

## **Creative class formation: international comparisons, statistical evaluation and forecast**

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The article investigates the problem of creative class formation. The author treats creative class as a part of middle class to a great extent influencing the innovative component of country development. The choice and behavior of creative class makes a huge economic impact: on one hand, being the main tax-payer, creative class (as part of the middle class) constitutes its main human resources power, participating in forming the national wealth and the national profit; on the other hand, it is the main consumer and takes part in forming the volume and structure of demand, and through this demand it sets the focus and requirements of the innovative development of economy.

Higher education institutions are treated as the main place where creative class is formed. In every country the system of higher education and its programs defines what will be the quality of creative class while entering the economy.

The problem of improving the existing higher education system and focusing it on the real demands of market and society is of crucial importance for both economically developed and developing countries in the situation of international elite mobility and the influence of this mobility on the economic development of these countries. The author conducts the international comparative analysis of the systems of undergraduate and postgraduate education targeted on distinguishing the main tendencies of European education development. The method of complex comparative analysis of Russian and European systems of higher education and statistical modeling of graduates' employment regularities are developed and tested. The efficiency of undergraduate and postgraduate education in Russia is evaluated in accordance with the parameters characterizing European university education. Qualitative and quantitative characteristics of modernizing Russian education are analyzed, content and structural transformations are revealed. Russian society should get the idea and evaluate the perspectives of higher education development in comparison with other EU countries. The analysis of the result achieved in other countries – leaders of the sector, makes it possible to forecast future perspectives for Russia.

**Key Words:** Creative class, middle class, higher education system, elite mobility