

Northwest Russia: Facts and Events

Newsletter by the Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg

Issue 8, 2004, week 18

The Moscow Region Duma visited Stockholm Region

The Moscow Region Duma representatives paid an official visit to the Stockholm County Council on 21-25 March. The following members of Moscow regional parliament took part in the event: First Deputy Chairman Vladimir Alexeev, Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Legal Issues



Photo: the Moscow Region Duma

Alexander Zharov, Chairman of the Committee on Land Use, Natural Resources and Environment Vasily Dupak, and Chairman of the Committee on Status, Regulations and Parliamentary Ethics Nikolay Cherkasov. The programme of the visit included the meetings with the Chairman of the County Council Executive Board Ingela Nylund Watz, the First Vice Chairman of the County Council Assembly Inger Linge, County Council Commissioner Bengt Cedrenius (the green party) and the Deputy Group Leader of the left party Måns Almqvist. The members of the Moscow Region Duma also met with the County Council Director Sören Olofsson, County Council International Director Tommy Karlsson, and Head of the Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg Lada Illarionova, as well as Hans Hede, the Office of Regional Planning and Urban Transportation, Björn Dalborg, Stockholm Transport (SL), and other officials.

The meetings were mainly focused on the issues of regional planning and public transportation, environmental safety and the protection of patients' rights in the healthcare sector. The parties expressed a mutual interest in the development of further cooperation and establishment of friendly relationships between the two regions. Chairman of the Stockholm County Council Executive Board Ingela Nylund Watz and other members of the Council were invited to visit the Moscow Region in September 2004.

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The Moscow Region Duma

The Moscow Region Duma is a regional legislative body consisting of 50 members elected for the period of 5 years. The population of the Moscow region is approximately 7 million people. Each member of the Moscow Region Duma represents an electoral district with a constituency of 100 -110 thousand people. The latest elections to the Moscow Region Duma were held on December 16, 2001. There are 45 men, and 5 women currently sitting in the Duma. At average, they are 45 years old. The Duma members both work on a permanent professional basis and combine their responsibilities with other jobs.

The Moscow Region Duma consists of 12 committees and the Audit Chamber, which performs the functions of revision and control. In its everyday activities the Moscow Region Duma prioritizes the issues of regional finances and budget policy, as well as the regulation of economic activity in the region, including, in particular, construction, agriculture, transportation and telecommunications.

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Photo: the Troitsk municipality

University Campus of Moscow School of Economics will be Built in Troitsk

A new university campus of State University, Moscow School of Economics will be

built in the town of Troitsk, Moscow region. It will encompass two faculties for 2 thousand students, a boarding school for 300 gifted children - the winners of economic contests for schoolchildren from all over Russia, as well as a hotel, a congress center, university dormitories and a housing quarter for teachers and maintenance staff.

The project was approved of by the Governor of the Moscow region, the Minister of Economic Development, and the Minister of Education of the Russian Federation. The agreement concerning the project investments was signed, in particular, by the Mayor of Troitsk and the Rector of State University, Moscow School of Economics .

The project is to be accomplished by the year 2007. It will contribute to the development of scientific and intellectual potential, the growth of business activity and tax revenues in the town of Troitsk.

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Photo: the Troitsk municipality

The Conference on Innovations in Troitsk

The conference *Scientific and Innovative Potential of Troitsk Science Park* gathered together for fruitful discussions

the representatives of Troitsk municipality and Moscow regional administration, the members of Moscow Region Duma, as well as the scientists and management of research institutes located in Troitsk.

The conference was devoted to the pilot project on the interaction of the bodies of state authority and local self-government in the development of the innovations. This project to be carried out in Troitsk is supposed to help in creation of the Science Park and solve the current problems faced by the town, such as low average salary, lack of work places, outflow of scientific manpower, outdated infrastructure and subsidized municipal budget. As a result of the project implementation, the population and the area of the city is expected to double in 10-15 years.

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Troitsk, Moscow Region



Photo: the Troitsk municipality

The town of Troitsk with a population of around 35 thousand people lies 20 kilometers southwest of Moscow. Since the middle of the last century Troitsk has been developing as a town of research institutes specializing in various branches of physics. In particular, laser and nuclear physics, physics of elementary particle, nuclear fusion, physics of high energy and high pressure, physics of plasma, physics of the Earth, planets and the Sun, as well as spectrometry and quantum physics.

Many of the research institutes located in Troitsk have a significant cooperation potential. Among them are the Institute of Nuclear Research, the Institute of High Pressure Physics, the Center of Physics Instrument-making and the Troitsk Institute of Innovative and Thermonuclear Research. In 1985 the latter took part in setting up the *Baytik Foundation* developing and testing innovative methods for education. The *Baytik Foundation* participated in a number of international programmes, including *People to People, Children – the Creators of XXI Century* and *The Odyssey of Intellect*. Over 1500 children between 5 and 17 years old annually undergo training within the frames of the *Baytik's* programmes. The activities of the *Baytik Foundation* are supported by the Russian Federal Ministry of General Education and Professional Training as well as by the Department of Education of the Moscow regional administration.

42,3% of the Troitsk population have higher education. In the nearest future the town will be granted the Science Park status.

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Photo: UNDP/UNOPS

Representative Office for the UNDP and Rospatent Joint Project opened in St.-Petersburg

Establishing the *Intellectual Property Information and Legal Center in the Russian Federation* is a joint project of the Rospatent, the Russian State

Agency for Patents and Trademarks, and United Nations Development Programme.

IPR and legal owners protection. Issues of theory and practice seminar was arranged in St.-Petersburg on 22-23 April. The speakers were invited from the Federal Service for Intellectual Property, Patents and Trademarks, the Office of the Public Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Interior of the Russian Federation, the Federal Customs Service of the Russian Federation and United Nations Development Programme.

The Representative Office for the Joint Project was established at the Baltic Research Center.

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Structural changes within the City of St. Petersburg

During the St. Petersburg Executive Board meeting on 20 April structural changes within the city authorities were announced. The Committee on Transportation and Transit Policy was established, and the Committee on Tourism and Resorts Development became a part of the Committee for External Affairs.

Source: The City of St. Petersburg, www.gov.spb.ru

IT Applications for St. Petersburg Forwarding Companies

The seminar devoted to the development of specialized IT applications for forwarding companies was held in St. Petersburg on 6 April. Arranged by the North-western Branch of the Russian Association of Forwarding Companies and the St. Petersburg Department of the IT Professionals Club, this discussion forum focused, in particular, on local production of software for managing large warehouses and container terminals. Telecommunication infrastructure requirements for applying IT-solutions at transport logistics centers were also discussed. Local IT-companies' current experience in the field of software development for logistics centers was presented and the demands of forwarding companies with respect to IT-products were described.

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



Photo: Leontief Centre

A Liberal Agenda for the New Century: A Global Perspective Conference

A Liberal Agenda for the New Century: A Global Perspective Conference took place in St. Petersburg on 8-12 April. The conference was devoted to the liberal

reform in Russia and sponsored by the Cato Institute, Leontief centre, the Institute of Economic Analysis and the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs. Andrey Illarionov, Economic Adviser to the President of Russian Federation, Charles Murray, Scientist of the American Enterprise Institute, Sergey Vasiliev, Head of the Committee on Financial Markets, Council of the Russian Federation, Justin Yifu Lin, President of the Chinese Center for Economic Research, Ruth Richardson, Former Minister of Finance of the New Zealand, Arnold Harberger, Professor of the University of California at Los Angeles, José Piñera, President of International Center of pension reform, Former Minister of Labor and Social Security of Chile, participated in the discussion. More than 200 well-known Russian and foreign politicians and experts, representatives of business community, academic circles and mass media took part in the conference.

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Photo: Primexpo

Interfood Fair in St. Petersburg

The 8th international specialized food industry fair *InterFood* was held at St. Petersburg exhibition center *Lenexpo* on 12 - 15 April 2004. This event, central for the food industry branch of the Northwest Russia, was arranged by the exhibition company *Primexpo* with the support from the City of St. Petersburg, the President's Plenipotentiary Representative in the Northwest

Russia and the Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation.

The fair is traditionally arranged simultaneously with *ProdTech* – food and processing industry fair, and *FoodPack* exhibition, devoted to packing and processing machinery and materials.

Interfood 2004 included several specialized expositions: food exhibition *Interfood*, beverages exhibition *Drinks* and exhibition for food ingredients, additives and spices *Ingredients*.

On the exhibition area of 11 thousand sq. meters over 400 manufacturing companies and major suppliers from 20 countries of the world presented their products. More than 18 thousand specialists visited the fair.

The business program of the exhibition included seminars, conferences and professional contests. Wine testing, presentations and numerous business meetings between foreign manufacturers and Russian importers took place during the event.

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Tourist forecasts for the summer 2004 in St. Petersburg

No changes are expected in the incoming sector of St. Petersburg this summer, though the interest to the city is still very high. St. Petersburg, located in the Baltic Sea Region being one of the safest regions of the world, has successfully occupied the positions of the city favourable for tourism. Sergey Korneev, Director of the Northwestern branch of The Russian Union of Travel Industry, RUTI, noted that, according to the World Tourism Organization, St. Petersburg ranks 8th in the list of the most popular tourist cities of the world.

When the outgoing sector is concerned, Nordic countries are still loved by the population of St. Petersburg. The demand for trips to the Nordic countries is stable thanks to good services, security, and perfect conditions for relaxation. The lack of growth depends on expensive Euro. However, some increase in sales of tours to Norway is expected.

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The Russian Union of Travel Industry, RUTI

The Russian Union of Travel Industry, RUTI (till 2001 – Russian Association of Tourism Agencies – RATA) was founded in 1993. Since 1995 RUTI is a member of the United Federation of Travel Agencies Association (UFTAA) that represents Russia; since 1997 – a member of the World Tourism Organization (WTO).

RUTI unites about 900 tourist companies, hotels, resorts, mass media, insurance and transportation companies that deal in tourism, enterprises of leisure and entertainment infrastructure, including leading companies of St. Petersburg and the Northwest Russia, as well as the foreign ones. Together they control two thirds of the tourist market of the country.

The main goal of the Union is the support for tourism development in Russia and the Federation units, as well as protection of collective interests of Union members.

The North-West division of the Union is the largest and the most fast-developing regional branch of the RUTI.

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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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