

PILOT PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT SEPTEMBER 2008-MAY 2009

During the period from September 2008 to May 2009 within the framework the Russian-Danish pilot project of development of local self-government according to the action plan of the project and the agreement between COWI consult International ltd (Denmark) and the Russian expert Mikolasyuk Igor Stepanovitch, the following activities have been performed:

I. The methodological grounds for the reorganization of municipal units in Leningrad Oblast were developed in September 2008.

This activity included a number of stages.

First, in order to develop the methodological grounds for the improvement of municipal units in Leningrad Oblast the following issues have been analyzed: the existing legislation of the Russian Federation, Leningrad Oblast and other http://www.multitran.ru/c/m.exe?a=110&t=3671232_2_1&sc=48 constituent entities of the Russian Federation in the sphere of local self-government activity, regulations of http://www.multitran.ru/c/m.exe?a=110&t=879387_2_1&sc=48 electoral rights and the rights of the citizens to participate in referendums, establishment of new constituent entities in the Russian Federation.

The laws of several constituent entities of the Russian Federation (Kursk, Murmansk, Orenburg and other entities of the Russian Federation) have been analyzed. They are the laws on the reorganization of municipal units that perform general legal regulations in the sphere.

Besides, some special laws of a number of constituent entities of the Russian Federation (Krasnodar Territory, http://www.multitran.ru/c/m.exe?a=110&t=3674041_2_1&sc=716 the Republic of Mordovia and http://www.multitran.ru/c/m.exe?a=110&t=3673847_2_1&sc=716 the Penza Region) have been analyzed. They are the laws on the reorganization of particular municipal units.

Furthermore, the information on the existing http://www.multitran.ru/c/m.exe?a=110&t=4534831_2_1&sc=0 law enforcement practice on the reorganization of municipal units in the Russian Federation has been found and analyzed.

The report on “The experience of local self-government development in Denmark” presented by Foreign Affairs Department of the municipality of Aarhus was of great interest to Russian partners. The experience of the reorganization of municipalities in Denmark represented in the report notably inspired the development of the methodological grounds for the reorganization of municipal units in Leningrad Oblast.

II. From October to December 2008 the methodology for the reorganization of municipal units in Leningrad Oblast has been developed. It may be used by all the interested parties in order to deal with practical matters in the sphere of the reorganization of municipal units.

However, local self-government in the Russian Federation is still at the stage of its development, and therefore, the legislation in this field is changing dramatically. For example, the Federal Law of October 6, 2003 №131-FS “On the general Principles of the Organization of Local Self-Government in the Russian Federation”, which fully http://www.multitran.ru/c/m.exe?a=110&t=3696834_2_1&sc=84 came into operation on 01.01.2009, had been altered by 37 Federal Laws.

In order to ensure the relevance and accuracy of the developed methodology in 2009 it's necessary to monitor the legislation of the Russian Federation, which establishes general legislative, territorial, organizational and economical principles of local self-government activity, and, if necessary, may alter the methodology of the reorganization of municipal units in Leningrad Oblast.

III. During a visit to Aarhus (Denmark) in October, 20-24, 2008 different aspects of the development of local self-government in Denmark have been under discussion. The visit included such activities as:

- participation in seminars on the following topics:
 - 1) Intermunicipal co-operation in Denmark;
 - 2) The strategies of relationship;
 - 3) The development of a strategy, aimed at intermunicipal co-operation;
- study of the experience of social services management in Aarhus according to the "Single Point of Entry" principle (a visit to the Social Service Centre in the municipality of Aarhus);
- study of the experience of service performance by local government authority (a visit to an intermunicipal Employment Organization);
- study of the experience of co-operation between government authorities and local self-government in Denmark.

IV. Assistance was rendered to local government authority of Leningrad Oblast to prepare and organize visits of the delegation from the municipality of Aarhus (Denmark) to the Kingisepp Region in Leningrad Oblast in November 2008 and February 2009.

During the visits the delegations from the municipality of Aarhus were provided with an insight into local self-government performance in Leningrad Oblast as well as the problems occurring in local problem-solving.

This enabled a comparative analysis of the ways and methods of problem-solving, which is local self-government responsibility, and to prepare recommendations to local authorities with regard to the Danish experience.

During the discussion of local self-government development matters the partners mutually agreed to define a possible way of intermunicipal co-operation in order to solve the problem of intermunicipal co-operation, which could be implemented with the assistance of Danish experts.

V. Assistance was rendered to local government authority of the Kingisepp Region of Leningrad Oblast on the matters of legal regulation of intermunicipal co-operation, particularly by means of aggregation of financial assets and other resources in order to deal with local matters more efficiently.

Moreover, advice was provided to local government authorities of Kotelsky, Nezhnovsky, Opolyevsky and Filileevsky rural settlements of the Kingisepp Region in Leningrad Oblast to help them define possible variants of intermunicipal co-operation in order to improve the ways and methods of local problem-solving.

VI. The knowledge and practical experience as a result of the Russian-Danish pilot project of the development of local self-government were used in the process of the reorganization by integration of Svetogorsky and Lesogorsky urban settlements in Vyborg municipal district of Leningrad Oblast.

In particular, a draft law “On the integration of Svetogorsk and Lesogorsk urban settlements in Vyborg municipal district of Leningrad Oblast” has been developed on the basis of the reference, made by the head of administration of Vyborg municipal district to Leningrad Oblast administration.

The regional law of June, 3, 2009 № 50-03 “On the reorganization of municipal units “Svetogorsk urban settlement” in the Vyborg Region of Leningrad Oblast and “Lesogorsk urban settlement” in the Vyborg Region of Leningrad Oblast” was approved by the Legislative Assembly of Leningrad Oblast and signed by the Governor of Leningrad Oblast.

VII. Due to the change in the Federal Legislation in 2009 the methodology of the reorganization of municipal units in Leningrad Oblast developed in 2008 has been adjusted to the norms of the actual legislation.

The new methodology of the reorganization of municipal units in Leningrad Oblast reflects the recommendations and comments, provided by the heads of rural settlements during the seminar in Pavlosk.

VIII. The explanation of basic issues of the methodology of the reorganization of municipal units in Leningrad Oblast was provided to municipal and government officers during the meetings, held by the Committee of co-operation with local government authorities in Leningrad Oblast.

IX. In order to disseminate the experience as a result the Russian-Danish pilot project it was agreed with the heads of the executive authority of Leningrad Oblast to publish the methodology of the reorganization of municipal units in Leningrad Oblast in printed sources as well as in the Internet.

Appendix: The methodology of the reorganization of municipal units in Leningrad Oblast.

Russian expert

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