



"To improve is to change;
to be perfect is to change often."

— Winston Churchill

Dear colleagues,

First of all, we are delighted to welcome you back to the new academic year after the summer break! The summer time was very fruitful indeed and the HSE moved forward on a number of fronts from new ambitious admissions, remarkable number of newly hired international professors and postdocs to the structural transformation of the university departments. We have decided to devote this issue to the main changes that have recently taken place as they are on the one hand significant and will affect each and everyone of us, and on the other, will be advancing the HSE to greater aspirations and accomplishments. So now we are happy to welcome our new students both Russian and international and our new faculty members who have chosen to advance their careers at the Higher School of Economics. And we welcome fresh challenges and opportunities this year will bring.

Best wishes for a new fulfilling and productive academic year,

Director of Internationalization

Yulia Grinhevich

Autumn's Winds of Change

New International Labs

The competition for international lab projects to be conducted over a three-year period was announced at the HSE in December 2013. The goal was to locate promising and talented research teams, including multidisciplinary ones that have a potential to grow and give them funding so that they could invite renowned international academics to supervise their research. All in all 49 applications were submitted to the international expert committee for evaluation. There were 19 areas of research that applied, with the majority of applications coming from such disciplines as physics, sociology and economics. In March 2014 it was announced that eight projects will receive financial support. Two of these teams are previously functioning research units at the HSE that invited international colleagues to join them:

- International Centre for the History and Sociology of World War II and its Consequences;
invited scholar - **Michael David-Fox**,
Georgetown University, USA
- Neurolinguistics Laboratory;
invited scholar - **Nina F. Dronkers**,
The University of California at San Francisco, USA

To develop the other six projects new labs had to be created:

- International Laboratory for Applied Network Research;
invited scholar - **Stanley Sholom Wasserman**,
Indiana University at Bloomington, USA

- International Laboratory of Representation Theory and Mathematical Physics;
invited scholars - **Andrey Okunkov**, Columbia University and **Roman Bezrukavnikov**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA
- International Laboratory for Nonprofit Sector Studies;
invited scholar - **Lester M. Salamon**, Johns Hopkins University, USA
- International Laboratory of Stochastic Analysis and its Applications;
invited scholar - **Enno Mammen**, University of Mannheim, Germany
- International Laboratory of Intangible-driven Economy;
invited scholar - **Angel Barajas**, University of Vigo, Spain
- International Laboratory of Positive Psychology of Motivation and Personality; invited scholar - **Kennon Sheldon**,
University of Missouri at Columbia, USA

Two more new labs have been added to this list. They were launched by the HSE together with its partners the New Economic School and Skolkovo:

- International Laboratory of Russian Economic History (with NES) headed by **Andrey Markevich**, NES professor, and **Simeon Djankov**, NES Rector and former Minister of Finance of Bulgaria
- International Laboratory of Law and Development (with Skolkovo) headed by **Alexey Ivanov**, the Skolkovo Department of Legal Policy and Social Development, and **Leopold Specht**, a renowned Austrian lawyer, entrepreneur and lecturer

For more information on international laboratories visit <http://www.hse.ru/en/interlabs/>

New International Colleagues

September is when the university opens its doors to new international professors and postdocs. As a result of the last recruitment round 23 tenure-track professors and 22 postdoctoral fellows are joining the Moscow campus. The faculty and postdocs specialize in a wide range of areas including economics, finance, mathematics, computer science, management, sociology, psychology, history, philosophy, linguistics, philology, public administration, institutional analysis, education, politics, media and communications, international affairs and law. The HSE campus in St. Petersburg welcomes two tenure-track professors, in history and economics, and three postdocs specializing in history. Perm and Nizhny Novgorod were pioneers in hiring international teaching-track professors in economics.

Martin Gilman, the Director of the Centre for Advanced Studies, describes the situation with international faculty recruitment using the metaphor “the glass is half-full or half-empty”. “If you look at the actual progress it’s rather remarkable,” says Gilman. “The number of applications for tenure-track has gone from a total of 280 applications for the 2013-2014 academic year to almost 900 for the next year, 2014 - 2015. However we are not moving as rapidly as we would like. We have very strict academic criteria for the kinds of faculty we are looking for. At the same time, the HSE is unfortunately in no position to dictate to the international job market. In the future we plan to further improve the advertising and start the whole process earlier - we think that we’ve lost a number of good candidates who might have accepted our offer, if we had moved earlier. In terms of challenges, it depends first of all on the job market situation. The second obstacle is a Russia-specific one. We are not a major academic centre and so it can be more difficult to attract the better academics from international research universities. We try to compensate by generous research travel allowances which seem to work in a generally satisfactory way. The third obstacle which I had hoped was becoming less important, but unfortunately now has re-emerged, is the perception of Russia as a rather exotic place to pursue your career. It’s more difficult right now because of the changing perceptions enhanced by the media hype about Russia in the light of the Ukrainian situation. I hope that will be temporarily. On the plus side though is that we think we are doing the right thing.”

New Faculties

The biggest news that will influence everybody who works and studies at the HSE is the change in the structure of university departments. Before the transformation started the HSE had some 40 faculties and departments. In spring 2014 a major structural change began its implementation. The main thrust of these changes is to decentralize the administrative structure and give its subdivisions more autonomy in terms of governance and in some cases finances as well. It is hoped that these reforms lead to more effective mechanisms of self-governance for individual departments. HSE faculties and units will be transformed into departments and schools. These new structural units will be united under the auspices of so-called “mega faculties,” analogues to western schools, the administrative units that generally form the structure of western universities. In fact, the change is not about merging of the departments to make them bigger, but about uniting them into thematic clusters.

Yaroslav Kuzminov, the HSE Rector, recently explained the need for administrative reforms. “The HSE grew into a big university,” he said. “The Rector’s Council simply doesn’t have the specific knowledge to make expert decisions on faculties’ internal issues. Besides, there is always lack of time. Seven or eight big thematic subdivisions can build their own administrative teams that will be able to manage their faculties independently.”

Three big faculties have already been formed. The new Faculty of Social Sciences combines the old faculties of sociology, psychology, politics and public administration. It will be headed by Professor Andrey Melvil,

the former Dean of the Faculty of Politics and a merited scientist of the Russian Federation. Melvil emphasised recently that all parties should be open to dialogue while going through this major structural change. “Reality is flexible, we can modify it based on our common goals and preferences,” said he.

The new **Faculty of Communication, Media and Design** is comprised of the old departments of media and communications, design and integrated communications. Andrey Bystritsky a physicist by training and formerly the Head of the Faculty of Media and Communications has been appointed its Dean. He is also the Chairman of the Voice of Russia State Radio Company and the Deputy Chairman of All-Russian State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company. The new department will focus more on practical study programmes, as well as theoretical research.

The **Faculty of Computer Science** was created together with Yandex, developers of Russia’s best-known search engine that competes with Google in myriad ways. The new faculty will unite the former School of Software Engineering, the Department of Applied Mathematics and Informatics, and the Yandex Department. Associate Professor Ivan Arzhantsev has been appointed to head the freshly formed unit. Arzhantsev, who specialises in algebraic geometry, representation theory and invariant theory, previously managed Yandex academic programmes and headed the Yandex Department at the HSE before his appointment. The new faculty has set three major educational objectives: to offer students fundamental mathematical education, quality studies in programming and information technology and hands-on and practical courses.

New Face of the HSE Website

Those that have been at the HSE for a while now have surely noticed the changes undergone by the university website. Complaints about old-fashioned design, an overwhelming homepage and overall difficulties in navigating the site were heard and starting this spring the university’s main information portal began updating its look for its users. What has changed?

In terms of the structure, the homepage became the main place for university news and event announcements targeted at a wide audience. The new section HSE Family was launched with the aim of informing the HSE community about faculty news and internal events. The HSE family page leads to sections containing practical information for international students and faculty such as handbooks and important contacts.

There are several new sections that warrant your attention. One is the page Life in Moscow, <http://www.hse.ru/recommends/>. It contains news about events in the city, practical advice on living in Russia’s capital, including information about the HSE neighborhood, restaurants, public transport, and an exclusive website devoted to historical background of the HSE buildings. The HSE.Cornerstone can be found at <http://www.hse.ru/en/fundament/> and is a colourful and informative collection of articles detailing the former lives of the buildings now occupied by our university. Here one can find out which building was a famous gymnasium for girls, which structure was a former estate of Baron Stroganov, a confidant of Empress Elisabeth and where the heroine of one of Chekhov’s most famous stories, The Grasshopper lived.

Additionally, a Russian-English glossary of university terms and phrases, the HSE Thesaurus, has been created and published at <http://www.hse.ru/org/hse/thesaurus/>. Have a look at the style guide and find out the correlations between Russian and English words and collocations.

Gradually, more information will be published in English and individual pages will be transferred to the new design pattern. If you would like to give feedback on the new website, or if you don’t see something in English that you think would be of use to others, please contact the chief editor of the English website Maria Besova at mbesova@hse.ru.

Welcome Aboard

Universities are like people, and every one of them have their unique character. What is so special about the HSE? Many say that we are a young, dynamic and multifaceted university and it is our people that make this place unlike any other. In tune with these characteristics the HSE strives to stay young by hiring new academics; dynamic by making the faculty recruitment an on-going process; and multifaceted by inviting scholars representing different disciplines and academic traditions. The HSE Look will begin introducing new faculty that are joining the university this year. Where do they come from, why did they opt for the HSE and what are their aspirations for their first year with us? Read and find out.

Hanzhou Pang was born in China. He received his PhD in English education in 2010 from Washington State University and has extensive teaching experience in the US, South Korea and Russia's Far East. Pang joins the HSE Institute of Education as a postdoctoral fellow. He is into sports and enjoys running, swimming and basketball in his free time.

"I travelled a lot for studies and work. I pursued three degrees in USA—an MFA in Creative Writing, an MA in American Studies, and a PhD in English Education. After graduation, Central Oregon Community College offered me a position as writing instructor and tutor. Tutoring has given me a lot of opportunities to understand multicultural communications. In 2012, after two years, Kwangwoon University in South Korea invited me to be an assistant professor of English. Some Russian professors were also there, and one year later, they brought me to Far Eastern State Transport University in Khabarovsk. Generally speaking, the more countries I visit, the more I understand my relatives, and less cultural biases followed me. My English learning and teaching experiences will always prompt me to look at the international level and to engage in comparative approaches. At the moment, I hope that my experiences help me find something in the area of higher education policy and leadership. Hopefully, these interests will come along, and hold water for a long time."

Emre Dogan was born in Turkey and got his PhD in Economics in 2014 from Rice University in Houston. He taught courses in microeconomics in Istanbul Bilgi University, and has been working on articles in the area of theoretical microeconomics. Dogan joins the HSE International Laboratory of Decision Choice and Analysis as a postdoctoral fellow. Beyond work Dogan is interested in music, philosophy, and sports. In his spare time, he likes swimming, cooking and playing the flute. This year he has one extra hobby: learning the Russian language.

"When looking for a job I applied to many places all around the world, but there were two specific reasons why I applied to the HSE. I took courses from Prof. Fuad Aleskerov in my master's years at Istanbul Bilgi University, and thought that it would be a great opportunity to work with him again, and also Moscow is a beautiful city. In terms of my research, I have been working on some papers in my PhD programme; they are on cooperative stability and population solidarity in allocation problems in the general field of Cooperative Game Theory and Fair Division. I also have some ideas that need to be developed further. So in the short term, my plan is to have my working papers published, plus I may have some teaching duties in my department.

When you move to a new country cultural shock is natural. If you claim that you don't have a cultural shock it means that you are, in fact, in a very big shock. During my stay in US, it was not very early when I recognized this fact. Afterwards, I became more open to meeting people, understanding their culture and having relations in accordance with their social codes. Now in Moscow I feel more secure about dealing with things. My experience should help me adapt here faster."

Vladimir Unkovski-Korica was born in Yugoslavia and grew up in Zimbabwe where he went to school. He received his PhD in international history in 2011 from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) where he later read courses as a teaching fellow while simultaneously working on articles, book chapters and a monograph entitled *The Economic Struggle for Power in Tito's Yugoslavia: From World War II to Non-Alignment*. Unkovski-Korica joins the HSE Faculty of History as an assistant professor. After work he enjoys film, spending time with his family and watching team sports.

"In my research I am trying to understand the rise and fall of Yugoslavia, I have developed wider interests in international affairs, nationalism, communism and economics. My hope in coming years is to understand better Yugoslavia's interaction with the USSR, so I will be looking to improve my Russian language skills and work in Soviet-era archives, from the pre-war Comintern to the post-war state and Communist Party archives. In part, I hope this will deepen my understanding of the Balkans as a diverse region caught between the great powers. But I also want to investigate the possibilities and limitations of attempts to re-order the rules of the world economy by smaller countries like Yugoslavia. For example, Yugoslavia was central to setting up the world's first international organisation focused on the needs of developing countries, the United Nations Commission on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). This is relevant today for issues as wide as regional federalism and the global south. Coming to the HSE, as a leading centre of humanities and social sciences, is therefore a logical step for me and I look forward to working with my colleagues across various disciplines."

My first challenge here will be to integrate myself in the academic life of the HSE. I want to be able to deliver courses that students enjoy and learn from. I am also keen on establishing links with colleagues in the history department and more widely. I saw a colleague in the Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs set up a "poly-sci" working group where colleagues read each other's papers for publication purposes. That sounds great and I am keen to get involved in such initiatives. Indeed, on the point of publication, I hope to finish my own book and then an article for publication before the end of the academic year. I think much of my time will be spent on Russian language lessons, though, to enable my first attempt at working in Russian archives next summer, so I will try to be realistic about what can be done this year and what can be done later."

Christopher Brav received his PhD in algebraic geometry from Queen's University, Canada in 2008. After that he worked as a postdoc in the University of Toronto, Leibniz University in Hannover, the University of Oxford and the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. This year Brav joins the HSE Faculty of Mathematics as an assistant professor. Besides work he is fond of music, especially Arabic and Indian classical music, and Azerbaijani jazz that is played in many in Moscow clubs.

"Moscow is one of the world centres in the kind of mathematics I do and I was very familiar with Moscow mathematicians when I was a student. I had met many of the HSE faculty at conferences in the past, so I had a professional connection. When I came here I was very impressed with what I saw in the mathematics faculty. It seemed like a very good opportunity in term of research but also teaching as students seem really excellent and I think I will be able to teach at a much higher level than in other places where I worked. In the first term my teaching duties are with the master's students. This will give me an opportunity to see how things are done here and to figure out which research seminars I wish to be involved in. In winter semester I will be giving an elective course on homotopical algebra. I designed this course, but I have never taught it before as I never had students that were interested in such a course."

I also want to finish a project I've been working on during the last year and get it out as an electronic archive. Generally, I am interested in algebraic geometry, which is in simple words the study of spaces that can be described by polynomial equations. Algebraic geometry has applications in many areas, for example to information technology security. If you make a credit card transaction online you want to make sure that no one can get access to your card and for that you need a code. These codes are often based on algebraic geometry. What I am doing is beyond that because the mathematics they apply today is maybe one hundred years old. It will be another hundred years before the mathematics people do today is applied in a concrete way."

Faculty of Social Sciences **Sarah Busse Spencer** addressed the topic of social capital. She explained what this popular sociological term means, what it has to do with friendship, and more generally - how sociology helps us make sense of the world around us. **Valentina Kuskova**, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Management, closed the lecture series with a talk on the myths about management that exist in the society and what the reality is. Her examples covered different types of management - from self- and time-management to managing big companies. **Zhenya Bakin**, Head of the HSE Academic Writing Centre, kindly agreed to moderate the discussions.

The programme of the HSE Open Talks can be found at
<http://www.hse.ru/en/day2014/lectorian>

How Was Your HSE Day?

On September 10 Moscow's most famous recreation zone, Gorky Park, hosted HSE's biggest festival - HSE Day. This was the third time our university marked the opening of the new academic year by extending an open invitation to students, faculty, staff and the wider public to usher in the start of the new semester.

"A university open to the city" is one of HSE's mottos. In order to realize this statement the first HSE Day took place in Gorky Park in 2012. Today HSE Day remains the only university event of such a scale that is open to all. This year's programme included a number of activities that took place simultaneously on different stages. The events varied in themes and formats and included open talks, workshops, presentations, community games, sports, music and much more. Choosing between things to do and see was really a challenge, especially as there were more activities available for non-Russian speakers. Below are the highlights picked by The HSE Look!

HSE Open Talks

Since 2012 the university became active in organising talks by HSE professors available for public audiences. Open lectures in Moscow museums, cultural centres and even parks have covered a wide range of disciplines and topics and have been given by the best junior and senior professors, lecturers and researchers that the HSE has to offer. The time has come to make these lectures available to a global audience. HSE Open Talks, a platform featuring English-speaking lecturers, was launched for the first time at the HSE Day 2014. Four professors representing different disciplines participated and spoke for the public. As this is the first session of lectures in English, we didn't put pressure on speakers to find a common thematic frame. The goal was to introduce international professors and let them speak about what they would find interesting and appropriate.

Yuval Weber, who joins the Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs this September, gave a talk on social and political responses to diversity in different countries. He incorporated his personal experience of being an immigrant in three countries - Canada, the US and Russia. Assistant Professor at the Department of Politics **Michael Rochlitz** compared administrative systems of Russian and Chinese regions and explained how performance incentives schemes for regional officials in two countries influence economic efficiency. Assistant Professor at the

Russian Tea Area

International guests of the HSE Day were invited to visit the Russian tea zone. The tea lawn was created as a networking area for those who are curious to know more about Russian language, culture and traditions. It goes without saying that one of the strongest Russian traditions is, of course, tea drinking. Tea culture in Russia differs from Chinese ceremonies or English teatime. Frosya, a Siberian heroine of a classic Soviet movie "Prikhodite zavtra" ("Come tomorrow"), ordered six (yes, six!) glasses of tea in a Moscow restaurant. She explains her habit in the film by saying: "My mother and I always drink tea with raspberry jam after the banya." The HSE almost outdid the Frosya in this respect as our samovar could boil 45 litres of water at a time to quench the thirst of all participating tea connoisseurs. Of course, national culture was a major topic here, but non-native Russian speakers and native ones were also encouraged to participate in a language exchange, which was good for all involved.

Who Is the Mafia?

One of the most popular Russian role-play games, Mafia, was played in a tent by the Moscow River. The game was invented by Dmitry Davydov, a Moscow State University (MSU) psychology student. Davydov says that the idea was based on the cultural-historical psychology theory developed in the 1920s by a well-known Soviet psychologist, Lev Vygotsky. The plot of the game models a whodunit story with different characters struggling together to fight against the perpetrator who is trying to destroy peaceful life of the community.

The first rounds of the game were played in 1986 at the MSU dorms. The game quickly spread around the Soviet Union as many came to Moscow to study from Soviet republics. Later on the game was "smuggled" abroad when Davydov became a professor at his alma mater and taught his international students how to play. Two fun facts about the game: Chinese therapists use the game to treat compulsive gambling and Japanese students that are preparing for jury duty at court practice the game in the course of their studies.

The game has truly become international. And on the HSE Day non-Russian speaking participants could enjoy it with their Russian counterparts as several rounds of the game were conducted in English. The rules of the game were slightly modified so that the players were taking up the roles of university characters. We hope that playing Unimafia at the HSE Day helped students and other participants make new friends and simply have fun before the craziness of the semester sets in!

Check the HSE Day website for reports and pictures
<http://www.hse.ru/day2014/>