

Co-Tour Project Update, March – June 2014

During the designated period CoTour's project personal has worked with implementing the decisions of the project steering group:

- **production of the printed marketing material**
- **promotional activity in Murmansk region**
- **supporting information about the project region on the web sites of the tour operators**
- **translation of the materials for destinations from Swedish/Finnish into Russian**
- **preparation of the summer fishing FAM-trip (July 3-7, 2014)**

Implemented activities and project related information:

1. Printed Marketing Material

In March-April we continued processing data for the printed marketing material in Russian. All the partners and companies included in the brochure had a chance to see, comment and correct the content. 3000 copies of the marketing material were ready on May 7, when we started distribution of the brochure among the tourist information offices in Norrbotten, Finnish participating municipalities and the participating companies (500 copies). The marketing material is available in pdf-version that you can leaf thru at the project web site: www.co-tour.eu

Our Finnish project partner Lapin AMK has been working on the online marketing material, which will facilitate the electronic version of the brochure. All the materials will be available in the autumn, and the companies and other partners will be free to use the materials whatever way they like. Material consists of videoblogs, interviews, service/product presentations and so on for the destinations covered by the project.

2. Promotional Activity in Murmansk, May 15 – 18

The idea of the promotional activity in Murmansk was to distribute the printed marketing material and motivate the individual travellers and tour operators to get interested in the region, to learn more about the region's possibilities and share the information respectively with their family, friends and customers. The local Swedish and Finnish companies were offered a possibility to join the project team.



At the mall Forum we have distributed 350 brochures as well as many other materials about the region that we had with us. The other places where the marketing material was distributed are: Finnish consulate in Murmansk: 200 brochures, Main square and supermarkets in the centre of Murmansk: 800 copies, offices of the tour operator V Leto throughout the Murmansk Region: 550 copies, Offices of the TOs April and Mir Puteshestvy 100 copies. Totally: 2000 copies of the printed marketing material in Russian were distributed.



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During the visit to Murmansk a number of meetings with Murmansk TO:s V Leto, April, Mir Puteshestvij, which come with the groups to the project region and arrange activities apart from shopping were held to discuss further development of their products and programmes in Finland+Sweden.

We paid a visit to the annual tourist trade show/fair named "Otdyh dlya vas" in Murmansk where several Finnish municipalities present including Oulu, Kemijärvi, Salla etc., as well as Norway. The trade show is getting smaller every year. Just one Russian tour operator, which works with the Nordics was present there (Mir Pyteshestvij) and just 3 other tour operators/agencies working with International and/or Russian market.

- Comments from the Operators concerning current situation with the Russian travellers:

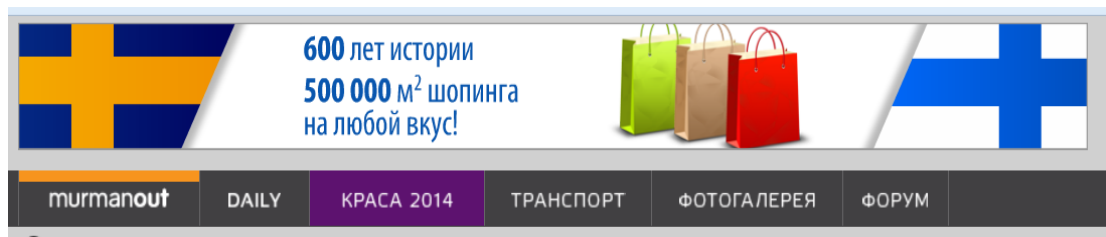
The TOs mention decreasing number of Russian tourists going to other countries. The reason is the recommendation (implying the order) from the Russian government to the employees of the law and order state authorities to refrain from international travels. The main reason is that USA may pursue Russian citizens in more than 170 countries and require from these countries to hand over Russian citizens to USA for legal prosecution. According to the calculation in the Russian media it may affect up to 4 million Russians, which is about 3% of the population.

- Work group meeting in Murmansk, May 16

A work group meeting with the Russian partners including Mipki (St.Petersburg) was held in Murmansk. The major focus of the meeting was the evaluation of the test printing of the brochure about destinations in Murmansk, Archangelsk, St. Petersburg and Leningrad Regions in Finnish/Swedish that will shortly be available.

3. Supporting information about the project region on the web sites of the tour operators

During February – April the project placed the banners on the tour operator's V Leto web site as well as banners on 3 different popular web resources in Murmansk: www.murmanout.ru, www.b-port.com, www.hibiny.com The information about the project region was visited by 7 to 30 visitors daily.



One of the slides of the flash-banner saying: "600 years of History, 500 000 m2 of shopping for any taste"

The marketing contributed to V Leto's two tourist trips to the region of HaparandaTornio-Boden-Piteå-Luleå in May and June. There were 36 tourists in the group in May and 19 tourists in the group in June. Among the visited attractions were Rödbergsfortet, Museum of Defence, Pite Havsbud, Teknikens Hus, Churches in Torneå, Haparanda Stadshotell and Railway Station etc.

4. Translation of the materials for destinations from Swedish/Finnish into Russian

About a year ago the destinations were offered a possibility to get their materials translated from Swedish and Finnish into Russian until June 30, 2014. Just a few destinations and companies used this possibility although the destination coordinators encouraged the companies to use the possibility. There is still one week left of the time and it is possible to use this possibility if the destinations and companies have the materials they would like to get translated.

5. Preparation of the summer fishing FAM-trip (July 3-7, 2014)

Fishing FAM-trip preparation meeting was held in Luleå, March 26-27. The preparation started with the direct contact with a number of fishing guides in October 2013 from different areas in Norrbotten. In November 2013 a Luleå-based company KonfAktiv was involved into the preparation to represent several fishing areas and possibly be a selling point for those



different areas. The Russian fishing expert Alexander Glazov of Viking Travel TO has been involved since March 2013. Alexander's role was to choose the right products and assist with the choice of the tour operators and journalists for the Fishing FAM trip. The Finnish partner involved the fishing expert Petri Muje. A study visit to Sörbyn and fishing activity there were arranged during the meeting.

Basis for the fishing packages is a good quality accommodation near to the fishing area, primarily cottages. Based on the interest from the local companies, guides and accommodation possibilities the FAM-trip program will cover the areas of Finnish and Swedish Kukkola, Muonio/Pajala and Överkalix/Jockfall. The group of 10 will consist of both journalists working for the national fishing magazines and tour operators selling fishing packages. The detailed programme and the list of participants will be available on the project web site www.co-tour.eu soon.



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