

# Northwest Russia: Facts and Events

Newsletter by the Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg

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## Protocol on Cooperation between Sörmland and Leningrad regions for 2007- 2009



On 27-28 February the delegation from Sörmland region headed by Bo Könberg, Governor of Södermanland, and Marita Bengtsson, Chair of Sörmland Regional Council, visited the Leningrad region. During the meeting with Valery Serdukov, Governor of the Leningrad region, the Protocol on cooperation with the Leningrad region for 2007- 2009 was signed. As it was marked by Valery Serdukov during the press conference after the protocol signing "10 years cooperation between our region and Sörmland region have shown that we have mutual interests which have been proved out by practical accents".

During the next 3 years period cooperation will be focused on improving the quality of life in the regions as well as intensifying economic and trade contacts. Among others priority exchange issues are: regional development, infrastructure, entrepreneurship, high school, healthcare, social issues and tourism.

During the visit the delegation also met Kirill Polyakov, the Chair of the Leningrad region Legislative Assembly. The Consulate general of Sweden held a reception dedicated to the signing of the new Protocol.

The programme of the visit was arranged with the support of the Stockholm region Office in St. Petersburg.

Contact person: Annika Gamsäter, Sörmland Regional Council, [annika.gamsater@region.sormland.se](mailto:annika.gamsater@region.sormland.se)

Photo: *The World Voyager* magazine, <http://www.world-voyager.info/ww/index.asp>

## New Support Measures – New Opportunities

In 2007 within the framework of the small business state support program the *Leningrad Business Support Center* is planning to implement a new business development measure targeted at the export-oriented enterprises. The financing will be provided only for those certificates that meet the international standards. In long term prospect the realization of such support measures is supposed to increase the competitive level of the Leningrad region's enterprises on international market. The Government of Leningrad region has reserved 1 million RUR for distribution of certification compensations.

As last year the *Leningrad Region Business Support Center* will provide several training programs for entrepreneurs focused on raising the export potential.

*The Leningrad Region Business Support Center* actively participates in international projects and attracts their resources to support local small business companies. This year 10 local businesses will receive consultancy and advice in ICT field and as a result of "E-Skills for Russian SME's phase II" EU project will acquire the personalized ICT development plans. Besides the *Leningrad Region Business Support Center* is one of the leaders in another EU project "Business Matryoshka" whose main objective is to strengthen the Leningrad region SME's potential through conducting, business contact meetings, training, developing business web-portal etc.

Contact person: Dmitry Pavlov, *Leningrad Region Business Support Center*, Head of department Agency for export development, e-mail: [pavlov@813.ru](mailto:pavlov@813.ru)

Photo: [www.interpress.ru](http://www.interpress.ru)



## New Garbage-Sorting Plants in St. Petersburg



On 22 February 2007 the construction of a garbage-sorting plant with the capacity of 100 thousand tonnes was launched in Frunzensky district of St. Petersburg. The completion of the construction work is

planned for the end of 2007. The total investment in the projects will constitute approximately 6 million EUR. It is also planned to construct two similar garbage-sorting plants in Vyborgsky and Kalininsky districts of St. Petersburg with the capacity of 150 thousand tonnes each.

Kvantum company, responsible for the construction, will also install special garbage containers at 280 out of 320 garbage-collecting sites. There were also proposals to construct a plant, manufacturing pellets - pressed fuel briquettes, which may be used for all types of solid-fuel furnaces. The total investment in the management of solid waste in St. Petersburg may constitute over 100 million EUR.

Source: *Delovoy Peterburg* newspaper, February 2007, [www.dp.ru](http://www.dp.ru) Source: *Delovoy Peterburg* newspaper, February 2007, [www.dp.ru](http://www.dp.ru), Photo: [www.interpress.ru](http://www.interpress.ru)

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## Swedish Garbage - Processing Technologies Applied in St. Petersburg



A new garbage-processing technology will be tested in Moskovsky district of St. Petersburg. The city has purchased a Swedish garbage-processing plant, which allows to sort and reduce garbage to fragments, and then safely pack it in multi-layer plastic sachets. The plastic bags are supposed to be stored

at special country sites, and will further be used for restoration of open-cast mines. Such plants will also be applied in other city districts.

With the new technology in 5 years it is planned to reduce the amount of garbage, stored on open grounds, by half.

Source: *Metro* newspaper, February 2007.

Photo: [www.interpress.ru](http://www.interpress.ru)

## St. Petersburg Rating has Become Positive



Standard & Poor's Ratings Services has revised its outlook on St. Petersburg to positive from stable. At the same time, the 'BBB-' long-term issuer credit rating was affirmed. "The outlook revision is based on the city's sound financials and improved liquidity," said Standard & Poor's credit analyst Boris Kopeykin.

The rating reflects the city's increased commitment to address its most urgent infrastructure needs, highlighted by rising capital expenditures. St. Petersburg's low debt, with direct debt representing less than 4% of operating revenues, and sound financial performance, combined with good debt management and strong liquidity, also support the rating. In addition, liquidity

reserves in the end 2006 exceeded total debt several times, making the city a net creditor. According to Kopeykin they expect St. Petersburg's growing economy and revenues to help the city to continue increasing its capital expenditures.

An upgrade could be driven by the increased visibility of the city's medium-term financial and debt strategy, with the likely adoption of a 2008-2010 financial plan in the first half of 2007 considered an important milestone. If St. Petersburg manages to tackle its capital needs without significant deterioration in its financial performance and liquidity position, the rating could be raised.

Source: <http://www.interfax.com/3/248133/news.aspx>

Photo: [www.interpress.ru](http://www.interpress.ru)



## Heat Power Industry in Russia

*Heat Power industry in Russia* conference will take place in Stockholm on 15-16 March. This first annual conference will bring together the most significant market players in Russian Heat Power sector, covering all relevant issues related to current status and plans for the strategic development of the industry as well as highly relevant ecology saving issues. It will also examine how different segments of the energy community could evolve at the current industry state and what kind of reforms should be done in order to push industry development.

Amongst the speakers are RAO UES of Russia, GAZPROM, Swedish Designated National Authority for "Kyoto Protocol-questions", Federal Tariff's Service, Federal Agency of Construction, Housing and Utility Complex, The Combined Heat and Power Association (UK).

Contact person: Natasha Jerneva, Marketing Manager [natashaj@marcusevansuk.com](mailto:natashaj@marcusevansuk.com)



## St. Petersburg Educational Forum – 2007

On 30 March – 1 April the Committee of Science and Higher School of St. Petersburg will hold the *St. Petersburg Educational Forum – 2007*. This Forum includes exhibition, conference, round tables on educational issues. Leading universities of St. Petersburg and foreign institutions will participate in the Forum. During the Conference government officials and rectors of universities will discuss problems of education, exchange their experience in applying modern educational technologies and innovative development in the area of professional education. Approximately 180-200 exhibitors and 12-15 thousand visitors are expected to take part in the event.

Contact Person: Irina Shipilova, FOC *Education and Career*, International Department, Director, [rtv@znanie.info](mailto:rtv@znanie.info)

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STOCKHOLM REGION OFFICE in ST PETERSBURG  
 Visiting address: Nevsky 1, St. Petersburg  
 Postal address: BOX 1005, 190000, St. Petersburg  
 tel.: +7-812-314 68 18, fax: +7-812-314 68 53  
 e-mail: [stockholm.office@stockholm.spb.ru](mailto:stockholm.office@stockholm.spb.ru)  
[www.stockholmregion.org](http://www.stockholmregion.org)