

BTS COMMERCE INTERNATIONAL

Session 2000

Communication en langues étrangères

ANGLAIS

Durée de l'épreuve : 3 heures – Coefficient : 1,5

L'usage d'un dictionnaire bilingue est autorisé.

Les calculatrices sont interdites.

New prospects on the "Baltic Rim"

1 Stockholm — The region bordering the Baltic Sea claims to be Europe's fastest growing market in what local boosters like to call the "Baltic Rim".

After heady forecasts earlier in the 1990s, the Russian economic crisis has made a dent in the immediate growth prospects of the three Baltic states—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—that shook off 50 years of Soviet rule at the end of the cold war.

The three countries are still hobbled by unwelcome inheritances from their former Soviet masters in the form of inadequate economic infrastructure, imperfect legal system, corruption and a lack of understanding of market economics. There is still uncertainty over Russia's future intentions.

10 But there can be no doubt that the area presents great opportunities. At a conference in Stockholm this week on Baltic investment, attended by government and business representatives from around the region, there was widespread agreement that the three countries were heading in the right direction, even if they still have a long way to go.

15 As a matter of fact, the Baltic economies are beginning to be transformed by foreign investment. Perhaps the region's biggest asset is a well-educated and technologically sophisticated workforce, with wages generally ranging from one-sixth to one-tenth of those in Sweden or Finland.

20 Many of the Soviet Union's electronics and other high-tech industries were located in the Baltic region, including St. Petersburg and the surrounding area. Scandinavian companies are increasingly treating the Baltic countries both as part of their home market and, with much of the workforce Russian-speaking, as a stepping stone to Russia.

Optimists hope to draw much of northwestern Russia—rich in energy and raw materials—into a Baltic growth area that would underpin the region's security as well as its economic and political stability.

25 Some have a vision of a high-tech, low-tax, deregulated entrepreneurial paradise.

That will require a lot of changes. Although the region is technically a free-trade area, conference participants complained of burdensome obstacles at borders for both goods and people.

The aim of reducing the time taken for frontier crossings to a maximum of two hours (compared with 10, 20 or even more) is still pie in the sky, especially at the Russian border.

30 But apart from Russia, all the countries of the region are forecast to grow faster than the average for industrial countries this year and next. And it is in the whole of Europe's economic and security interests to encourage the region's development.

Much effort will have to come from Baltic governments, which need to continue to improve the climate for the massive foreign private investment that will be essential for the region's growth.

35 Most Baltic companies are too small to thrive in the open market by themselves.

What the European Union can do is make it crystal clear that the Baltic states will be admitted as soon as possible. It is perhaps a good sign that the conflict in Kosovo has convinced many European leaders that the whole process of the EU's eastward enlargement and the stabilization of the former communist states should be accelerated.

Abridged from *International Herald Tribune*, June 11, 1999.

I - COMPTE RENDU EN FRANÇAIS (20 points)

Après lecture attentive, vous ferez un compte rendu en français et ferez apparaître les idées essentielles. (210 mots + ou - 10 %)

II - ÉLABORATION D'UNE LETTRE COMMERCIALE EN ANGLAIS (20 points)

Lettre à élaborer et à rédiger en anglais selon l'usage commercial courant.

Le directeur des achats de VIDEO BOX U.K. (12 Truro Lane, Falmouth TR112DX) adresse une lettre à une société de transport ferroviaire (TRANS-EXPRESS, 17 High Street, Bromley BR51QH) après avoir constaté des dégâts à la réception d'une commande.

Objet : bordereau d'expédition n°6354 22.

- Accusé de réception de dernière commande arrivée le 9 octobre : 6 caisses de cassettes vidéo vierges, dont 2 sérieusement endommagées.
- Contact pris avec fournisseur : selon lui, marchandise en parfait état à l'arrivée au dépôt de Trans-Express d'Orpington.
- Responsabilité Trans-Express engagée.
- Dégâts constatés : boîtiers de cassettes fendus malgré mention "Fragile" sur les caisses, négligence probable lors de la manutention.
- Perte estimée sur prix facturé : 825 livres, demande d'indemnisation car marchandise expédiée aux risques du transporteur.
- Ci-joint : copie bordereau d'expédition et facture.
- Caisses tenues à disposition pour examen.

III - RÉDACTION EN ANGLAIS (20 points)

Répondre en anglais aux deux questions suivantes :

1. Why are Scandinavian companies "treating the Baltic countries [...] as a stepping stone to Russia" (l. 19 à 21)? Draw your arguments from the text. (150 mots + ou - 10 %) (10 points)

2. Regional trade agreements: a good thing for global free trade? Support your arguments with concrete examples. (150 mots + ou - 10 %) (10 points)