

Northwest Russia: Facts and Events

Newsletter by the Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg

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Health Care Cooperation

On 1 December the round-table “Health care reforms in St. Petersburg and Stockholm and international cooperation” was held in the City Medical Prevention Center. The event was organized by the East Europe Committee of the Swedish Health Care Community (SEEC) in cooperation with the St. Petersburg Healthcare Committee and the Stockholm County Council.

Discussed problems included international health care cooperation, world experience of health care reforms, health care reforms in St. Petersburg and Stockholm and their perspectives, coordination of public and private health care systems, improvement of medical service etc.

Source: Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg, lena.vorobyeva@stockholmregion.org



Fourth Baltic Evening in St. Petersburg

The Baltic meetings, the annual event of Committee for external Relations of St. Petersburg and the Ambassador hotel took place on 9 December in St. Petersburg. The feature of the fourth Baltic evening is the forum “Nordic countries and North-West Russia economic, legal cooperation and development of civil society”. The event focuses on cooperation of the Nordic countries and the North-

West Russia in the sphere of economy and support of small and medium businesses, legal cooperation, including anticorruption measures as well as civil society development and media.

The Fourth Baltic Evening – Baltic meetings was attended by the representatives of executive and legislative authorities of St. Petersburg, Leningrad, Novgorod and Murmansk regions, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia and Finland, the Consulates General of the Baltic Sea region, business community of the city, journalists and nongovernmental organizations of Nordic countries and St. Petersburg.

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Seminar Environmental Cooperation in Perspective Challenges and Possibilities

On 9 December The Finnish Ministry of the Environment, Finnish Consulate General in St. Petersburg and the Committee for Nature Use, Environmental Protection and Ecological Safety of St. Petersburg organized the seminar devoted to cooperation in the field of environmental protection and management. The objective of the seminar is to take stock of experiences and lessons learnt

from cooperation so far and to focus on future cooperation priorities.

The seminar focused on the main outcomes of the projects of the present Work Plan including air monitoring, environmental information management, environmental permitting and control, hazardous waste management, treatment of contaminated soil, raising public awareness. Special attention is given to future measures, dwelling also on the impact of the global economic crisis and environment economy aspects - both positive and negative. Among the main Finnish stakeholders are the Finnish cities Turku, Helsinki and Tampere, different Finnish institutions and organizations.

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Building Material Industry of Northwest Russia: Fragile Stability after Market Decline

One of the region's core industries, building materials production, tends to stabilize after the sharp decline in the beginning of the year. According to the market report published by the SZNK Group, the gravel prices remain stably at the level of 925 RUR (approx 21 EUR) per cubic meter (delivery not included) since September and the concrete market remains at the price level of 2500 RUR (approx 57 EUR) per cubic meter since August.

The past two months demonstrate moderate growth of the concrete market, by 9-10% in volume monthly. While in the past 5 years civil construction was the core segment of concrete consumption, this year the demand comes from the state-financed infrastructure projects and commercial estate financed by foreign investors.

As for the demand of aggregates, the state railway company, OAO RZHD has become a number 1 consumer of the gravel this year. Following the decline in construction, the concrete market faced the 30% drop in volume and gravel market – about 50% drop in volume by the end of November.

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City Programmes for SME Support: First St. Petersburg Business Incubator

The First St. Petersburg Business Incubator is a City programme for SME support implemented by the St. Petersburg Committee on Economic Development, Industrial Policy and Trade. The Incubator provides business development services to the start-ups, operating in the field of innovative technologies, R&D, manufacturing and housing & utilities services. In the frames of the City programme, the companies get a full range of services:

premises, equipped with furniture and clerical aids, licensed software, Internet and telephony; accounting and legal services; consultancy on taxation, marketing, promotion and bank loans; assistance in attracting investments; education etc.

International cooperation is an integral part of the Incubator's activities. So far the Incubator has had close links with the Small Business Centre of the Helsinki School of Economics. In the frames of existing partnership programmes the residents of the two business incubators find matches, take part in joint events and have opportunities to use each other's premises. On 15-16 December at the Annual St. Petersburg Forum for Small Business the Incubator and the Small Business Centre signed a cooperation agreement. The First St. Petersburg Business Incubator is interested in extending its international contacts and cooperation projects.

For more information please contact: Julia Aseykina, PR manager, First St. Petersburg Business Incubator, email: pr@reoservice.ru, web: www.start-business.ru/eng/index.html



The Third St. Petersburg International Workshop 2010

On 19 January 2010 Russian Union of Travel Industry North-West Division Office (RUTI NWDO) and Association of the National Tourist Offices Representatives in Russia (ANTOR) are organizing the third business meeting in Russia devoted to international tourism development. The event will be held at Sokos Hotel Palace Bridge.

The object of workshop is to give new possibilities of international tourism to the Russian market and to create conditions for making contacts with international partners. The business event by tradition becomes the sign action opening professional tourist season in Russia.

Among the participants of workshop are national and regional visitors' boards, international hotel chains, international and Russian tour operators, congress bureaus and centers, transport companies, consulting and insurance companies, tourist media and others.

Further information on event and its participants, and also the application form for participation on <http://www.workshospb.ru/eng/workshop2010/about>, tel.: +7 (812) 325 11 44, +7 (812) 325 22 40

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The Memorandum of Cooperation within the framework of the International Forum Clean Water 2009

On 24-25 November (Moscow) Mr. Felix F. Karmazinov, President of the National Union of Vodokanals, and Mr. Michael Beckereit, President of the German Water Partnership signed the Memorandum of cooperation.

The National Union of Vodokanals (SUE *Vodokanal of St. Petersburg* is one of its participants) and the German Water Partnership intend to develop cooperation in a range of areas, in particular, in implementation of effective management, production, engineering, technical developments and know-how in water sector. The parties plan to develop and implement jointly programs of the existing water supply and wastewater discharge systems modernization, work together for reduction of adverse environmental impact caused by direct untreated wastewater and insufficiently treated wastewater discharge.

The Memorandum is to a large extent focuses on share of experience. For instance, it is assumed to promote the European Union technical standards and regulations experience in Russia. A separate section of the Memorandum is dedicated to cooperation in promotion of water supply, resource saving and environmental improvement ideas. For this purpose it is planned to hold joint conferences and seminars, participate in exhibitions and congresses, to issue specialized publications.

The German Water Partnership became the first international partner of the National Union of Vodokanals. For more info please visit <http://www.vodokanal.spb.ru/content/press/press/eng>

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St. Petersburg New Energy Efficiency Programme

On 11 November 2009 Government of St. Petersburg has adopted a decision "About the Concept of energy efficiency increasing and energy saving stimulation" to promote innovation development of St. Petersburg and to improve quality of life at the same time.

In this connection Non-Profit Partnership "The St. Petersburg House Property Owners Association" has initiated the project "Energy Efficiency – Innovation policy of the state and civil society. Social responsibility towards future generations (for example, Nordic countries)" in the frames of the Nordic Council of Ministers financial support. Project's goals include

the assistance in monitoring and development of the local projects about energy and resource-saving in St. Petersburg, the establishment and consolidation of the cooperation between non-profit organizations of St. Petersburg, Russia and Nordic countries on the subject of energy efficiency - an innovative state and civil society policy, the exchange of experience and others.

The programme presents wide range of opportunities for new cooperation projects pointed at creation sustainable and long-term partnership between North-West Russian and Northern countries organizations during 2010-2013. Committee for External Relations of St. Petersburg, Committee for Energetic and Engineering Support, Committee for Construction, St. Petersburg Industry Support Fund, Regional office of All Russian Party "United Russia" and other governmental and non-governmental structures have already confirmed their participation in announced project. It is opened for educational institutions, business structures and other organisations as well.

Committee for Economic Development, Industrial Policy and Trade of St. Petersburg has started monitoring of international events concerning energy efficiency and city energy saving technologies planned in the near future. The main aim is to get financial support which intends for both Russian and Northern Europe partners.

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Source: Nordic Council of Ministers Information office in St. Petersburg, web: <http://www.norden.ru>

The Exhibition of Young Artists of Leningrad Region

On 15 November – 13 December the children's drawing exhibition Silver Shield of North-West Russia was holding in the Non-governmental Educational Institution for Continuing Professional Education "ATOMPROF".



The presented artists are the inmates of some children's homes in Leningrad Region. The event is organized by the Ring Motor Road – Leningrad Region Open Joint-Stock Company, the Committee on General and Vocational Education, the Government of the Leningrad Region, Leningrad Regional Office of the All Russian Party "United Russia", Leningrad Region subsidiary of the Russian Children's Fund, the Museum Agency of Leningrad region, Old Ladoga archaeological expedition, The Museum and Reserve "Old Ladoga", New Ladoga Center of Youth Tourism and Yachting. The exhibition features more than one hundred drawings and photographs.

Project Silver Shield of North-West Russia is a part of the federal program Historical Memory implemented in North-West Russia by the All Russian Party "United Russia". It involves 2000 inmates and teachers of children's homes and boarding schools of Leningrad Region, St. Petersburg and regional mass media, social associations, municipal and local authorities. The project aims to develop moral, historical and cultural education to build civil identity and to guarantee a bright future of young generation.

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The Exhibition *Stockholm – the city of light* in the frames of St. Lucia Celebrations

On 13 December Sweden celebrated the Day of St. Lucia, Swedish holiday of light. In St. Petersburg event traditionally took place in St. Catherine's Swedish Reformation Church on Malaya Konushennaya Street. The Lucia tradition can be traced back both to St. Lucia of Syracuse and to the Swedish legend of Lucia as Adam's first wife. It is said that she consorted with the Devil and that her children were invisible infernals. Thus the name may be associated with both lux (light) and Lucifer (Satan), and its origins are difficult to determine. The present custom appears to be a blend of traditions.

On 14th of December in the frames of St. Lucia Day the photo exhibition *Stockholm – the city of light* was opened in Vladimir Nabokov Museum. Presented works demonstrate diversity and riches of colours, emotions, cultural allusions filling the bright world of modern Stockholm. Being quiet European city Stockholm is a maritime capital with long history which is close to heart of any citizen of St. Petersburg.

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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

The archive of the newsletters can be found at <http://www.stockholmregion.org/website/1/1.0.1.0/16/3/index.php>

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