

Russian Federation

Demographics for Russian Federation

Population:	143,420,309 (July 2005 est.)
GDP (by PPP method):	US\$1.589 trillion (2005 est.)
Currency (inc. code):	Russian Ruble (RUR)
Language(s):	Russian, many minority languages
Internet country code:	.ru

General education system in the Russian Federation

General education is aimed at the intellectual, moral, emotional, and physical development of children; at shaping their general cultural level, developing their ability to adapt to life in society. General education is to set the foundations which will enable individuals to make a conscious choice of a further profession training programme and to cope with it.

General education comprises:

- pre-school education;
- primary general education;
- basic general education; and
- secondary (complete) general education.

From primary school, general education programmes now last 11 years. The school enrolment age is six. Pupils normally finish secondary (complete) general education at the age of 17. There are also 12-year programme schools for part-time education and education in the arts.

At present, the system of general education comprises 66,909 schools with about 20,825,000 pupils. Some 607 private schools have been established over

the last five years. The official name of general education schools is the Secondary General School. New types of schools called “gymnasia” and “lyceum” have recently been set up, that can be state and private. The duration of studies in “gymnasia” and “lyceum” can exceed that of Secondary General Schools, and their educational programmes can be more advanced.

The academic year lasts from 1 September to mid-June. The Basic Curriculum for General Education is based on the State requirements as to the minimum content of education and the workload of pupils. In addition to these required fields of study, the Basic Curriculum provides for subjects, which could be added as specific to the particular geographic region in which the school is located as well as optional subjects in accordance with the interests of pupils.

Russia has a network of specialized schools offering advanced programmes, based on the Basic Curriculum and can be offered in a number of ways:

- through schools offering advanced programmes in selected disciplines such as foreign languages, mathematics, physics, etc.;
- through schools with developed out-of-school activities giving a profound mastery of fine arts, philosophy, economics, sports, and other fields; and
- through schools in which senior grades work under the auspices (and tutorship) of higher education institutes or universities and use the academic staff and facilities of the latter.

Primary general education and basic general education are compulsory. On the completion of basic general education (a nine-year programme), pupils take final examinations – State final attestation. If they pass it they are awarded the Certificate of Basic General Education and can continue their education. The Certificate entitles its holder to be admitted to secondary (complete) general education – 10-11 forms, or to vocational education, as well as to non-university level higher education.

In general the language of instruction is Russian. The study of Russian as the state language of the Russian Federation is included in all State-accredited educational establishments, except pre-school institutions. The citizens of the Russian Federation have the right to receive their basic general education in their native languages. The language (languages) in which education and training are conducted are selected by the founder(s) and/or by the statutes of the school.

On completion of the secondary 11-year school programme and the successful passing of the State final attestation-final examinations the Certificate of Secondary (complete) General Education is awarded. Further, he/she can pursue further professional education: either vocational education or either a non-university or university level higher education.

Higher professional education is aimed at the continued development of students, in the process of which they acquire professional qualifications. Its programmes prepare graduates to work in the chosen profession.

Professional education includes:

- vocation education;
- non-university level higher education;
- university-level higher education; and
- postgraduate education including doctoral study programmes.

The higher education is facilitated by universities, academies and institutes and it is provided by governmental and non-governments accredited higher education institutions.

There are three types of higher education:

- (1) Basic higher education (four years) leading to the “Bakalavr’s” degree, the first university level degree. This is equivalent to the BA/BSc degree in the USA or Western Europe.
- (2) Postgraduate higher education (five to six years), comprising Specialist Diploma (total five to six years cumulatively) or a Master degree (two year-studies after a Bachelor course). This is equivalent to a Master Degree (MSc, MA) in the USA or Western Europe.
- (3) After a Master degree, students can continue to study towards a doctoral degree: “Kandidat Nauk” degree (an equivalent to PhD) and “Doktor Nauk” degree (the second highest academic title, equivalent to full professor).

The Bachelor degree programmes last for four years of full-time university-level study. The programmes are elaborated in accordance with the Russian Federation State Educational Standards which regulate almost 80 percent of their content. The other 20 percent are elaborated by an accredited institute itself. The programmes include professional and special courses in science, the humanities and social-economic disciplines, professional training, completion of a research paper/project and passing State final exams. Having obtained a Bachelor degree, students may apply to enter the Master programme or continue their studies in the framework of the Specialist’s Diploma programmes. The Bachelor degree is awarded in all fields except medicine after passing the final exams and the viva defending a Diploma project prepared under the guidance of a supervisor.

Holders of a Bachelor degree are admitted to enter the Specialist Diploma and Master degree programmes. Access to these programmes is competitive. The Master degree is awarded after successful completion of two years’ (18 months) full-time study. Students must carry out a year of research including

in-company training and prepare and defend a thesis which constitutes an original contribution and sit for final examinations.

Access to the PhD level again is very competitive. Candidates must hold a Specialist Diploma or a Master degree. Studies and research work leading to a PhD dissertation presentation last three years. The PhD course prepares for research and professorial activities. Students must learn teaching methods and pass qualifying exams. They carry out independent research, prepare and defend a PhD dissertation. They are then awarded the scientific degree of Candidate of Sciences or PhD. The Doctor of Sciences or Arts programme is specific and its duration is not fixed, but normally it takes from five to ten years to do research leading to the full Doctor dissertation.

In September 2003 Russia joined the Bologna Declaration Concord and started introducing a two-tier system of higher education – Bachelor degree course (four years) – Master degree (18 months-two years) instead of a five-year Diploma of a Specialist course. It is planned to finish the transformations by the end of 2010. In 2006 education as a social lift was announced by the government – one of three top priority issues of developing Russia in the next three to five years.

Business and management education

Business education is defined to be a system of catering for professional managers to run companies and organizations operating on the market with the purpose of making a profit.

The present-day business education in Russia originated with the transition of the then Soviet Union to a market economy starting in 1985. Principal reforms in the Russian business education began together with the economic reforms. Further business programmes' content, status, enrolment system and technologies of training underwent very thorough changes. It has led to improving the structure of the Russian business education by adding a large number of new, private business schools that incorporated western business education models and teaching materials. At the same time these new business schools focused on the development of business in Russia under new market conditions together with exploring international business practices.

Now business education is a rapidly developing industry in Russia. The Russian economy and companies are growing and they lack skilled managers. Companies started to compete not only for customers, but also for skilled executives and managers.

In the 1990s there were about 120 higher education institutions which offered degree programmes in management, and over 100 centres of further post-experience management development. National market conditions and business context created prerequisites for a rapid growth of training courses and management development programmes for business.

New business schools appeared – non-state, not-for-profit organizations with a mixed or corporate ownership, which offered executive development and further management education programmes, including MBAs. The best economic and technical universities joined the process by launching departments of further management education and re-training. By the mid-1990s a multi-tier system of professional business and management education had been shaped, which was oriented to new requirements of the transition economy in Russia.

The Russian business education market is increasing every year by 15-20 percent, and according to the analysts' forecasts by 2010 its capacity will reach US\$500million, with 10,000-12,000 new MBA graduates per year. The number and diversity of MBA programmes offered by Russian business schools is based on the market requirements, while the number of graduates meets only 50 percent of the demand of businesses for top managers and executives. (Kachalov Consultancy Co. Survey, 2005)

There are four models of business education in Russia:

- (1) Higher education degrees in management and business administration (Undergraduate – basic education, Bachelor, Master's of Management). Their aim is to develop a personality, to provide for professional education of a specialist in a relevant business function or area. Their mission is to develop knowledge and skills leading to jobs in business or management. A total of 25 percent of these programmes are delivered free of charge, as they are covered by the state budget, while the remaining 75 percent presume paid for tuition.
- (2) Executive development aims to introduce management as a profession and to provide a foundation for taking up a new professional activity. Students are those who have a professional education (Undergraduate basic, Bachelor, Master) and work-experience. Tuition is paid for, sometimes by a company or an organization, or, in some 80 percent of cases, by the participant him/herself.
- (3) Management training aims to develop a more qualified manager by: theme-focused training in a particular business function or skill by the use of workshops; deeper learning of topical issues in business development, problem solving in the economy and business in order to increase one's own qualification; and short courses to master concrete topics such as dealing with current problems and management technologies studied as training sessions and seminars.
- (4) MBA – Master of Business Administration aims to cater for the professional manager, enabling the career development of specialists in various areas of technology, engineering, medicine, arts, etc., which will provide for their success in business, entrepreneurship, management and administration. Tuition is paid for by the participants or their employers.

In recent years another segment has been actively developing – professional development courses for corporations, tailored to their needs and strategies of HR development.

As distinct from the USA and Europe, where management development systems are over 50-years old, in Russia they are relatively new, being about 18-years old. In 1990, the Russian Association of Business Education (RABE – www.rabe.ru) was established by several top national business schools. Now it unites 128 members (June 2006) – business schools, universities, training centers, corporate, international and individual members. RABE's mission is to create an efficient system of business education, management and executive development, which would meet the needs of Russian business and other stakeholders and would be up to the highest international standards. For this purpose RABE cooperates with the most renowned international business education associations (EFMD, AACSB, AMBA, ETF, CEEMAN) through carrying out joint research and educational projects. It was thanks to the active work of RABE with the RF Ministry of Education and Science that the MBA programme became officially recognized by the government in Russia. RABE holds an annual general national conference, regular faculty and trainers development seminars, and publishes its quarterly magazine *Business Education*.

At present there are over 100 MBA programmes delivered in Russia by various institutions. In 1999 the MBA programme was standardized by the Russian Ministry of Education, and an Expert Board for the MBA programmes under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation was created. About 50 MBA programmes have been accredited by the State Russian Expert Board for MBA programmes since then.

Many business schools have joint programmes with western business schools and issue Russian and western diplomas (MBA degrees). European business schools (23 joint MBA programmes) are much more active in Russian than in US schools (nine joint MBA programmes). The majority of joint MBA programmes are offered in Moscow and St Petersburg business schools and only several joint programmes can be found outside.

Some 40 of these MBA programmes are offered in Moscow and St Petersburg. Currently over 5,000 students graduate from the Russian MBA programmes, but the potential demand is about twice as large. MBA tuition fees for 2005-2006 have been in the range of \$5,000-6,000 in remote regions of Russia and \$12,000-16,000 in Moscow. Management development programmes are of a rather high quality – five business schools have recently had their MBA programmes accredited by the International Association of MBAs, AMBA.

Russians interested in getting an MBA degree have the following options:

- apply to a Russian business school to enter a Russian-standard MBA course;
- enrol on a joint Russian-Western MBA programme; or

- apply for an MBA programme abroad (by directly applying to western universities or participating in foreign government-sponsored programmes like British Councils or the Edmund Muskie Fellowship Programme).

Business schools offer various forms of education, including part-time, modular, weekend professional courses, or distance learning.

Russian MBA students are older than in the West. The age of MBA students in Russia is between 22 and 45, the average age is 28, and about 27 percent of MBA programme applicants are over 30. Of them 35 percent are women.

Russian MBA applicants are more interested in career change and salary growth than their Western colleagues. MBA applicants choosing business schools abroad are usually interested in working abroad or in international companies globally, including Russia. Applicants choosing joint MBA programmes in Russia are interested in working for Western companies in Russia, while those entering Russian MBA programmes are focused on working in Russian companies or running their own business. Many applicants would prefer to continue their careers in parallel with doing their MBA degrees, as the economy is rapidly growing and changing. Many have to support their families and pay for the education on their own. Russian MBA applicants are better suited for part-time MBA courses with a specialization, as opposed to the general MBA. Some choose distance MBA education programmes in Western universities.

The business education market in Russia

Business education is developing as a market system in the economy of knowledge. Its parameters – level of competitiveness, prices and distinctions compared with the western business education, tendencies and perspective scenarios – are worth considering.

Factors of competitiveness of Russian business education are:

- price-competition between market leaders;
- non-price competition between Russian and Western business education organizations;
- competition with new market-players in business education, such as corporate universities, consulting companies, offering trainings and seminars; and
- competition for star-lecturers and top faculty whose number is not adequate to the needs of the business education system in Russia.

According to experts' forecasts, in the coming years large Russian companies may spend \$200-400 million annually for personnel training and development. It was noted that in 2005 Russian companies on average increased training budgets from 3 percent to 10 percent of the company's overall budget.

Large Russian companies tend to train current personnel rather than replace less skilled employees with better-educated and experienced professionals. Large companies create corporate educational programmes jointly with universities and consulting companies or open their own corporate universities. Some large Russian companies are not interested in general business education programmes – they ask universities and consulting companies to develop industry-specific or even company-specific cases and tasks for the students. The annual growth rate of corporate educational programmes in Russia is 10 percent. About 20 Russian business schools (approximately 20 percent of the total number) develop special corporate education programmes corresponding to the MBA standards.

Issues

- (1) Globalization of Russian postgraduate business education programmes (developing cross-cultural competences as a factor of successful operation of Russian companies on the global market).
- (2) Increasing the intensity of learning through realizing the idea of a learning organization.
- (3) Further developing corporate HR management centers as a way to bringing business education to the working place.
- (4) Developing the system of lifelong learning to provide for improving managers' level of competences through the whole life.
- (5) Introducing inter-disciplinary approach to MA/MBA programmes design and technologies of training.
- (6) Focusing on soft-skills development, as a response to the increased role of the human factor in management.
- (7) Direct linking of business education and career development of post-experience students.

Challenges

- Developing the relationship between business schools and business.
- Improving the quality of business education programmes and services.
- Further internationalization of business education products and services to make them compatible with the requirements of globalizing business.
- Increasing the role of business education in further development of a culture of management and administration in Russia.

Moscow Business School MIRBIS
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