



---

## **PLEKHANOV RUSSIAN UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS: THE EXPERIENCE OF LIFELONG EDUCATION IMPLEMENTING**

*Olga A. Grishina, Dinara R. Tutaeva, Alexey I. Grishin,  
Plekhanov Russian University of Economics, Russian Federation*

---

Lifelong education indeed has its place deserved among key components of sustainable and effective development of human capital, as well as increase of competitive capabilities of University graduates at the labour market.

In the Plekhanov RUE almost all levels of education currently available in the Russian Federation are implemented – secondary general education, secondary vocational education, higher education, including postgraduate and doctoral studies, additional education. The University provides all necessary conditions for acquiring the necessary basic and additional qualifications not only during the period of study at the University but also throughout the whole employment period and lifetime in general. The development of the Plekhanov RUE lifelong learning system has become possible thanks to modern remote technologies, individual approach to each student and listener, flexible teaching schedule, a wide range of ongoing programs of basic and additional education, excellent instructors.

The key role in this system is played by the Faculty of Distance Learning (FDL), which covers almost all aspects of lifelong education provided for different group of learners – from freshmen-students to graduates of the Plekhanov, and from 1st year schoolchildren to senior citizens. To implement educational and awareness programs, as well as the communication of students and teachers, the FDL administrates LMS (Learning Management System) on the Moodle platform.

### **For children – the “University Saturdays” project**

The “University Saturdays” is an educational career guidance project for school and college students implemented since 2014 and held under the support of the Moscow Department of Education. Within the bounds of this project a range of activities were organized by the FDL of the Plekhanov RUE in cooperation with other faculties and departments aimed at attracting students to the University. Visiting Plekhanov University at least once, students are not thinking about where they will study further. For years of 2014-2016, 3595 schoolchildren and college students from 180 schools and 10 colleges of Moscow had participated in the project. Among all project educational activities, the most interesting and memorable were the following:

### **Master classes/workshops:**

- “The art of public speaking”. The master class was devoted to the formation and development of skills of eloquent, brilliant and charismatic speaking performances.
- “The state is I: each of us has the right of...”. Being the part of the workshops thematic cycle “State and I”, the master class provided for the listeners an opportunity to learn what the Constitution is and why it is needed, why should one know and be able to defend his or her citizen rights and freedoms and, finally, why it is important to be an active citizen of the country and how to become one.
- “Chinese traditions and customs”. The participants of the master class learned about the history of Chinese New year, lantern Festival, traditional Chinese weddings, traditions associated with different seasonal holidays, participated in the tea ceremony.
- “Fundamentals of Chinese painting and calligraphy” (a part of series of events “Moscow & Beijing – partners or friends”). Listeners were acquainted with the art of calligraphy and Chinese ink wash painting. Of particular interest to schoolchildren was the opportunity to “try their hands” at these arts.
- “Monumental painting”. Participants had the opportunity to watch an interactive movie about the Russian monumental painting, see some examples of exhibitions organized by the State Russian Museum, come in touch with vivid examples of the use of monumental painting in the interior design.

### **Trainings:**

- “The tax calculation is easy! *The Glavbuh* accounting reference system will help us!”. In this training boys and girls have mastered the basic abilities of *The Glavbuh* electronic accounting reference system. In particular, they learned to calculate the taxes on their incomes, property and motor vehicle, use an electronic service *Error-free payroll paycheck*, which makes it easy to understand all the features of payroll calculation, calculate interest payments under the loan agreement.
- “Secrets of modern advertising”. This topic was especially interesting for high school students who plan to pursue a career in marketing and advertising. The participants got familiar with the most effective forms and methods for viral advertising and promotion through traditional (mass media, Internet technologies, social networks) and innovative forms of communication (WOW-Call etc.).
- “Personal Finance: what is it, why to think about it and how to manage it”. The participants learned that the owner of the money manages the finances for two possible purposes: for consumption (family or personal) and for accumulation (family or personal). They mastered the usage of an electronic system of family expenses accounting, learned how to form a family budget, plan family incomes and spendings, and manage savings of the family.
- “Sly prices – the trade motor”. This training gave a chance to students to get acquainted with hidden and explicit ways of influencing on consumer behaviour, encouraging them to make a purchase.

### **Quests:**

- Series of quests "Defenders of Moscow" devoted to the events of the 1941 Battle of Moscow during the Great Patriotic war. These patriotic games included the study of history, urban orienteering, costumed entertainment etc. and were very popular among schoolchildren of 12-15, their parents and teachers.

### **Lectures and excursions:**

- "Library is the herbarium of feelings and passions...", which attracted the attention of lovers of old and unique books published in Europe and Russia in the XVII- XX centuries. The schoolchildren studied the stories of the rare books stored in the Fundamental library of the Plekhanov RUE, learned its relation to social and cultural events in Russian and world history.
- "110 years of the University – a lot or not". The excursion was designed as the fascinating journey through the historical Plekhanov RUE buildings that are officially recognized as heritage objects. Participants got acquainted with the rich historical, cultural and scientific heritage of the University, with the history of its formation and work, as well as general history of the Russian science and education development

Together with schoolchildren and college students attend events with their parents and teachers have participated in the majority of the events outlined above, remarking the high level of them.

### **For students and adults – FDL opens its doors!**

Nowadays basic educational programs are implemented at the Plekhanov RUE Faculty of Distance learning for more than 4000 listeners. The programs are conducted in part-time (evening) and distance learning forms. The total number of bachelor, master and specialist programs is 41. They are designed for graduates of schools and colleges, as well as persons who already have higher education, including University graduates.

Along with the main educational programs, the Faculty is implementing additional professional programs with the annual number of graduates about 1000. Students of the Plekhanov University (as well as other Universities) are also offered with a wide portfolio of additional educational programs developed in conjunction with employers.

Among the most interesting and popular projects of the FDL was the one carried out in close cooperation with the OBI retail company. It was held with the participation of the Plekhanov RUE Marketing and Trade policy Departments from December 2015 to July 2016. The practical result of this research project was the development and approbation of professional training program "Universal head of store department" for the last-year PRUE students. The program is completely free for students, being funding by the sponsor (OBI, which was also the customer of the research project). Program duration was 8 months, 60% of the classes were conducted by PRUE teachers, 40% – by employees of OBI, at both PRUE campus and the company head office. The program was characterised with a rather rigorous process of students selection, which took place in several stages in October and November 2015. In the

end, 20 students from different faculties of the University were enrolled to study. After completion of the program students received a diploma on professional retraining, and the best students were employed in the company at an initial salary of 50.000 roubles. Thus, at the end of the study at the University, the students received a diploma of higher education, the diploma of professional retraining and (the most successful ones) signed job contract.

The Faculty of Distance Learning is currently implementing a range of professional retraining programs for University students in conjunction with relevant departments, including:

- “Effective personnel management”;
- “Law for beginners”;
- “Banking for beginners”;
- “Accounting for beginners”;
- “Finance for beginners”.

Thus, upon graduation students receive not only the higher education diploma, but also acquire additional competences and the right to conduct a new type of professional activity. According to the graduates, a record in the summary about an additional education gives them preferences in employment.

Graduates wishing to continue their education in the University and not to lose touch with their Alma Mater are offered with programs of master level and additional education. The master programs of the FDL have international and professional accreditation. Some of them are unique, such as the “Examination of the evaluation reports” master program. This is the first in Russia practice-oriented master program designed for professional appraisers and based on project teaching method. Master thesis of the program is defended in a special format. It is accompanied by the Internet stream in real time, which connects more than 20 regions of the Russian Federation and foreign countries: Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany and the United States. Moreover, representatives of the government and professional communities are invited to the defence, including ones from the Ministry of defence of the Russian Federation, the Moscow region Ministry of construction, the Central Bank of the Russian Federation, the Trading-industrial chamber of the Russian Federation, Russian Guild of realtors, Association of Russian banks, JSC "United aircraft consortium", JSC "LUKOIL", Grant Thornton etc.

### **For seniors – “Silver Generation University” project and more**

The older generation is not to remain without attention of the Plekhanov University. In 2014, the FDL co-organized the IV All-Russian Championship on computer decathlon among pensioners conducted by the Russian Union of Pensioners. More than 130 pensioners – winners of regional competitions in 59 regions of Russia, participated in the two-day marathon of computer decathlon, which took place within the walls of the Plekhanov University. There were also participants from international teams (of Belgium, Slovakia and Belarus). This Championship has led to the idea of the annual Championship on computer decathlon among students and teachers of Moscow universities, and, what was the most

important, the launch of the FDL social project “Silver Generation University”. These activities and projects are implemented now with the active participation of PRUE students and teachers.

At the moment, the following activities are conducted within the bounds of the “Silver Generation University” project:

- Creative week “I don’t get tired to explore the world”. This event aims to support the personal and social status of older people, maximum extension of their active lifestyles, organisation of leisure activities tailored to their interests and needs. In the framework of the creative week several activities were held:
  - Excursions dedicated to the study of the historical and cultural heritage: “To grasp the immensity: The old and the new in the Plekhanov University”, “Stories about Art: An excursion to the virtual branch of the Russian Museum”
  - Master classes aimed to increase consumer, computer and legal literacy of the older people: “My pension: how to manage pension savings?”, “How to protect yourself from poor-quality counterfeit goods” and “Open the window to a New World: How to use computer to improve the quality of life”.
- Creative week “Health. Longevity. Demand”. The event was dedicated to exploring of some innovative methods of healing the body, the use of minerals, new approaches to the improvement of life in modern conditions, improvement of mental and physical activity of an older person.

## **References**

1. Plekhanov Russian University of Economics. Mission and Strategy. Retrieved January 29, 2017 from <http://www.rea.ru/en/pages/About/Mission.aspx>
2. Plekhanov Russian University of Economics. Faculty of Distance Learning. Retrieved January 29, 2017 from <http://www.rea.ru/en/org/faculties/Pages/distfak.aspx>
3. Plekhanov Russian University of Economics carries out the Academic Board. Retrieved January 29, 2017 from <http://www.rea.ru/en/news/Pages/meeting-academic-council.aspx>
4. В Плехановке стартовал IV Всероссийский чемпионат по компьютерному многоборью среди пенсионеров (In Russian). Retrieved January 29, 2017 from [http://www.rea.ru/ru/news/Pages/news\\_23092014\\_1315.aspx](http://www.rea.ru/ru/news/Pages/news_23092014_1315.aspx)
5. Факультет Дистанционного обучения продолжает Вторую творческую неделю Университета «Серебряное поколение» (In Russian). Retrieved January 29, 2017 from [http://www.rea.ru/ru/news/Pages/news\\_25032015\\_1116.aspx](http://www.rea.ru/ru/news/Pages/news_25032015_1116.aspx)