

**“THE STRUCTURE OF THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM OF WORLD  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY AND ITS CONTEMPORARY  
CHALLENGES”**

**“JAHON IQTISODIY-IJTIMOIY GEOGRAFIYASI” FANI MAKTAB  
DASTURI TUZILISHI VA UNING HOZIRGI ZAMON  
MUAMMOLARI**

*Axmadjanova Gulxumor Akramjonovna*

*“Master’s degree student at Fergana State University”*

*Axmadjanova Gulxumor Akramjonovna*

*Farg’ona davlat universiteti magistranti*

**Abstract**

This article analyzes the structure and content orientation of the school curriculum of World Economic and Social Geography taught in general secondary education institutions, as well as the contemporary challenges arising in the process of teaching this subject. The study provides a theoretical analysis of the main sections of the curriculum and highlights their role in developing students' spatial thinking and global perspective. Furthermore, in the context of rapid changes in economic and social processes under globalization, the necessity of updating curricular content, strengthening the integration of digital technologies, and enhancing interdisciplinary approaches is substantiated. The article also proposes practical recommendations aimed at addressing existing problems, which contribute to improving the effectiveness of geography education.

**Keywords:** world economic and social geography, school geography education, curriculum structure, globalization, spatial thinking, interdisciplinary integration, digital technologies.

**Annotatsiya**

Mazkur maqolada umumta'lim maktablarida o'qitiladigan "Jahon iqtisodiy-ijtimoiy geografiyasi" fanining o'quv dasturi tuzilishi, mazmuniy yo'nalishlari hamda uni o'qitishda yuzaga kelayotgan hozirgi zamon muammolari tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqot jarayonida fan dasturining asosiy bo'limlari, ularning o'quvchilarda hududiy tafakkur va global dunyoqarashni shakllantirishdagi o'rni ilmiy-nazariy jihatdan yoritilgan. Shuningdek, globallashuv sharoitida iqtisodiy va ijtimoiy jarayonlarning tezkor o'zgarishi fonida o'quv mazmunini yangilash, raqamli texnologiyalar va fanlararo integratsiyani kuchaytirish zarurati asoslab berilgan. Maqolada mavjud muammolarni bartaraf etish bo'yicha amaliy taklif va tavsiyalar ishlab chiqilgan bo'lib, ular geografiya ta'limi samaradorligini oshirishga xizmat qiladi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** jahon iqtisodiy-ijtimoiy geografiyasi, maktab geografiya ta'limi, o'quv dasturi tuzilishi, globallashuv, hududiy tafakkur, fanlararo integratsiya, raqamli texnologiyalar.

**Introduction.** In the context of contemporary globalization, *World Economic and Social Geography* plays a significant scientific and practical role in understanding economic and social processes occurring on a global scale. This subject contributes to the formation of students' knowledge of the territorial distribution of countries worldwide, their socio-economic significance, as well as the development of economic-geographical analytical skills within general secondary education. At the same time, the rapid socio-economic transformations taking place in today's world necessitate the improvement of both the content and structure of the school curriculum.

As with other general education subjects, the restructuring of the *World Economic and Social Geography* curriculum, the enhancement of its scientific rigor in terms of instructional content, and the strengthening of teaching methodologies aimed at improving students' mastery of the subject have become pressing demands of the time.

Without basic economic knowledge, it is impossible to understand any economic-geographical phenomenon or to explain its underlying causes. In this regard, the subject *World Economic and Social Geography* fulfills an important educational function in schools. It not only provides students with geographical knowledge but also plays a crucial role in developing their economic literacy and enabling them to apply acquired knowledge in everyday life. Therefore, alongside theoretical issues, greater emphasis has been placed on economic knowledge within the teaching of world economic and social geography. In school textbooks, several economic terms that previously existed (such as *freight turnover*, *enterprise*, *industrial sector*, and others) have been elevated to the level of key concepts.

Providing a concept means giving a precise definition by clearly identifying its essential characteristics. However, it is not necessary to assign a strict definition to all key concepts and terms used within this discipline. For instance, taking into account various didactic considerations, it is not advisable to provide a formal definition of the term “*World Economy*” in the 9th grade. Instead, students should be encouraged to consider which sectors constitute the world economy and how these sectors are interconnected. At the same time, students are expected to be familiar with terms such as “*economic region*” and “*concentration of production*,” as these concepts are included in the curriculum.

Nevertheless, introducing general concepts, mastering them, and explaining the causes of phenomena alone do not ensure the acquisition of meaningful geographical knowledge. If students are unable to apply their knowledge and skills in real-life contexts, and if this knowledge does not enable them to understand the world independently, such knowledge remains a “useless burden.” Only when students are capable of applying geographical knowledge in everyday life can it be said that they have truly mastered the subject. However, the majority of school geography teachers tend to focus primarily on knowledge acquisition, while insufficient attention is given to organizing and facilitating its practical application.

This aspect is particularly important because students' thinking develops through the analysis of numerous engaging facts and examples, their comparison, verification of accuracy, and the process of drawing logical conclusions.

The structure of the *World Economic and Social Geography* course, including its sections, topics, content, interconnections, as well as the changes introduced into the school curriculum, can be summarized as follows:

- In the 9th grade, *World Economic and Social Geography* is allocated 68 instructional hours, during which natural and social phenomena as well as geographical laws are presented to students in a clear, simple, and comprehensible manner. Particular attention is given to students' age-related psychological characteristics and their ability to understand, thoroughly master, and effectively assimilate the learning material. The course includes an introduction and covers topics such as *the economic-geographical characteristics of the branches of the world economy and the world's countries, the political map of the world and its structure, and international economic relations*.

- The introductory section of *World Economic and Social Geography* is limited to outlining the object and subject of the discipline, its specific role, objectives, and tasks. Within this framework, it is essential to explain the reasons behind the emergence of issues related to the rational location of production, as well as to clarify the differences between the study of natural resources in physical geography and economic geography courses.

- Within the section “*General Characteristics of the World*,” the topic “*The Political Map of the World*” introduces the concept of the world political map. This topic addresses the current number of states in the world, their territorial size, and their classification according to geographical location, as well as changes that have occurred in the world political map over the past 25–30 years. It also includes the classification of countries according to their level of socio-economic development, along with traditional issues related to forms of government and state

structure. At this stage, students are provided with initial information about general concepts.

- The section “*World Natural Resources*” systematizes the knowledge students acquired in grades VI–VII regarding global natural resources. This section introduces the concept of “*economic evaluation of natural resources*,” which enables students to develop an initial understanding of the role of natural resources in the development of production and their historical character. Furthermore, the necessity of rational use of mineral, soil, water, and other resources is emphasized, along with the importance of protecting the atmosphere, rivers, lakes, and seas from industrial pollution. Natural resources are evaluated according to their intrinsic characteristics, sectoral relevance, and regional distribution.

- The section “*World Population*” has been expanded and deepened through the inclusion of new issues. It examines the size, growth, and distribution of the world’s population, as well as its gender, age, and racial composition, and the processes of urbanization in countries around the world.

- In the section “*World Economy*,” new concepts are gradually introduced in line with advances in science and technology. In the subsection devoted to a concise definition of the world economy, explanations are provided for many important and newly introduced concepts. However, this does not imply that all these concepts can be fully mastered within a single lesson. Rather, they are revisited and reinforced in each subsequent lesson. Some concepts may be explained in greater depth by the teacher within selected topics, as deemed necessary.

- The regional section of the course begins with the economic-geographical description of countries and major regions of the world. Its content is considerably deepened, incorporating topics such as the role of natural, historical, and economic conditions in the spatial distribution of labor, the nature of specialized sectors, auxiliary and local industries, and their interrelationships. The first topic of the

regional section examines the economic-geographical position of a region, which is defined in terms of its location relative to other regions [1].

The economy of each region consists of a complex system of sectors, which develop as integral components of the global economy under specific natural and socio-economic conditions. The primary purpose of the regional part of *World Economic and Social Geography* is to highlight the unique characteristics of regions. Consequently, the objectives defined in terms of economic-geographical description cannot be fully explored in every lesson of the regional section due to the limited time allocated [4].

Although studying the distinctive features of regional economies is a crucial task, it is not the only task. Students need to understand that the specific characteristics of a region's economy result from general laws manifested differently in various locations. Therefore, during the study of regions, concepts such as *enterprise*, *industry*, and *forms of production organization* are repeatedly revisited [2].

The current school curriculum presents a somewhat diversified system of practical work, requiring students to conduct observations in production, and to work with textbook material, cartographic and statistical sources, diagrams, and thematic tables. The regional section concludes with a summary and generalization [3].

Based on the above requirements, the article outlines the components of students' learning-cognitive activity. This activity has a complex structure, which organizes the conditions for learning-cognitive activity within the teacher-student interaction. It also forms subject-specific competencies, including criteria, stages, approaches, aspects, methodological conditions, and expected outcome components.

In the process of developing subject-specific competencies, the functional roles of both teachers and students in learning-cognitive activity are central. To this end, the learning-cognitive activity conditions must allow students to perceive

geographical information through sensory experience and organize the collection and search for data. Furthermore, it is essential to facilitate students' independent and active search for geographic information. To develop subject-specific competencies, criteria must be established that foster students' creativity, motivation, and high-level cognitive needs based on theory, methods, and technologies [5].

The principles for forming subject-specific competencies are derived from social, scientific, and psychological foundations. They include:

- Scientific validity;
- Comprehensibility;
- Consistency;
- Coherence;
- Systematic approach;
- Use of visual aids.

These principles enable the development of both activity-based and personality-oriented approaches to forming subject-specific competencies. The developed approaches play a key role in motivational introduction, academic literacy, practical activity, and meaningful assessment of outcomes.

**Conclusion.** Achieving the expected results in subject-specific competencies is possible by fostering students' motivation and developing methodological conditions that include the combination of teaching methods, forms, and goal-oriented strategies. The study indicates a clear need to advance and refine the modern scientific and innovative methodological system for teaching *World Economic and Social Geography*. To address this, the research proposed the use of innovative technologies, ICT-based pedagogical tools, and modern learning tasks for monitoring and assessing students' knowledge, which were implemented in 9th-grade lessons.

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