

Northwest Russia: Facts and Events

Newsletter by the Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg

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National Day of Sweden – Sweden Day in St. Petersburg

For the first time ever the National Day of Sweden was celebrated in St. Petersburg with a Sweden Day. The open-air celebration was held on 4 June at Malaya Konyushennaya street, right in front of the Consulate General of Sweden in St. Petersburg.

A marketplace was arranged at Malaya Konyushennaya, with many of the well-known Swedish companies and organizations, such as IKEA and Swedish Institute, represented. Svärdjö folk music group, Kannon Dance company and a student choir entertained the guests of the Sweden Day all day long. Contest and lotteries were held.

The Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg assisted the Stockholm Visitors Board and Swedish Travel and Tourism Council in preparation of the participation of Sweden and Stockholm at the Swedish market. Everyone who visited their booth on 4 June, could obtain information materials about Sweden, Stockholm and the Vasa museum, meet Santa Claus and the symbol of Silja Line company Harry the Seal, as well as get a balloon with the new brand name “Stockholm – the Capital of Scandinavia”.

Source: Stockholm Region Office in St. Petersburg, e-mail: stockholm.office@stockholm.spb.ru



Photo: Stefan Höglund, Arteast Company

Handelsbanken to Open Branch in St. Petersburg

Handelsbanken will open a representative office in St. Petersburg, which will later become a branch of the bank in Moscow.

Handelsbanken is the first Nordic bank to start up its own banking operations in Russia. It will be targeted at Nordic and British companies having business in Russia.

Handelsbanken has been present in Russia with a representative office in Moscow since 1974.

The subsidiary bank in Moscow, with equity of EUR 45m and a staff of 25, will open in June. The Russian central bank granted the banking licence in May 2005.

Source: Delovoy Peterburg, 2 June 2005

Agreement on Cooperation between Stockholm Region and Moscow Region

On 15 June an Agreement on Cooperation between the Stockholm County Council and the Moscow Region Duma was signed by Ingela Nylund Watz, President of the Stockholm County Council Executive Board, and Vladimir Alexeev, 1st Deputy Chairman of the Moscow Region Duma (see photo). The signing ceremony, which marked the formal start of the cooperation, took place in Stockholm during a four days' visit of the Moscow Region Duma.

Within the frames of the visit the representatives of the Moscow Region also visited the Stockholm Elderly Foundation, the Arbitration Institute of the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce and a dental care center. The visit also included a discussion on how to promote regional economic growth by cooperation between public authorities and private actors in combination with the universities, in this case the Royal University of Technology in Stockholm. The discussion was the first step in arranging a seminar on economic development in Moscow in autumn 2005.

The parties have agreed to develop the contacts in such fields as health care, regional development, innovations and economic development. They also agreed to set up a bilateral committee that would supervise that the biannual working plan is being fulfilled according to the schedule as well as evaluate the accomplished activities.

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9th Petersburg International Economic Forum

The 9th International Economic Forum was held at Tavrishesky Palace in St. Petersburg on 14-16 June 2005. The annual event with the motto "Efficient Economy – Worthy Life" was held under patronage of the President of the Russian Federation with the support of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Russian Federation.

The Forum was opened by Valentina Matvienko, the Governor of St. Petersburg, who addressed the participants with a welcoming speech. Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation, also attended the Forum.

The main issues discussed during the 9th Petersburg International Economic Forum were the economic growth problems and life quality under the conditions of globalization, international and interregional cooperation of the Northern countries. The last issue was discussed as part of the thematic block "Prospects of cooperation in the Arctic".

The issues on the structural reforms and innovative development of the economics of Russia and the CIS countries, the participation of the CIS countries in the world integration processes, social and economic reforms realization, sectoral issues of the economy development and other topical questions will be in the center of the Forum discussions.

At the special exhibition arranged within the scope of the Forum at Mikhailovsky Manezh the economic opportunities of the Siberian Federal District, Republic of Azerbajdzhan and Hungary were presented.

Source: the website of the Forum <http://www.economforum.iacis.ru/eng/common/comm6.html> (Information in English is available)



Russian - German Forum *Innovation Technologies of Information Century*

On 7 June 2005 the Russian-German forum *Innovation Technologies of Information Century* was held in St. Petersburg. The Forum was arranged by Eastbridge - German Association for Economic and Technological Cooperation with Eastern Europe - with the support of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Science Researches, jointly with the German Society of Applied Researches Fraunhofer and Siemens company. 30 representatives of scientific and research organizations and technological enterprises took part in the event from the German side. Negotiations between companies were held within the frames of the Forum. Representatives of the St. Petersburg Committee on Science and Higher Education, St. Petersburg Institute for Informatics and Automation, St. Petersburg Technical University, St. Petersburg Electrotechnical University were among the participants of the Forum.

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European Integration of Leningrad Region

Within the scope of the 9th Petersburg International Economic Forum the Leningrad Region Administration with the participation of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation arranged a round table discussion "Regional Aspects of Cooperation between Russia and EU. Experience and Perspectives". Among the participants of the Valery Serdukov, Governor of the Leningrad Region, Kirill Polyakov, Chariman of the Leningrad Region Legislative Assembly, Marc Franco, Head of the Delegation of the European Commission to the Russian Federation, and representatives of European regions having bilateral cooperation with Leningrad region.

In his opening speech Valery Serdukov pointed out the importance of the interregional cooperation on the international level and marked that every project should have a specific goal for the inhabitants and perspectives for the strengthening of the partnership in general. Among the most important projects was mentioned the construction of the ferry crossing Ust'-Luga – Kaliningrad – German ports that would allow a significant increase in cooperation between Russian and EU.

During the round table discussion, the reports were made, in particular, by Anneli Taina, Governor of the Region of Southern Finland, Pawel Wroblewski, Marshal of the Province of Lower Silesia (Poland), and Geir Knuston, Governor of Nordland Region (Norway).

Source: www.lenobl.ru

Stockholm University and City of St. Petersburg in New Ecological Project

In January 2005, a new project called Information and Communication Technologies to Strengthen the Sustainable City Management (INFOCOSM) was launched with the support of the European Union within the scope of the so-called LIFE Third Countries projects. Main partner is the St. Petersburg Committee for Use of Natural Resources, Environment Protection, and Environmental Safety, which will be working together with Stockholm University, the French NGO CEBANOR, the city of Hamburg and the Finnish department of Environment. The overall objective of the project is to improve the environment in the Baltic Sea Region through the support of sustainable city management in St. Petersburg. Basically, this will be achieved by building a common information platform based on the coupled geographic (GIS) and meta-information systems (MIS), which will provide stakeholders on different levels of administration with relevant environment information. The first phase of the project has just been initiated with an inventory of already existing information at the different levels, identifying the needs of stakeholders. The prototype of the system will be finished and tested by 2007.

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Cruiser Yacht Adventure Begins Summer Sailing

On 14 June the cruiser yacht Adventure left St. Petersburg going on a long European voyage. The total distance of the voyage exceeds 3200 miles. Adventure is a present made by His Royal Highness Prince of Wales Charles to the sport club of the Russian Navy and the Naval college of Peter the Great in 2003, in connection to the 300th anniversary of St. Petersburg.

During the sailing, the yacht will visit Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, France and Sweden. In Great Britain, it will attend the celebration of the 200th anniversary of Admiral Nelson's victory in the battle of Trafalgar and the 100th anniversary of Britannia Royal Navy College in Dartmouth, as well as participate in the Portsmouth Marine Festival. In Sweden, Adventure will take part in the sailing festival Baltic Sail in Karlskrona.

Photo: www.interpress.ru

Source: www.interpress.ru



International Art Festival Sergey Oskolkov and Friends



On 3-12 June St. Petersburg and its famous suburbs Peterhof and Oranienbaum hosted the 9th International Art Festival *Sergey Oskolkov and Friends*.

On the 300th anniversary of Peterhof, three music concerts, an art exhibition and poetry readings were arranged at the main Peterhof Palace. In Oranienbaum, the traditional concert of young musicians, choir music evening and the concert of modern academic music took place. Modern Russian operas were performed at the Dostoevsky museum in St. Petersburg. The first night was attended by the famous artist Mikhail Shemiakin.

The preparation of the next, 10th Festival that will take place in June 2006, has already started. The organizers hope that it will be as successful as this year's event.

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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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