North-West Federal District has a unique position in the system of international relations of the Russian Federation. Its territory borders to the European Union, which is the one of the leading economic and political partners of Russia. Geographical factor and common interests in regional development became main motive of establishing an international congress platform devoted to the intensification of multifaceted contacts between stakeholders in the field of cross-border cooperation.

Annual International Conference: “Cross-border cooperation: the Russian Federation, the European Union and Norway”, which had been launched in 2005, has gained a status of such platform.

The main goal of the conference is to create appropriate conditions for purposeful dialogue over the full range of issues concerning the regional development of the territories on the both sides of the EU-Russian border.

During the period of its existence the conference was granted a status of a leading congress event in the area of the cross-border cooperation. It was the very sessions of the conference in 2010, where representatives of the Russian Federation and the European Union exchanged the documents on accomplishment of internal procedures, which are required for agreements about financing and implementation of the programs of cross-border cooperation of European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument to come into force. The official start of the five programs, embracing the border regions of the Russian Federation and its neighboring countries, was carried out by that means.

On 22-23 September 2011 the VII Annual International Conference: “Cross-border cooperation: the Russian Federation, the European Union and Norway” will take place in Kaliningrad.

The focus of the conference will be directed to the new conditions of the cooperation between the Russian Federation and the European Union in the Baltic Sea region. The new conditions of the cooperation between the Russian Federation and the European Union in the Baltic Sea region will be brought into focus of the Conference.

The following issues will make up the agenda of the conference in 2011:

- Baltic Sea region in the light of the regional development strategies of the EU and Russia. From common interests towards common actions. In 2009 the European Union adopted Strategy for the Baltic Sea region. In 2010-2011 the “Strategy of Social-economic development of North-West Federal District until 2020” was elaborated. What kind of opportunities in strengthening cooperation between the EU and Russia stated these documents? What kind of cooperation areas will be prior to the relations between Russia and the EU in the Baltic Sea?
Common efforts for the prosperity of the common region. Towards German and Russian chairmanship in the Council of the Baltic Sea States in 2011-2013. In June 2011 Germany will chair the Council of the Baltic Sea States. In its turn Russia will lead the Council in 2012. Consecutive chairmanship of Germany and Russia as well as common interests in the Baltic Sea region, especially in the fields of economy, energetic dialogue and environmental protection, give sufficient prerequisites for revitalization of the relations between Germany and Russia in Baltic Sea region. These and some others issues will form the agenda for round tables of the conference.

Cross-border cooperation programs of the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument 2007-2013. Since the programs had been launched officially two rounds of the call for the proposal passed away. Outcomes of the calls for the proposal, presentation of the projects and future of the ENPI beyond 2013 will be in the focus of attention of the conference panel.

Cross-border cooperation of the North-West Federal District. Focus on Kaliningrad. Kaliningrad oblast is the westernmost Russian region and it has a unique position in spatial configuration of the Russian Federation. What kind of limits and advantages it posed on economical development of the Kaliningrad region? How does the collaboration with the neighboring regions effect on social and economical development of Kaliningrad region? What is the role of the region in strengthening of the cooperation in the Baltic Sea region?

As it was in 2010, the unofficial meeting of the ministers from neighboring countries and Russia responsible for cross-border cooperation will precede the conference. In 2011 the Conference will be combined with International Forum of Partner-regions of Kaliningrad Oblast “Interregional cooperation, interaction of authorities, business and science” and Annual Conference of the Lithuania-Poland-Russia ENPI CBC Programme 2007-2013.

The organizers from Russian Federation are Ministry for Regional Development of the Russian Federation, Office of the Plenipotentiary Envoy of the President of the Russian Federation to the North-West Federal District, Government of Kaliningrad region, Association of economical interaction of the subjects of the Russian Federation North-West region, North-West Development and Investment Promotion Agency, Center of Cross-Border and Interregional Cooperation in St.Petersburg office of the Higher School of Economics, Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University. The European organizers are: Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, Information office of the Nordic Council of Ministers in Kaliningrad, Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Russia, European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument Programme “Lithuania-Poland-Russia”. Conference is also organized under the auspices of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russian Federation

**North-West Development and Investment Promotion Agency**  
**Center for cross-border and interregional cooperation of the Saint-Petersburg branch of the Higher School of Economy**

**Contact person – Stanislav Lazovsky**  
Phone: +7 812 406 70 75, +7 812 622 14 87  
Fax: +7 812 406 70 74,  
e-mail: lazovsky@investa.spb.ru, www.investa.spb.ru