The Moscow Times
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Russia Left Out of Top 200 Universities List

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October 03, 2012



Russian universities once again failed to make the list of the top 200 universities in the world, according to a ranking that Times Higher Education published Thursday.

Moscow State University received the best rating among local universities with a score that placed it in the 201 to 225 group. This result is a slight improvement from last year, when the university was in the 276 to 300 group.

St. Petersburg State University dropped off the top 400 list this year, but Moscow State Engineering Physics Institute made its ranking debut in the 226 to 250 bracket.

There is a risk that Russia could fall even further behind as the new education powerhouses like China, Taiwan and Korea invest more in research and their universities rise in the rankings, said Phil Baty, editor of Times Higher Education Rankings.

"At the moment, Russia and India are the only two BRIC countries that are not doing well," Baty said.

The Times Higher Education ranking has been done annually since 2004 and some Russian universities did make it to the top 200 until the group switched to a stricter methodology in 2010.

The rankings are based on 13 factors, including the quality of teaching, research and international perspective, which measures the university's ability to attract foreign students and faculty.

"[Moscow State University's] real weakness is that the research it is producing is not being cited around the world," Baty said, though he also added that improvement in research has been one of the key drivers for the university's better showing in 2012.

The California Institute of Technology maintained the lead position on the list this year, with the University of Oxford, Stanford University, Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology rounding up the top five. The United States remained the absolute winner in the ranking. The country has seven out of the top 10 universities on the list and 76 of its universities are in the top 200.

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