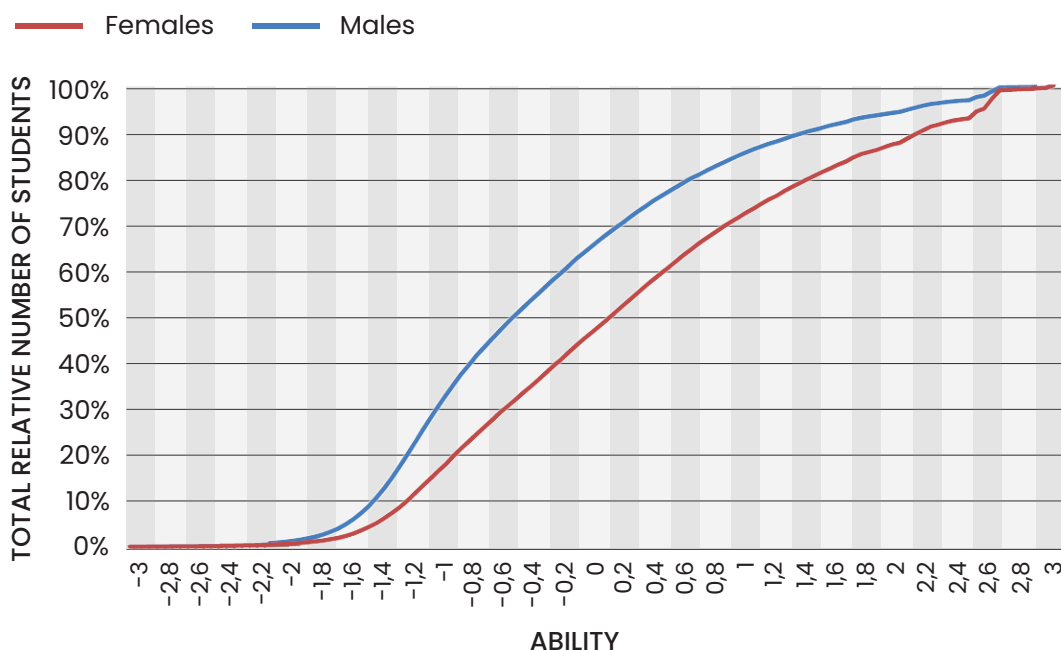
As can be seen from the graphs, the ability indicators of females were higher in both 9th and 11th grade. This trend also shows itself in the entrance exams to higher education institutions.

The scientific-statistical analysis of the results of the student admission and general educational institutions graduation exams for the 2018/2019

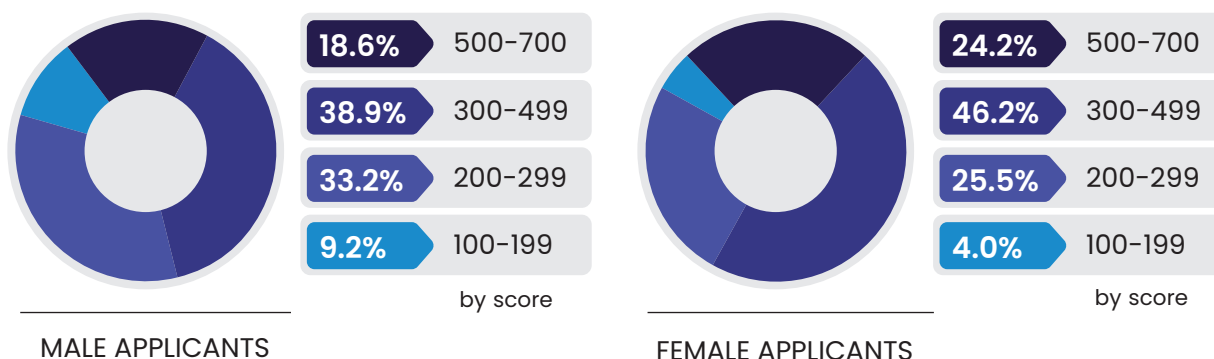
academic year shows that the ability indicators of females were higher than males in the entrance exams to higher education institutions.

The distribution diagram of scores obtained by applicants admitted to higher education institutions in 2018 (for groups I-IV) is shown below:

INTEGRAL CURVE OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF ABILITY INDICATORS OF MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS FROM THE NATIVE LANGUAGE SUBJECT (GRADUATION EXAM FOR 11TH GRADE)



AZERBAIJAN SECTION



It can be concluded from this case that females who are allowed to get higher education show high results in exams.

Comparison of attendance and exam results of students of the graduation class

The State Examination Center, as a rule, determines the number and composition of students who are expected to participate in the graduation exams by country and region, and examines the indicators of those who passed the graduation exams in the next educational levels and stages, as well as the number of those who are excluded from continuing their education (participating in graduation exams) and about whom there is no information after finishing the 9th and 11th grades, and tries to determine its reasons.

The state of students attendance who finished general secondary (grade 9) and completed sec-

ondary (grade 11) education levels in 2018, level of knowledge and the dynamics of changes in this field as a whole were analyzed in a comparative manner.

Thus, the students who finished the 11th grade in 2018 entered the 1st grade in 2007. According to the information provided by the State Statistics Committee, the number of students entering the 1st grade in 2007 was 118290 students. The number of students who graduated from the 9th grade was 108734 in 2016. The number of students who participated in the 9th grade graduation exam that year was 104729 students and 4005 students did not participate in the graduation exam for one or another reason. As it is seen, 8.1% of the 118290 students entering grade 1 in 2007 did not get general secondary education and there is no information about their education.

RUSSIAN SECTION

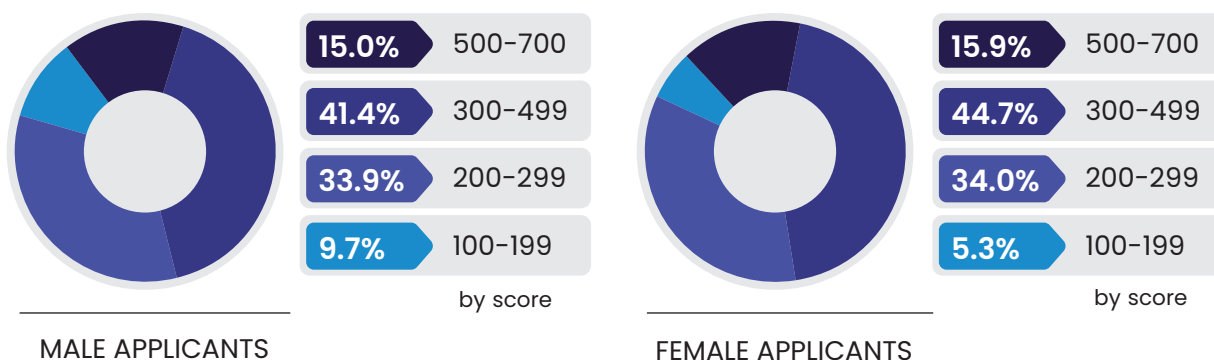
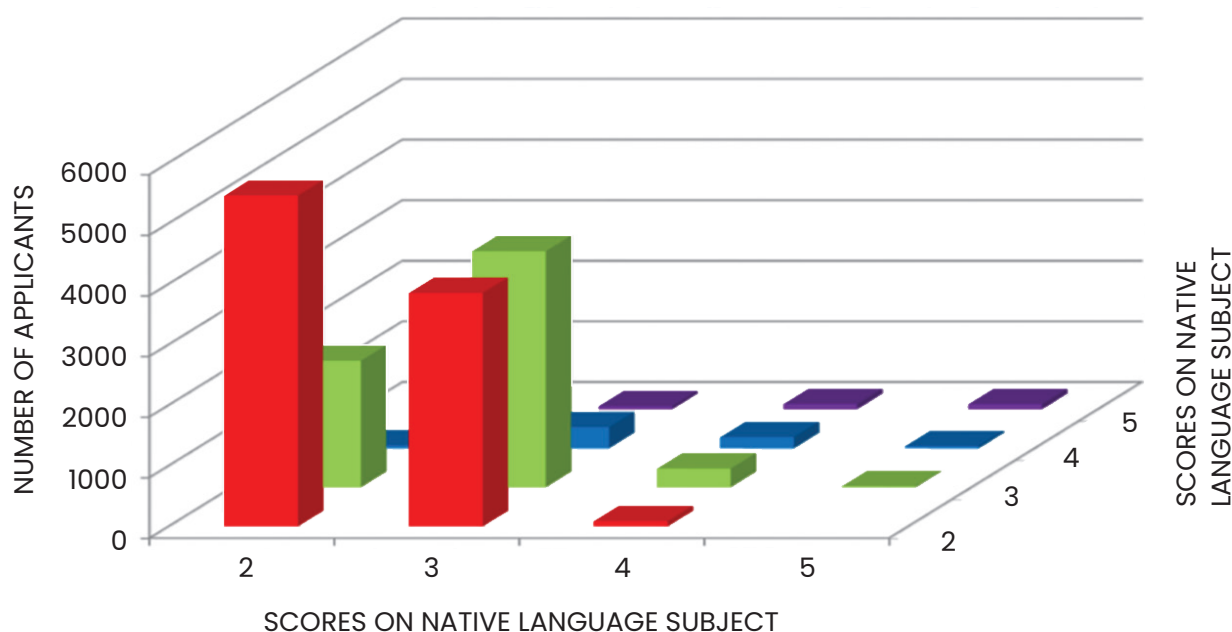


Table 1.

SHARE OF MALE AND FEMALE APPLICANTS ENTERED HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN 2018 BY HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

N	HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION	Those who entered			
		Male		Female	
		Numbe	Per	Numbe	Per
1	Baku State University	1901	34.84	3556	65.16
2	Azerbaijan State University of Oil and Industry	2009	73.67	718	26.33
3	Azerbaijan Technical University	1470	81.44	335	18.56
4	Azerbaijan University of Architecture and Construction	1176	68.77	534	31.23
5	Azerbaijan Medical University	242	36.12	428	63.88
6	Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University	493	16.94	2417	83.06
7	Azerbaijan State University of Economics	2096	58.50	1487	41.50
8	Azerbaijan University of Languages	232	16.20	1200	83.80
9	Baku Slavic University	147	14.91	839	85.09
10	Baku Engineering University	721	64.20	402	35.80
11	The Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic	178	48.11	192	51.89
12	ADA University	254	57.60	187	42.40
13	Baku Music Academy	27	18.49	119	81.51
14	Azerbaijan National Conservatory	72	52.94	64	47.06
15	Azerbaijan State University of Culture and Arts	203	40.60	297	59.40
16	Azerbaijan State Academy of Fine Arts	59	17.72	274	82.28
17	Azerbaijan Tourism and Management University	301	68.25	140	31.75
18	Baku Choreography Academy	59	39.60	90	60.40
19	Azerbaijan State Academy of Physical Education and Sport	1111	89.67	128	10.33
20	National Aviation Academy	260	70.46	109	29.54
21	Azerbaijan State Marine Academy	194	97.98	4	2.02
22	Baku Higher Oil School	122	68.16	57	31.84
23	Academy of State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan	28	63.64	16	36.36
24	Nakhchivan State University	561	53.48	488	46.52
25	Nakhchivan Teachers Institute	61	20.82	232	79.18
26	Azerbaijan State Agricultural University (Ganja city)	909	70.36	383	29.64
27	Ganja State University	509	34.60	962	65.40
28	Azerbaijan Technological University (Ganja city)	486	73.08	179	26.92
29	Sumgait State University	652	46.74	743	53.26
30	Mingachevir State University	282	50.09	281	49.91
31	Lankaran State University	511	52.25	467	47.75
32	Azerbaijan University of Cooperation	612	68.46	282	31.54
33	Azerbaijan Institute of Theology	29	48.33	31	51.67
34	Azerbaijan University	203	54.57	169	45.43
35	Western Caspian University (former Caspian University)	399	48.84	418	51.16
36	Khazar University	203	38.37	326	61.63
37	Baku Eurasian University	275	44.79	339	55.21
38	Baku Girl University	0	0.00	387	100,00
39	Odlar Yurdu University	205	36.35	359	63.65
40	Baku Business University	172	67.98	81	32.02
41	Nakhchivan University (Nakhchivan city)	205	63.86	116	36.14
42	Azerbaijan Academy of Labour and Social Relations	66	69.47	29	30.53
TOTAL		19695	49.79	19865	50.21

THE DISTRIBUTION OF SCORES OBTAINED FROM GRADUATION EXAMS OF THOSE APPLICANTS ABOUT WHOM THERE IS NO INFORMATION AFTER THEIR COMPLETING THE 9TH GRADE IN 2016

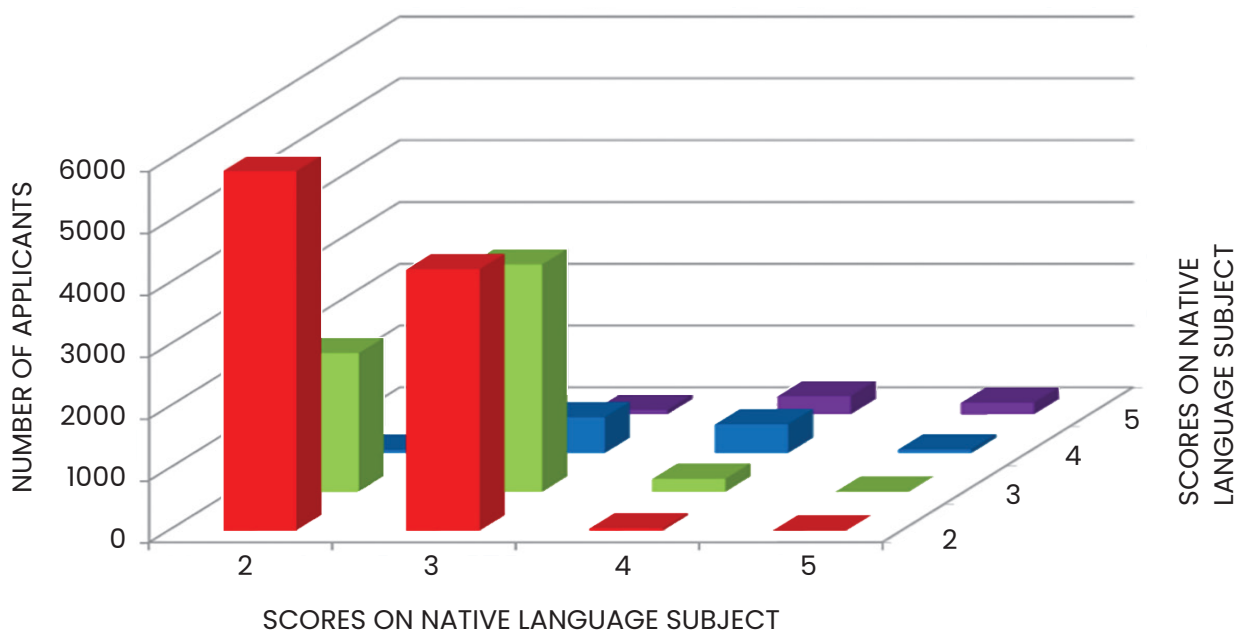


As mentioned, the number of students who participated in the 9th grade graduation exam in the country was 104729 students in the country in 2016 and about 16% of those students did not continue their education. The distribution of those students according to the marks they received in the class

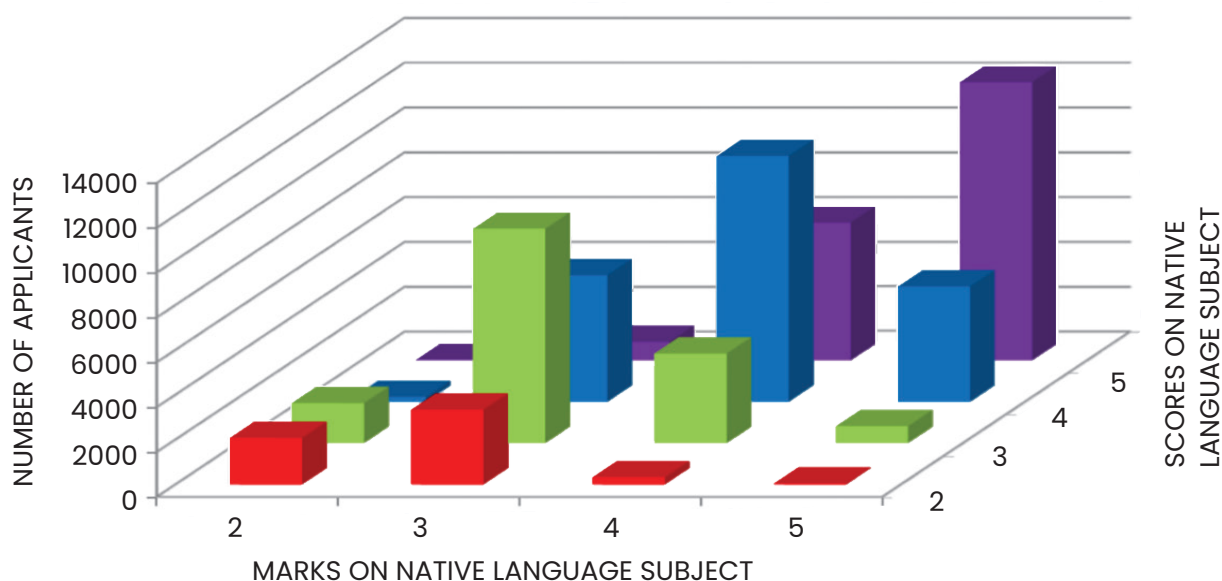
IX graduation exams is given in the diagram above.

As can be seen from the diagram, this contingent is mainly those who got “2” and “3” marks in the graduation exams. It should be noted that 69% of students with such weak results represent rural schools (see Table 2).

THE DISTRIBUTION OF APPLICANTS WHO DID NOT APPLY TO SECONDARY SPECIALIZED EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ON THE BASIS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND FULL SECONDARY EDUCATION ACCORDING TO THE MARKS OBTAINED IN THE GRADUATION EXAMS IN 2018



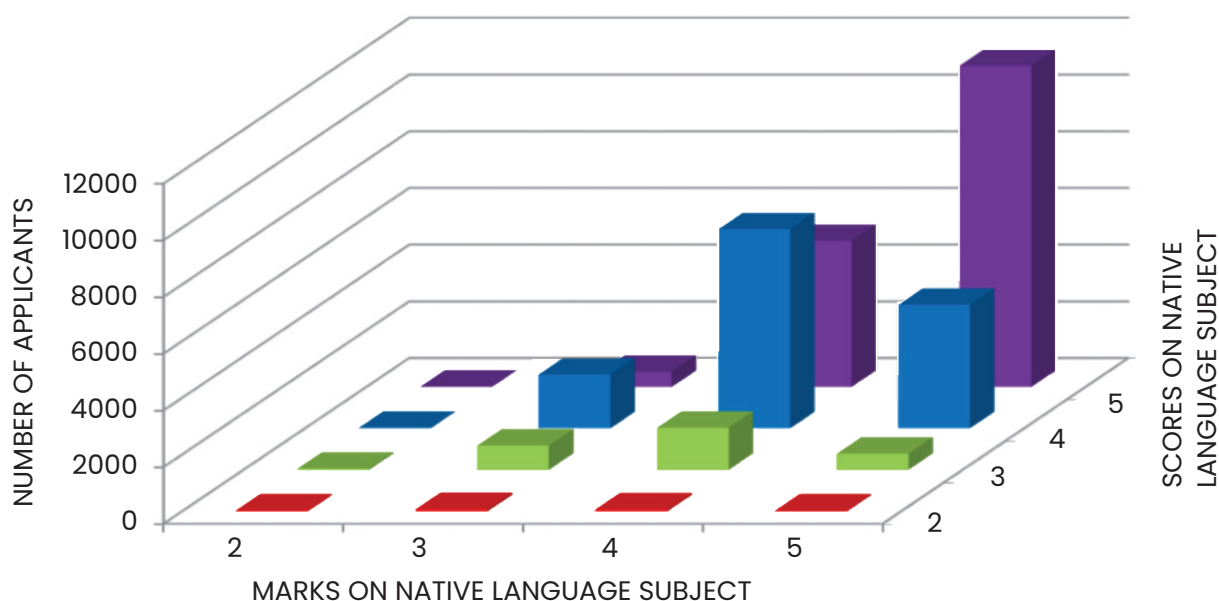
DISTRIBUTION OF APPLICANTS BY MARKS WHO ADMITTED THEIR APPLICATION TO HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND SPECIALIZED SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS FROM THE COMPLETE SECONDARY SCHOOL BACKGROUND IN 2018 IN GRADUATION EXAMS



Only 7% of those who graduated from the 9th grade continued their education in vocational high schools and secondary specialized educational institutions. The remaining 72% of students in 2018. Left complete secondary school. As a result, it was known that 68% of 118,290 students entering grade 1 in 2007 finished complete secondary education level and 24% finished

general secondary education level. About 23% of students finishing their complete secondary education level in 2018 decided not to continue their education and did not appeal for admission to high education institution and secondary specialized education institution on complete secondary education level (their 66% were male students and 34% were female students).

DISTRIBUTION OF APPLICANTS ENTERED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN 2018 BY THE MARKS THEY GOT FROM GRADUATION EXAMS



DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS ENTERING 1ST GRADE IN 2007 BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL (FORECAST FOR 2023):

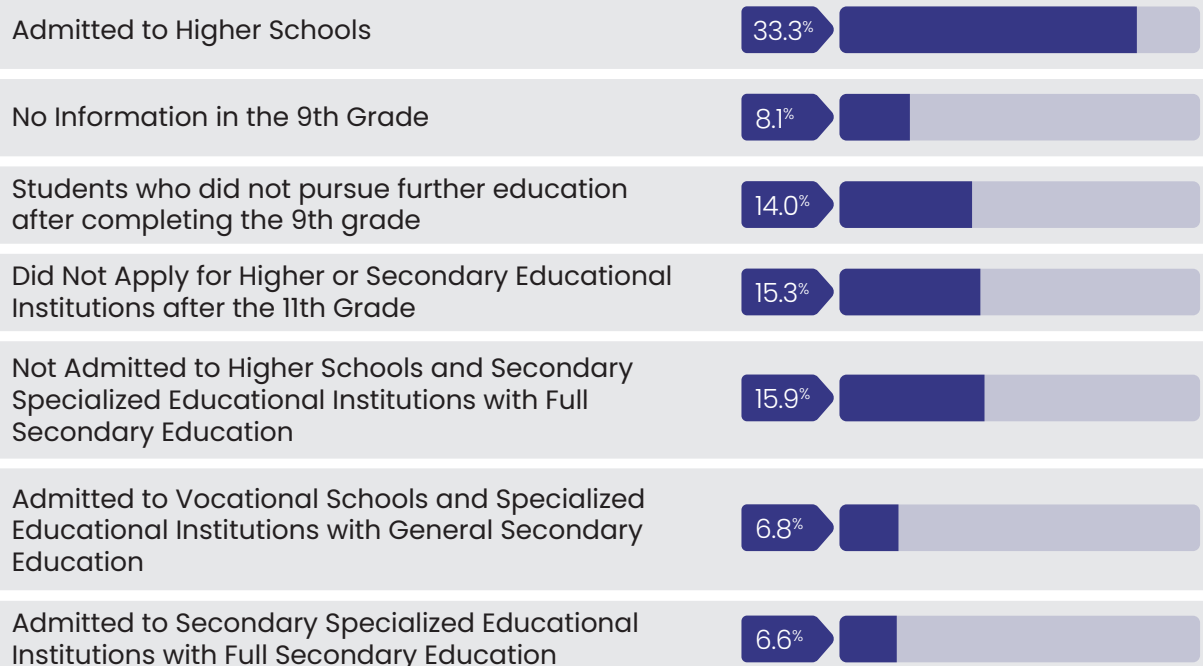


Table 2. Content of graduate selection about whom there is no information after they finished

Male	Female	City	Village
51%	49%	31%	69%

The distribution of those students related to their marks obtained in graduation exams are as indicated in the above diagram:

As it is seen from the diagram, these students are the ones who showed poor and weak results in education. The sad thing is that 81% of them left rural schools (see Table 3).

63178 students, that is, only 53% of the students who entered the 1st grade in 2007, applied for admission to higher education institutions and secondary specialized educational institutions on the basis of full secondary education in 2018 (as can be seen in Table 4, 52% of them were males, 48% were females, 40% were students from cities and 60% were from rural areas). 7798 of these students had the opportunity to continue their education in secondary specialized educational institutions and 33419 in higher educational institutions. The distribution of applicants who have applied for admission to higher education institutions as well as those who have entered according to the marks, they received in the graduation exams, is given in the diagrams here above. The composition of the sample of applicants who applied for admission to higher education schools and entered is given separately in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 3. Composition of the sample of graduates who did not apply to higher education institutions in 2018

Male	Female	City	Village
66%	34%	19%	81%

Table 4. Composition of the sample of applicants applied for admission to a higher education institution in 2018

Male	Female	City	Village
52%	48%	40%	60%

Cədvəl 5. 2018-ci ildə ali təhsil müəssisələrinə qəbul olan abituriyent seçməsinin tərkibi

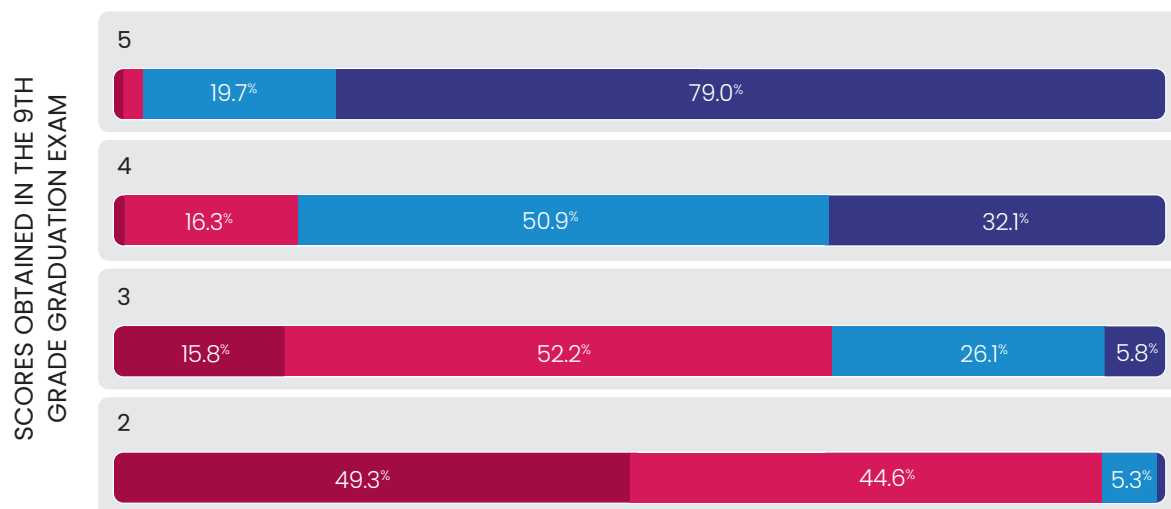
Male	Female	City	Village
50%	50%	46%	54%

As can be seen from the diagrams, the applicants who applied to higher education institutions mostly got "3", "4" and partly "5" marks in the graduation exams, while the vast majority of the applicants who entered the universities got "4" and "5" marks.

It should also be noted that the State Examination Center has forecasted based on the analysis of the statistical results of the entrance exams of previous years what percentage of the contingent that applied for admission to higher education institutions in 2018 but did not enter, would enter higher education institutions in the next 5 years. According to this forecast, approximately 18% of that contingent is supposed to enter higher education institutions within the next 5 years.

AS PER NATIVE LANGUAGE SUBJECT

2 3 4 5



SCORES OBTAINED IN THE 11TH GRADE GRADUATION EXAM

Summarizing all of the above-mentioned, it can be noted that 53% of the 118290 students who entered the 1st grade in 2007 will enter the labor market without any vocational or professional education.

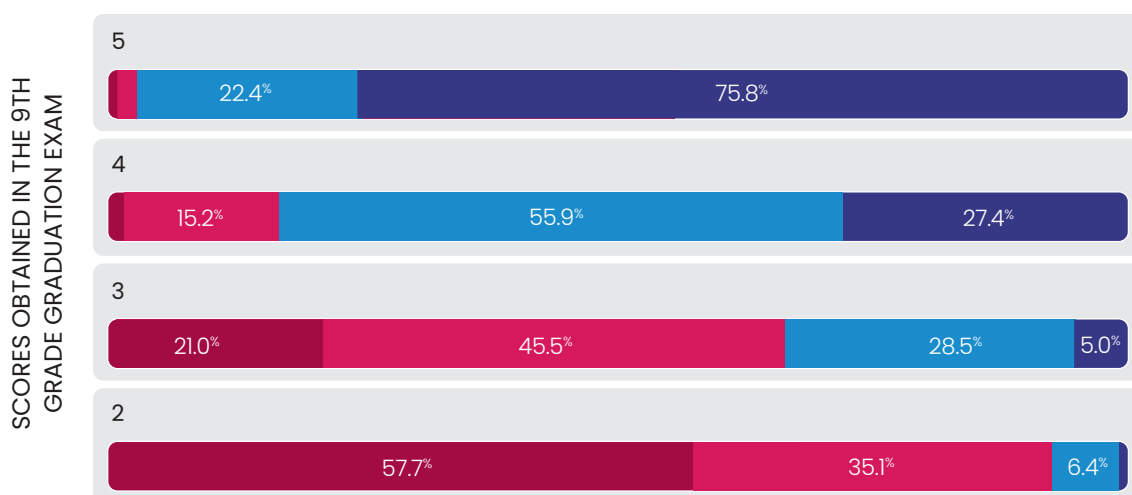
The distribution diagrams of the students' marks obtained at the graduation exams of grade 11 in 2018 and marks "2", "3", "4" and "5" in the subjects of native language and mathematics in the 9th grade graduation exams in 2016 were presented here.

As can be seen, the students demonstrated knowledge corresponding to the level of the graduation exams of the 9th grade in the graduation

exams of the 11th grade. For example, 93.9% of students who got "2" in grade 9 on the graduation exam on native language subject in 2016 also received "2" and "3" marks in grade 11 on the graduation exam in 2018. 79.0% of students who got a "5" in grade 9 on the graduation exam also got a "5" mark in grade 11 on the graduation exam. It should be noted that 15% of those students got a "2" on the native language subject in grade 9 on the graduation exam in 2016, 45% got "3", 24% got "4", 16% got "5", however, 19% got "2" on Mathematics, 37% got "3", 21% got "4", 23% got "5".

AS PER MATHS SUBJECT

2 3 4 5



SCORES OBTAINED IN THE 11TH GRADE GRADUATION EXAM

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