



**INTERNATIONALISATION  
MAP OF BUSINESS SCHOOLS  
IN THE CIS AND RUSSIA — 2020**



# INTERNATIONALISATION MAP OF BUSINESS SCHOOLS IN THE CIS AND RUSSIA – 2020

## Analytical report

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## FROM ONLINE COURSES TO NETWORKING

Forced transition of business education to online gives a chance for new market players who had been advancing in this field before the crisis. However, they are few in the world, as well as in Russia.

**In** the framework of this research, we annually assess how Russia advances on the global market of business education. The last year before the Coronavirus pandemic showed rapid growth: since 2010, the number of international students in the world had doubled reaching 5,3 million people. The share of Russia in this market was 4,7% (6th place in the world), which is obviously less than the market leaders (the USA with 18,6%, the UK with 8,2% and Australia with 7,2%). There is no reliable statistics concerning business education specifically, however, it is clear that the Russian share was even less there due to the dominant position of American and European business schools in this market.

The pandemic cut off the trend of growing international student mobility and created several significant challenges for those competing for the global market. The first one of them is to be ready to provide students with high-quality online products. Not many business schools, including the leading ones that work very well with international students offline, were ready to go online without losing in teaching quality. But the problem is not only bringing

the process of knowledge transfer and skills acquisition into the new format with online communication between students and teachers. This forced transition to online will change students' behaviour models after the pandemic. It will require a change in business models for the education system. Which of them should replace the existing traditional models? It is not yet clear. This is the second challenge. Finally, the market of international students will predictably decline due to Coronavirus-related limitations and general income decrease caused by the world economic recession. These challenges are relevant for the whole education sector, but mostly for business education that is conditioned on the private sector money.

The response of Russian business schools to these new challenges will strongly influence whether the Russian share on the global education market is going to increase. This market will surely resume its growth after a pause.

### **ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE PANDEMIC**

The group of Russian and CIS schools visible on the global business education market had taken shape

by 2020; there are about 30 of them. Unfortunately, there are no more new schools that would like to invest in prospective export of their services. However, inside this group, the differentiation had been growing steadily until recently.

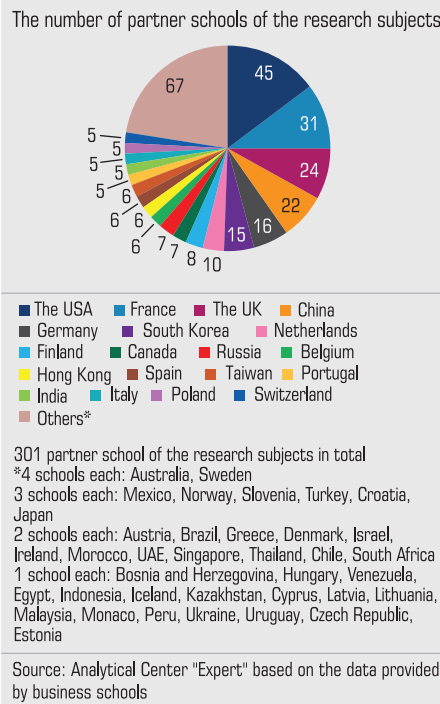
We remind that visibility of business schools on the global scale (and their global reputation respectively) is measured using three basic criteria (see the section Research methodology): the most prestigious independent assessment (international accreditations, rankings), partnership projects and joint programmes with leading schools in the world, as well as the level of research in the field of management.

By 2020, the number of Russian business schools in Financial Times, Times Higher Education Business & Economics (hereinafter – THE B&E) and Quacquarelli Symonds Business & Management (hereinafter – QS B&M) had increased. Only three years ago, the Financial Times ranking of European business schools included Graduate School of Management, SpBU (ranked 64th), THE B&E included only one Russian institution – NRU HSE (ranked 83rd), and QS B&M listed NRU HSE (151–200), SpBU (151–200) and

MSU (251–300). In 2020, SKOLKOVO School of Management entered the Financial Times rankings Executive Education – Customised (ranked 44th), and Executive Education – Open programmes (ranked 62nd). THE B&E, beside NRU HSE (now ranked 94th), included six other schools: MSU (126–150), SPbPU (251–300), KFU (301–400), PFUR (301–400), SpBU (301–400), and UrFU (401–500). Over the period of research, the QS ranking added Plekhanov Russian University of Economics (251–300), Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation (401–450), UrFU (401–450), KFU (451–500) and RANEPa (451–500).

Another criterion of global visibility of business schools is international accreditations. This is essentially a door to the club of about 1000 schools that enables various partnership opportunities from academic mobility to joint research and double degree programmes. Among the most prestigious accreditations ('first-level' accreditations), there are the institutional accreditation by AACSB, the MBA programmes accreditation by AMBA, and two accreditation by the European Foundation for Management Development: the institution-level accreditation EQUIS and the programme-level accreditation. It is internationally recognised that having three accreditations of AACSB, AMBA, EQUIS (so-called 'triple crown') positions a business school among the best schools in the world, of which there are about 100. During the previous year of research, we concluded that there are no significant changes in the list of accredited business schools in the CIS are to be expected. Now, one business school has AACSB (Institute of Business Studies, RANEPa), two have EQUIS (GSOM SpBU and SKOLKOVO), and two have programme-level accreditation by EFMD (Graduate School of Economics and Management, UrFU, and School of Economics and Management, NRU HSE – St. Petersburg). 15 schools are accredited by AMBA. Over the past year, one school lost its programme accreditation by EFMD (Lomonosov MSU Business School). In total, 18 business schools in the CIS have 'first level' accreditations. Several school are in the process of getting them, which

Graph 1. Geographical coverage of the research subjects' partner institutions with 'first-level' accreditations



will take a few years.

The second criterion that allows a business school to compete for students in the international market is double degree programmes with two-way mobility delivered in cooperation with leading schools in the world. The very fact of such a close cooperation with the best players demonstrated the level of the school. Last year, 18 research subjects had double degree programmes, this year there are 23 such schools, and 18 of them cooperate with partners possessing 'first level' accreditations. The leader in this field is IBS RANEPa.

A less impactful, but still important criterion is the number of partners for student mobility programmes (not necessarily with double degrees). In total, there are 301 such partner schools of the research subjects (without duplicates), 72 of them are with 'triple crown' accreditations. Last year, there were 245 such schools, including 53 with the 'triple crown'. Accounting for the increase this year, 28 schools were included because of new partnership agreements, and the rest were added resulting from the change in research subjects and a more comprehensive picture of partners in educational consortia.

The calculations showed that our research subjects have considerably

expanded cooperation with the US business schools (11 new partners from the USA), the UK (+5), Germany (+6), and South Korea (+7). A significant increase can be observed in partnerships of the Faculty of Business and Management, NRU HSE (+28, including 8 with the 'triple crown') and IBS RANEPa (+19, including 11 with the 'triple crown').

Finally, the third criterion of global visibility is the level of research measured in publications. Based on this criterion, we included 13 business schools in the research this year, two of them for the first time: the Bang College of Business of KIMEP University, and School of Engineering Entrepreneurship of Tomsk Polytechnic University.

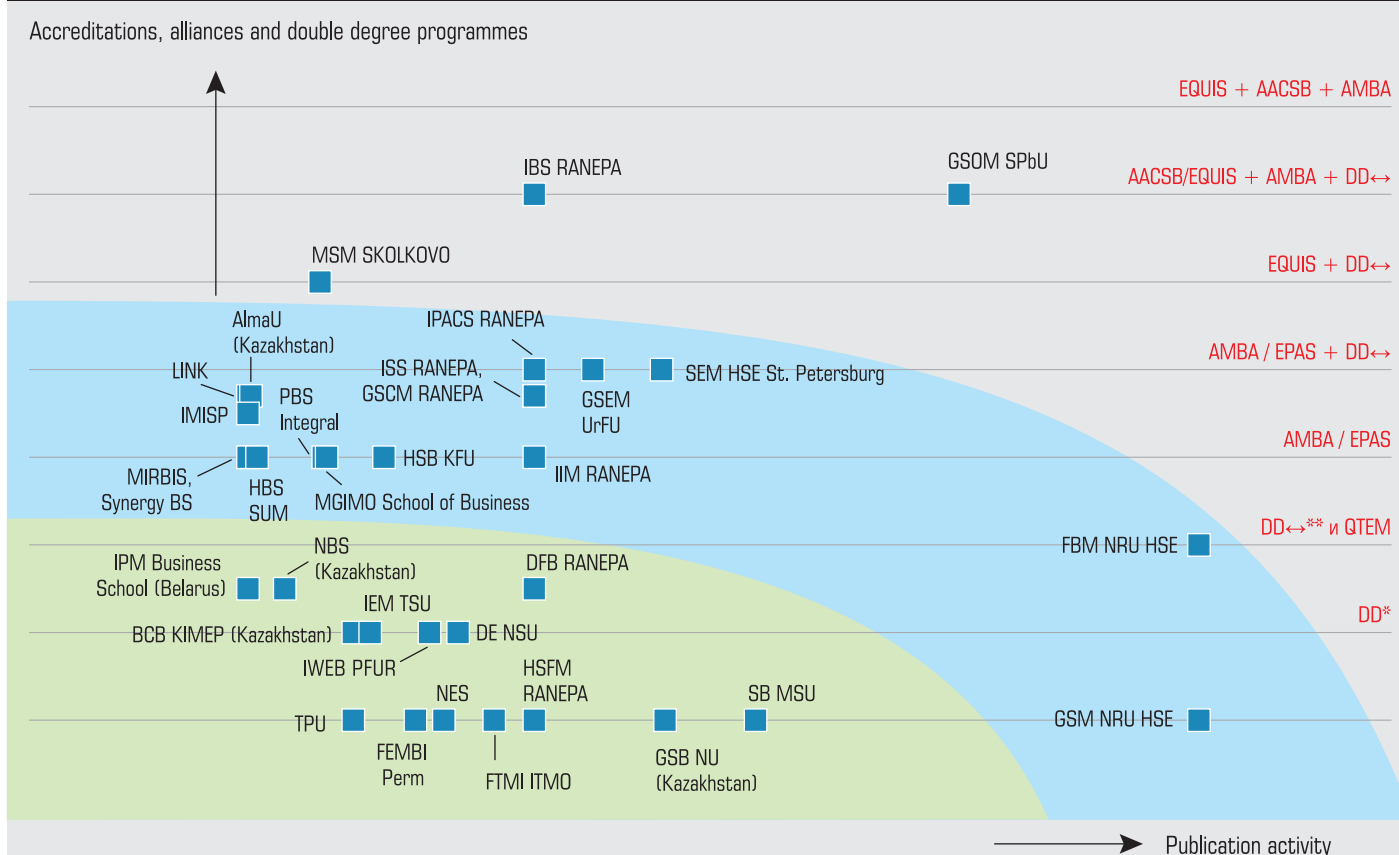
For our research we used the ABDC (Australian Business Deans Council) list to assess publication activity in leading journals. This is one of two most reputable journals lists in the field of economics and management, the second one being CABS (Chartered Association of Business Schools).

The total number of papers published in 2020 by the research subjects has not changed compared to 2019, however, their quality increased: in 2016-2018 there were 1096 papers published in journals ranked A\* and A, and in 2017-2019 there were 1272 of them, which is 16% more; papers in journals ranked A\*, A and B – 19% more.

The top ten schools in publication activity remained the same, except for RANEPa (represented by its business schools), which was 11th last year, and this year moved to the 7th position, having significantly increased its publication activity. Compared to the last research, RANEPa has almost doubled the number of publications, and the number of journals excluded (see Methodology) was halved. The quality of publications sets NES aside: 80% of papers were published in journals A и A\*, and not one paper in excluded journals. In the strict sense, NES itself is not a business school, however, its relevance in the global market in this particular niche is evident.

Thus, the criteria put together, we can see that 34 business schools meet the definition of globally visible: 29 in Russia, 4 in Kazakhstan, 1 in

Graph 2. Internationalisation Map of Business Schools in the CIS and Russia



\* DD — double degree programmes with partners that have 'first-level' accreditations.  
 \*\* DD <-> — double degree programmes that include two-way mobility with partners that have 'first-level' accreditations.

Source: Analytical Center "Expert"

Belarus. The subjects were classified depending on their current promotion strategy in the international market and visibility in the global education environment (see Figure 4). Like previously, we identified three groups: international business schools; business schools actively advancing on the international market by means of accreditations and partnerships or research activity; business schools that are visible on the international market but do not have an elaborate development strategy yet.

The research indicates that the number of CIS business schools visible in the international market is growing very slowly. This year, the dynamics is explained by publication activity in leading journals in the field of management. At the same time, the subjects are very different in terms of both accreditations and partnerships with foreign schools. And in the future, this differentiation will only increase.

And so, this small and only just developing group of potentially globally competitive schools faced

Table 1. Top 10 business schools by the number of partnerships with universities that have 'first-level' accreditations

2020	2019	Business school	Number of foreign partners with 'first-level' accreditations, total	Among them with 'triple crown' accreditation
1	2	RANEPA Institute of Business Studies	79 (60)*	31 (20)
2	1	SPbU Graduate School of Management	75 (76)	31 (29)
3	6	NRU HSE Faculty of Business and Management	57 (29)	23 (15)
4	3	School of Economics and Management of NRU HSE Campus in Saint Petersburg	51 (40)	21 (13)
5	4	Almaty Management University (Kazakhstan)	40 (32)	8 (8)
6	—	The Bang College of Business (BCB) (KIMEP University)	35	8
7	8	UrFU Graduate School of Economics and Management	34 (23)	4 (3)
8	7	Lomonosov MSU School of Business	33 (27)	12 (8)
9	5	Moscow International Higher Business School MIRBIS	30 (30)	8 (7)
10	9	SKOLKOVO Moscow School of Management	21 (21)	8 (5)

\* Here and after the value of respective indicators in 2019 is given in brackets.  
 Source: Analytical Center "Expert"

the Coronavirus situation. It turned out then that the number of business schools ready to provide its students not with hastily adapted surrogates for new communication channels, but with robust online products is even fewer than the aforementioned group.

**DISTANCE LEARNING CHALLENGES**

On March 15, 2020 the Ministry of

Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation recommended that Russian universities switch to distance learning. Some business schools were able to do this in one or two days, while others took a little longer to complete the transition. Full-time education programmes with a specific graduation date were quickly transferred online. The quality of this transition is quite different. In view

**Table 2. Business schools delivering double degree programmes with foreign universities**

Business school	Number of programmes	Number of programmes with partners possessing 'first-level' accreditations
RANEPA Institute of Business Studies*	19 (18)**	15 (14)
Narxoz Business School (Kazakhstan)*	6	6
Almaty Management University (Kazakhstan)*	10 (9)	5 (6)
UrFU Graduate School of Economics and Management*	5 (4)	5 (4)
NRU HSE Faculty of Business and Management*	7 (8)	4 (5)
RANEPA Institute for Social Sciences*	5 (3)	3 (3)
SPbU Graduate School of Management*	3 (3)	3 (3)
KIMEP University, Bang College of Business*	4	3
RANEPA Institute of Public Administration and Civil Service*	12 (15)	2 (3)
PFUR Institute of World Economy and Business (International School of Business)	8 (8)	2 (2)
School of Economics and Management of NRU HSE Campus in Saint Petersburg*	7 (8)	2 (2)
RANEPA Department of Finance and Banking*	6 (4)	1 (1)
TSU Institute of Economics and Management (IEM TSU)*	4 (1)	1 (0)
NSU Department of Economics*	2 (1)	1 (1)
RANEPA Graduate School of Corporate Management*	2 (1)	1 (0)
IPM Business School (Belarus)*	1 (1)	1 (1)
SKOLKOVO Moscow School of Management*	1 (1)	1 (1)
LINK International Institute of Management*	1 (1)	1 (1)
SUM Higher Business School (HBS SUM)*	2 (0)	0 (0)
School of Engineering Entrepreneurship (TPU)*	2	0
Moscow International Higher Business School MIRBIS*	1 (3)	0 (1)
Lomonosov MSU School of Business*	1 (1)	0 (0)
ITMO Faculty of Technological Management and Innovations (FTMI ITMO)*	1 (0)	0 (0)

\* Data provided by the business school.

\*\* Here and after the value of respective indicators in 2019 is given in brackets.

Source: Analytical Center "Expert"

of the urgency of the transformation, in most cases it was implemented purely technically (a professor began lecturing via one of the popular channels - Zoom, Skype, etc.), but not methodologically. Although there are some examples of high-quality online education. In these cases, business schools have succeeded in retaining project learning and tend to use student engagement tools, facilitation boards, and other similar means. Organising such online education takes a lot of effort for both students and teachers, but it is these formats that allow for maintaining the quality. The rapid transition to online turned out to be impossible for part-time and module-based programmes, which in most cases were simply rescheduled: for their target audience it is very important to establish new contacts and interpersonal connections.

At the same time, under conditions of quarantine and the global lockdown, the demand for such a format for getting knowledge in the field of management as online courses has increased. There are certain advantages for institutions that had

already had their own online courses by the time of total transition to distance learning. According to **Evgeny Kaganer**, Dean for Academic Affairs of Moscow School of Management SKOLKOVO, Professor of IESE Business School, most of the world's leading business schools have formed a large portfolio of online programs in the area of open professional development programmes over the past two or three years.

«Schools often have five to ten programmes in the SPOC (Small Private Online Course) format, not to be confused with MOOC<sup>1</sup> (Massive Open Online Course) or massive open online courses that are often not directly related to the business school profile, – says Mr. Kaganer. – In Russia, the creation of SPOC programmes is lagging behind, and this is a significant difference that allows Western schools to actively promote this portfolio on the global level, while Russian schools cannot do this because these portfolios are not fully formed. At Moscow School of Management SKOLKOVO, we are trying to accelerate the development of a whole range of

programmes that will appear in the near future».

The most popular providers of MOOCs are American platforms Coursera, edX and Udacity, as well as British FutureLearn. Courses of Russian educational institutions in management and related fields (economics, finance, data analysis, social sciences, etc.) can be found on Coursera and edX. The share of the Russian segment within these topics on edX is 1% (in total, we counted nine courses posted by ITMO, UrFU, and MEPhI). The share on Coursera is slightly higher – about 3% of courses. Within the topics Business, Social Sciences, Data Sciences on this platform, courses were placed by 11 Russian institutions, namely HSE, SpBU, SPbPU, NSU, TSU, MIPT, MEPhI, MGIMO, Sberbank Corporate University, E-Learning Development Fund, and Yandex. Their cumulative result on the Coursera platform is 58 courses lasting up to 16 hours, 72 courses lasting from 16 to 250 hours, and two programmes over 250 hours. The last two programmes should be emphasised as they are more 'visible' products. These programmes include Russia's first online Master's Degree in English delivered by NRU HSE: Master of Data Science in Applied Mathematics and Computer Science; as well as specialisation (specialisation on Coursera means a group of related courses designed to help students deepen their knowledge in a specific subject) of the National Research Tomsk State University in cooperation with the E-learning Development Fund called Presentation Skills: Speechwriting, Slides and Delivery.

In addition to international ones, national online platforms have appeared in many countries: XuetaangX in China, MiriadaX in Latin America, France Université Numérique (FUN) in France, and the National Open Education Platform in Russia.

Open Education hosts mainly Russian-language courses. Any university (or a specific student) will be able to use these courses for educational purposes, supplementing the curriculum or even replacing offline courses with them. In the fields of management, economics and data analytics (see Research Methodology), courses by 15 Russian universities

<sup>1</sup> In MOOCs, access is open to an unlimited number of participants, in SPOCs, content is also delivered via the Internet, but access is limited to a smaller number of participants (Authors's note)

were made available on Open Education, six of which are participants of this Internationalisation Map. In total, 272 courses on the analysed topics with duration from 16 to 250 hours are present on the national platform. NRU HSE and SPbPU are the most active universities in the field of management.

However, some schools are interested in foreign national platforms - for example, St. Petersburg State University has placed six online courses on the Chinese platform XuetangX in the Chinese language. They are mainly devoted to the study of the Russian language.

In addition to uploading courses to international resources and the national platform, business schools organise their own platforms where they make their own and/or partners' courses available. There are options for posting directly on business school websites and even on YouTube. 7 out of 34 research subjects are using this method of promotion (NRU HSE, Almaty Management University, RANEPa, SKOLKOVO, Graduate School of Economics and Management of UrFU, Higher School of Business of SUM, Institute of Economics and Management of TSU). The strategy of placing branded courses on their own resources, while making short-term courses available on international platforms fully fits into the mainstream of international practice: for example, the first ten distance MBA programmes of the Financial Times ranking are presented on business schools' own platforms, while half of them also post online courses on Coursera.

An important element of the competition for international students is the language of online courses. And here it is worth to pay attention to the following: it is a well-known fact that Russian-language courses are hosted on the national platform, but even on Coursera, most of the courses delivered by Russian institutions on the selected topics are also in Russian, and only 26% are in English. Therefore, as a promotion mechanism, this tool is mainly applicable to the territory of the CIS. Considering the fact that the presence of Russian institutions on international educational platforms is rather weak (with the exception of NRU HSE), in general this tool will not

**Table 3. Top 10 universities by publication activity in the field of management**

2020	2019	Universities	Number of published papers	Number of published papers in journals by ABDC categories			
				A*	A	B	C
1	1	NRU HSE — Moscow	610 (571)**	39 (57)	198 (201)	204 (169)	169 (144)
2	2	SPbU	215 (226)	16 (22)	88 (81)	71 (77)	40 (46)
3	3	MSU	146 (135)	6 (6)	69 (62)	37 (30)	34 (37)
4	5	Nazarbaev University	120 (81)	12 (9)	50 (33)	36 (24)	22 (15)
5	4	NRU HSE — Saint Petersburg	119 (95)	20 (12)	40 (21)	39 (39)	20 (23)
6	7	UrFU	100 (71)	3 (2)	43 (24)	28 (19)	26 (26)
7	11	RANEPa	84 (45)	4 (3)	17 (9)	28 (17)	35 (16)
8	6	ITMO	73 (72)	4 (8)	39 (34)	16 (19)	14 (11)
9	8	NSU	63 (58)	1 (1)	34 (33)	16 (17)	12 (7)
10	9	NES	59 (56)	27 (28)	20 (17)	7 (7)	5 (4)

\*\* Here and after, the data from the 2019 survey are in research.

Source: Analytical Center "Expert" based on Scopus data (as of 20.04.2020)

be effective for promotion purposes. Those courses that have a strong brand, a recognisable university, or a prominent professor remain in the field of visibility.

Thus, the presence of the majority of business schools (and universities) in Russia and the CIS in the global educational online space, to say the least, leaves much to be desired: less than ten business schools are represented on the most popular international platforms, if you include a national platform in the assessment, it will make a dozen. Market players have significantly more online products on their own resources, but their quality cannot be judged externally. And this is perhaps the main challenge that business education has to face now: how to maintain the level of quality. In international practice, the benchmarks for various educational products, including online ones, are certifications and ranking systems, for example, the rankings of online MBA online programmes by Financial Times or QS. Russian business schools have not been represented there yet. The EOCCS of the European Foundation for Management Development acts as an international certification system for online courses in the world. In total, 106 courses of 22 institutions from 12 countries have been certified by EOCCS, and 2 of them are Russian (MSU Faculty of Economics and Sberbank Corporate University). **Igor Baranov**, Vice Dean for Education and Research at Sberbank Corporate University, considers the certification procedure to be very important for the entire business education system: "Business schools cannot compete in terms of prices, and very often the quality of education cannot

be directly assessed by students. In the international practice, the accreditation (CLIP) is provided for corporate universities, and we have received it. The EOCCS accreditation for online courses is more focused, it provides an opportunity to test the quality of a course in terms of international standards with the help of peer review of foreign colleagues who participate in the commission. We believe that the procedure of the accreditation process itself is no less important than the result. Because this analysis involves professionals from other large companies, and their first and foremost task is not to give a compliance audit, but to provide comments and feedback on the product."

In general, we can conclude that there are tools for assessing the quality of online courses, but they cover a very small part of this market. It is obvious that this topic should receive serious development in the nearest future and support from both the state and independent agencies.

## CORONA-SCENARIOS

The majority of market players agree that accelerated digitalisation will make a great impact on business education. Sporadic attempts to replace traditional lectures with online courses in order to lower the workload for the faculty at leading universities have always been there. Some schools have placed their online courses in the national Open Education platform as an experiment while understanding that this gives a chance to learn from the best professors and earn credits for home university. Now these and many other novelties are being put into practice at a tremendous pace.

**Table 4. Global visibility of Russian and CIS business schools**

<b>I. International business schools</b>	
<i>Development trajectory: expansion in various promotion areas</i>	
SPbU Graduate School of Management (GSOM SPbU)	
<i>Development trajectory: accreditations and partnerships</i>	
RANEPA Institute of Business Studies (IBS RANEPA)	
SKOLKOVO Moscow School of Management (MSM SKOLKOVO)	
<b>II. Business schools actively advancing on the international market</b>	
<i>Development trajectory: accreditations and partnerships</i>	
School of Economics and Management of NRU HSE Campus in Saint Petersburg (SPb SEM)	NRU HSE Faculty of Business and Management (FBM NRU HSE)
UrFU Graduate School of Economics and Management (GSEM UrFU)	NRU HSE Graduate School of Management (GSM NRU HSE)
RANEPA Institute of Public Administration and Civil Service (IPACS RANEPA)	
RANEPA Institute for Social Sciences (ISS RANEPA)	
RANEPA Graduate School of Corporate Management (GSCM RANEPA)	
Almaty Management University (AlmaU) (Kazakhstan)	
LINK International Institute of Management	
IMISP, International Management Institute Saint Petersburg	
RANEPA Institute of Industry Management (IIM RANEPA)	
KFU Higher School of Business (HSB KFU)	
MGIMO School of Business and International Proficiency (MGIMO School of Business)	
Plekhanov Business School Integral, Plekhanov Russian University of Economics (PBS Integral)	
SUM Higher Business School (HBS SUM)	
Moscow International Higher Business School MIRBIS	
Synergy Business School (Synergy BS)	
<i>Development trajectory: research</i>	
<b>III. Business schools visible on the international market</b>	
<i>Development trajectory: undefined</i>	
RANEPA Department of Finance and Banking (DFB RANEPA)	Lomonosov MSU School of Business (SB MSU)
Narxoz Business School (Kazakhstan) (NBS)	Nazarbaev University Graduate School of Business (Kazakhstan) (GSB NU)
IPM Business School (Belarus)	RANEPA Higher School of Finance and Management (HSFM RANEPA)
NSU Department of Economics (DE NSU)	ITMO Faculty of Technological Management and Innovations (FTMI ITMO)
PFUR Institute of World Economy and Business (International School of Business) (IWEB PFUR)	New Economics School (NES)
TSU Institute of Economics and Management (IEM TSU)	Faculty of Economics, Management, and Business Informatics of NRU HSE Campus in Perm (FEMBI Perm)
KIMEP University, Bang College of Business	TSU Institute of Economics and Management (IEM TSU)

Source: Analytical Center "Expert"

**Table 5. Number of courses hosted on the Open Education platform**

Universities	Total Courses	Number of courses in "Management"	Number of courses in "Economics"	Number of courses in "Data Analysis"	Number of courses in "Management", "Economics", "Data Analysis" (double counting excluded)
NRU HSE	100	17	49	22	58
SPbPU	67	25	36	6	47
UrFU	52	33	21	4	39
SPbU	131	10	31	10	35
ITMO	52	15	14	20	33
NUST "MISIS"	37	13	6	1	15
NURNU MEPhi	34	7	9	4	12
Tomsk State University	23	2	7	2	7
ETU "LETI"	13	6	1	5	7
University of Tyumen	8	0	6	5	6
MSU	37	3	1	1	4
MIPT	20	3	0	1	4
BMSTU	4	3	1	1	3
Samara University	8	0	1	0	1
RUT (MIIT)	1	1	1	0	1

Source: Source: Analytical Center "Expert" according to the Open Education platform research subjects are highlighted in gray

Evgeny Kaganer comments on this matter: "The pandemic situation is accelerating the changes that we knew about, understood and have been preparing for. From the viewpoint of business school students being ready for online and blended programmes, we have come the way that would have taken 5-7 years before the Coronavirus in just a couple of months".

This also concerns other things beside learning formats. According to Deputy President – Chairman of the Management Board of VTB Bank, Director of Graduate School of Management (GSOM) **Olga Dergunova**, the pandemic removed bureaucratic restrictions that have been a controversial issue and even a fear for the education system in general and business schools in particular. For instance, online application to a



## MANAGING THE FUTURE

The main challenge for business education is how to transfer the content online without compromising the quality, according to **Fedor Fedorov**, Executive Director of Moscow International Higher Business School MIRBIS.



### – How has the business education market changed during the pandemic, in your opinion?

– This is the most widely discussed topic nowadays. And there are different points of view. The segment of supplementary education, in particular training centres and short-term courses, received an additional impetus. During the pandemic, the demand for online products has grown significantly. But, as a rule, students come to such courses to solve specific tasks. Most commonly, this is a momentary story, moreover, the surge of interest for this format was largely due to marketing campaigns, in particular, a large amount of free content. Let's see how users of online content will react when they have to pay a full price. Students of basic fundamental programmes who chose systemic training took different positions: someone decided to 'pause' their studies, but there were also those who felt the need for knowledge right then. For example, some of our students

gave the following reasons for their desire to continue the training: "We understand very well that Zoom will not replace the classroom, but right now we need coaching support, which is available at the MBA programme at MIRBIS. Right now we need courses on financial strategy because we do not want to stop the business. We want to immediately apply this knowledge in this crisis situation".

### – How strong can the penetration of distance learning formats be in the management education market?

– In the development of business education after the pandemic, I would highlight four trends. Firstly, a lot will depend on the duration of restrictive measures in the world and in Russia. Secondly, it is important to understand to what extent our managers and entrepreneurs will perceive education as the basis on which to build a career, a company's future strategy, their personal and professional brand, as well

as positioning their company in the market. Thirdly, the world after the Coronavirus pandemic will become different, we will need new technologies, and with it, owners and managers will need new knowledge. We will have to formulate a new strategy, and in any case, it will be necessary to think about new products, look for partners and sales markets. The fourth trend is that universities and business schools will certainly experiment a lot and transfer some parts of their content online. Today, we are looking for answers to these challenges in heated disputes with my colleagues. The most important thing, and this is where we all agree, we need to find an answer to the question: how to transfer the content online without compromising quality. It is quite possible to teach technical courses and financial accounting online. It is more difficult, for example, to provide professional skills of a manager, or teach a course of organisational behaviour. This is especially difficult to organise in the framework of branded programmes such as MBA, or the long-term programmes. And of course, in order to confirm accreditations and ranking positions, the schools themselves need to maintain capital: the brand, the programmes quality, the level of teaching staff.

university can now be submitted at all institutions and all levels of study: for bachelor's, master's and PhD degrees alike. Previously, this option had not been available at all universities, and at GSOM the online procedure was possible only for master's and PhD degrees. "We discussed this option, argued about it and had doubts, but the pandemic made it all possible, – says Olga Dergunova. – The transition to this technology gives us an opportunity to attract prospective students from more locations as they will be able to apply to a university that they otherwise wouldn't have travelled to just to submit an application. In my opinion, this step will help redistribute students among universities".

According to GSEM UrFU Academic Director **Zhanna Belyaeva**, the pandemic will provide for higher-quality applications to regional universities this year: "Uncertainty of the learning format for 2020-2021 and post-quarantine limitations force many school leavers to consider universities in their home regions rather than relocation to Moscow, Saint Petersburg or other countries. This means that

more good applicants with high Unified State Exam results will stay in their home regions".

The pandemic definitely influenced the usual promotion patterns employed for partnerships and student exchange programmes. Due to the restrictions and quarantine measures, these programmes have been practically closed, and apparently won't resume any time soon. For example, some German universities inform that they won't open for exchange students until 2021. Some European universities confirmed that they are starting this academic year online. Because of this, schools are looking for other communication channels.

"We have tested digital internationalisation tools before, but the transition to online education simultaneously with all international partners certainly became a development driver and highlighted new cooperation opportunities. For instance, we have launched a project simulator with 12 universities in Latin America and Western Europe fully online; now we are discussing new double degree programmes at

bachelor and master levels that could be delivered in the blended mode. It is important to identify the projects that would only benefit from going fully online in the context of new post-COVID normal, and those that demand face-to-face communication, – says Zhanna Belyaeva. – We have managed to organise fully functional online internships with our corporate partners for Russian and international students. Traditional summer schools for international students have also moved online. There is demand, and there will be demand for such short-term programmes as many students from European universities are happy to participate in high-quality programmes that give additional ECTS for their degrees at home universities. This is an additional tool for attracting students to our programmes".

It is evident that accelerating digitalisation of business education expands the horizons for basic academic programmes. However, the future of MBA programmes is very uncertain. On the one hand, during the crisis the best investment that managers can make is into their own education. On the other hand, it is not

clear whether online programmes will be in great demand as new contacts and interpersonal connections are very important for this particular target audience. According to Olga Dergunova, people usually choose an MBA programme to discuss, reflect and develop among their peers. “So, in this case, face-to-face communication, opportunities to have coffee together or work in a project team are vital for many people considering an MBA degree”, – says Ms. Dergunova.

Director of NRU HSE – St. Petersburg **Sergey Kadochnikov** believes that development strategies for business programmes will be reshaped with due regard of global transformations in business and society: “These new conditions showcase the transition to flexible, mobile learning formats. Having analysed the needs of NRU HSE – St. Petersburg partners and clients, we have noticed the demand for adaptive

learning products at the executive level. Companies are switching to ‘conscious consumption’ of education that gives real practical skills. The learning process is being transferred online. There is no more time for 6-months full-time programmes: education should fulfil the students’ need to use new knowledge at their workplace tomorrow”.

In light of this, according to Sergey Kadochnikov’s opinion, going online is going to be a serious challenge for best experts all over the world: “It is necessary to ensure maximum engagement and impressiveness into the learning process for all participants. The winners will be business schools that are able to quickly set up online networking for building business connections between students and teach them to utilise the rarest resource today – communication opportunities – efficiently».

### THREE YEARS TO WAIT

To summarise, this year did not bring any significant changes in terms of international visibility of business school in the CIS, and was most notably characterised by the Corona-crisis that stopped international communications. However, in two-three years we are expecting to see big changes on our map. Firstly, in this time several schools are going to finish their costly projects of getting international accreditations, hence there will be more equal partnerships with leading business schools in the world. Secondly, those schools that invested in online products and technologies in previous years will gain a significant advantage because of international students. There are about 20 of them in the country. This will be happening in the course of differentiation based on quality of rapidly expanded market of online education products.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

**B**y business schools we mean separate private or public institutions and units of universities that deliver basic academic programmes at the bachelor and/or master levels in the field of management (majors ‘Management’, ‘HR Management’, ‘Innovation Studies’) and/or supplementary professional education programmes in business (MBA, EMBA, DBA). The research goal is categorising business schools based on their development trajectories and levels on a global scale.

We used two types of criteria in the ranking: basic (prerequisites to become research subjects) and additional (important for assessment of a business school international development level and prospects).

Information sources: Scopus database; official web sites of accrediting bodies and official web sites of business schools; data provided by business schools.

**Geographical coverage:** the CIS countries.

#### Basic criteria:

– one or more international institutional accreditations (EQUIS, AACSB or CEEMAN);

*(and/or)*

– one or more international programme accreditations EPAS, AMBA;

*(and/or)*

– at least 25 papers in the field of

management published in journals included in the ABDC Journal Quality List (Australian Business Deans Council)\* indexed in Scopus during 2017 – 2019, excluding the list of journals developed under the project Subject Ranking of Research Productivity in Higher Education Institutions – 2020. On the one hand, using ABDC Journal Quality List for reference guarantees an acceptable level of publication quality; on the other hand, it places certain constraints in terms of subjects (management, marketing, etc.). The number of publications was counted for an educational institution as whole, not for a separate business school.

#### Additional criteria:

– partnership development. We considered partnerships of all types (students exchange, research collaborations, joint degree programmes, etc.) with foreign business schools that have at least one ‘first-level’ accreditation;

– double degree programmes. We considered double degree programmes with foreign business schools that have at least one ‘first-level’ accreditation. Essential condition: upon completion of the programme, students get their home university degree and a degree from the foreign partner. The following types of programmes were excluded from the research: franchise programmes, pro-

grammes with non-degree certificates of successful completion, short-term programmes.

Visualising basic principles of business schools visibility at the global level (see Graph. 2):

Classification criteria for visibility levels of business school in the international market:

– international business schools: a ‘first-level’ institutional accreditation and one of the ‘first-level’ programme accreditations.;

– business schools actively advancing on the international market: one of the ‘first-level’ accreditations;

*or:*

– at least 150 publications meeting the research methodology criteria;

– business schools visible on the international market: from 0 to 150 publications, no ‘first-level’ accreditations.

Analysis of courses on the Open Education platform. The subject area Management included the following areas of study: 08.02.00, 38.03.00, 38.03.03, 38.04.03, 27.03.05, 27.00.00, 27.04.03, 38.04.02, 27.04.08, 27.03.03. The subject area Economics – 08.00.05, 38.00.00, 38.06.01, 27.04.07, 38.04.01, 38.03.01, 08.00.10, 38.04.08, 38.03.05, 38.04.05. The subject area Data Analysis – 01.03.05, 09.03.02, 01.03.02, 01.04.02, 09.03.03, 09.04.03.



