

Latest high-tech closer to linguists

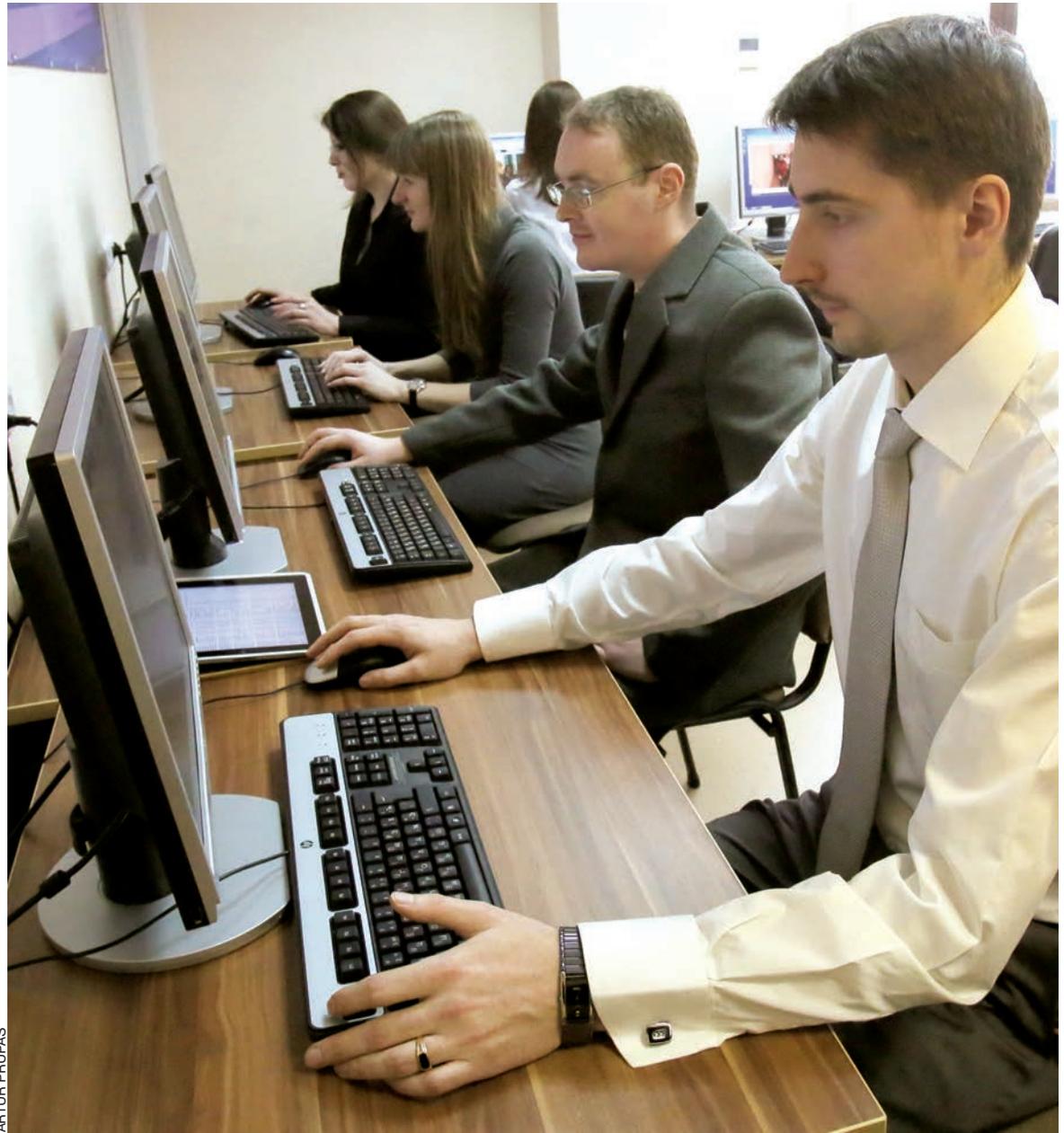
High-Tech Park, EPAM Systems Company and Minsk State Linguistic University open joint IT training lab at Faculty of Intercultural Communication

By Dmitry Ponomarev

The MSLU-EPAM laboratory is offering additional IT training for students, in their free time. It may seem surprising for our future linguists and humanities experts to bother with IT but, of course, our modern world makes knowledge of computers a must for every professional. Foreign languages also have their own niche within the IT field, especially for technical writers and business analysts. The former mediate between software developers and users, who need detailed instructions on how to use computerised systems and programmes. It's not easy to write clear instructions in another language unless you have in-depth knowledge. Meanwhile, business analysts mediate between cus-

tomers and software developers, researching the needs of customers and assessing feasibility, while offering additional services; they then formulate tasks, drafting proposals for the development team.

In short, students trained as translators can use their skills to translate the language of programmers into more 'user-friendly' language, including in English. "The opening of a joint training IT-lab at MSLU is further confirmation of the HTP's focus on co-operating with the widest range of educational institutions, helping graduates fulfil their potential in the IT sector," notes HTP Administration Director Valery Tsepkalo. He adds, "Increasing the number of IT professionals is a key factor in supporting HTP residents in maximising their revenue and exports



Classes at IT lab in MSLU already in full swing

year on year. We're helping them participate in more technically complex and expensive projects, working on their own software. Today, information technologies are being used in all areas of life: business and social. Software

development requires not only knowledge of programming but knowledge of the sphere in which the product is to be used. If you combine IT skills with specialised industrial expertise, you're a valuable commodity."

As noted at the solemn ceremony at MSLU, together with Belarusian universities, the High-Tech Park has established about fifty laboratories, with HTP company residents having invested over \$5m.

Present-day portrait of woman seems rather demonstrative

National Statistical Committee paints portrait of modern woman of Belarus: aged 42, married, whose native language is Belarusian yet who tends to converse in Russian, prefers urban living and has higher or specialised secondary education, while becoming a mother at 25

By Yelena Prusova

On January 1st, 2013, the number of women in the country stood at 5.1 million (54 percent of the total). In fact, 76 percent live in urban settlements, while 24 percent reside in rural areas. Women outnumber men overall: 1,152 to 1,000. This ratio rises in cities and towns (1,166 women), and is less in rural areas (1,109).

Among the urban population, men outnumber women up to the age of 29 and, in rural areas, outnumber women until the age of 57. Clearly, young women from rural areas tend to leave to con-



Lyudmila Manchak, a farmer from Brest, grows flowers

tinue their education and to find employment. Additionally, men experience higher mortality, rarely reaching retirement age.

The greatest gender disparity is observed among the elderly: 1,475 women aged 60-69 years per thousand men in cities and towns, falling to 1,359 in rural areas. Over the age of 70, women outnumber men 2.3 fold in cities and towns,

and 2.5 times in villages.

According to the UNDP, the 'natural' difference in expected life span between men and women is about five years. This figure is 10-12 years in Belarus and has been so for about two decades.

At the beginning of 2012, the average age of women in Belarus was 42: 47 in rural areas and 41 in urban environments.

Good service provided in different languages

By Olga Korneeva

Belarusian Railways prepares special phrase books in English, German and French for staff

"The editions should help our employees to overcome language barriers in communicating with foreign passengers. They'll be particularly useful for carriage guards and personnel at railway stations," notes the Press Service of Belarusian Railways. "The phrase books' topics will

relate to aspects of rail travel and the circulation numbers will be guided by staff needs."

The phrase books are being released as part of preparations for the 2014 IIHF World Championship in Minsk. Belarusian Railways has been studying the experience of other countries which have hosted similar sports events; Ukraine also released a phrase book for its railway workers. In addition, rail workers are to receive foreign language lessons in advance of the 2014 event.

Children's confident 'steps' into attractive theatrical life

2nd International Children's Theatre Forum gathering around a hundred participants from five countries

The theatre arts competition will bring together theatrical schools from Belarus, Russia, Moldova, Lithuania and Poland, including six performances by mid-ranking theatre schools and children's theatre studios. A panel of international judges, comprising leading theatrical figures and journalists, will chose winners in various categories.

Taking part will be pupils of Minsk arts schools, whose paintings are to go on show at the New

Drama Theatre (and will be later donated to guests). Meanwhile, musicians will be performing Belarusian and foreign classical pieces. There is also to be a practical conference on the development of theatre art and a roundtable discussion dedicated to children's education.

The goal is to develop and preserve national traditions in theatre arts, to support talented children and young people, and to share experience between teachers and those running arts schools, while strengthening international cultural ties. The Minsk City Executive Committee is organising the event.