

Report on the international student competition „ELECTRICAL POWER ENGINEERING – 2015“

Hosted by the Ivanovo State Power Engineering University

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This report describes what the team of the Technical University of Darmstadt experienced during the international student competition “Electrical Power Engineering – 2015” of the Ivanovo State Power Engineering University. It addresses the course of events during the competition (including field trips), the perception of its general organization, the tasks of the test, as well as interesting moments for our team.

Course of events: Our team arrived in Moscow three days before the competition started. This gave us some time to get to know the country and its people, and also to explore the city. It was the first time to visit Russia for three of us and we were quite impressed. One member of our team is capable of speaking Russian, which simplified the communication during these days a lot.

On Tuesday, the 17th of November, we were picked up from Moscow and travelled to Ivanovo. Although the bus ride took a long time, we were happy to catch up some sleep. The contestants of Donetsk, who travelled with us, were obviously feeling similar. After our arrival in Ivanovo, we had some time to explore the city.

The next day the actual program of the competition began. We got picked up by a big bus and were transferred to the ISPU to take part in the opening ceremony. We already expected that pictures will be taken. On the other hand, it took us a little by surprise to hold a greetings speech – unfortunately, we weren’t prepared for this. After the ceremony the actual competition took place and we took our tests. As soon as we were done with the examination and had some lunch in the canteen, we met with a class of students studying German. These students prepared questions and we had very interesting conversations with them. Finally, we had dinner with some ISPU students (let’s call them our “caretakers”).

On Thursday a power plant visit was scheduled. Unfortunately, two of us couldn’t take part in the field trip as they were feeling sick. Nevertheless, it was

an interesting field trip. Although we couldn't understand everything because the guide was speaking in Russian, we had a great translator who helped us to grasp the most important details. In the afternoon, the ranking of the competition was announced. The day ended with a pleasant dinner and drinks, which we had together with the students and PhD students of ISPU.

Friday we spent most of the day on travelling back to Moscow. On our way there, we had the opportunity to view a large synchronous compensator and a neighboring gas insulated switchgear, which, to our surprise, was produced by Siemens. After this excursion we arrived at our hotel. In the evening we had the chance to do some sightseeing together with ISPU students. Even though we have been to Moscow a few days before, it was nice to go along with them. We were able to ask questions on-site and had a great time.

On Saturday it was time for our way back to Germany. Before we had to get to the airport, we took part at the "ENES 2015" convention. Most of the presentations were in Russian, yet there were interesting things for us to discover, i.e. in the branch of electric mobility.

General organisation and support: The itinerary and time schedule for the events during the contest were very clear. We received a translated sheet during the opening ceremony, which specified what was planned for the following days.

Before we arrived in Ivanovo, we experienced that less people spoke English than we originally expected; a false Assumption that emerged from previous travels throughout Europe. On the other hand, we were very glad that the ISPU students, the PhD students and the German teachers of ISPU took great care of us. This way we were able to follow the ceremonies and the information presented during field trips. Since we also spent time together in the evenings, we were able to exchange ideas, get to know each other and have fun together. All of us felt very welcomed and we were amazed by the hospitality. We hope that sometime, when the time is given, we will be able to return this guest-friendship.

The only time we actually had trouble with the organisation was when we tried to get breakfast at hotel in Ivanovo, which most likely was correlated with the language barrier. After realizing that we won't get any from the hotel, we prepared our own breakfast for the following days.

Tasks of the test: We were able to check out the tasks from the previous year, but hardly had any time to actually practise for the competition. This is due to

the studies we were involved with at our home university beforehand.

It was clear for us that the tasks were going to be mainly about the branch of energy supply. Nevertheless, the fields of study of all of our team members are mainly in other branches of electrical power engineering (primarily: power electronics and high voltage engineering). Up to now, most of our team members only took part in one single course concerning energy supply. Also, all of us were clueless concerning relay protection, as this hasn't been a topic within our studies yet.

During the test, we had more than enough support concerning the language. We were always able to ask the German teachers and/or the translator of the tasks for help. The translation of the tasks itself was almost always fully comprehensible. Only once I noticed that the indices were written in Latin in the task description, but on the other hand were written in Cyrillic in the given schematic. This was hardly a problem, though.

Interesting moments: One of the most interesting moments for us was when we visited the German class at ISPU. It was when the students asked about topics like literature, holidays, hobbies and cultural differences in general that we realized: Russia and central Europe is quite different. After the meeting, we achieved a profounder awareness about this. The same applies to the time we spent with other ISPU students.

Of course, Moscow also was one of the highlights of our trip. It was amazing to be in and around a city that is this large and has so much history and culture to offer. The Kremlin, Red Square, Cathedral of Christ the Saviour and the Metro, to mention some of most impressive sights.

It's a pity that we didn't have more time in Ivanovo to walk around ISPU and the city. On the other hand, this only amplifies our interest to visit once more.

In the name of our team and the Technical University of Darmstadt, we want to say thank you very much for all of your effort and the generous hospitality!