



EU – RUSSIA INDUSTRIALISTS' ROUND TABLE

Conclusions of the Project Workshop *HR for Innovative Businesses* (Tomsk, 24-25 May 2011)

Implementation of joint innovative projects aimed at making the economies of Russia and the EU more competitive, depends to a great extent on qualified human resources capable of developing and introducing modern technology solutions. Nowadays, there is a clear gap between the real capacities of the educational system and the business's demand for innovative human resources. Based on the Project Workshop discussions, its participants suggest taking the following steps to promptly bridge this gap:

1. Joint research and development centres (R&D centres) represent a key mechanism to train human resources for innovative businesses. Such centres, if founded by leading industrial companies and universities, may, on the one hand, provide opportunities to commercialise the existing technological developments and bring them to the market and, on the other hand, encourage research organisations to search for new technical solutions aimed at securing promising market niches. Support for joint R&D centres including in the framework of promoting R&D localisation in Russia, should embrace preferential tax treatment and state financing for educational infrastructure (including student business incubators and university business platforms). It is also critical to reduce administrative costs, primarily those related to purchase of equipment and supervisory activities.

2. Industry-specific self-regulating business organisations must participate in elaboration of sectoral standards of training based on systematic market forecast for industries concerned and their future demand for specific professional competencies. Harmonisation of training standards coupled with technical standards harmonisation can push economies of Russia and the EU closer, and combine their comparative advantages for higher competitiveness within the global economy, in the face of challenges posed by rapid development of newly industrialised countries.

3. Training for innovative businesses in higher education institutions should build upon a competency-based approach involving modern educational methods. The aim is to train skilled engineers-entrepreneurs who may be hired by leading R&D centres, and are also ready to launch their own innovative businesses. A special focus should be made on project-based learning engaging private companies as a way to establish an "advanced" interface between science and business, with students being involved in business-oriented innovative activities (working on practically relevant technical tasks and projects) at the early stages of education.

4. Better protection and wider commercial use of intellectual property produced in research and educational institutions would provide more incentives for their staff and students to engage in business-oriented technology research. The use of intellectual property produced in joint R&D centres should be regulated in a manner that would provide maximum opportunities for speedy patenting, introduction and

commercialisation of the technological developments (including in the form of reimbursable transfer of the ownership of these developments to partner businesses of the R&D centres).

5. In the modern world, international mobility of human resources is a critical prerequisite for innovative development. We need to be consistent in lifting restrictions on movement and employment of qualified specialists between Russia and the EU. The strategic goal is to completely eliminate visa barriers and establish a common EU-Russia market of skilled workforce by 2015.

These recommendations, if implemented, would promote significant growth of workforce capacity for innovative development, setting up a common expert network and exchange of competencies between Russian and European professionals working in the innovative businesses, and ultimately – would enhance opportunities for production and commercialisation of new technologies in order to raise competitiveness of the economies of Russia and the EU.