Unexpected leader

- Average age of twenty leading Russian universities – 80
- Higher School of Economics is the youngest – established in 1992.
- Ranked #1 in social and economic sciences
- Third in quality of new students
- Leader in attracting foreign faculty and international publications
- How did this young university make its way to the top?
Historical context

- 1987 – perestroika
  - breaking the isolation
  - more freedom for economic and social research and teaching
  - growing demand for new specialists for market economy and democratic society
- 1991 – collapse of the Soviet Union
- 1992 – first Russian “Law on Education” – increased autonomy and diversification of financing

New development in social sciences and humanities

- Resistance of the existing universities and research institutions (Academy of Sciences)
- Emergence of independent think tanks
- Establishment of departments of economics, management and social sciences in technical universities
- Growth of private universities (95% - economics, management, law)
- Establishment of new public universities (Higher School of Economics and Russian State University for the Humanities)
Constraints

- Higher Education: decline of public financing – by 40% from 1989 to 1992
- Weak infrastructure
- Ideological inertia
- Limited access to global knowledge

Opportunities and choices

- Demand for mass teaching in economics and social sciences OR
- Demand for elite teaching in economics and social sciences

- Orientation toward the most advanced sector of the economy (including the emerging finance sector) OR
- Orientation toward traditional sectors of the economy

- Teaching university OR
- Research university
Courage

- Entering new academic areas - new markets
- Setting high price for education and applied research
- Learning from international leaders
- Aggressive branding (“new education for new Russia”)
- Attracting talents from other academic areas
- Young management
- Innovations (first in Bologna process)

Luck

- Global and national challenges:
  - Growing demand for the first class training and consulting services
  - Opening new niches in social and economic sciences
  - Strong interest to Russia among the international partners
Signs of success

• By 2006:
  • 12 thousand students, 1200 research and teaching staff in 4 cities
  • Joint education programs and research projects with leading international institutions
  • 19 leading academic journals in social and economic sciences published by HSE
  • Research funding at the level of the Western European universities
  • First professors are hired at the international academic market
  • HSE develops the largest pool of socio-economic data to support first-class research and policy development

Key to success

• Right people
• Right challenge