

Irina Pavlova, Yury Lirmak

7. Place based innovations

Providing Competitiveness of an Entrepreneurial University in Russia through Its Internationalization

Key words: international cooperation, entrepreneurial university

In the era of globalization of both educational and product markets universities inevitably become the elements of the world's knowledge grid and if their involvement proves to be successful it means that there are no barriers for the exchange of ideas and knowledge. This fact is trivial for what we call now developed world, but in the countries that for decades have been separated from it by iron curtain it represents kind of a challenge: the years of belligerent isolation have created the unique combination of expertise in science and engineering with the special mindset that often limits one's activity to the confines of one country.

Despite the processes of globalization, this is the case for many universities in Russia where the concept of success and happiness has been and sometimes still is limited by the vision of internal local regional market as the only target for graduates employment as well as the only market for the distribution of products and services generated by Russian companies. These boundaries however have expanded to home country's borders as domestic market and even to the borders of Commonwealth of Independent States' countries. This process is due to the legacy of formerly existed USSR organizational network and common Russian language-speaking communication environment. Also, this so called first stage of internationalization is possible thanks to the process of strange understanding of internationalization of education when, for instance, students coming in droves to Siberia from Kazakhstan is the key factor of university's international activity. Of course it is well-organized brain-drain but one cannot consider this as a full-fledged international exchange even though there are first signs of a competition since young talents from Kazakhstan now choose between the best national universities and education in Europe, USA and China. The majority of those coming to Russia from former CIS countries are

ethnic Russians so there are no either cultural or language barriers to overcome and of course no benefits from successfully bridging the gap between nations, no experience and administrative skills development for the mission.

An entrepreneurial university partly in its mission states the processes of internationalization of its educational, research and innovation activity as a key to the university success. For example, Tomsk State University of Control Systems and Radioelectronics (TUSUR) in its mission as a research entrepreneurial university indirectly indicates internationalization of university activities as a prerequisite condition for its graduates success. At the same time, the university faces many challenges on this road.

As the first stage of research the analysis included review of university resources, international programs, resources allocated on the development of academic mobility programs, joint projects and grants realized by international teams or R&D projects aimed on international customers. This part was aimed to evaluate TUSUR's capabilities in the area of university internationalization.

Since Tomsk is a unique city where every fifth inhabitant is a student and possesses unique research and educational opportunities, it was necessary to evaluate the universities potential to draw intellectual resources into the city. Academic mobility and international exchanges have become very important indicators for universities as internationally oriented institutions. For Tomsk universities academic mobility is seen as sending Tomsk students and some of the professors abroad and not attracting foreign students here while academic mobility should be realized in two ways exchange. For this purpose a series of expert seminars has been conceived with the financial support of Tomsk Regional Administration in order to assess Tomsk universities potential from the standpoint of academic resources capable to teach courses in English. Today, Tomsk universities have foreign student coming here for university diplomas or postgraduate studies. Majorly, they are students of Tomsk Polytechnic University and they are

taught in Russian. As a necessary condition to enroll in the university studies is the test of Russian as a foreign language.

All universities aspiring for global leadership continue to provide educational curricula in English as a language of international communication. A number of foreign students and professors teaching in English is very important for universities in the countries where English is not a native language. We see numerous examples of that in Europe and South East Asia.

A series of expert seminars conducted during 6 months included expert sessions as well as evaluation of some engineering and medical courses curricula in English, since engineering studies and medicine particularly proved to be key areas for foreign students' interest in Tomsk.

The result of this research was formed as the report to Tomsk Regional Administration indicating key countries to focus on establishing and developing educational contacts (Vietnam, Mongolia, China, India, Pakistan, etc.) with strong traditions of cooperation with Russian universities. Also, the research group enumerated limitations of academic mobility development and potential in terms attracting foreign students to Tomsk. For example, a new form for academic mobility earlier not used due to scarce resources could be short-term postgraduate professional program in specific areas of engineering and medicine. The research group forms a list of disciplines and interdisciplinary courses with lecturers and professors which could be taught in English on the bases of Consortium of Tomsk universities because no single Tomsk university possesses enough human resources capabilities to teach the whole educational program in English. To be a quality product, such an educational program ought to be a mixture of courses taught by professors from different Tomsk universities as well as from locally located research institutes of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Such a bulletin of disciplines and lecturers included a number of practitioners and experts working in different areas but being in close contacts with universities. Another very important step is educational programs for prospective professors teaching in English since the knowledge of language itself on communicational level is not enough. Such a language skills development program should be

originally focused on postgraduate students as well as young researchers who plan to work in Tomsk universities. Such a pilot program has already been started in TUSUR as its intermediate results also deserve close attention for its evaluation.