

SEMINAR: Career opportunities with Russia

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SPEAKER BIOS

Opening

Riitta Kosonen, Professor, Director, Center for Markets in Transition, Aalto University

Riitta Kosonen is a Professor and Director of Center for Markets in Transition (CEMAT) at the Aalto University School of Business. She is in charge of several multidisciplinary research projects that provide scientifically rigorous and societally relevant research on emerging markets, especially on Russia. In addition, she serves as the chair of the Working Group for Social Sciences of the Finnish-Russian Commission for Scientific and Technological cooperation. She is also a member of the board of Aleksanteri Institute. During October 2016 – August 2019 she also worked as the Programme Director for the Strategic Research Programs “Security in a Networked World” and “Urbanising Society” under the Academy of Finland.



Kosonen is an author of over 75 publications targeted to the larger public or business community. Kosonen is frequently invited speaker and expert in various types of events and meetings. She has an extensive experience of engagement with the business community and policy-makers in research projects and of dissemination of research results to the business community and policy-makers.

Panel discussants

Pasi Kokkonen, Councillor, Unit for Russia, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

Counsellor Pasi Kokkonen, MFA/Unit for Russia, has a degree in Political Sciences, major in International law, Åbo Akademi University. He has worked 13 years at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland; inter alia with human rights policy, security policy and now with Finnish-Russian bilateral relations. During his MFA years he has also worked about one year at our Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels, our Permanent Representation to the UN in New York and our Embassy in Stockholm. In Bucharest Pasi Kokkonen stayed 3 years and worked as the Deputy Head of the Finnish Embassy. Before joining the MFA, he worked 3 years at the Ministry of the Interior, at the migration department and before that about one year at the Human Rights Institute of the Åbo Akademi University.



Juha Väättäen, Professor of International Business and Emerging Markets at the School of Business and Management (LBM), LUT University

Juha Väättäen works as a Professor of International Business and Emerging Markets at the School of Business and Management (LBM) at LUT University. He is a great believer of science-based knowledge, sustainability, social inclusion, and innovation driven competitiveness. Prior to joining the academia he worked in financial sector in United Kingdom and Russia.

His Russia interest goes back to 1980's when he visited Soviet Union as a student. He worked in Moscow mid 1990's and has after that visited Russia both in business and academic collaboration. In academic collaboration one achievement is establishment of double-degree Master programme collaboration over 10 Russian university partners ranging from St. Petersburg to Novosibirsk. In addition he is actively engaged in research collaboration with many Russian researchers studying innovation capability and competitiveness of Russian enterprises.



Katarine Lindstedt, Chief Specialist, Adviser to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Interior, Finland

Katarine Lindstedt has worked as the Adviser to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of the Interior (Mol), since January 1, 2021. Relating to her position, Lindstedt also acts as the Head of the Management Support Unit of the Mol.

Before her current position, Lindstedt worked as Counsellor responsible for Internal Security and Migration at the Finnish Embassy in Moscow. During her career, she has worked in the field of EU's external relations with a special focus on USA and Russia in several positions at the Mol and also at the Ministry of Employment and the Economy. She also has work experience from the Parliament of Finland, German and Indian Embassies in Helsinki and the Finnish Consulate General in Hamburg. Lindstedt has taken part in few of the OSCE's Election Observation Missions in Ukraine and in Russia.



Katarine Lindstedt holds a Master's degree of Social Sciences; Major in International Relations and Politics.

Timur Uzbjakov, Sales Director, Dewaco Oy

Timur Uzbjakov has a bilingual family background (Finland/Russia). He has an education in economics and personal interest in international business with focus on markets in Russia (CIS), Baltic region and East Europe. Timur has earlier work experience in construction industry and now he is working in cleantech sector.



Anna-Riikka Mahlamäki, Development Manager, International Operations, SOLEMO Oy

Anna-Riikka Mahlamäki graduated from University of York, UK in 2001 and continued in Helsinki to receive MSocSci (Economics) in 2004. During her time at UH she took up Russian language as a hobby. A friend then asked her to join him at FINEC in SPb for the spring term 2004 as there was a spare place in the exchange programme. Until her first stint in Russia Anna-Riikka had not considered Russia as a career opportunity, but those five months changed everything. As a social scientist Anna-Riikka was inclined to career in public service and tried out ForMin and BOFIT but realised quickly that her temperament did not suit that line of work. As in the mid 2000's the pull to Russian markets was



strong, in 2007 Anna-Riikka moved to SPb to start working in business. She was first key account manager at a consultancy that is now part of Accountor Group, then head-hunted to Lujabetoni to work in business development and as CFO. When Anna-Riikka decided to move back to Finland she was offered a job at SOLEMO. Soon it will be eight years at SOLEMO. Anna-Riikka is the only person at home office who understand Russia and Russian, but has today very varied tasks, e.g., board memberships in SOLEMO's Swedish and Danish companies.

Jekaterina Lindberg, Consultant, Climate Change & Sustainability Services, Ernst & Young Oy

Jekaterina holds a master's degree from Helsinki University Global Sustainability Master's Program. Her first career experience with Russia was an internship in St. Petersburg State University. Later she worked 2,5 years in Finnish-Russian Chamber of Commerce as a Business Advisor in sustainability and market research, where she promoted Finnish sustainability-oriented export companies and researched Russian developing waste management market and clean tech industry. Currently Jekaterina works as a Consultant in EY Climate Change and Sustainability Services team where she helps clients to develop,



measure and report on their sustainability matters. Russia is still a part of her work and for example one of the latest projects involved internal audit of Russian subsidiary of a Finnish company.

Moderator

Susanna Niinivaara, Director of Communication, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Finland

Susanna Niinivaara is the director of communication at Finland's Ministry of Transport and Communications. She got her master's degree in journalism from University of Tampere. She has worked as a journalist and Moscow-correspondent for Helsingin Sanomat and columnist for Suomen Kuvalehti. She has published two non-fiction books about Russia and served four years as a diplomat at the Consulate General of Finland in St Petersburg.

