

## **The Presidential Initiative in Norway 2004: Training of Russian Managers and Civil Servants**

*The Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry (NHO), the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs are working together to improve the skills among Russian managers, and build new contacts between Norwegian and Russian businesses and local and regional authorities. During the year 2004 approximately 30 young Russian managers and civil servants will receive training in market economy, business management and local governance, as well as practical managerial experience in Norway. The project is part of an extensive international programme – The Presidential Programme.*

### **What is the Presidential Initiative?**

On an official visit abroad in 1997, the Russian president called on the western countries to help strengthen the reform process, by improving Russian managerial education. Twelve countries – Canada, USA and Japan in addition to European countries and the European Commission – are now offering training programmes for Russian managers under the name of the “Presidential Programme” (<http://skpk.hse.ru/>). A Federal Commission has been established in Russia to facilitate the programme implementation, through an extensive regional network. The Commission's objective is to upgrade the skills of 5000 managers annually. The donor countries offer additional training abroad. By September 2003 ca. 6240 Russian managers had been on training in the donor countries.

In Norway the president's initiative resulted in the “Joint statement on co-operation between Norway and Russia on education of civil servants and business managers”. At the request of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NHO and KS took on the responsibility of implementing the training programme. NHO is in charge of the business training, and KS of the civil servants from local and regional authorities, local and regional politicians and managers from municipal enterprises.

The Norwegian answer to the Presidential Initiative was arranged for the first time in spring 2000. During years 2000 – 2003, 55 business managers and 53 civil servants received training within business management and local and regional governance. During this period the participants received theoretical education through seminars, and practical on-the-job training in the day to day management of a company or a local or regional administration.

### **Why such a programme?**

Since the early nineties Russia has undergone dramatic changes, partly as a result of creating a market economy and the reform process in the public sector. A functioning market economy is dependent on a series of institutions, from laws and organisations down to the knowledge and ideas of each individual. Within this one finds the major impediments to business development in Russia today, for local as well as foreign companies. The Presidential Initiative intends to give Russian managers and civil servants experience to help overcome

these problems, in addition to creating a platform for developing relations between Norwegian and Russian enterprises and local and regional authorities.

The participants in the programme – the future Russian leaders – will be given an opportunity to gain more knowledge about market economic and business related subjects and local and regional governments in the “old” democracy in Norway, as well as on Norwegian economy, society and culture. To the Norwegian companies, local and regional administrations hosting the participants, this is an opportunity to make new contacts in Russia, to strengthen existing ones, and to gain knowledge on the Russian market and society today.

### **How does the programme work?**

Approximately 30 young Russian managers and civil servants and an equal number of Norwegian companies and regional authorities will be recruited this year.

7 – 9 September 2004 an introductory seminar will be held in Russia. Here the participants will attend lectures in subjects such as Norwegian economy, government and society, public vs. private sector economy, market economy, and management tools. The programme will focus on practical rather than theoretical management training, and will be developed according to the professional needs and wishes of the participants.

18 – 23 October a second round of seminars will be held in Oslo. Here the subjects will be in-depth management and market economy related issues, Norwegian local and regional government, visits to companies and government bodies, and preparations for the internship.

The participants will be placed individually in a Norwegian company or a local/regional authority for three weeks, starting from 24 October. During the internship the participants will take part in the day-to-day management of the business or local/ regional authority, along with working on an individual project, based on her/his learning objectives.

15 - 16 November a final seminar will be held in Oslo before the participants depart for Russia. Here the participants will present their reports, evaluate the trainee period and the programme as a whole.

### **Financing**

The programme covers all expenses related to the seminars, travels within Norway and between Norway and Russia, as well as the living expenses in Norway. There are no fees to be paid by the participants. No salary will be paid by the programme organisers or host company/ local or regional administration.

### **Who can apply?**

The program is open to business managers, civil servants within local and regional authorities and local and regional politicians under 40 years of age, with a good command of English.

Candidates who have participated in Presidential Initiative programmes in other countries or in similar programmes cannot be offered participation in the Norwegian programme.

A letter of recommendation from the applicants' senior management or home institution (may be in written in Russian) is required. This is to secure a greater relevance of the programme to the company or institution as well as to the participant.

Candidates for the programme have to apply directly to NHO or KS preferably by e-mail (or telefax) within March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2004. The application form is available by fax upon request, and on the English internet pages of NHO: [www.nho.no](http://www.nho.no) (for private enterprises), KS: [www.ks.no](http://www.ks.no) (for public sector) and the former participants: [www.nrp.ru](http://www.nrp.ru).

**For more information, contact:**

**Mr. Roger Martinsen**, Project Manager NHO

Tel: +47 73 54 50 05

Fax: +47 73 54 61 61

Cellular tel: +47 91 85 66 66

Email: [roger@martinsen.biz](mailto:roger@martinsen.biz)