Northwest Russia: Facts and Events

Newsletter by the Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg

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Baltic Sea Is Cleaner Now

On 25 December 2009 SUE *Vodokanal of St. Petersburg* completed one more stage of the Northern Tunnel Collector Project. After the connection of 32 direct discharges to the Collector, the Northern Wastewater Treatment Plant will receive additional 42,000 m3/day of wastewater. Previously, these wastewater volumes were discharged untreated into the Neva. After the connection of the new portion of direct discharges to the Collector the share of treated wastewater in St. Petersburg will reach nearly 91 %. The Northern Collector is becoming a system of unique engineering structures including microtunnels, dozens of shafts, connecting galleries. Its construction works will be completed by the end of 2011.

In parallel with the Collector construction, the Northern WWTP is being rehabilitated to ensure wastewater treatment as recommended by the Helsinki Commission for the Baltic Sea Marine Environment Protection (HELCOM) and to accommodate the increased influent volumes.

Both the Northern Tunnel Collector Project, and the Northern WWTP rehabilitation are the components of the Neva Untreated Wastewater Discharge Closure Programme in St. Petersburg. In addition to other funds, the Programme is being financed with the loans provided by the Nordic Investment Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and European Investment Bank, in the total amount of MEUR 60. Moreover, nearly MEUR 40 will be received by *Vodokanal St. Petersburg* as non-refundable assistance (in particular, from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

New Investment Program of SUE *Vodokanal of St. Petersburg*

By following its policy aimed to create careful attitude to water on the consumer side, SUE *Vodokanal of St. Petersburg* is able to curtail significantly its investment programme for the period up to 2015. The revised programme is almost one half of the initial variant – the economy is nearly 131 billion Roubles (or more than 3 billion Euro).

Under the Investment Programme, an integrated water supply regimes control and flow metering system will be implemented in St. Petersburg. The energy consumption of pumping stations will be reduced by 45-50%. Water distribution losses will go down to 7%. The development of water networks and sewerage will cover the demand of new housing areas in the city. St. Petersburg will be deleted from the list of the Baltic Sea polluters, and the *HELCOM (Helsinki Commission for the Baltic Sea Marine Environment Protection)* standards will be complied with to the full extent. Renewable energy sources will be widely used at Vodokanal's facilities.

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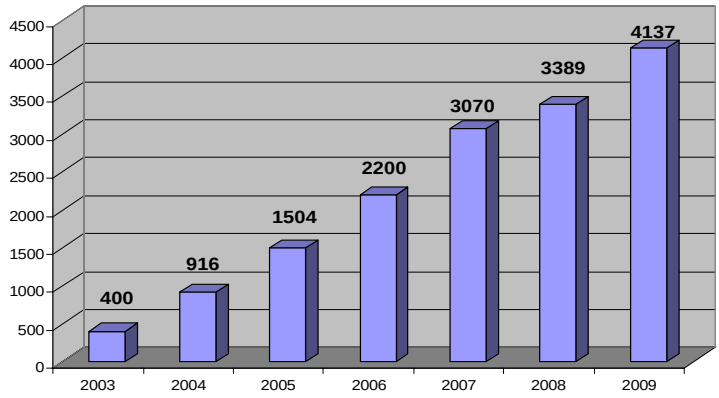
New High-speed Train on St. Petersburg – Helsinki Line

Border guards and customs officers will work on the way of St. Petersburg - Helsinki trains according to amendments optimising border and customs procedures for rail transport. It was declared by the First Vice President of Russian Railways *Vadim Morozov*. The first high-speed train between St. Petersburg and Helsinki will run in autumn 2010. St. Petersburg - Helsinki high-speed train will have an accelerated mode of border crossing procedure. Therefore the train will cross the Russian-Finnish border without any stops. St. Petersburg-Helsinki international train will travel at speeds of up to 220 kilometres per hour. Each train will have seven cars accommodating 350 passengers, and a dining car. The number of trips will be increased since three till four per day.

Source: *Piter-T* e-newspaper. Photo: www.100dorog.ru

Leningrad Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry: Facts 2009



In 2009 the youngest Chamber in the system of regional chambers in the Russian Federation the Leningrad Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry became not only the largest chamber (4137 members) in Russia, but approved its status as a fertile soil for effective relations between business and authorities. The legal basis for such relations is compiled by agreements of cooperation between the Chamber, the Government, and the Legislative Assembly of the Leningrad Region.

In 2009 the quality of LCCI services system was certified to *ISO 9001:2008 standard* in the *IQNet*. It also completed the creation of a representative offices network around the Leningrad region. LCCI continues to issue 2 monthly magazines: *Business territory* and an information-bulletin *Tovarish* successfully developing its information channels.

Picture: Number of LCCI members, contact person: Alla Vinnik, Deputy Director of the Department for External Economic Relations, e-mail: alla.vinnik@lotpp.ru

Cooperation: St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce and Industry – Sweden

The St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce and Industry continues to develop the international contacts. More than 100 foreign Chambers of Commerce and Industry and different business associations are already among its partners. In 2009 the Chamber held more than 100 international events with the participation of the foreign business representatives from over 40 countries and also more than 6 MOU and other agreements have been signed.

The Chamber operates in the Baltic Sea Region developing new business relations particularly with Sweden. Business relations between SPb CCI and the Swedish partners (especially with the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Commerce of East Sweden) have positively changed in the last years. SPb CCI and the Chamber of Commerce of East Sweden actively use such networking opportunities as b2b meetings, seminars, roundtables, workshops and exchange of commercial information. Together with the Chamber of Commerce of East Sweden several meetings have been held with the representatives of the Swedish companies DIBO and EWAB Engineering AB. For more information please visit web site: www.spbtpp.ru

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International Projects of the Camber of Commerce and Industry of the Pskov Region

In 2009 the Camber of Commerce and Industry of the Pskov region celebrated its 15th anniversary. It combines more than 430 enterprises, organizations and entrepreneurs. The Pskov Region is the only subject of Russian Federation which borders at once with 3 foreign states. The major emphasis of international contacts is on development of boundary business cooperation.

In 2000 the CCI of Southern Sweden (Malmo) became the first partner in the 1,5 lasting project aiming the studying of working experience of the CCI of Southern Sweden. The CCI of the Pskov region was taking part in a Russian-Swedish programme *Nordpraktik - New Managers for Russia.* The other projects included *Fostering Business Development in Border Areas through Cooperation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Regional Development Agencies* carried out with partners from Latvia and Estonia, the Russian-Danish *Programme of assistance with economic development in Kaliningrad and Pskov regions,* etc.

In 2009 *the VIth Russian-Finnish conference of chambers of commerce and industry of the North-West Federal district of the Russian Federation and chambers of commerce of Finland* was held in Pskov. For further information please visit websites www.cci.pskov.ru and www.bic-pskov.ru.

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Joint Interdisciplinary Seminar of Leontief Center

On 27 January 2010 the Leontief Center will hold the joint interdisciplinary seminar of Leontief Center, Sociological Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, State University – Higher School of Economics, Institute for Economics and Mathematics at St. Petersburg of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

The program includes a solemn presentation of medal and diploma to Professor at the Warsaw School of Economics Leszek Balcerowicz and the lecture of the International Leontief medal 2008 Institutional Systems and Economic Growth laureate. The ceremony devoted to the Awarding Ceremony of Professor Leszek Balcerowicz will take place in a new big conference hall.

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The Biggest Conference Hall AZIMUT Sovetsky in the Center of St. Petersburg

On 26 November 2009 AZIMUT Sovetsky, one of the biggest multifunction conference halls in St. Petersburg, was opened. New conference hall is situated in the former Restaurant Sovetsky which has become famous in the soviet times.

Two-level room with total surface of 1600 sq.m makes it the only conference hall in the city center which can accommodate 1000 people for the conference and 600 people for the banquet at the same time. General Director of the AZIMUT Hotel St. Petersburg, Alexey Dereglazov noticed that reservation requests have been registered in two months before the opening that indicates the hall importance for the city. Modern mobile equipment provides multifunctional use as the large ground for banquets and business events, and the exhibition surface as well.

Reconstruction of the conference room was split in two stages. The first one has been already completed. The second reconstruction stage including the construction of two new conference rooms is planned to be finished the next year. The investments are estimated about 40 million rubles (approx 950 000 euro).

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New High-speed *Sapsan* Train on Moscow - St. Petersburg Line

On 17 December at 19:00 a high-speed *Sapsan* train departed from Moscow to St. Petersburg on the maiden journey of the service. The duration of trip was 3 hours 45 minutes. According to the Russian Railways (RZD) Vladimir Yakunin Sapsan has become a new milestone in the development of the national railway. The train was produced by Seimens, and leading Russian rail transport institutes were involved in its development.

To enable the train to travel at speeds of up to 250 km/h between Moscow and St Petersburg, Russian Railways modernized the infrastructure of this line. The work began in 2006 and was completed in November 2009. The construction cost was around 15.4 billion rubles (over $351 million).

Each high-speed *Sapsan* train has 10 carriages, of which two are first class and eight are second class. The basic price of a first class ticket about 121 euros, and about 75 euros for second class. Ticket prices vary depending on the day of the week and departure time. Return tickets are sold at a 10% discount. Since 18 December 2009, the trains have departed from Moscow's Leningradsky Station three times daily.

Source: Delovoy Peterburg newspaper

Photo: www.interpress.ru

IX Conference Leontief Readings *Economy and institutions*

On 12-13 February the IX Conference Leontief Readings *Economy and institutions* from the series of Leontief Readings will be held. The conference will be organized in a new big conference-hall for the first time.

The idea to carry out Leontief Readings occurred to honor memory of one of the greatest economist, Nobel Prize winner – Wassily W. Leontief, whose name was given to the Research Centre. The first Leontief Conference dated for Wassily Leontief Commemoration and devoted to summarizing of the decade of economic reforms in Russia was carried out in February 2000 in St. Petersburg. The Conference was held successfully. It got public resonance and demonstrated the relevance of such events. As a result of the first Conference the initiators decided to carry out Leontief Readings annually.

The program of the IX Conference includes three sections meetings: *Institutional changes in the Russian Federation*, *Institutions and problems of development*, *Institutional analyses as an evolution and an expansion of economic theory*. Leading Russian and foreign scientists, politician, entrepreneurs, mass media representatives (about 120 participants) will discuss institutions features, possibilities of institutions changes, problems of institutional economy, its place in the modern world etc.

The solemn ceremony of awarding laureates 2009 by the International Leontief medal in nomination for *Contribution to Economic Reforms* will close the conference.

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The archive of the newsletters can be found at http://www.stockholmregion.org/website1/1.0.1.0/16/3/index.php

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