

The Polytech Days in Berlin Aroused Unprecedented Interest in Russian and Foreign Media



More than 120 publications in European and about 30 in Russian media have been published (as of today) in the course of the events and on the results of the Polytech Days in Berlin. For two days, several film crews, dozens of print and photo journalists from news agencies, central and regional print and online media worked with the participants on the forum. The director of the St. Petersburg Foreign Economic Bureau in Germany Dmitry UCHITEL was extremely helpful in attracting German media and promoting the Polytech Days in Berlin in other countries.

Thanks to the broad media coverage, the highlights of this large-scale event and interviews with key actors became available not only to the participants, but also for an extensive TV and Internet audience both in Russia and abroad. Also, the SPbPU Office of Public Relations emphasized that the forum events were broadly covered on the official site of SPbPU in Russian and English.

Away from the logic of present-day international relations, the current political situation and other matters, Polytechnic University seeks to strengthen ties with European colleagues. Therefore, the atmosphere of friendly partnership, which was present at the forum, further increased the interest of media representatives. Besides promoting the image of Polytechnic University as of a leading technical university in Russia and Russian higher education in general, the forum aims at establishing and strengthening partnerships between Russian and German businesses, scientific and educational communities, and civil societies of our countries.



The resource of good relations and working contacts with Europe has always been an important dimension in the value system of Polytechnic University. After all, it was established 120 years ago following the pattern of the best educational institutions in England, Belgium, France, Germany, Austria, Hungary and Switzerland, with the account of the most positive features of those European universities. In the early years of Polytechnic Institute, teaching was conducted in German, and that embraced the German system of training engineers. Today, Germany is one of our trusted partners in Europe, so it was decided to hold the Polytech Days in the very heart of Europe, that is, in Berlin.

The Polytech Days in Berlin were held as part of the Russian-German Year of Scientific and Educational Partnerships, which takes place in 2018-2020 at the state level in our countries. The Polytech Days in Berlin is a large-scale project that demonstrated the openness of our university to the world, its mighty history and traditions. Without exaggeration, the forum has become an event of the European scale, an exceptional tool for intercultural dialogue.



Russian and European diplomats, politicians, foremost companies and universities supported the event by their participation and in the course of its preparation. Among those were the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Germany Sergey NECHAEV; Pavel SHEVTSOV, Deputy Head of the Federal Agency for CIS Affairs, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation; Head of the St. Petersburg Foreign Economic Bureau in Hamburg Dmitry UCHITEL; Chairman of the World Alumni Association Vladimir CHETIY; President of the European Association of Chambers of Commerce Christoph LEITL; State Secretary, Ministry for Economic Affairs, Employment and Health, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Stefan RUDOLF; Director General of the German Eastern Business Association (OAOEV) Michael HARMS; Vice President of Siemens in Russia Martin GITZELS; President of Leibniz University of Hanover Volker EPPING; Jens Bölmann, Head of the Contact Bureau for Small and Medium Enterprises (Eastern Committee for German Economy); graduate of St. Petersburg Polytechnic University, foreign member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, director of the Institute of Mechanics of the University of Otto von Guericke Holm ALTENBACH; and etc.



In the core panel discussion on the [“Sustainable development of Russia - the EU through a dialogue between universities, industry and society”](#) took part: Andrey SOBOLEV, Trade Representative of the Russian Federation in Germany; Rector of University of Stuttgart prof. Wolfram RESSEL; President of Kazakh-German University prof. Laszlo UNGVARI; heads of leading companies / strategic partners of SPbPU: Wilfried SHTOL, head of FESTO Group; prof. FALK STRASHEG, founder of Strascheg Center for Entrepreneurship; Michael MEI, Head of Data Analysis and Artificial Intelligence at SIEMENS AG; Andre BIENER, SAP SE Regional Innovation Manager; Prof. Branko KATALINIC, President of DAAAM International Vienna Association. As the panel discussion showed, this format of communication was a very important component of the international dialogue. This format is in particular demand, because not only it allows us to build direct contacts and multifaceted cooperation between Russia and Europe but also opens up wide opportunities for public diplomacy.



Russia and Germany have centuries-old ties. The moderator of the discussion, Rector of SPbPU, Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences Andrei RUDSKOI, spoke about this in his speech. Many participants in the meeting fully agreed with him. However, not only current political and industrial trends in Europe were discussed. Matters of the general history and common pain of the Russians and Germans, World War II took an important place among the topics raised during the panel discussion. The Siege of Leningrad was not forgotten as well, the hurting experience of which affected every resident of our city. "Our common duty and direct responsibility to posterity is to preserve the memory of the events of those years, not to let the world forget about the terrible tragedy and its victims," said in his speech the Secretary of State of the Ministry of Economy, Labor and Health of the Federal State of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Stefan RUDOLF, offering to honor the memory of Leningraders with a minute of silence. Against the backdrop of modern information trends, this position certainly deserves respect.

The organized press conference of the Rector of SPbPU Andrei RUDSKOI, Volker EPPING, Stefan RUDOLF, Holm ALTENBACH and Martin GITZELS caused a huge media interest. It was attended by journalists from leading Russian and foreign television companies, newspapers and news agencies, such as Channel One, RBC, Russia Today, TV Berlin, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Düsseldorf Blatt, Deutsche Wirtschaftsnachrichten World Monitor, RIA Novosti, etc.



In general, the number of journalists who attended the forum created the atmosphere of a continuous press conference. Some speakers were interviewed even right on the street. Vice-Rector for Prospective Projects of SPbPU, co-leader of the Tekhnet NTI working group, head of the NTI SPbPU Competence Center Alexey BOROVKOV told the Channel One film crew about the digital transformation of industry, one of the priorities of the governments of the leading world countries, and highlighted the programs that focused on the digital transformation of Russian industry through the development of new production technologies, i.e., the “National Technological Initiative” (STI), the “Science” and “Digital economy” national projects. The vice-rector emphasized that Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University plays an important role in each of these programs.

Vice Rector for Research scientific work Vitaly SERGEYEV told reporters about other scientific projects and achievements of the Polytechnic University. Foreign graduates of the Polytechnic spoke with reporters about more casual topics. Honorary Consul General of the Russian Federation in Agadir, Morocco, Mr. Abdellatif ABID, Professor of the City University of London Sanovar KHAN, Professor of the University of Otto von Guericke Holm ALTENBACH - all of them graduated from Polytechnic University in different years and shared their memories of student time spent in our country, their beloved teachers and friends.

Due to the wide media coverage, a huge number of people got involved in the Polytechnic University’s event. Many departments of the university participated in the preparation of the forum: international services, the media service, colleagues from institutes and higher schools, employees of the Congress and Exhibition Activity Department. Due to the fact that everything

was thought out to the smallest detail, the event became an authoritative communication platform with European partners.