

Northwest Russia: Facts and Events

Newsletter by the Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg

Issue 31, 2005, week 16

Moscow Region Duma Visited Brussels



On 12-15 April 2005 the official delegation of the Moscow Region Duma visited Brussels and participated in the celebrations devoted to the 10 years of EU membership of Sweden, Austria and Finland. The delegation headed by Vladimir Alexeev, 1st Deputy Chairman of the Moscow Region Duma, came to Brussels upon the invitation from the Stockholm County Council that has been developing the cooperation with the Moscow Region since 2004. Conny Andersson, Chairman of the Stockholm County Council, met the colleagues from Russia in Brussels, together with Tommy Karlsson, Director, Interregional Cooperation, Stockholm County Council.

The goal of the visit was to learn more about the activities of the regional representative offices in Brussels, as well as to strengthen already existing interregional links in Europe. The eventful and informative programme of the visit was prepared by the Stockholm Region European Committee (SEU). Thomas Friis Konst, Director, and Lada Illarionova, Head of Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg, participated in the visit. During the three days of the programme 13 meetings took place. In particular, the delegation visited the Committee of the Regions of the European Union and the Brussels Regional Parliament, where a meeting with Jos Chabert, First Vice-President of the Brussels Regional Parliament, was held.

In a TV interview Vladimir Alexeev said that the Moscow Region would consider the possibility of opening a representative office in Brussels. "Brussels is the place in Europe not only to strengthen contacts but also to promote the interests of our home region. <...> The Embassy of the Russian Federation in Belgium appreciated the experience of international cooperation gained by the Moscow Region Duma and is even intending to recommend it to other regions in Russia as the best practice example of interregional cooperation".

Source: Liudmila Kozyrenko, Moscow Region Duma, e-mail: ozs5@duma.mosreg.ru

Presentation of 7th Forestry Forum *Russian Forestry Complex in XXI century in Stockholm*

On 21 April 2005 the Trade Representation of the Russian Federation in Sweden hosted the presentation of the 7th International Forestry Forum Russian Forestry Complex in the XXI century. The Forum itself will be held in St. Petersburg on 4-7 October 2005.

The presentation was opened by Mikhail Petrik, Trade Representative of the Russian Federation, who gave a brief report on the trade relations between Russia and Sweden and the perspectives of their development.

The delegation from Russia attending the presentation was headed by Lubov Sovershaeva, Deputy Plenipotentiary Representative of the President of the Russian Federation in the Northwest Federal District. Lubov Sovershaeva, also acting as Deputy Chairman of the Forum Organizing Committee, held a speech on Russia's investment and export opportunities within woodworking. Sergey Trofimov, President of Restec exhibition company and Deputy Chairman of the Forum Organizing Committee, highlighted the programme of the coming Forum. Representatives from Sweden also took part in the event. In particular, the report by Tommy Karlsson, Director, Interregional Cooperation, Stockholm County Council, was devoted to interregional cooperation as a business tool.



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Cooperation Agreement between St. Petersburg and Leningrad Region



An Agreement between St. Petersburg and the Leningrad Region was signed on 19 April during the joint session of the City of St. Petersburg and the Leningrad Region administration. The Agreement signed by Valentina Matvienko, Governor of St. Petersburg, and Valery Serdukov, Governor of the Leningrad Region, stipulates cooperation within trade, economic, scientific, culture and social sectors. The document is supposed to facilitate and accelerate joint projects within science and high technologies, SME sector, legislation, culture and sports. The new agreement also goes in line with the initiative of Valery Serdukov to cooperate with the City in solving the waste treatment and garbage removal problems (see Northwest Russia, week 14, 2005).

Source: www.gov.spb.ru

Thematic Environmental Maps of St. Petersburg

In the spring of 2005 the St. Petersburg Committee on Environmental Protection and Safety will launch thematic environmental maps of St. Petersburg – a whole block of information resources included in the geoinformation system (GIS) - on the Committee's website.

The Air Quality Management system (AQM) launched in 1997 together with the Swedish Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology with a support from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) will give the visitors of the website an online access to the information about the quality of atmospheric air. The AQM stations that are constantly in use provide every 20 minutes updated information about the air pollution. The user just has to choose the certain station and the control period. At the moment St. Petersburg has 12 automatic air control stations and 2 meteorological stations. During the first half of 2005, five more stations are planned to be launched.

Thematic maps of the water objects in St. Petersburg include information about the water quality in accordance with the results of the annual monitoring. Upon the order of the Committee the Regional Ecological Center *Urango* compiled the map of the radon danger forecasts and the map of heavy metals pollution in St. Petersburg.

The website of the Committee will also contain a map of radiation control stations in the city and a map of especially preserved territories.

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Programme of St. Petersburg's Development as Tourist Center

A programme of St. Petersburg's development as a tourist center was presented to the Governor and members of the City of St. Petersburg on 5 April. It was worked out by a leading international consulting company *The Boston Consulting Group (BCG)* in cooperation with St. Petersburg branch committees with the support of the Ministry for Economic Development and Trade of the Russian Federation. The programme is based on the *5x5x5 Strategy* aiming to make St. Petersburg in 5 years one of the 5 main European tourist cities attracting 5 mln visitors annually. These changes will cause an increase of tourist flow by 1,5 times, annually providing 200-250 mln USD extra to the city budget and create at least 50 000 jobs in the tourism branch.

The *5x5x5 Strategy* stipulates the establishment of a City marketing agency that will be financed with means from the city budget on a par with private companies from the tourist industry (from hotels and museums to transport companies). The main task of the Agency will be the marketing of St. Petersburg and the coordination of the city tourist market actors' activities. The Programme is also targeted at improving of St. Petersburg infrastructure. According to BCG's estimations, the development of the hotel sector will require no less than 1,5 bn USD of private investments during the next 5-6 years.

Valentina Matvienko, Governor of St. Petersburg, highly appreciated the BCG's work on the tourism development programme. She said that the Programme and the detailed implementation plan should be approved by the City of St. Petersburg no later than in the middle of May.

Source: Newsletter by the City of St. Petersburg, 11 April 2005

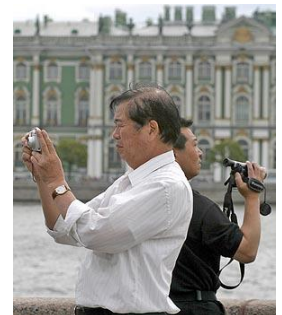


Photo: www.interpress.ru

St. Petersburg Days in Helsinki

St. Petersburg Days in Helsinki were held on 19-21 April 2005. The programme of the event featured the international media forum *Cities of One Shore*, an exhibition of children's environmental projects *Baltic Sea – Our Home*, an exhibition of Russian enterprises and a presentation of books on Finland.



Valentina Matvienko, Governor of St. Petersburg, attended the St. Petersburg Days and participated in most activities. In the speech held at the media forum Valentina Matvienko said that the active collaboration of mass-media in Russia and Finland is crucial for the further development of business links between the partners. In particular, the Governor suggested that regular joint TV programmes highlighting the cooperation between St. Petersburg and Helsinki, as well as a “St. Petersburg” nomination in the competition for journalists writing about Russia, should be created.



Within the frames of her visit to Helsinki Valentina Matvienko met Eva-Riitta Siitonen, Lord Mayor of Helsinki, and on behalf of Vladimir Putin, President of Russia, presented her with the Friendship Order for the input into not only the development of good-neighbour relations between St. Petersburg and Helsinki, but also for the strengthening of contacts between Russia and Finland in general.

Source: www.gov.spb.ru

Education Programme for Russian Entrepreneurs in Helsinki University of Economics



Helsinki University of Economics announced a competition for a free education programme for Russian entrepreneurs. It is financed by the Ministry of Labour of Finland. The competition is open for everybody, with preference given to beginners and those working in the sphere of wood and metal treatment. The participants for the programme should be willing to start their own business and to develop cooperation with Finnish companies.

The programme will start in April. The students will learn the basics of business planning, small enterprise's economy, certification and marketing. The education will be completed by July with each of the participants having

Photo: www.interpress.ru

defended his/her business plan.

Finnish companies are also interested in searching subcontractors from St. Petersburg. In particular, Russian small enterprises can produce components for Finnish companies. However, according to Leonid Aronov, Chairman of the Expert Union of St. Petersburg Union of Entrepreneurs, cooperation will not be restricted to assemblage, Finnish companies are also eager to find partners who can promote products both in Russia and Europe.

In the future, the University of Helsinki is planning to continue similar programmes, in particular, for female entrepreneurs.

Source: Delovoy Petersburg, 24 March 2005

K-Line's Ferries between Germany, Finland and Russia



The Japanese shipbuilding company *K-Line (Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha Limited)* has started a regular sea communication between St. Petersburg and Central Europe. The ship of the class Volga Highway that will ply on the route Bremerhafen (GER) – Cuxhaven (GER) – Helsinki (FIN) – Hamina (FIN) - St. Petersburg (RUS), moored at a berth of St. Petersburg wood trade port. A new ferry can take onboard up to 600 cars.

Source: www.interpress.ru

2nd International Forum on SME Support

The 2nd International Forum on SME Support in the Northwest Federal District took place in St. Petersburg on 15 April 2005.

The Forum was organized by the Office of the Plenipotentiary Representative of the President of the Russian Federation in the Northwest Federal District, the Delegation of the European Commission to Russia, the Ministry of Economical Development and Trade of the Russian Federation, the Northwest Federal Center for SME Support etc. About 150 participants representing regional authorities, branch organizations and European institutions supporting the development of SMEs in Russia, attended the Forum.



The aim of the Forum was a discussion on priorities in supporting the SMEs in Northwest Russia and enhancing their competitiveness in accordance with the State Policy for Development of SMEs in the Russian Federation. The central section of the Forum was devoted to the implementation of the policy and the discussion of its key results. The four larger projects financed by the European Union were presented within the frames of the Forum. These were *Baltic SME Development* (in Leningrad Region and Kaliningrad Region), *E-Skills for Russian SMEs* (St. Petersburg and Veliky Novgorod), *E-Karelia Project* and *Tourism Development in NW Russia* (the whole Northwest Federal District).

As a result of the Forum's work, a Memorandum with measures to take in order to implement the Policy on SME Development effectively was prepared. The document was addressed to Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation.

Source: <http://nw.smesupport.net>, materials of the Forum



The 5th International Forum *Russian Fuel and Energy. Regional Aspects*

The 5th International Forum *Russian Fuel and Energy. Regional Aspects* took place in St. Petersburg on 4-7 April. *Modern Power Industry 2005* conference was arranged within the scope of the forum. Among the official speakers at the conference were Jan Murray, World Energy Council, Lennart Göhl, Swedish Energy Agency, Vyacheslav Kravchenko, Ministry of Industry and Power of Russia, Vasily Zubakin, JSC RAO UES, etc.

The main topics of the conference were energy complex reforms (results, problems, solutions), creation of a free market of electric power industry in Russia, attraction of investments in power industry, successful experience and problems of investments projects realization, the modernization of power industry complex.

Special attention was given to the reforming of regional Energy Complexes, in particular those in Northwest Russia as its key role in the contacts with electric Industry of Russia and neighbouring countries is growing.

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The archive of the newsletters can be found at <http://www.stockholmregion.org/tpl/topic.asp?ID=457>

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