

Abstract of the presentation

The talk will begin with an overview of the Center guiding principles and their expression in the specific goals we set ourselves to achieve. I will emphasize our commitment to make a difference for research and practice and our aspiration to the highest academic standards. It will review achievements of the Center in its first two years of operation, and will outline future plans.

The talk will culminate in a presentation of two hopefully A-level academic papers on which the Center lead team had been working jointly. Both papers represent theoretical extensions and contributions to IB theory, and are based on proprietary data on Russian MNEs created for the sake of the respective papers.

The first and more advanced one examines the impact of political connections in Russia on the extent and patterns of the internationalization of Russian firms. We find that different types of political connections - which we name knowledge and relational political capital affect whether Russian MNEs serve foreign markets via exports or foreign direct investment.

The second paper, which is at early stages, will examine the impact of board composition on the country portfolios of Russian MNEs. This link is based on the anticipation that board composition determines the types of information and guide it can offer firms, thus serving to affect the patterns of their international expansion. Board composition will be measured by its size, diversity and directors background. Portfolio structure will be measured by an index that combines portfolio breadth (number of countries), depth (intensity of international activity), cultural and institutional distance from Russia, and political risk.

I will conclude the talk by extending a plea for the University's continuous support and endorsement of our endeavor.