

## **What do Experts expect from RSSIA 2010?**

*Victor Lapuente:* Most intellectual progress in social sciences is taking place in the intersections of disciplines, as Edgar Kiser noted. So, one cannot miss opportunities to interact with high-quality scholars from different disciplines, like RSSIA offers.

**Andrei Bremzen: I was a RSSIA expert last year. Although the research projects were very different, all the participants I had a talk with were very interested in discussion, in learning something new (notably not always closely related to their own academic interests). This year I expect to meet motivated and ready-to-learn young economists again.**

*Koen Schoors:* I expect a great interaction with Russian scholars and students about the institutional structure and development of Russia, both in a positive sense (what is the current reality?) and a normative sense (What is a desirable direction of evolution for Russia). I hope the exchange of views and ideas will be fruitful and that both formal and informal institutions will get some attention. Interesting topics could be formal institutions like legal development, property rights, financial development, creditor rights, bureaucracy, and democracy, but also more informal institutions like corruption, rent-seeking, trust, reciprocity and social capital that all together determine the economic and social model of a country and hence its future development. The resource curse will hopefully be also a topic of discussion, since it seems to play a major role in the current crisis.

**Russell Pittman: I hope that RSSIA will be an informal yet thought-provoking and even exciting experience for both experts and participants. I am expecting a combination of "formal" lectures — though with lots of questions and comments from the audience — with less formal presentations and then completely informal discussions over coffee or beer. I hope and expect that the mix of Russian experts, western experts, and participants will make for a wide diversity of experience and perspectives that will allow all of us to learn and grow.**

## ***Why may RSSIA 2010 be useful for the participants?***

*Victor Lapuente:* I think participants (first of all, me) may expect to learn a lot from people who think very differently on very similar problems, like what makes some institutions more efficient and/or less corrupt.

*Russell Pittman:* ***I think participants will benefit from the diverse experiences and perspectives of both the experts and the other participants. The program will give them the opportunity to test their knowledge and even their assumptions against very different perspectives formed in very different environments. I expect there will be an atmosphere that is challenging and rigorous but at the same time encouraging and supportive.***

*Koen Schoors:* *I think we will learn from each other and being exposed to new views on Russia coming from total outsiders. I will definitely learn from the views of the Russian participants. I also think that participants will learn to think in new and different ways about old problems Russia has been confronted with the last decades. Is there indeed a cost of cold? Should Russia be organized differently given its size and span? How should Russia develop economically in the future?*

*Andrei Bremzen:* ***Many economic departments in Russian universities are characterized by quite narrow sphere of researchers' academic interests; it may be also on the outskirts of Economics as a science. RSSJA provides a unique opportunity to become more broad-minded, to discover the scientific areas you've never studied or even known before while communicating with experts and other participants.***