

Northwest Russia: Facts and Events

Newsletter by the Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg

Issue 125, April 2010



Visit of Delegation of Leningrad Region to Sörmland

The delegation of Leningrad Region visited Sweden on 12-14 April. The meeting of Valery Serdukov, the governor of Leningrad Region, Bo Holmberg, the Governor of Södermanland County, and Marita Bengtsson, Chairman of the Board of Sörmland Regional Council, resulted in signing a new Cooperation Agreement for 2010-2013. The regions are planning to promote further cooperation within the context of regional

development including such prioritised spheres as infrastructure, trade and industry, human resources management etc.

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100th Anniversary of the Swedish Society in St. Petersburg

In 2010 *the Swedish society in St. Petersburg* celebrates the 100th anniversary. The organization was founded in 1910. From the very beginning of its presence in St. Petersburg *the Swedish Society* has made an essential contribution to the developing of wide-range contacts between Sweden and Russia. It is very active throughout the year with activities for Swedes residing in St. Petersburg. *The Swedish Society in St. Petersburg* organizes business meetings, assists in the celebrating of Swedish holidays promoting cultural and business-related bilateral exchange.

The Information office of the Nordic Council of Ministers in St. Petersburg presents *Nordic inhabitants of St. Petersburg*, the publication about links of the Nordic countries with the second-biggest Russian city, which highlights the 100th anniversary of the Swedish society in St. Petersburg. The publication is available on the web site <http://www.norden.ru/News.aspx?id=414&lang=en>

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Clean Baltic Sea – Our Common Concern

On 22 March 2010, SUE *Vodokanal of St. Petersburg* hosted a panel discussion dedicated to the environmental cooperation between St. Petersburg and Finland with the participation of Tarja Halonen, President of Finland and Valentina I. Matvienko, Governor of St. Petersburg.

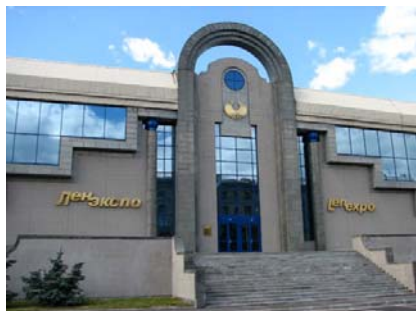
Felix V.Karmazinov, Director General of St. Petersburg *Vodokanal*; Jari Luoto, Finnish Ambassador for Baltic Sea Issues; Jussi Pajunen, Mayor of Helsinki and others also participated in the panel work.

Reduction of the negative influence on the Baltic Sea is the main line of cooperation between *Vodokanal* and Finland for more than 20 years. The major projects implemented by *Vodokanal* with the support of the Finnish partners over recent years are the construction of the South West Wastewater Treatment Plant and implementation of the enhanced nitrogen and phosphorus removal technology at *Vodokanal's* facilities.

Today, St. Petersburg treats 91% of all wastewater in compliance with HELCOM (Helsinki Commission on the Baltic Marine Environment Protection) requirements. By the end of 2011, after the completion of the Main Tunnel Sewer, this figure will grow up to 95%.

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Photo: SUE “*Vodokanal of St. Petersburg*”



New LenExpo Stakeholders

Gazenergoprombank Development has acquired 25% stake in LenExpo and is negotiating to buy another 30% of its shares. It has been sold by *LenExpo* General Director Sergei Alexeyev and CEO Leonid Krasnikov.

Gazenergoprombank Development has also embodied a project of building of a new exhibition complex in St. Petersburg through its subsidiary *EXPOFORUM*. According to *Colliers*, the sum of transaction could reach as much as \$20 million.

Consultants observed that the *LenExpo* is not only a place for exhibition activities, but also a perfect location for residential and commercial building, though Sergei Alexeyev assured that the exhibition work is not going to be stopped. According to General Director of *EXPOFORUM*, this stake has been purchased in order to avoid competition and to consolidate all the exhibition activities in the city.

Source: Delovoy Peterburg newspaper



H&M New Store in St. Petersburg City Center

World famous Swedish clothing company H&M has continued to expand its business in Russia, especially in St. Petersburg and plans to open a new big store in the heart of the city. Now company management is trying to find a large placing situated on Nevsky prospect that is rather difficult. The most successful format for the new store is two- or three-storied placing about 3 sq. m in area. Experts note that H&M brand commands a large sale in St. Petersburg than in Moscow that takes the company a good possibility to intensify the sales, as well as to extend the store network. The successful way H&M entered the Russian

market also depends on erosion of competitiveness of many stores and even big clothing chains during the year of 2009.

According to the agency Market Masters, the volume of the clothing market in St. Petersburg amounted to \$ 4.5 billion in 2009.

Source: Delovoy Peterburg newspaper

Russian Innovators Explore Business Opportunities of Finland and Sweden

On 11-14 April a group of Russian innovation-driven companies, business incubators, technology centres, universities and venture capitalists paid a study visit to the Stockholm region and the Lappeenranta region (Finland) to explore business and investment opportunities of the neighboring countries.

The programme included as follows:

- study visit Kista Science City, where the group met with representatives of Kista Science City AB, STING and *Appear Networks* (mobile solutions provider);
- meeting with representatives of ALMI Företagspartner providing public investment and business development services;
- meeting at Stockholm Business Region, where the group was provided with extensive information about investment opportunities and procedures of establishing a business;
- visit to the Scandinavian Electronics Event at Stockholm International Fairs;
- study visit to Technopolis technology centre in Lappeenranta and a seminar regarding the opportunities of setting up business in Finland;
- match-making event with Finnish innovative companies, organized with the support from Lappeenranta Business Development.



The programme was organized by Nordica Centre for Business Cooperation, Technopolis Plc. and the First City Business Incubator in St. Petersburg. A similar visit was first arranged in October 2009 (see [Issue 120 November 2009](#)).

Source: Nordica Centre for Business Cooperation, e-mail: info@nordica.spb.ru, web: www.nordica.spb.ru

Photo: Julia Aseikina



Starting Visa Free Ferry Connection between Russia and Finland

On 21 April Visa Free Ferry Connection between Russian Federation and Finland was launched for the time ever by EU ferry operator *ST.PETER LINE*. Russia's largest port on the Baltic Sea opens a regular ferry link with Helsinki. Passengers from all over the world will be able to enjoy marvelous treasures of Russian North Capital Saint-Petersburg within 72 hours without Russian visa.

Princess Maria is a 34 000 GRT modern passenger ferry which can accommodate up to 1638 passengers on board and carry up to 395 vehicles. 606 cabins of different types will create excellent conditions for travelling between Saint-Petersburg and Helsinki in budget and in style way.

In 2010 the company is planning to make 5 voyages from Saint-Petersburg and Helsinki every week and serve more than 500 000 passengers. After a new ferry terminal is opened in St. Petersburg this autumn, cruisers will make trips to the ports of Sweden, Germany and the Baltic states.

Source: www.st-peterline.com Photo: www.interpress.ru

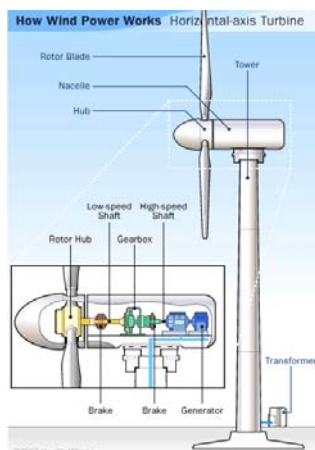


Cooperation in Energy Efficiency

On 6-7 April the seminar focused on Energy saving regional programmes and enhancing energy efficiency and monitoring in the North-West Russia was organized by the Information office of the Nordic Council of Ministers in Kaliningrad and St. Petersburg. The platform of the seminar is based both on the Russian government recognition of importance of enhancing efficient use of energy resources, modernisation of housing and public utilities and development of innovative technologies in energetics and Nordic countries significant progress in the mentioned areas. It aims at exchanging experiences between authorities, research institutions and business.

The seminar is the part of the bigger project on cooperation in energy sector which promotes networking between regional and local authorities, education and research institutions as well small and medium enterprises from the North-West Russia and Nordic countries. Since 2008 the project included number of study trips to Nordic countries, seminars and international conferences.

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Windpower Engineering: Russian-Finish Cooperation

A wind farm worth €500.000 will be constructed in the area of the Gulf of Finland. New wind farm will provide an effective use of wind energy. It is a joint bilateral initiative which is a part of the Russian-Finnish project BLESK (Business, Logistics, Energy, Sustainable Development, and Cooperation).

Project participants are small and medium-sized companies from St. Petersburg, Leningrad region and Finland, and the main partner in St. Petersburg is the Committee for the External Relations. The cooperation in the field on renewable energy sources is recognised to be urgent for both Russian and Finish sides. St. Petersburg market of wind power is looking for new development possibilities when Finland is planning to get 20% of all energy from renewable sources by the year 2020.

Source: Delovoy Peterburg newspaper

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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