# NIB BULLETIN

NORDIC INVESTMENT BANK

MAY 2009

## Here comes the sun

**Solar silicon production takes off in Norway**

## NIB sharpens its focus in non-member lending

PHOTO: TUOMO MANNINEN

# Focusing

In the last few years, the Nordic Investment Bank (NIB) has focused its activities in different ways. This has been deemed necessary in order to ensure that our limited human and financial resources are used in the most efficient way.

When revising its strategy in 2006, NIB looked for activities in which the relative strengths of the Bank could best be employed. Hence, we identified projects that require long-term financing, which are cross-border in nature, and in which there is a strong link between the private and the public sectors. And, of course, these activities must be of high priority in the member countries.

As a result, energy (including energy efficiency and clean energy), the environment, transport, logistics and communications, as well as innovation were identified as focus sectors for the Bank. These are not new areas for NIB as such: most of them have always featured heavily in the Bank's portfolio. This makes it possible to build on existing experience within NIB.

In order to increase our ability to be proactive and to further enhance support for these activities, two facilities were established in early 2008. The first is BASE (the Baltic Sea Environment lending facility), which has allocated EUR 500 million for the cleaning up of the Baltic Sea. The second is CLEERE (the Climate Change, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy lending facility), which is using EUR 1 billion for the financing of clean energy and energy saving. The HELCOM process is taking time to implement and many of the environmental projects have long lead times, so the first facility still has considerable unspent resources. CLEERE has been met with high immediate demand, and more than half of the allocated resources were spent in the first 10 months of its existence.

By better focusing its activities, the Bank can increase and utilise its expertise when it comes to technical solutions and, in particular, when it comes to designing financial packages suited to the activities mentioned above. This capability has proved increasingly important in times of stress in the financial markets, when the supply of long-term funding from many traditional sources has dried up, and the private financial sector has a reduced interest and ability to provide finance.

In 2009, the Bank also decided to focus its activities geographically. The Bank has over the years developed framework agreements with many countries in different parts of the world. There are currently almost 40 such agreements in place. Such wide geographical coverage has been useful to many of NIB's sponsors and it spreads the risks in the Bank's lending portfolio. At the same time, it also by necessity reduces NIB's ability to support its partners when and if problems emerge. Given its financial resources, NIB's presence in most of the framework countries is very thin, and NIB is only a marginal player. Given its limited human resources, NIB cannot offer expertise in so many countries. Taken together, this limits the possibility to cooperate with local authorities and it also makes it difficult to analyse and follow the development of risk.

By concentrating on a limited number of markets—those most important for the member countries—the Bank can increase its presence and relevance to the host countries. This enables more intensive cooperation with the countries and the respective authorities. It will also make it possible for the Bank to further develop its expertise in different markets and thereby deliver greater value to its stakeholders.

*April 2009*
*Johnny Åkerholm, President and CEO*

## BULLETIN MAY 2009



PHOTO: YKKÖSTIE OY


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**COVER PHOTO**
Metallurgical furnace at Elkem Solar AS, Norway. Photo: Tore Jonssen, Elkem Solar AS

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Furnace flames: where solar-grade silicon is born.

# Solar silicon production takes off in Norway

**In late 2008 – early 2009, Norwegian Orkla-owned Elkem Solar AS completed a new metallurgical plant for smelting silicon and tested its innovative production line in Kristiansand, southern Norway. The project has been partly financed with a loan from NIB totalling EUR 145 million.**

The Elkem Solar plant is a result of 25 years of research and development of a viable metallurgical production process for solar-grade silicon.

"Our aim is to industrialise a process that will result in lower costs and is better suited to producing large volumes than other, more traditional technologies in the industry," says Helge Aasen, Senior Vice President, Business Unit, at Elkem Solar.

## SOLID COMPETENCE

As one of the world's leading producers of silicon metal, Elkem Solar has a centralised R&D environment with more than 150 scientists and technicians employed. The company has built strong relations with the electronics industry and has been working on the development of silicon for solar cells and electronics since the early 1980s.

Although the first solar-grade silicon line was discontinued due to the lack of sufficient demand from the market, the company did not stop its research and development in this area. And in 2006, after Orkla had taken over Elkem and incorporated it into its group, an investment project worth NOK 2.7 billion (EUR 300 million) was launched to build the new solar silicon plant in Kristiansand.

## SOLAR GRADE MEANS PURE

Once the plant is commissioned later in 2009, Elkem Solar aims at producing 6,000 tonnes of solar-grade silicon a

PHOTO: TORE JONSSEN, ELKEM SOLAR AS

year. In solar cells, this amount of silicon is able to produce 650 MW of energy, or an electricity supply for a town of 55,000 for a year.

Solar energy is not the only industry that uses silicon, but it sets high standards for silicon purity. In order to achieve the necessary level of purity, the Elkem Solar plant uses new, patented technology based on Elkem's long traditions in the field of silicon production.

The final product of the plant is a brick-sized 10-kilo ingot made of purified silicon. Solar cell manufacturers melt and crystallise it into ingots. After the ingots are cut into wafers, then dopings and other enrichment are added to make them capable of converting sunlight into electric power, thereby becoming solar cells.

## INNOVATIVE APPROACH

Elkem's final product contains a low amount of phosphor and boron, widely used in the industry for controlling silicon's electrical properties. An advantage of Elkem's product is that it is ready to use. It does not need any additional doping.

Most competitors still use a gas deposition method for purifying silicon, which is an energy-consuming and costly process.

The metallurgical production process at Elkem Solar is a step up compared to major silicon producers in the world which use gas phase technology requiring lot of energy.

"The energy savings possible in our production process stem exactly from skipping this phase. This helps us save energy and cut costs," says Mr Aasen.

Compared to its competitors using gas phase technology, Elkem consumes about one third of the energy. It also keeps its gas emissions to the air at the level of one third compared to other solar-grade silicon producers.

Elkem Solar's furnace produces 600,000 cubic metres of waste gas an hour, but you see no smoke from Elkem's chimney.

"There used to be a huge white cloud rushing up from the silicon furnace before we introduced a filtering technology that cleans the hot gases," Mr Aasen explains.

Elkem is now helping implement the same gas particle filtering in metallurgical plants in China.

## TINY SHARE, OPTIMISTIC OUTLOOK

It was a bold decision made back in 2006 to start up the industrial production of solar-grade silicon feedstock. Today silicon may well have won the competition among materials for solar cell production. The solar energy share of total global electricity production is only 0.23%. Solar energy is and will continue for some time to be dependent on state subsidies to make it financially viable for consumers even in the sunniest parts of the world, such as Spain or California.

Yet, the solar market seems to be less affected by the global financial and economic crisis. Elkem Solar is confident and optimistic about the future. Its contract with German Q-Cells, the world's largest solar cell producer, for half of Elkem Solar's production is in force until 2018.


Elkem Solar Technology Park in Kristiansand.

## ADVANTAGE OF SOLAR ENERGY

In comparison with other commercially available energy sources, solar allows for relatively small–scale electricity production close to the end user. This means that there are substantial savings in transmission costs and grid rent. Solar energy can potentially reduce the need to increase the transmission capacity of the electricity grid. Furthermore, solar installations are more or less maintenance–free for more than 20 years. Solar energy can build a strong niche position as a potential supplier of decentralised electricity production. In areas with plenty of sunshine, for instance in California, solar energy is being used for cooling and air conditioning during the peak hours of sunshine.

In its World Energy Outlook published in November 2008, the International Energy Agency (IEA) expects modern renewable technologies to become the second-largest source of electricity soon after 2010, next to coal. Falling costs, higher fossil fuel prices and strong policy support would help eliminate the renewable industry's reliance on subsidies and bring emerging technologies into the mainstream.

The IEA expects solar energy, along with wind, geothermal, tide and wave energy, to grow faster than any other source worldwide, at an average of 7.2% annually. The share of non-hydro renewables in total power generation is expected to grow from 1% in 2006 to 4% in 2030.

### COST REDUCTION A PRIORITY

"The competitiveness of solar energy depends on how soon we reach so-called grid parity, that is, when the solar energy price is at the same level as more conventional energy sources. All in all, it comes down to the module installation cost and of course how many sun hours you have," says Mr Aasen.

A country like Spain, with its 1,800 sun hours a year, will clearly reach grid parity much faster than a country like Norway, with no more than 800 annual sun hours on average.

"It is a general belief in the industry that costs will be much lower within the next three to six years," Mr Aasen adds.

Cost reduction is one of the priority areas for Elkem's R&D. The target is to reduce the costs of electricity supplied to the consumer by at least 20% from the current level by 2010.

"This will only be possible on the basis of further development of industrial know-how. The industry is transforming itself from a craft industry producing small volumes, into a large-scale industry. If the costs are cut as planned, the solar industry will become competitive in large geographical areas," Mr Aasen explains.

The industry is learning to get more and more out of silicon. The thickness of the silicon layer used for wafer production was 0.2 millimetres three years ago. Now it's 0.16 millimetres.

### ORKLA AND SOLAR ENERGY

With roots dating back to 1654 when it began as a mining company, Orkla has developed into a large international group with stakes in a vast variety of business sectors, such as branded consumer goods, aluminium solutions, materials, renewable energy and financial investments. The group has a turnover of NOK 66 billion (EUR 7.5 billion) and 32,000 employees in more than 40 countries.

In recent years, when it gradually became clear that solar energy was developing into an attractive market, Orkla allocated a substantial amount of capital for further investment in this industry.

Since 2005, Orkla has had two important interests in this industry: Elkem Solar and a stake in another important solar energy

Helge Aasen, Senior Vice President and General Manager of Elkem Solar

company in Norway, Renewable Energy Corporation ASA (REC).

"These companies were identified as having significant potential for value creation. It is a major investment in a high-growth industry. Together with Orkla's stake in REC, the Elkem Solar plant represents a strategically important position in this industry," says Geir Solli, Senior Vice President of Finance at Orkla.

Speaking about the loan received from NIB for the Elkem Solar investment programme, Mr Solli adds:

"The new loan confirms NIB's position as an important lender to our group. Orkla has enjoyed good relations with NIB for many years. Based on its financial strength and long-term perspective, NIB adds value as a reliable, attractive source of long-term financing." ■

## INDUSTRIAL SILICON

Silicon is a semiconductor produced from quartz and coal in a metallurgical furnace at a temperature of 2,000 degrees Celsius. Today, thin slices of silicon, called wafers, comprise 90% of materials used for the production of solar cells. Traditionally, the most important customer groups for this metal have been the aluminium, chemical and electronics industries. Electronics has been one of Elkem's priority customer groups. Today, Elkem-produced silicon can be found in processors and other components in about half the world's computers.

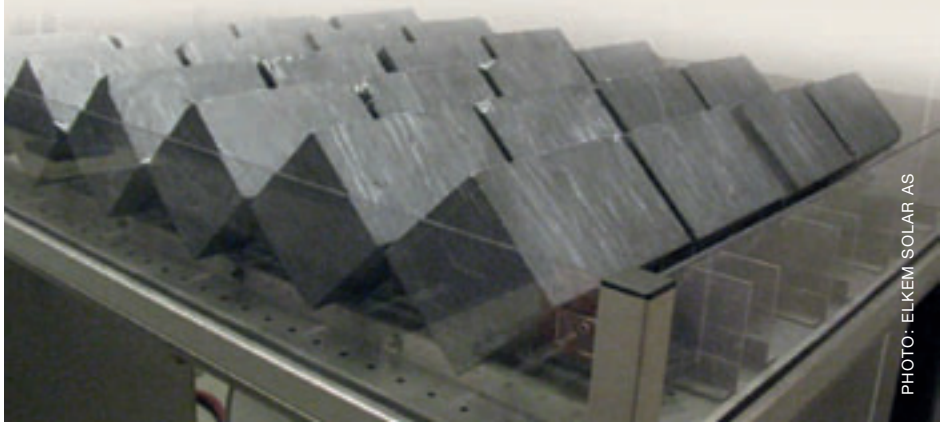


PHOTO: ELKEM SOLAR AS

Silicon ingots, 9.5 kilos each, ready for delivery.

# Steelmaker invests in clean technology

**Rautaruukki, a leading Finnish steel producer, is significantly reducing its environmental impact with the help of NIB financing.**

A seven-year-maturity NIB loan worth EUR 30 million has been granted to help fund modernisation of the blast furnaces at Rautaruukki's biggest steel plant on the Baltic coast in Raahe, northern Finland.

The work will help bring the manufacturing process up to date with the latest environmental and technical standards demanded by the European Union.

The blast furnace improvements and new installation in the cast house will also reduce dust emissions by 50% when new filtering and ventilation technology has been installed at the 530-hectare plant.

## ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT

When the upgrade is completed, sintering operations at the plant will no longer be necessary, significantly reducing the plant's emissions into the atmosphere.

For NIB, the loan to Rautaruukki is directly in accord with the Bank's key strategy of environmental improvement, as well as promoting competitiveness.

From the environmental mandate point of view, the project will result in significant decreases of emissions that affect both the global and local environment.

A key environmental benefit of the improvements funded by the loan is a substantial decrease in sulphur and dust emissions from the factory. In addition, the investment will mean a reduction in suspended solids discharged into the Gulf of Bothnia.

## STEELMAKING NOT NECESSARILY DIRTY

Rautaruukki supplies metal components and systems to the construction and mechanical engineering industries.

Steelmaking is traditionally seen as a dirty and polluting business. But Rautaruukki has always seen itself as a company challenging that perception.

"We have always tried to operate responsibly and have been investing heavily in clean technology step by step. The NIB loan is allowing us to continue this commitment to the environment," Rautaruukki's development director Erkki Pisilä shouts above the din in the plant's hot rolling area.

External recognition of the steelmaker's environmental commitment has come from a number of quarters. Rautaruukki has been ranked among the top companies in the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) Nordic assessment. The CDP evaluates each year how companies are responding to the challenges of climate change. The CDP is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that assesses large corporations on the basis of the risks and opportunities they recognise from climate change.

In September 2008, Rautaruukki was included in the Dow Jones Sustainability World (DJSI World) index and, for the second year running, in the Dow Jones STOXX Sustainability (DJSI STOXX) index. The indexes include the top companies in their sector that are committed to sustainable environmental development.

The company is obviously taking its responsibility to the environment seriously. "We will even be filtering and treating the snow and rain water that fall on the site, to ensure that if it ends up in the sea, it will be clean," Mr Pisilä adds.

## INCREASING REVENUE FROM MORE EFFICIENT RECYCLING

The Raahe plant is capable of producing 2.5 million tonnes of hot metal per year. The steel manufacturing work means there is inevitably plenty of waste. In one section of the huge Raahe works there are mountains of slag and other by-products which can be used by other industries, for instance the concrete industry and agriculture.

Luckily, slag has many commercial uses. After it has been reprocessed to separate any other metals that it may contain, it is granulated for use as fertiliser, in cement and as a durable road base material. NIB's loan is set to make the slag granulation process much cleaner by introducing new production techniques that will conform to exacting new EU standards.

Although the company recycles what it can, the loan will help reduce the amount of material that is surplus by 25%. This is seen as a win-win situation as it will not only be good for the environment, but also increase revenue as less material is thrown away. ■

PHOTOS: SEAN CROWLEY

# Loan improves household wastewater cleaning and insulation

**In a valley on the outskirts of a beautiful residential area, a summer house is being renovated for year-around living. The renovation will make important contributions to the environment by decreasing both nutrient discharges into watercourses and emissions to the air.**

Terhi and Leif Fredrikssons' house in Salo.

Terhi and Leif Fredriksson were born and have lived all their lives in Helsinki. As they near retirement, the idea of moving to their summer house permanently is becoming a reality. The house is situated in Salo, a middle-sized city some 100 kilometres northwest of Helsinki.

"The house has a special place in my heart," says Terhi. "My grandparents bought the summer house in the early 1950s and I spent most of my summer holidays here in my childhood and youth."

In those days the surroundings were cultivated land, but over the years, as the city of Salo has grown, the area has been filled with one-family houses, lived in permanently.

For Leif, the house and the surroundings are also very familiar. Since the 1980s, Terhi and Leif and their children have spent their summer holidays and many weekends from March to October at the house.

Wastewater is treated on-site.

PHOTOS: LEIF FREDRIKSSON

"This is an idyllic place to live in," says Terhi and Leif Fredriksson. In summer, they will move permanently to their beloved house in Salo.

## WASTEWATER IS CLEANED ON SITE

Back in the 1950s, summer houses were built with neither running water nor indoor toilets. As Terhi and Leif are going to live in the Salo summer house permanently, they decided to enlarge the house and install modern conveniences.

The clean water comes from the municipal water utility but wastewater is not yet connected to the municipal discharge treatment system and will not be for another ten years. Finnish legislation sets requirements for household wastewater treatment. According to the law, all households that are not connected to municipal wastewater treatment systems must, by 2014, clean their wastewater on site before it drains into the ground and watercourses.

That is why the Fredrikssons decided to install their own wastewater treatment equipment while renovating and enlarging their house. In their garden, a four-metre-deep hole was dug to place two discharge containers and handling cassettes for the wastewater treatment.

On-site wastewater treatment is an efficient way to decrease so-called diffuse emissions, which are emissions from large areas, or from several emission sources that are hard to identify. The discharge of nitrogen and phosphorous is considered to be one of the biggest reasons for the eutrophication of the Baltic Sea. In the Baltic Sea area, a significant part of the nitrogen and phosphorus discharge originates from untreated wastewater in rural residential areas and agriculture.

## HOUSE INSULATION WILL BE IMPROVED

"When the work on the enlargement of the house began, the builder suggested that we install modern insulation laminates around the whole house at the same time," says Leif.

Better insulation improves energy efficiency and thus offers significant environmental benefits, because of decreased emissions to the air.

"Even though this of course increased the costs, we agreed with the builder—efficient insulation decreases energy use and is smart from an environmental point of view," he adds.

## NIB LOAN PROVIDES THE FUNDS

When Terhi and Leif were discussing applying for a loan from Aktia Bank, their bank manager suggested that the wastewater treatment and the house insulation could be financed with an environmental loan.

The environmental loan is the result of cooperation with NIB, which in May 2008 granted intermediary loans of EUR 30 million respectively to two Finnish banks—Aktia Bank and Sampo Bank. NIB's loans are being onlent in smaller tranches by the intermediary banks. Terhi and Leif Fredriksson's environmental loan from Aktia is a good example of how NIB can contribute to small-scale environmental investments that decrease diffuse emissions.

Terhi and Leif's year-long house renovation project will be finalised in the beginning of the summer. The deep hole is filled and the apple trees that have been growing in the garden for decades will have the peace to grow and provide the Fredrikssons with apples in the autumn.

After years of driving back and forth between Helsinki and Salo, Terhi and Leif can also be proud of another environment-friendly fact: less driving means lower emissions.

"It turned out to be ecological thinking from start to finish," Leif says with a smile on his face. ■

# Busiest road in Finland a motorway after fifty years

**The final stretch of the E18 motorway between Helsinki and Turku in south-western Finland was opened in early 2009. The section was built in record-breaking time.**

PHOTOS: YKKÖSTIE OY

"This last stretch was built in three years," says Tom Schmidt proudly. He is the Managing Director of the special-purpose company Tieyhtiö Ykköstie Oy.

"All in all, it has taken over 50 years to build the whole motorway from Helsinki to Turku. The first stretch was built in the late 1960s, and now, finally, we have a full-length motorway."

Now that the 51-kilometre stretch of road is completed, the entire 160-kilometre route between Helsinki and Turku is a four-lane dual carriageway. The completed section cuts the driving time between the two cities by half an hour, even though the actual road length is just a few kilometres shorter than before.

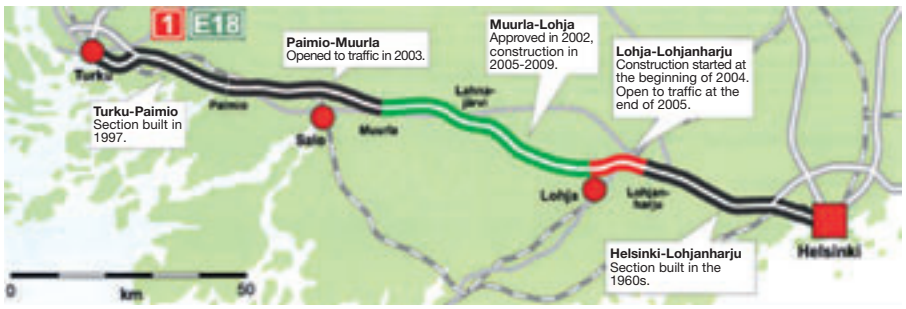
The E18 is Finland's busiest road in an east-west direction and the most important route for international traffic in the country.

The new road section is exceptional in Finnish terms. Tunnels comprise one-tenth of the road, due both to the topography and the desire to reduce the environmental impact.

"The area has deep rock cuttings, banks and narrow valleys of fields or woods between high rock ridges. The tunnels enable the motorway to pass smoothly in spite of the topography," explains Mr Schmidt.

## SAFETY PARAMOUNT

Improving safety was a key reason to upgrade the busy route. The old road was crowded and the scene of several bad accidents. The new road is now three times safer than the old one, and it is estimated that over the next ten years there will be fifty fewer fatalities and 250 fewer injuries. Safety features include interchanges, separate lanes, high animal fences and landscape contouring.




The road project was for the section between Muurla and Lohja and was the largest of its kind in Finland.

In the tunnels, preventive safety is crucial. All seven tunnels consist of two separate lanes, with connecting points every 250 metres. Twin tunnels eliminate the risk of head-on collisions, and facilitate rescue work in case of emergency, such as fire.

"The tunnels are equipped with state-of-the-art systems for supervision, traffic control and safety," says Mr Schmidt.

## WILDLIFE INFLUENCED PLANNING AND BUILDING

The diverse wildlife in the area has to be catered for in both the planning and construction of the new road section.

"The road is sometimes dubbed 'the wilderness motorway'. The tunnels make it possible for animals, such as moose, to roam the area freely. The routes of the rare flying squirrel were taken into consideration in the very early planning phase. A total of 40 crossings were provided for flying squirrels, and in one location fully-grown trees were planted between the lanes—a sort of an emergency landing strip," notes Mr Schmidt.

## LIFE-CYCLE MODEL MEANS EFFICIENT BUILDING

The motorway stretch was implemented as a public-private partnership, also known as the life-cycle model. In this model, public and private sectors work together within the framework of a long-term agreement. The life-cycle model is based on the principle that the state purchases the construction work, the maintenance and the financing of the road from a private contractor.

For this project, the Finnish Road Administration (Finnra) purchased planning, construction and financing from Tieyhtiö Ykköstie Oy. Ykköstie is jointly owned by Swedish Skanska, British John Laing and Finnish Lemminkäinen.

"The project has not been dependent on funds from the national budget, a fact that enabled the short building time," says Mr Schmidt.

NIB participated in the funding of the road construction project with a long-term loan of EUR 77 million to Ykköstie. The loan disbursements started in late 2005, when the construction work began. The total cost of the construction phase amounted to EUR 300 million.

Other financiers include the European Investment Bank, Nordea Finland Abp, Svenska Handelsbanken AB and the Royal Bank of Scotland.

Ykköstie is also responsible for the service quality and maintenance of the road. Finnra pays a service charge to Ykköstie which is based on the availability of the road; if, for instance, the road is closed, the charge decreases. The service agreement runs up until 2029—when Finnra will take over the road.

Another important aspect of the life-cycle model is the distribution of risk.

"The main principle is that the risk is taken by the party best placed to handle it. The service provider, that is Ykköstie, takes the technical risks and the client, in this case Finnra and the Finnish state, takes the political risks," states Mr Schmidt.

## IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE STRENGTHENS COMPETITIVENESS

Kim Krokfors, Senior Manager, Lending, at NIB, says that this is an important project for the Bank. He explains:

"One of NIB's focus areas is transport and logistics, and the E18 is crucial for the whole of southwestern Finland. Improved transport links support the economic and social development of this region."

In the long term, its is not just a matter of the motorway between Helsinki and Turku, but a motorway all the way to the Russian border. According to plans, this will be complete by 2015.

The E18 is part of the trans-European transport network known as the "Nordic Triangle" and is one of the EU's 30 prioritised transport corridors. The triangle links the Nordic capitals of Oslo, Stockholm and Helsinki with the Russian border and improves links with Central Europe. The road network is important for the free movement of people, goods and services, and thus for the economic and social development of the EU. ■

The environmental approach to the design and building of the road meant local inhabitants were also taken into consideration.

The tunnels reduce noise and keep the landscape intact, both important from an ecological and aesthetic point of view. Above the longest tunnel, running for 2.2 kilometres, the wilderness was preserved as a result of the combined efforts of the City of Lohja, local inhabitants and Ykköstie. Funds for the preservation were raised by organising the Five Tunnel Marathon event in October 2008.

# High-speed trains cut distance and save nature

**The Swedish railway system has great challenges ahead of it. As travelling by train is becoming even more popular, both the capacity of the railways and the power supply need to be increased.**

Significant infrastructure development is needed to maintain the competitive advantage of the railway in Sweden.

CEO Jan Forsberg of the Swedish passenger railway company SJ AB says that the biggest challenge is keeping to timetables.

"A general rule is that a maximum of 80% of the railway capacity should be in use. This concerns both the rail network and the power supply. On our railways, the capacity reaches 100% continually. As the railways and the power supply are overloaded, even a small delay is dramatic. A domino effect starts, and all trains are delayed," says Mr Forsberg.

PHOTOS: SJ AB

"We need to be reliable in order to be able to compete with airlines and cars," Mr Forsberg adds.

Due to the load on the infrastructure, it is difficult to increase the number of departures, but it is possible to make the trains longer. SJ assumes that expanded train capacity will increase the market share of train travel.

In Sweden, around 15% of journeys over 100 kilometres are travelled by train, almost 70% by car, 13% by air and 5% by bus.

## COMPETITION IS INCREASING

Not only cars, planes and buses are competitors of SJ. A law on the deregulation of passenger train traffic in the country, which will come into effect in the beginning of January 2010, will change the competition significantly. The deregulation opens the market for any railway company and allows any service provider to start trafficking on Swedish railways.

"On the other hand, for the deregulation and competition to work, we need to increase the network and power supply. If the infrastructure capacity cannot absorb the increase in traffic, other service providers will not be interested in entering the market," says Mr Forsberg.

A recent market study on high-speed rail traffic in Sweden, in which SJ has taken an active part, suggests that an expanded high-speed rail network would have substantial benefits for the country. Shorter travel times, enhanced possibilities to meet environmental targets and other advantages would add up to improved competitiveness for Sweden's economy.

In Sweden, as well as in many other European countries, demand for high-speed train travel is increasing. SJ has responded to this demand by introducing new high-speed trains as well as engaging in product and service development. Fast and comfortable train services are vital for many parts of Sweden. High-speed trains make distances shorter and bring communities closer together.

Many studies have clearly shown that time is the most important factor when people consider means of travel. The decreased travel time in combination with higher departure frequency is assumed to lead to train travel taking market shares away from air and road travelling.

## ADDED VALUE ATTRACTS PASSENGERS

In order to attract new train travellers, SJ is focusing on providing passengers with added value. Old trains have been renewed, both visually and as concerns travel comfort. SJ has also put much effort into training and the development of its personnel with a view to improving the service-orientation among the staff.

Other services include improved restaurant carriages, conference compartments, office services, such as an Internet connection, as well as quiet compartments for those who want to work or relax on the train.

"Of course, basic things such as safety, punctuality and efficiency need to be in place, as well," says Mr Forsberg.

## ENVIRONMENT-FRIENDLY WAY OF TRAVELLING

These days, when environmental issues are on everyone's minds, the train has a strong advantage compared to cars and airplanes. SJ only buys renewable electricity from hydroelectric and wind power sources and the production of electricity for the trains causes minimal emissions.

For example, an average car emits 89 kilograms of carbon dioxide into the air during a one-way trip from Stockholm to Gothenburg, some 470 kilometres. An entire SJ train, carrying up to 300 passengers, emits 400 grams. The differences become even more pronounced if you compare trains with planes. A single plane emits as much as six tonnes of carbon dioxide on that same route.

According to Mr Forsberg, it is a force of habit that people go by car or by airplane instead of by train. By offering services and possibilities that neither cars nor aircraft can offer, SJ wants to encourage more people to use the train. ■

## NIB FINANCING FOR 20 HIGH-SPEED TRAINS

SJ has ordered 20 new high-speed trains from Canadian Bombardier Transportation. NIB is contributing to the financing with a loan of EUR 45 million.

"One of NIB's focus areas is the financing of infrastructure investments. The development of infrastructure is a key factor for competitiveness," says Ulf Westergård, Senior Manager of NIB.

SJ's new trains will offer travellers reduced travel time and improved comfort.

SJ operates passenger rail services from 350 stations and is the largest passenger railway operator in Sweden. SJ's market share amounts to some 55% of all passenger train transport in Sweden.

Jan Forsberg, CEO of the Swedish passenger railway company SJ AB.

# NIB sharpens its focus in non-member lending

## Head of Lending: The aim is to deepen relations and increase the Bank's presence.

The main lending activities of NIB are in its eight member countries—Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden. However, since the 1980s, NIB has been financing projects in non-member countries. Over the years, this has become a permanent part of the Bank's activities, comprising approximately one fifth of its lending stock. Recently, NIB has decided to intensify its cooperation with a limited number of non-member countries where there is a high degree of interest on the part of project participants and much potential for fulfilling NIB's mandate. The aim is to deepen relations and increase the Bank's presence in these countries.

Nils E. Emilsson, First Vice-President and Head of Lending at NIB, explains the background to the decision.

**Why did NIB want to select focus countries?**
"As an international financial institution, NIB finds it important to develop close cooperation not only with its borrowers but also with the authorities of the borrowing country in order to lay a strong foundation for a mutually beneficial relationship. By focusing its activities on a group of countries, the Bank will be able to secure continuity of operations, deepen its contacts with key counterparts and increase its level of activity."

**Which areas will be of primary interest for NIB in the future?**
"The neighbouring area, that is, the Baltic Sea region including Poland and Russia, as well as Ukraine, will continue to be a priority area. In addition, the Bank will further develop its cooperation with some of the major emerging economies, the most prominent ones being Brazil, China and India. However, all cooperation framework agreements entered into with other countries will remain in force.

Nils E. Emilsson, First Vice-President and Head of Lending at NIB.

**Does this new focus signal a big change in NIB's activities outside the member area?**
"Actually, the change is not so big. In recent years, clearly the largest part of the lending outside the member region has already been to the focus countries. This reflects the main trend in demand and the opportunities for the Bank to identify projects that fulfill its mandate."

**Does this move reduce the level of NIB's activity in non-member countries?**
"No, in the longer term, the Bank expects activity to remain at the present level, although in the current very difficult economic situation with a scarcity of credit in the Bank's member countries, there may be a temporary shift towards financing projects there."

**Focusing means concentrating on a limited group of countries. Why is NIB doing this now when international financing flows are declining and project owners have problems in financing their projects?**
"By increasing its focus, the Bank will, in fact, be better equipped to provide financing for projects that are important to project sponsors and cooperating partners. It should be remembered that NIB, as an international financial institution, plays a different role compared to the institutions financing trade. The Bank provides financing for projects which fulfil its mandate and are of mutual interest to the borrowing countries and the Bank's member countries."

**What do you mean by an "increased presence" in focus countries?**
"As a relatively small institution, NIB is, apart from having local representatives in China, India and Russia, working from a distance. By focusing its activities, the Bank will be in a position to engage in a more fruitful dialogue with local authorities and stakeholders and to foster long-term relations. This can also be expected to provide a basis for agreeing on a more elaborate strategy framework, which is already the case in some countries of operation." ■

# Promoting renewable energy in India

**The Indian government is promoting renewable energy to reduce its increasing fossil fuel dependency. A loan from NIB to the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency is set to support the effort.**

India's growing energy consumption has resulted in the country becoming increasingly dependent on fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas. Also taking into account the negative effects on the environment caused both locally and globally by the use of fossil fuel, the Indian government has taken action to increase the usage of non-conventional energy production.

In order to decrease India's dependence on fossil fuels, the government has launched a policy on conserving energy and promoting renewable energy. Renewable energy is crucial for controlling the emission of greenhouse gases, but it also plays an important role in safeguarding India's energy independence.

The responsibility for the implementation of this policy was given to the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd. (IREDA). It is a non-banking financial public sector company founded in 1987.

One of the challenges within the energy sector in India is getting electricity to the vast population living in the rural parts of the country. Of the 1.2 billion population, over 70% live in the rural parts of the country.

At present, renewable energy accounts for 5% of India's electricity generation capacity. The government plans to double this share by 2012.

The potential for renewable energy in India is great. It is estimated that wind power, biomass and waste energy alone could produce 86,880 MW. In addition, there is a great potential to use solar energy in the power grid.

During the past eight years, IREDA has financed projects for energy conservation and efficiency within industries such as sugar, paper and textiles. IREDA's own funding sources include the national government, the World Bank, ADB, IBRD and now also NIB.

A USD 50 million loan agreement signed between IREDA and NIB in March 2009 is aimed at financing the transfer of advanced environmental technology and equipment supplies from the Nordic and Baltic countries for renewable energy projects in the wind power, biomass and small-scale hydropower sectors in India. ■

# NDEP grant for wastewater treatment in St. Petersburg

Heikki Cantell, Nils E. Emilsson (both NIB) and Felix Karmazinov (Vodokanal).

The Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership Fund (NDEP Fund) has provided a grant totalling EUR 24 million for co-financing the Neva Closure of Discharges of Untreated Wastewater Programme in St. Petersburg, Russia.

The non-refundable assistance agreement was signed in mid-April by NIB and the Russian water utility Vodokanal St. Petersburg. NIB is an implementing agency for this project within the NDEP. The project includes the building of a second channel of St. Petersburg's sewage collection tunnel and the rehabilitation of the Northern Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The first channel of the sewage collection tunnel, in operation since autumn 2008, has prevented 90,000 cubic metres per day of untreated effluents from being discharged to the river Neva and the Baltic Sea. This has improved the city's wastewater treatment level to 87% of all discharges. Once the second channel is in use, as expected in 2012, the city will be able to treat up to 98% of its wastewater.

The NDEP is a cooperative effort to coordinate and support the financing of urgent environmental investments in Northwest Russia. The partnership combines the expertise and resources of the European Commission, the Russian Federation, the EBRD, the EIB, NIB and the World Bank. ■

# Brazilian Embratel receives A/B loan

**Having Brazil as one of its key non-member countries and telecommunications as a focus sector, NIB provides a new value-added loan to Brazilian Embratel.**

The Bank has provided a USD 200 million A/B loan to the Brazilian fixed-line telecom operator Empresa Brasileira de Telecomunicações S.A. (Embratel).

Maria Angélica Oliveira Luqueze, Head of Financing and Insurance at Embratel, says that an A/B loan suits Embratel's needs, since the loan structure will benefit the borrower, as it gets access to a large financial package. The B lenders benefit from sharing the advantages of NIB's status as an international financial institution.

The A loan totalling USD 50 million has been granted by NIB with a 5-year tenor. The B loan has been underwritten for the amount of USD 150 million with a 5-year tenor by the commercial banks Société Générale, Santander, Nordea, Natixis, Calyon and BBVA.

Tarja Kylänpää, Senior Director, Head of Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East at NIB, explains:

"Brazil is one of the Bank's key non-member countries, and telecommunications is an essential sector for our operations. Both contribute to fulfilling our mandate of enhancing competitiveness. A combination of multilateral and commercial bank participation in the A/B loan arrangement will benefit the customer."

Long-term relationships in a frequently changing business environment are crucial for Embratel.

"Our transactions with NIB are a good example of such long-term relationships. We closed a transaction a few years ago which helped a lot in structuring this new one," says Ms Oliveira Luqueze.

The financing will be used for Embratel's expansion of its wireless broadband and telecommunications infrastructure in Brazil, using state-of-the-art telecom network technology supplied by Nokia Siemens Networks.

"The expansion of Embratel's infrastructure will not only improve the efficiency and coverage of the existing network but also bring new technology solutions to customers," explains Ms Oliveira Luqueze.

Embratel owns the largest telecommunications network in Brazil, comprising fibreoptics, submarine cables and satellites. Being at the forefront of introducing new technologies to the national market, the company offers complete telecommunications solutions for the entire market in the country.

For Nordic telecom equipment manufacturers, Embratel is strategically important as a customer for R&D and other product development. By taking part in the financing, NIB is strengthening the Nordic suppliers' international competitiveness. ■



PHOTO: TUOMO MANNINEN

Director Joe Wright

**What are the most important characteristics of an A/B loan?**
"Under an A/B loan structure, NIB is the lender of record for both the A and the B loan, keeping the A loan for its own account and syndicating the B loan amongst commercial banks. The A/B loan product is offered in emerging markets, where NIB enjoys international financial institution status. The loan structure offers several benefits to the borrower and the participating commercial banks. The most important characteristic from NIB's perspective is that it permits us to offer larger value financings in pursuit of our lending mandate by mobilising commercial bank lending alongside our own."

**What are the customer's benefits?**
"There are three main benefits for the borrower: (i) the A/B loan makes it possible to provide the borrower with a larger value of financing than NIB could provide working alone; (ii) commercial banks are often willing to provide the borrower longer loan maturities under the A/B loan structure than they would otherwise; (iii) through the A/B loan the borrower is often able to diversify its sources of borrowing, for instance, receive loans from banks, including NIB member country banks, that they might not have done business with before."

# Loan structure offers benefits

**Joe Wright, Director, Head of Project and Structured Finance, explains what opportunities NIB's new lending product, A/B loans, offers the Bank's customers and partners.**

**How do commercial banks benefit from lending under NIB's umbrella?**
"The commercial banks that participate in the B loan share in NIB's status as an international financial institution. In particular this means protection from currency convertibility and transfer risks. The commercial banks also take comfort from working alongside NIB given the Bank's high standards of due diligence and credit risk appraisal."

**NIB started providing A/B loans last year. What was the reason?**
"2008 was a year of very high demand for NIB's loans, and a year when the Bank focused on aligning its lending with the competitiveness and environment mandate. Both of these factors made it important to develop mechanisms to offer larger value financing and mobilise private sector loans alongside our own.

The implementation of the first A/B loan in 2008 also marked the culmination of more than a year's preparatory work, in which NIB collaborated closely with the International Finance Corporation and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development to ensure that we offer an A/B loan product of an equally high quality.

The timing was good as it turned out, because the banking crisis and the economic recession have made the A/B loan structure even more relevant. For one thing commercial banks are more concerned about foreign currency transfer and conversion risks, and about using their own capital efficiently, in today's environment. There has also been fresh interest in looking at ways for IFIs and commercial banks to collaborate, and the A/B loan structure is a well-proven way to do so."

**Is it only a coincidence that both NIB's first and second A/B loans are provided to Brazilian telecom operators?**
"NIB's first A/B loan transaction was concluded with Oi (Telemar Norte Leste), Brazil in July 2008. This was a USD 100 million A loan plus a USD 150 million B loan, which was underwritten by BNP Paribas and Banco Bilbao Vizcaya Argentaria. And in February 2009, we concluded our second A/B loan transaction–with Embratel.

Phone operators in Brazil are making enormous investments in rolling-out modern networks, making a Brazil a key growth market for Nordic equipment makers such a Nokia Siemens Networks and Ericsson. The A/B loan is well suited to this market given the magnitude of the investments required.

NIB's plan is to roll out its A/B loan product in the three largest non-member countries where we have large private sector lending operations: Brazil, Russia and India. So, we didn't plan at the outset to target Brazilian telecom operators for the first transactions, but it was consistent with our goals that it worked out that way."

**What is the role of your unit, Project and Structured Finance, in the Bank's lending operations?**
"The project and structured finance team is an expert resource that works with transaction teams to deliver loan financings that involve more complex risks or financial structures. The team plays a key role in risk identification and mitigation, due diligence, loan structuring, and transaction negotiation. The team members work across regions in partnership with the business origination teams. Most of the transactions that we work on are in the energy, infrastructure and environment sectors. We are a team of six bankers and an assistant."

**What is your professional background?**
"I am an economist by training, and I have worked on infrastructure project financing for 13 years. Before joining NIB a little over two years ago I worked for the World Bank Group, located in Washington DC and then in Delhi."

**Have you experienced any changes in your life after moving to Finland?**
"My wife, Mari, and I had our first child shortly after moving here–life changes don't get much bigger than that!" ■

PHOTO: SIGURDUR J. OLAFSSON

# New energy for Tartu

**A peat- and biomass-fired power plant built in Estonia's second-largest city, Tartu, will help reduce the local economy's dependence on imported natural gas.**

Finnish-Estonian Fortum Tartu AS received a NIB loan for building a new combined heat and power plant back in 2007. The company supplies of Tartu, a city of 100,000 inhabitants. The network covers 85% of Tartu's households, and produces electricity for export to neighbouring Latvia. Most of the plant's old boilers used to be heated with gas, but have now been replaced with modern units working on peat and wood chips. The output capacity of the new facility totals 52 MW of heat and 25 MW of electricity.

CHP plants have become increasingly common throughout Europe. The technology is based on consuming less fuel for energy production. This is possible thanks to the simultaneous production of heat and electricity, as well as by minimising energy loss during delivery to consumers by using heat generated close to the plant. CHP plants improve the efficiency of heat production by up to 89%.

"The CHP plant in Tartu is the first of its kind in Estonia. It is an important step for us at Fortum Tartu, the city of Tartu and a milestone in the modernisation of Estonia's energy production," says Madis Nommik, Fortum Tartu's Financial Manager.

The new plant will cut down on the use of imported gas from 171 GWh in heat and power output to 20 GWh per year. This is an important reduction for an economy greatly dependent on the import of gas from Russia. The Estonian economy would benefit from improving the balance of its current account, spending less on imported fuel and increasing energy exports.

The annual production of heat and electricity from peat and wood chips will total 600 GWh. To secure this demand, Fortum Tartu has signed contracts with peat harvesting sites close to the city. Wood chips for the new boilers are supplied from producers throughout the country.

Apart from generating income for contractors, the production and transportation of the fuel are creating up to 200 new jobs in Estonia, where unemployment is on the rise in common with many other countries in Eastern Europe.

The benefits that Tartu households gain from modern heat production are obvious: heating prices in Tartu are 24% lower than in other areas, where heat production is based on gas.

"Our heat prices are among the lowest in Estonia. Local fuel allows us to reduce the reliance on the costly import of gas from Russia and it also guarantees a steady supply," says Margo Külaots, Chairman of Fortum Tartu's management board. ■

# Lighting up Vilnius greenfield areas

**A loan agreement with NIB has brought EUR 15 million to Lithuanian Rytu Skirstomieji Tinklai (RST) for financing the company's investment programme earmarked for upgrading the power distribution grid in and around Lithuania's capital, Vilnius.**

PHOTO: RITU SKIRSTOMIEJI TINKLAI

The investment programme includes the construction and reconstruction of transformer substations and distribution points as well as the development of a network management system. This will enable the company to control the main equipment of the network by remote control.

A 110/10 kV transformer substation and a distribution point have been recently built in the vicinity of Vilnius.

"This is a completely new type of distribution equipment. The transformer substation uses state-of-the-art tools for controlling and transferring the data kit and is equipped with modern security systems," explains Vidmantas Stukas, head of the RST Network Development Department.

"The city is expected to expand in a greenfield area, where very little infrastructure has been available until recently," says Mr Stukas.

RST's investment has facilitated energy supply to new, large industrial consumers. If the area develops as expected, the new substation will soon see the demand for its load capacity increasing by several thousand households.

## NOT ONLY GREENFIELD

Although Vilnius's newly developed or greenfield areas are a high priority for RST, the historical centre of the city also needs a reliable power supply.

"Several new hotels are built in the city every year. The central department store has recently been expanded. More companies want their facades lit up. One of the bridges over the river Neris in central Vilnius has recently lit up," comments Mr Stukas, mentioning only the most obvious newbies on the consumer list.

Areas further afield also receive due attention and their share of modernisation. About 1,000 power users in Panevezys County in central Lithuania are now being serviced through a renewed 10 kV distribution point. The modernisation has improved the quality of power transmission to a logistics centre of one of the country's major retail operators.

Established in 2001 upon the reorganisation of a national power utility, RST is a public electricity company supplying and distributing electrical energy in Lithuania. The company currently services the eastern half of the country, including the capital area with its population of 1.7 million. ■

# Loan to help revitalise Latvian SME sector

NIB's loan programme totalling EUR 100 million to the Latvian state-owned Latvijas Hipoteku un zemes banka (Mortgage and Land Bank of Latvia, Hipoteku banka) will provide the Latvian government with a tool to raise the competitiveness of the country's small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

"This financing is aimed at revitalising the Latvian SME sector, which is the backbone of the Latvian economy. Small businesses have been hardest hit by the recession in Latvia, but they also have strong potential for improving the country's export competitiveness," says Johnny Åkerholm, NIB President and CEO.

Latvia's Minister of Finance, Einars Repše, emphasises the importance of the new loan programme for the country in the current economic situation: "This loan provides a significant support for Latvian businesspeople who in these circumstances are able to develop production, keeping existing jobs and creating new ones as well as finding markets, thus stimulating the national economy."

Inesis Feiferis, Chairman of Hipoteku banka's Board, adds that the financing should go to innovative enterprises. "It will enhance their productivity and the quality of their output," says Mr Feiferis.

Hipoteku banka is a development and retail bank, used by the government as a tool for implementing development projects aimed at promoting SMEs. Hipoteku banka was granted loans from NIB for similar projects in 2000, 2002, 2003 and 2006. ■

PHOTO: TUOMO MANNINEN

# NIB aims to raise EUR 4 billion in 2009

Lars Eibeholm, Head of Treasury

"Timing, pricing and duration are the keywords for NIB's funding activities in 2009," says Lars Eibeholm, Head of Treasury and CFO of NIB.

In early April, NIB launched its inaugural 5-year EUR-denominated benchmark transaction of EUR 1 billion, which represents the largest offering NIB has made thus far in its main lending currency.

"Through this transaction, we are achieving our goal of diversifying our funding base and the deal was supported by many new investors," states Mr Eibeholm.

NIB's targets for 2009 are to fulfil the funding plan of some EUR 4 billion at the best achievable price subject to an appropriate maturity and a well-diversified investor base.

"It is a matter of timing to get the right pricing," Mr Eibeholm explains, and adds: "NIB has a small and efficient funding team and we are able to respond quickly to funding proposals from both investors and arrangers."

Another strength of NIB is its relatively small funding plan. While some of NIB's peers need to issue 15 to 20 benchmark transactions per year, NIB only needs one or two.

"This fact allows us to make quick moves when we see an opening in the market—or, if necessary, wait. Our main markets will of course be where the investors are: the US, the euro area and Asia," Mr Eibeholm continues.

## YEAR 2008 FULL OF CHALLENGES

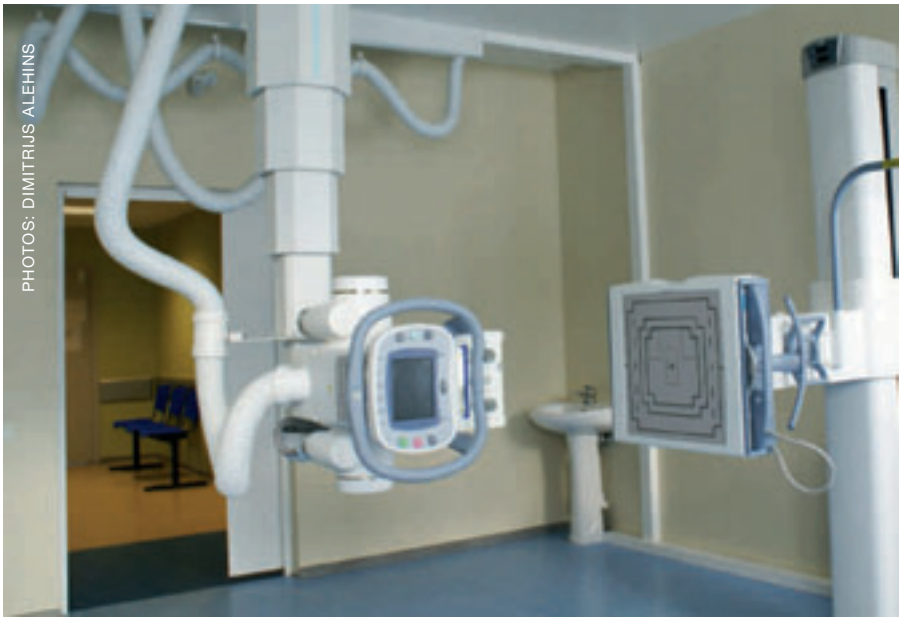
The year 2008 was tough for the financial market. The crisis, which escalated in October, triggered turmoil in the markets. Developments in the financial markets increased funding costs in general, also for NIB and other supranationals towards the end of the year. NIB, though, managed to maintain its good access to the funding markets and debt issuance amounted to a record high EUR 4,681 million in 2008.

"In November, NIB re-opened the USD benchmark market by issuing a 3-year benchmark bond of USD 1 billion. The bond was the first on the market since October. Investors responded positively, the order book was fully subscribed and, in spite of the volatile times, the bond was a success," says Mr Eibeholm.

"We have strong support from our member countries and our biggest owner countries have strong economies despite the current economic situation," Mr Eibeholm points out.

Iceland and the Baltic countries have been affected by the economic turmoil more than the other owners of the Bank. These economies are relatively small, and Mr Eibeholm does not believe the difficulties in these countries will affect the attractiveness of NIB's bonds.

"We will continue to grant loans and make commitments in order to support the competitiveness of the member countries. I believe NIB will continue to see good demand from global investors, who are looking at NIB as a strong AAA-rated issuer," concludes Mr Eibeholm. ■



PHOTOS: DIMITRIJS ALEHINS

Dr Atstupens shows the new hospital block.

# Hospital upgrade in eastern Latvia

**Ludza, a small town 270 kilometres east of Latvia's capital Riga, has opened a new block of its hospital. The new facility is equipped with the most modern surgical and intensive care equipment in the whole eastern part of the country.**

In 2006, the hospital was one of four local medical institutions in Latvia that received NIB loans earmarked for modernisation and the purchase of new medical equipment. The loan to Ludza totalled EUR 5.7 million.

On an area of more than 4,000 square metres, almost twice as big as the old Ludza hospital, the new block houses the admissions, operating theatre, the maternity ward and intensive care. It has also added 55 new patient beds to the previous 85.

"Now we in Ludza have much more state-of-the-art medical equipment compared to any other hospital in eastern Latvia. The conditions for both the patients and the doctors have improved a great deal," says Dr Juris Atstupens, chairman of the hospital's board.

The implementation of the project was not without its challenges. Construction started 25 years ago, but was halted due to a lack of financing. Four years ago, the entire block design was renewed in order to restart the construction. The construction work was completed in summer 2008. This coincided with the years of high inflation in the Latvian economy that hit the construction industry hard.

"It was very unfortunate. The costs jumped vigorously during 2007 and in early 2008. The NIB loan was a sort of a warranty that the project wouldn't stop. But we were short of funding and had to raise additional funding from the Ludza municipality," explains Dr Atstupens.

The municipality is the owner of the hospital. Close to 90% of the hospital's revenues come from the governmental Health Insurance Agency, while the remaining part is being covered from patient payments. This situation is typical for the Latvian health care system.

The Ludza hospital, founded in 1838, services an area with a population of 33,000. The hospital employs more than 270 staff, including doctors, nurses and other personnel. ■

## APPOINTMENTS AT NIB

### Credit and Analysis Department

**Eliisa Kaloinen** (FI) has been appointed Senior Economist in the Mandate Unit. She joins NIB from Askar Capital on Iceland.

**Joakim Widström** (SE) has joined NIB as Senior Project Analyst. He has previously worked for Svenska Handelsbanken in Stockholm and Moscow.

**Tiina Schildt** (FI) has been employed as Bank Analyst in the Country and Bank Analysis Unit. She joins NIB after working for HSH Nordbank Finland.

### Other Departments

**Timo Nyman** (FI) has joined NIB as Senior Manager at the Work-out Unit in the Lending Department. He previously worked for HSH Real Estate AG.

**Nina Berggren Monsen** (NO) has been appointed Communications Specialist at the Communications Unit. She previously worked for Norfund.

## INTERNAL APPOINTMENTS

### Lending Department

**Vilius Girkontas** (LT) has been appointed Senior Manager for lending operations primarily in the Baltic countries.

**Tiina Kuusela** (FI) and **Tony Mäkynen** (FI) have been appointed Senior Managers at the Client & Country Management Unit.

### Other Departments

**Kai Arte** (FI) has been appointed Senior Credit Portfolio Analyst for Risk Management.

**Eva Nickull** (FI) has been appointed HR Specialist at the HR Unit.

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## VISIT OUR WEBSITE WWW.NIB.INT

We work hard on keeping the website up to date, relevant and useful for our customers, owners, the media and other stakeholders. The website displays NIB's statutory documents and policies, explains the eligibility criteria for receiving a NIB loan and reports on recent developments. The site features searchable databases of NIB's loans and in-depth stories on selected financed projects.

## ANNUAL REPORT 2008 ONLINE

NIB's annual report 2008 is available online at annual.nib.int

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