

Northwest Russia: Facts and Events

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Petersburg Dialog

On 30 September – 3 October the VIII session of the Russian-German Forum “Petersburg Dialog” took place at the premises of the St. Petersburg State University. The theme for this year was “Russia and Germany in a Global World – Modernization Partners”. The Forum attracted many public figures and high-rank officials, including Dmitry Medvedev, President of Russia, and Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany.

“Petersburg Dialog” is an open Forum for discussion of relevant public issues, as well as those relating to Russian-German relations. The Forum is held once a year by turns in Russia or Germany.

Source: Petersburg Dialog, www.petersburger-dialog.de



Borders of Europe and European Identity

Under this title a debate - meeting with a group of young coming leaders, students from St. Petersburg Institute of Humanitarian Education (SPbIGO) took place on October 8. Guest speakers were Dr. Nikita Lomagin and Dr. Andrey Zimbuli, from St. Petersburg State University and Russian State Pedagogical University respectively; Rikke Helms, director of the Danish

Cultural Institute in St. Petersburg; Thomas Vanker, BA; Artem Budaev, Ph. D., SPbIGO, and Tatjana Kravchuk, student of SPbIGO.

All speakers gave their views upon the European identity versus national or other identities and ended up agreeing that diversity in character, mentality and ethic values is what makes connections difficult, but interesting, and that the main task for today is to find ways of stressing common interests and willingness to understand and learn from each other.

The debates were organized by professor Nina Litvinova, chairman of the House of Europe in St. Petersburg, as a preparation for the session of Model European Parliament, Baltic Sea Region, that will be hosted in St. Petersburg on October 20-23, 2008.

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“Professional Cleaning in Prevention and Treatment Facilities”

On 15 October the conference “Professional Cleaning in Prevention and Treatment Facilities: Problems, Trends and Prospects” took place in St. Petersburg, attracting chief medical officers of public and private clinics, principal chief nurses, representatives of the St. Petersburg Legislative Assembly and the Committee on Public Health, and representatives of cleaning companies.

The conference was opened by the statement of Oleg Sergeev, member of the St. Petersburg Legislative Assembly, Chairman of the Commission on epidemiological and ecological safety of St. Petersburg. The main part included presentations by Alexander Golyshev, CMO of Children's Hospital #5; Ludmila Zueva, Chief Epidemiologist of St. Petersburg; Vera Ushakova, Director, Chemitech Company; and Johanna Adami, Medical

Director, Bactiguard AB, Associate Professor at Karolinska Institutet.

The conference was organized by the Regional Association of Managers in Medical Services (RAMMS) and the Russian Association of Cleaning Companies.

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Swedwood: Production of Fuel Pellets

In 2009 *Swedwood Tikhvin* furniture plant, subsidiary of *IKEA*, will launch production of pellet fuel made from wood wastes. Currently the plant recycles 25 thousand tones wood waste into fuel bricks annually. The planned production volume of fuel pellets is 55 thousand tones per year with possible 50% growth.

According to analysts from *Swedwood Tikhvin* recently the demand for fuel bricks, mainly used in heating of private houses, has been going down due to relatively warm winters. The demand for pellets, which are used in industrial heating, is much higher. The fuel pellets produced by *Swedwood* will be mostly exported, though some part may be also used to heat *IKEA* malls in Russia.

Source: *Delovoy Peterburg* newspaper, September 2008, www.dpgazeta.ru

Photo: www.interpress.ru

Swedbank: Small Business Loan Programmes



In September *Swedbank* Russia launched small business loan programmes, which include unsecured lending with repayment term up to 1 year at 17 percent rate. Loans will only be given to those enterprises running their business for over 1 year.

Previously *Swedbank* and the Swedish Trade Council had undertaken a business climate study, showing that the number of Swedish companies setting up a presence in Russia is increasing all the time and they are very positive to the opportunities Russia offers. The study also indicates that Russia has an underdeveloped banking sector. Swedish companies require stable banks, entailing a business opportunity for *Swedbank*.

Sweden's trade relations with Russia are growing from strength to strength. Russia is currently Sweden's thirteenth largest export market accounting for around 2.0 percent of Sweden's total exports. Russia is also Sweden's fourth-largest import market, particularly following significant fuel imports.

Source: *Swedbank*, www.swedbank.com; *Delovoy Peterburg* newspaper, September 2008, www.dpgazeta.ru

SWECO: Expanding in Russian Market



In September *SWECO* set up a division within *Lenvodokanalproject* Institute (water supply and disposal) which is going to focus on three major fields of activity, namely on administration of infrastructure projects, water supply and disposal and power engineering. In May *SWECO* acquired 50 percent shares of *Lenvodokanalproject* from *American Atlas Sales Cor.* becoming its only proprietor. In 2007 the revenues of the Institute amounted to RUR 100 million (app. SEK 27 million). Under *SWECO* it's expected to grow at least 35 percent annually.

According to Jonas Dahlberg, CEO of *SWECO* Russia, by the end of 2009 the company will have expanded its network adding offices in Ural and Siberia. Currently *SWECO* is developing several infrastructure projects in St. Petersburg, including construction of an aeration plant and wastewater treatment facilities.

Source: *Delovoy Peterburg* newspaper, September 2008, www.dpgazeta.ru



Stella Lines: St. Petersburg-Helsinki Ferry Connection Closed

On 8 October *Stella Lines* Company announced that the ferry connection between Helsinki and St. Petersburg, which had been renewed after a long brake in August 2008 (see week 32), was closed. The reason for that is the world financial crisis, which left the Finnish company without loan funds, needed to

cover the deficit of EUR 2-3 million.

Source: *Delovoy Peterburg* newspaper, September 2008, www.dpgazeta.ru

Photo: www.interpress.ru



Leningrad Region: Biogas from Agricultural Wastes

Olmix Company (France) announced its plans to launch a pilot plant recycling agricultural wastes in Russia. The estimated probable project costs total EUR 3-4 million. The pilot project is going to be launched in early 2009 in Leningrad or Rostov region basing on the technologies used by *Olmix* in France. The plant will recycle animal dung into biogas, which is going to be used for heating and organic fertilization of soils.

At the moment there is a growing demand for recycling of agricultural wastes, as their disposal is quite expensive. According to Raphael Guillou, Director of *Olmix* Russia, at least 16 plants will be needed to recycle all agricultural wastes in Leningrad region. There are 66 thousand pigs and 184 thousand head of cattle; producing 408 thousand tones of dung a year. Only a small part of that (5 percent) is recycled, the rest is disposed or traditionally used for fertilizing of soils.

Source: *Delovoy Peterburg* newspaper, September 2008, www.dpgazeta.ru

Phone: www.interpress.ru

The archive of the newsletters can be found at http://www.stockholmregion.org/website1/sd_page/16/1/index.php

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