

# 'THIS TOWN HAS MUCH TO CELEBRATE'

*While looking beyond its identity as capital of the Faroese fishing industry, Klaksvík continues to invest in harbor development to attract more calls from large trawlers, container ships, and cruise liners.*

**O**FTEN REFERRED to as the 'capital of the fishing industry' for obvious reasons, Klaksvík, the Faroe Islands' second-largest community, is looking to diversify its local economy through boosting entrepreneurship and attracting more port calls.

Known as an energetic and industrious town, Klaksvík, with a population of about 5,000 as of today, was built on fishing and has boomed during periods of modernization of the Faroese fishing fleets throughout the 20th century.

"We are proud of our history and the fact that this town remains a major stronghold of the fishing industry," said Mayor Jógvan Skorheim.

Mr. Skorheim, one of the youngest ever to become mayor of the Town of Klaksvík, took office on 1 January 2013 at the age of 30, following the 2012 municipal elections.

"It's important that we respect and appreciate our business community for its past and present achievements," he said. "That said, we need to look to the future as well. The times are changing and the number of staff needed in fishing

is lower today compared to earlier. So we want to encourage entrepreneurship and business startups, whether directly linked to fishing or not. We should also take into account that there are opportunities, for example, in merchant shipping as well as in the offshore energy sector."

The mayor recently announced the establishment of a local business development fund, aimed at helping young entrepreneurs and innovators get their ventures off the ground.

"There is a lot of creative talent, skills and knowledge and some of it has to do with music and arts," Mr. Skorheim said. "But perhaps most of the actual business ideas relate to seafood and shipping."

Meanwhile the ongoing oil and gas exploration activities off the Faroe Islands are seen, at least in part, to explain why an increasing number of Faroese people choose to work in the offshore business, typically in Denmark, Norway, or Scotland.

An estimate one-tenth of the entire Faroese workforce are officers at sea, many of whom work on Faroese fishing vessels including quite a few Klaksvík-registered ones. Also many of these officers work abroad as navigators and captains, engineers and chiefs on international merchant ships.

**HARBOR DEVELOPMENT:** Some of the leading Faroese fishing businesses, including JFK and Christian í Grótinum, are based in Klaksvík. To accommodate the needs of these as far as concerns



transport infrastructure, as well as to attract more merchant vessels, the Port of Klaksvík has undergone significant development in recent years.

Notably, the 317-meter North Quay, with 12 m depth alongside, has become one of the busiest in the Faroes. It was built around the same time as Norðoyatunnin, which opened in 2006, a 6.4-kilometer underwater tunnel that connects Klaksvík to the island of Eysturoy, the capital Tórshavn and Vagar Airport.

"We receive an increasing number of calls from large vessels, including trawlers, container vessels and cruise ships," said harbormaster Meinhard Petersen.

While much of the container traffic is associated with the seafood trade, the rise of cruise tourism is a separate matter.

"The North Quay is one of the very best docks in the country when it comes to large vessels," Mr. Petersen said. "This is part of what we tell shipowners and operators when we promote the Port of Klaksvík."

Part of that promotion consists of participating at industry events such as international trade shows. Moreover a plan has been drafted to extend the



Mayor Jógvan Skorheim; View of the North Quay (opposite top); Partial view of town (opposite bottom).

North Quay, according to the port authority, the Town of Klaksvík.

"We hope to see more cruise ships," Mr. Skorheim said.

"We want to make sure our visitors are offered the best possible service. The North Quay needs some more docking space to make it more convenient for several large ships to berth at the same time. We are looking to lengthen it by 130 m."

Several yearly events put Klaksvík squarely on the map as it celebrates fishing and the sea.

One such event is Torradagar, several days of conferencing and informative activities that bring together movers and shakers in the fishing industry alongside public authorities, regulators, marine scientists and economists.

Another one is Sjómannadagurin

## Town of Klaksvík

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Mayor: Jógvan Skorheim

Klaksvík is a welcoming, well developed and business-friendly town of stunning natural beauty, offering a wide range of services for residents and visitors alike. Klaksvík is the second-largest community in the Faroe Islands, with a population of about 5,000.

## Port of Klaksvík

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Harbor Master: Meinhard Petersen

The Port of Klaksvík is a safe and well-sheltered natural harbor.

North Quay: 317 meters of dock, depth alongside 12 m; ro/ro ramp 30 m wide; high-pressure disinfected water supplies through 6" tubes (450,000 liters/hour). ISPS approved terminal.

West Quay: Dedicated terminal for container ships, general cargo, fish landing and cruise ships. 300 m of dock, depth alongside 8.75 m. Maximum length of ship 160 m LOA.

Kósín Quay: Dedicated terminal for fish landing and general cargo. Total dock length 267 m, depth alongside 8 m. Maximum length of ship 180 m LOA.

Fuel Quay: Tanker terminal, dock length 55 m; depth alongside 8 m. Serves tankers up to 6,000 tonnes (NT).

(Sailors' Day), a highly popular, festive occasion for the public to highlight various aspects of fishing and life at sea.

Then there is the Atlantic Fair, a trade show for suppliers to the fishing and maritime industries, held once every two years, with the next edition scheduled for May 2015.

"This town has much to celebrate," Mr. Skorheim added.