

Northwest Russia: Facts and Events

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Industrial Boom Coming to St. Petersburg

1.5 million square meters of industrial and civil construction objects were built in St. Petersburg and Leningrad oblast in 2003. According to the applications already submitted to the St. Petersburg Committee on Construction, the total space of new industrial facilities will further grow at least by 150 - 200%.

Leningrad oblast shows the same development trends. Oleg Alimpiev, The Chairman of the Committee on Construction of Leningrad oblast, says that in 2003 industrial production and construction correspondingly went up by 22%. Direct investments into the industrial sector comprised \$1.5 billions. Investments into industrial construction constituted approximately one third of this amount. In the recent past, the majority of industrial construction projects were carried out by foreign investors, while in 2003 the share of Russian investments significantly increased.

Analysis made by the branch experts has revealed that machine-building, food, tobacco and wood-processing industries demonstrate stable growth in St. Petersburg and Leningrad oblast. Oleg Alimpiev forecasts also a sharp increase in terminals and warehouse construction, especially near the St. Petersburg ring road.

Source: Delovoy Peterburg, 19 February 2004

New Protocol Signed between Leningrad Oblast and Sörmland Region

The Protocol no. 2 was signed by the Governor of Leningrad oblast Valery Serdyukov, the Governor of the County of Södermanland Bo Holmberg and the Chairman of Sörmland Region Council Marita Bengtsson on 25 February, 2004. It was signed in the development of the Agreement on Cooperation between the Leningrad oblast Administrative Board, the Södermanland County Administrative Board, Sörmland County Association of Local Authorities and Sörmland County Council from 5 December 1997.

The Protocol no. 2 sets the priorities for cooperation between the two regions for the period of 2004-2006. The priority areas include economic development, healthcare and social security sectors, cultural and natural heritage, as well as youth policy and future development prospects.

The Protocol no. 2 was signed within the frames of the Governor Valery Serdyukov's visit to Sörmland, which took place on 24-26 February.

The accomplished results and prospects of cooperation between the two regions were further discussed during the follow-up visit of the Sörmland Region Council to St. Petersburg on February 29 - March 3. The programme of the visit encompassed, in particular, meetings with the Leningrad oblast Chamber of Commerce, the Committee on Education of the Leningrad oblast Administrative Board, and St. Petersburg Polytechnical University, the leading technical university of Northwest Russia. The participants received a number of specific cooperation proposals to be forwarded to the members of the Sörmland Region Council.

Source: the Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg, e-mail: stockholm.office@stockholm.spb.ru

Leningrad Oblast: Social Sector Results of the Year 2003

The meeting of the Board of the Leningrad Oblast Committee on Labour and Social Security devoted to the results of the year 2003 and plans for 2004 was held on 19 February. The economic growth in the region over the previous year contributed to the purposeful development of the social security sector. As it was announced at the meeting, the income of the population of Leningrad oblast increased by 7,7%, salaries – by 15,7% and pensions – by 5,6%. The level of unemployment was the lowest for the last 10 years. Together with municipal authorities and bodies for social security, the Committee continued to build up a comprehensive system of social services. Thus, the targeted programmes *The Senior Generation*, *The Family*, *Social Support for Disabled*, *Disabled Children*, as well as *The Improvement of Conditions for and Protection of Labour* were implemented to the full extent. The system for personnel training was further developed. The social services sector of Leningrad oblast also continued to introduce in its daily practices the experience of Sweden, Denmark, and Finland.

Source: Newsletter of Leningrad oblast, 19 February 2004, e-mail: lenobl@lenobl.ru

NORWECOM-2004 and Post-2004

On 24 –28 February 2004 St. Petersburg hosted two leading branch fairs of the Northwest Russia “NORWECOM-2004” and “Post-2004”.

The 11th International fair on communication and telecommunication systems - “NORWECOM-2004” - was organized by *RESTEC Exhibition Company* and *Northwest Telecom Company* with the support of Russian Ministry of Communication and Informatization, *SvyazInvest Company*, the City of St. Petersburg, Association of Economic Cooperation of the Northwest Russia, *Megafon Company* and *TelecomInvest Operator Group*.

This year the exhibition covered 10 216 sq. meters and presented expositions of 211 companies from 12 countries. Among the exhibitors were the largest domestic telecommunication companies, representatives of the leading manufacturers of telecommunication equipment and communication facilities, communication operators, as well as the leading scientific research institutes, and higher education establishments. 22 918 visitors from 16 countries were registered during the 5 days of the exhibition, 14711 of them being branch professionals.

The 7th International Postal Technologies & Equipment Exhibition “Post-2004” included the following sections: postal services, information technologies for postal industry, software & recognition systems for address information codes, security systems for mail processing centers, postal transportation and equipment, postal uniform, and philately. The aim of the fair was to provide solutions to tasks that the Russian post is currently facing, and demonstrate the development tendencies of postal technologies in Russia and abroad.

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Recycling and Power Saving Exhibitions

Two environmental trade fairs arranged by the Alsima-Expo exhibition company took place in St. Petersburg on 25-27 February. The specialized international exhibition Recycling Expo was held

with the support of the Northwest Department of Gosstroy, the Committee on Construction of the Russian Federation and covered a large number of topics, ranging from recycling of specific types of waste to general environmental questions.

The second exhibition, Power Saving Expo, gathered under its roof the largest producers of energy-saving equipment both from Russia and abroad, companies specializing in construction and assembly works and applying energy-saving technologies, as well as various specialized editions.

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International Baltic Sea Day

The International Environmental Forum *The Baltic Sea Day* is taking place in St. Petersburg on 21-23 March 2004. The event is timed to the 30th anniversary of The Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area, also known as The Helsinki Convention. All parties of the Helsinki Commission (Helcom), the governing body of the Convention, are taking part in the Forum.

The program of the oncoming Forum encompasses the seminar on hazardous substances, children and youth competitions, as well as the trade fair *Ecology of the Big City* held at Lenexpo.

The issues to be discussed at the Forum include the scientific and practical aspects of the Baltic Sea environmental protection, navigation safety, and the new integration strategies between Helcom and EU member-states. The Forum will also focus on finding the optimal ways to restructure Helcom, taking Russia's interests into account.

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Cleaning of the English Pond in Peterhof

The second stage of environmental recovery of the English Pond in Peterhof, St. Petersburg suburb famous for its fountains, has recently started upon the order from the St. Petersburg Committee on Environmental Protection and Safety. The English Pond is the main pond of the Peterhof's Upper Park and one of 8 objects in St. Petersburg included in the targeted City program *on the Environmental Recovery of Detached Water Objects*. The pond had suffered from silts and garbage accumulated at its bottom, while the littoral zone needed restauration as well. The work on its environmental rehabilitation started in 2003 and according to the project plan will finish in the autumn of 2005.

The removal of silt deposits from the bottom of the English pond will improve its sanitary condition and allow smooth and uninterrupted work of the Peterhof fountains. The state of environment around the pond will also significantly improve.

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Conference Control and Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections

The Conference Control and Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections is taking place in St. Petersburg on 22-23 March 2004 (information both in English and Russian regarding the conference may be find on the Russian website: <http://www.medsci.uu.se/STIrus>). The event is organized by The STI Section of the Swedish Institute for Infectious Disease Control and Uppsala Group of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIGUP). The main purpose of STIGUP is to serve as the basis for the Eastern Europe-located STI-projects. The conference is being held within the frames of the projects implemented in St. Petersburg and Leningrad oblast. The program of the conference includes a wide range of reports made by project leaders, the annual meeting of the St. Petersburg Dermatovenerological Dispensary, and a round table dedicated to the discussions of project experiences in St. Petersburg and Leningrad region, as well as their dissemination to other regions.

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Seminar on Social Work with Families

Seminar *Violence in the Family Causing Delinquency and Desadaptation among Children and Youth* was held in St. Petersburg on 27 February 2004. It was arranged within the frames of the *Work with Juvenile Delinquents* project carried out by the Department of Social Work of Stockholm University and the St. Petersburg Committee on Youth Policy and Interaction with Public Organisations. The seminar's agenda encompassed a number of lectures made by Kerstin Holmberg and Owe Sjölander representing FamiljeForum AB in Lund. A total of 78 participants including judges, prosecutors and attorneys, social workers and psychologists took part in the event.

Source: the Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg, e-mail: stockholm.office@stockholm.spb.ru

Business Seminar *Russian Touch*

Business seminar *Russian Touch 2004* within the frames of the Swedish governmental program *The Touch to Russia* is taking place in Stockholm on 22 March 2004. The program is carried out by the company *Russian Touch* in cooperation with the St. Petersburg company *Petrostimul*. The objective of the program is to strengthen business links between Russia and other European countries. The main themes of the program are import and export, investments, financing, production cooperation, real estate etc. Business forum in Stockholm is an event both for companies and authorities where business, culture, and art from Russia and Sweden converge. All interested organizations are invited to take part.

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Comfortable Russia

The Russian Union of Travel Industry (RST) has begun to prepare the next project of *Just Russia* series. It combines tourist catalogues published in form of photo albums promoting Russia as a tourist destination abroad.

The first photo album *Just Russia* was issued by RST's publishing house in 2001. The total circulation of all album editions in various languages, together with the catalogue *St. Petersburg Views*, comprised over 150 thousand copies.

The next publication in the series called *Comfortable Russia* will present the information on Russia's best hotels. The goal of the edition is to demonstrate the competitiveness of Russia's hotel industry on the world hospitality market. The catalogue will be distributed at trade fairs, among embassies and consulates, tourist centers and travel agents. Part of the circulation will be sent out to project participants and advertisers, for further distribution.

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The archive of the newsletters can be found at <http://www.stockholmregion.org/tpl/topic.asp?ID=457>

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