

## Polytechnic University Hosted an International Seminar on Supply Chain Management

The international seminar “Analysis of Russian and foreign experience in the formation and development of logistics networks of international companies” came to an end at Polytechnic University. The event was held as part of the Russian-Swiss project, which SPbPU is implementing jointly with the Swiss Higher Technical School of Zurich (ETHZ). The seminar, which was organized by the Higher School of Management and Business and the Directorate of the Institute of Industrial Management, Economics and Trade and SPbPU International Services, brought together Russian and foreign experts and lasted for over three days. The event took place with support of Embassy of Switzerland in Russia



Supply chain management is a complex multidisciplinary process that affects various management, information, and technical aspects. At Polytechnic University, disciplines affecting logistics and supply chain management are studied in different areas of training. It is noteworthy that not only IIMEiT students, but of various other departments of Polytechnic University attended the speakers' speeches: in the modern world, logistics is necessary in almost all areas of industry, science and technology.

The seminar was opened by the head of the Department of International Cooperation, Vladimir HIZHNYAK, who emphasized that today the demand for specialists in the field of logistics and supply chain management is growing rapidly, especially given the strengthening of ties between countries. *"It is especially enjoyable that leading experts in their industry will share their experience today. The format of open seminars for students and teachers is an essential educational element. By inviting foreign and Russian speakers, on the one hand, we try to reach as many students as possible, so that they work out the most possibly accurate idea of a particular profession, its advantages and tasks, and on the other hand, to study the best practices of leading universities in developing unique teaching methods and approaches, developing cases, business games,"* said the Head of the International Cooperation Department.



Deputy Director for International Activities at IPMEiT Nikita Lukashevich proceeded on the matter: *"The topic of logistics and supply chain management is one of the priorities for the Institute, not just because educational programs and educational modules in the field of logistics are being successfully implemented, but because logistics is becoming, on the one hand, one of the competitive advantages of modern industry, and on the other hand, it requires certain educational approaches to training specialists, some of which can be successfully translated from leading foreign universities."*

*"Recently, an international conference on logistics was held at Polytechnic*



*University. We managed to ensure the participation of reputable experts from the academic community and business. The preparation and holding of such seminars significantly expands cooperation with leading universities and logistics companies,”* said Igor Ilyin, Director of the Higher School of Management and Business.

The international joint seminar was dedicated to the formation and development of logistics networks in international business. The speakers brought examples of successful cases, shared their experience in teaching disciplines in logistics and supply chain management, spoke about the processes of collecting the required data.



In particular, Naoufel CHEIKHROUHOU, professor of supply chain management and operational management at the University of Applied Sciences of Western Switzerland, delivered a lecture for students of Polytechnic University on the topic “Modern Trends in Supply Chain Management: Best Practices of Swiss Companies”. Digitalization processes are being intensively implemented in all spheres of our life, including in the field of supply chain management. In addition, global companies are actively starting to implement the block chain technology. *“The world does not stand still - many progressive companies are exploring options for modernizing the transport and logistics systems,”* the professor pointed out. The integration of all available data into a single system on one platform will give us a new impetus for the supply of all kinds of materials and goods to many countries of

the world. There is one important point in all of this: the human factor. Professor Shikrow paid special attention to that: “Not systems but people interact with each other. That is why we must take care of employees' communication among each other and information transfer processes. We work with a huge number of people, and the final result depends on how accurately the data is transferred from one participant of the process to another.”

As part of the second day of the international seminar, Professor Naoufel CHEIKHROUHOU held a methodological lecture on the development of cases, interaction with companies to obtain the required data, and the possibility of using outcomes of scientific research in the training process.



ETHZ professor Bublu TAKUR-WEIGOLD noted that there was a huge shortage of solid cases on Russian issues in the field of supply chain management around the world. Together with Professor Tatyana Khvatova, the Swiss professor developed a case (Khvatova T.Y., Thakur S.B. (2019). The Lipstick Effect: Turning around XT-Beauty, Emerald Emerging Markets Case Studies (forthcoming)). The case study considers a chain of professional cosmetics stores experiencing a wide range of problems - reorganization problems, supply problems, as well as personnel management problems.

The role of technology in the educational and business processes was commented on by the managing partner of Swiss Island Rudiger Geist: “In my opinion, over the

*past 15 years, one thing has changed dramatically: technology creates business opportunities, and not vice versa. We are now kind of looking into the future. If I were betting, I would bet on a collaboration of supporting technologies and big data, but not on artificial intelligence. It is overrated in many areas."*

On the third day, participants visited several production and logistics companies to familiarize themselves with production processes and discuss the possibility of developing joint cases for integration into the educational process.

In conclusion, the seminar participants visited the laboratories of Polytechnic University, presented their universities and opportunities for joint cooperation; both parties noted on the high productivity of the meeting and good prospects for cooperation between SPbPU and Swiss universities and companies, and emphasized that the work on the project would continue.

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