



# Networks in the Global World

International Scientific Conference

**NETWORKS IN THE GLOBAL WORLD:  
STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN EUROPE, THE US AND RUSSIA**

St Petersburg, June 22-24 2012

**Preliminary Programme**

[www.ngw.spbu.ru](http://www.ngw.spbu.ru)

# Networks in the Global World

## Conference Partners



St. Petersburg State University

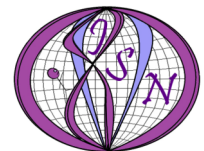
Conference coordinator:  
Council of Young Scientists of the Faculty of  
Sociology



Centre for German and European Studies  
(St. Petersburg State University – Bielefeld  
University)



Junior Sociologists Network of International  
Sociological Association



Российская Ассоциация  
Политической Науки  
Russian Political Science Association

Russian Political Science Association

## Conference Concept

In present day society, heterogeneous network structures binding together individuals, organizations, regions and states play an increasingly important role. This leads to transformations in business, science, education, politics and other areas both in the global world as a whole and in Europe, Russia and the US. While networks become more and more important and their structure grows in complexity, network theory and methodology attract increasing attention from social, cognitive, economic, management and political sciences, as well as from cultural studies. Each of the disciplines develops its own approach to studying networks and it brings out questions of comparability of studies and the perspectives of network analysis. Besides, different regions of the world, including Russia, Europe and the US, have developed different traditions of studying the networked society. It appears necessary to coordinate various network research strategies and to encourage interdisciplinary and transregional dialogue focused on global structural transformations.

**The goal of the conference** is to unite efforts of various scientific perspectives of network research and to respond to the challenges conditioned by structural transformations in the US, Russia and Europe catalysed by the growing importance of networks in the contemporary world.

The range of questions to be discussed at the conference is wide. It covers different aspects of network interaction: from network topology and classifications, stages of network development to social capital, network intelligence, leadership and competition within and between networks. However, all these aspects are united by one common basis: in the present-day world networks are considered not just as an element of structural heterogeneity, but as agents, capable of transforming the existing structures and create new relations in economics, politics, science and everyday life.

This global transformation poses new questions.

**How do global and local network structures relate to the hierarchical?** Are these types of structures competing or complementary? Can a society built on the basis of network structures be sustainable and answer external challenges? Can a networked society be manageable?

**Is network intelligence possible?** Is “network mind” distributed (collective intelligence) or is there a “brain centre” that “thinks for the whole network”? Where is network memory “stored” and how is it sustained? What is the role of emotions in network relations? How is emotional energy in networks reproduced and spread?

**What is leadership in networks?** How is power distributed and where are the centres of dominance? Who controls network relations? Do advances in telecommunication make distributed leadership possible, where every actor possesses an equal part of power (network democracy)?

**What are the drivers of competition in networks?** Who is considered winner and loser, and why? How are the results of network activity distributed? Is it correct to speak of partnership and rivalry between networks? Which benefits and threats are brought to life by network and cross-network interactions? What are network competitive resources in the global world?

**How can effectiveness of networks be evaluated?** What could be the methods and instruments of such evaluation? Should we focus on the sustainability of a network or communication dynamics? How to combine quantitative and qualitative parameters, static and dynamic characteristics of networks?

**What defines network boundaries?** Where do network operations start and end, what is the product of these operations? Through which mechanisms are networks connected to the external environment? How are global, national and subnational networks related to each other?

**How should practitioners deal with networks?** What are the possible ways of evaluating, planning and

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organising network activity? Are there any specific network tools and methods of practical activity? Are any standards of collection and systematisation of statistical data on networks possible? What might be these standards?

The range of questions posed forms the semantic space of discussion, which can answer the general question on the specifics of contemporary structural transformations in the global world brought to life by the growing role of network structures.

## Organisation Committee

Chair: Prof., Dr. Nikolay Skvortsov, St. Petersburg State University (Russia)

Scientific Secretary: Dr. Nikita Basov, St. Petersburg State University (Russia)

Prof., Dr. Martin Everett, University of Manchester (UK)

Prof., Dr. Kathleen Carley, Carnegie Mellon University (US)

Prof., Dr. Andreas Vasilache, University of Bielefeld (Germany)

Prof., Dr. Wesley J. Johnston Georgia State University (US)

Prof., Dr. Kristian Möller, Aalto University (Finland)

Dr. Dimitris Christopoulos, University of the West of England - Bristol (UK)

Prof., Dr. Vera Minina, St. Petersburg State University (Russia)

Prof., Dr. Olga Tretyak, National Research University – Higher School of Economics (Russia)

Prof., Dr. Leonid Smorgunov, St. Petersburg State University (Russia)

Dr. Mikhail Sokolov, European University at St. Petersburg (Russia)

Dr. Anisya Khokhlova, St. Petersburg State University (Russia)

Dr. Elena Belokurova, Centre for German and European Studies (Russia)

# Networks in the Global World

## Day 1. Plenary Session

Confirmed plenary keynote speakers:

Prof., Dr. Martin Everett, University of Manchester (UK)

Prof., Dr. Kathleen Carley, Carnegie Mellon University (US)

Prof., Dr. David Stark, Columbia University (US)

Prof., Dr. Val Burris, University of Oregon (US)

Prof., Dr. Andreas Vasilache, University of Bielefeld (Germany)

Prof., Dr. Wesley J. Johnston, Georgia State University (US)

Prof., Dr. Kristian Möller, Aalto University (Finland)

Prof., Dr. Vadim Radaev, National Research University – Higher School of Economics (Russia)

Prof., Dr. Vera Minina, St. Petersburg State University (Russia)

Prof., Dr. Olga Tretyak, National Research University – Higher School of Economics (Russia)

## Day 2. Sessions

### **Panel 1: Inter-Firm Relations in Europe, the US and Russia: Responding to Present-Day Challenges**

Today the coordination and management of inter-firm relations become the basis of stable competitive advantages whether in European, Russian or American markets. Network approach to understanding and managing inter-firm relations becomes increasingly widespread both among scholars and management practitioners. Numerous innovative forms of organizing business – networks, alliances, value chains, clusters – give way to new possibilities for providing collective competitive advantages. Under such circumstances researchers face new tasks to develop and test relevant management models and techniques as well as to find indicators of inter-firm interactions effectiveness, both globally applicable and region-specific.

### **Panel 2: The Academic World-System: Network Approaches to Exploration**

One of the key social transformations of the present-day world is transformation of the structure of the academic community driven by globalization processes and new information technologies emergence. Academic networks are expanding their boundaries beyond local scientific and educational communities and become global. This poses new challenges to researchers including studies of networks dynamics of academic migration, mobility and collaboration (i.e. formal) networks, networking "language games" between national academies, protectionism and competition in science, mechanisms of leadership and control in academic networks, and other. Resolving these problems requires developing theoretical and methodological tools used to study academic networks as well as creating new concepts and approaches.

### **Panel 3: Knowledge Networks and Innovations in a Globalised World**

Developing sustainable knowledge societies is one of the greatest challenges that Europe, Russia and the United States face. Today, knowledge and innovation are considered as the basis not only for the economic growth, but for social transformations as well. Therefore, the studies of knowledge generation as related to innovation processes is of particular importance. The specific feature of knowledge is that it has no rigid national or regional boundaries. However, knowledge geography is such that in some places innovation landscapes emerge, while in others this does not happen. It is necessary to determine what is the reason behind that, what role do networks and network communication play, and how innovative landscapes based on knowledge networks may be formed. To do this, it is important: (1) to reveal what constitutes knowledge-generating network communication, how are personal relations correlated in it, what role collective and individual intelligence play; (2) to understand how to lead these structures and how to manage interpersonal networks of knowledge at global, national and regional levels to provide innovative productivity; (3) to develop methods for assessing the effectiveness of intellectual networks. Accomplishing these tasks requires development of inter-disciplinary and multi-focus approaches based on network theory and methodology.

## **X<sup>th</sup> All-Russian Seminar of the RPSA Research Committee on Comparative Political Science. Network Analysis of Public Policy: Methodology and Topics for Comparative Studies**

Development and implementation of public policy in contemporary societies is influenced by the emergence of policy networks. This process involves a widening range of actors (government agencies, business associations, civil society, NGO, INGO etc.), which take part in decision-making on the basis of communication and resource sharing. Emerging public policy networks are influenced by national, regional and global contexts, as well as by today's global financial and debt crisis. The seminar, on the one hand, considers the role of different contexts and factors of the formation of network public policy networks and identifies conditions that ensure its effectiveness and efficiency, while also looking at possible problems and shortcomings. The search for resources that create competitive advantages for actors who participate in networking is of particular importance here. The problem of leadership in network policy management requires solving as well. On the other hand, the ontology of contemporary political networks involves the development of a new methodology for network analysis of policy, which implies synthesis of different research methods: qualitative and quantitative, static and dynamic, analytical and interpretive. In this regard, the seminar aims to discuss and test new methods of political network analysis.



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## Day 3. Concluding Events

### Round Tables

Topics suggested for concluding round tables:

Collective intelligence: a new potential for knowledge creation or new limitations for creative opportunities?

Competition and collaboration between networks: factors of competitive advantages and mechanisms of partnership.

Power and domination in networks: is distributed leadership possible?

Network effectiveness: who and how can evaluate it?

Global and local networks: blurring identity and/or strengthening boundaries?

Virtual networks: a tool to solve “real” problems or a “separate reality”?

New networks in Europe, the US and Russia: regional specifics and common trends.

### Concluding plenary session