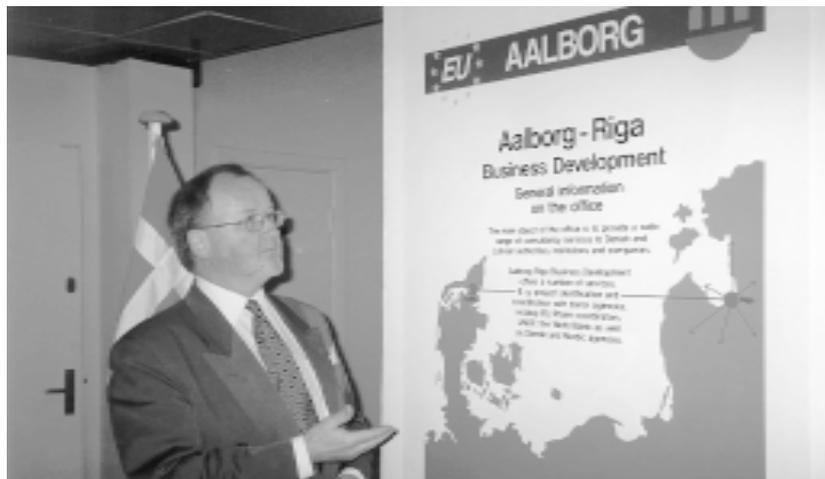


AALBORG - RIGA BUSINESS CONNECTIONS BLOSSOM



Mr Niels C. Pedersen, manager of the Aalborg - Riga Business Development Center, is glad about the good cooperation between the cities.

In 1990 Aalborg and Riga officially signed a twinning agreement and in 1992 Aalborg established the representative office in Riga AALBORG - RIGA Business Development. The idea was to make a bridgehead to Latvia and on a smaller scale to the two other Baltic countries so that companies and institutions in connection with specific commercial activities would be able to make use of the office and its facilities. From the beginning the office has primarily serviced North Jutland, but later on it has been possible for companies/institutions from all of Denmark to profit by the experiences of the office.

The office has taken part in a large number of tasks in connection with projects between official as well as private cooperation partners in the countries. The projects have often been supported by the Danish Official Aid to Central and Eastern Europe and one of the main tasks of the office is to keep up to date with present subsidy schemes. The office also assists in filling in applications for co-financing.

Another important task is to identify and establish contacts to Latvian companies and institutions which are "in demand" by Danish companies who want to establish direct commercial cooperation or as a cooperation partner to assist in solving other, not direct commercial tasks. The office is often requested to establish contact to public offices. It is of course obvious that the contact with

Riga City Council is very close after many years of twinning. Danish companies have often asked the office to assist in establishing local, Latvian companies or to find production facilities for a specific production which they want to start in Latvia.

It is the experience that more and more Danish firms understand the advantages of establishing or buying products in countries where the wages are considerably lower than in Denmark - which is the case in Latvia - and the office anticipates a still increasing interest from Danish companies in establishing such cooperation agreements and in making direct investments in Latvia.

Furthermore AALBORG-RIGA Business Development has a close cooperation with the International Department of the Mayor's Office in Aalborg as well as Aalborg EU-Office in Brussels to obtain information and consultancy in connection with EU matters.

Further information:

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GDAŃSK HOSTS BRIDGEHEAD OFFICES

For a couple of years Gdańsk has developed contacts with regions and cities on the Baltic Sea Area. The city initiates lots of common undertakings.

Gdańsk has many examples of fruitful international cooperation. There were located the Secretariat of the Committee for Spatial Development of the Baltic Sea Region - VASAB 2010 and also the Secretariat of the Union of the Baltic Cities. The agencies of many Baltic cities, f.ex. Kalmar (Sweden), Brema (Germany), were established in Gdańsk.

Moreover the long-term cooperation in various spheres of life connects Gdańsk with friendly, not only sister cities all over the world. Worth mentioning is involvement of the city of Gdańsk in preparation of the seminar of industrial cooperation, to be held in September. The event organised jointly with Karlskrona, Kalmar, Blekinge and other cities is addressed to more than 300 small and medium firms from the Baltic region. Other initiative concerns the common project of the new centre in Gdańsk. This project started in cooperation with Rotterdam last year and is still developing.

In the nearest years a further development of the cooperation between Gdańsk and those cities is planned, as well as the enlargement of the activity on the field of supporting initiatives which tend towards further development of the cities of the Baltic Sea Region. Maybe these activities will have bigger influence in the region when in accordance with the new administrative reform of the country, Gdańsk, become the capital of the northern Vistula's Pomerania Macroregion.

