

Nordic-Latvian cooperation in 2017



Nordic Council of Ministers'
Office in Latvia



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Photo: Ansis Vagners/norden.lv

Foreword

This publication aims to highlight some of the projects and events that were supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Latvia in 2017. Instead of a full account of all activities conducted, we hope to provide you with some colourful glimpses reflecting the wide spectrum of cooperation taking place between Latvia and the Nordic countries. This includes support to independent media, sustainable development, culture and social welfare. Besides these activities, plenty of Nordic-Latvian initiatives are running on their own merits while others are supported by Nordic embassies in Riga or other Nordic institutions and organisations.

Since the beginning of 1990's, close Nordic links have been established with Latvia, which now is an integral part of the dynamic Nordic-Baltic region. I am convinced that our regional cooperation still holds a great deal of potential to be developed further, which would enrich us all and help us stand stronger when dealing with new challenges in a globalized world. The Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Latvia would like to express gratitude to all our partners for fruitful cooperation during 2017. In the coming years, we are ready to expand our networks and explore new ideas of common interest that will bring Latvia and the Nordic countries closer together.

Stefan Eriksson
Director
Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Latvia

#INDEPENDENT MEDIA

Photo: Dāvids Briulis/norden.lv



Baltic Media Grant Scheme

The Baltic media grant scheme “Support for Increased Quality of Media Content and Strengthening of Minority Language Media Production in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania” was launched in 2017. Its overarching purpose is to raise the quality and attractiveness of local media in the Baltic countries, with a special focus on inclusive content in minority languages and ethnically diverse regions.

Out of the total of 62 applications submitted by local media publishers and freelance journalists, the three national evaluation committees consisting of local media experts selected 5 projects from Estonia, 9 projects from Latvia and 8 from Lithuania. The total grant support amounted to 150 000 EUR.

In Latvia, grants were awarded to DELFI, *Latgales Laiks*, TVNET, LETA, Mix Media Group, *Kurzemes Vārds*, SPEKTRS, *Rīgas Laiks* and smartlatvia.lv.



Photo: Jānis Spigovskis

Nordic-Baltic Public Service Media Forum

The first Nordic-Baltic public service media forum *“Maximising Public Value: A Future for Public Service Media in the Nordic-Baltic Region”* focused on a variety of threats to the independence of public service media (PSM) in the Nordic-Baltic region, on the models of PSM accountability as well as on the ways to remain cutting-edge, reaching wired audiences and developing mutual collaborations.

The conference was held in Riga in April 2017 with high-level participation from all Nordic and Baltic countries, with a focus on threats to PSM independence, models of PSM accountability, outreach to wired audiences, as well as developing mutual collaboration.

Organisers and supporters: Baltic Centre of Media Excellence, Danish Cultural Institute, Latvian Journalism Association, Nordic and Baltic media institutions



Photo: Baltic Centre for Media Excellence

Strengthening Public Interest Journalism in Regions of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

A series of training activities and seminars was arranged to strengthen local media in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, mainly in the field of multi-platform content production, outreach to young audiences, business sustainability and media ethics. An emphasis has been put on working with media in the regions densely populated by Russian-speaking minorities.

The project has helped Baltic media outlets to be better prepared and equipped to handle the challenges that media face today in light of the transformation of the media landscape due to local, regional and global factors.

Organiser: Baltic Centre for Media Excellence



Photo: Ansis Vagners/morden.lv

Legal Guide for Journalists

A legal handbook, "*Local Law for Dummies*", published by the Centre for Media Studies at Stockholm School of Economics in Riga in cooperation with the Baltic Centre for Investigative Journalism *Re:Baltica*, will assist journalists with navigating the legal framework governing media and journalistic work.

The handbook is available in Latvian, Estonian, English and Russian.

Implemented by: Media Centre at Stockholm School of Economics in Riga, Re:Baltica

Media and Information Literacy Skills for Teachers

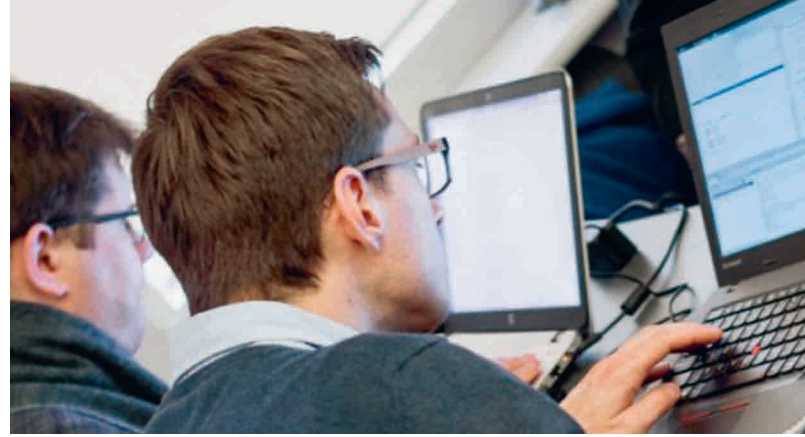
In October four seminars for future teachers and in-service teachers were conducted at Daugavpils University, Rēzekne Higher Education Institution, Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences and University of Latvia.

At the seminars, Finnish and Estonian experts along with Latvian professionals delivered theoretical presentations on various aspects of media literacy, organising practical workshops as well.

Cooperation partners: Latvian Safer Internet Centre, Embassy of Finland, Daugavpils University, Rēzekne Higher Education Institution, Liepāja University, Vidzeme University, University of Latvia, Riga Academy of Teacher Training and Educational Management

#DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

Photo: Aleksa Zéberga



Data Hackathon

Data Hackathon gave an opportunity for open data activists in Latvia – IT experts, journalists and editors – to jointly create data-driven media stories with an emphasis on data illustration and use of infographics.

More than 30 attendees worked with different issues, including food waste, municipal statistics, pharma lobbying and others.

Organisers: School of Data, Infogr.am



Photo: Ansis Vegners/norden.lv



"Measure Your Own Media Literacy!"

817 visitors of the Conversation Festival LAMPA tested their media competence through various media-related situations and answering predesigned questions.

The results of this activity as well as the research conducted by the Latvian Ministry of Culture proved that the average level of understanding of such media literacy concepts as propaganda, fake news, misinformation, commercials etc. is not optimal and that many people still lack solid basic knowledge thereof.

Cooperation partners: Latvian Safer Internet Centre, Latvian Ministry of Culture



Photo: Ansis Vegners/norden.lv



Photo: Ansis Vegners/Norden.lv



Photo: Ansis Vegners/Norden.lv

Bioeconomy and Green Living at LAMPA

In 2017 the NCM Office contributed to Conversation Festival LAMPA taking place in Cēsis with a panel discussion “Working TOGETHER”, which concentrated on bioeconomy and green living in Northern Europe and Latvia. The discussion featured three cases from the Nordic countries and one case from Latvia in the field of bioeconomy, illustrating why working together and collaboration matters.

Kristaps Ročāns, Project Manager at the High Added Value and Healthy Food Cluster (Latvia), was joined on the big LAMPA stage by Anne-Mette S. Langvald, Chief Consultant from the Central Denmark Region; Kari Poikela, Cluster Manager from the Kemi Technology Park (Finland), and Stig Bang-Andersen, Adviser on EU Law, Policy and EEA Advisor from Norway.

Cooperation partners: Nordic embassies, Interreg BSR



Photo: Dāvis Ūlānds

Social Entrepreneurship Forum

The forum took place in November 2017, focusing on the ways how social enterprises and corporate businesses can jointly tackle challenges in a number of aspects – be it employment, sustainable supply chains, environmental issues or community building.

Useful insights were shared by Swedish expert Per Clingweld, who presented his socially oriented start-up *Just Arrived* – a digital platform connecting newly-arrived immigrants with Swedish companies. Per Clingweld also participated in an informal discussion on the start-ups striving for social impact and how they can survive and thrive among their “ordinary” peers.

Organisers and supporters: Social Entrepreneurship Association of Latvia, Institute for Sustainability and Corporate Responsibility and Foundation for an Open Society DOTS; Digital Freedom Festival and Creative Industries Business Incubator (Latvian Investment and Development Agency)

#CULTURE

Photo: Ansis Vagners/norden.lv



Exhibition

“Nordic Countries – Known and Unknown”

The traveling exhibition “Nordic Countries – Known and Unknown” was a cooperation project between the NCM Office in Latvia and the creative team of Latvian Radio 1 broadcast “Zināmais nezināmajā” (“Known in the Unknown”).

Radio journalists Sandra Kropa and Paula Gulbinska ventured on numerous trips to the Nordic countries to make new discoveries while also rediscovering seemingly familiar and well-known places and phenomena.

The trips resulted in a photo exhibition covering a wide range of topics: environmental protection, social security, culture history and others.

In 2017 the exhibition was displayed in Riga, Daugavpils, Rundāle, Gulbene, Madona, Salaspils, Valmiera, Jēkabpils, Liepāja, Talsi.

Implemented by: Latvian Radio 1



Photo: Ansis Vegners/norden.lv

Photo: Ansis Vegners/norden.lv



Nordic-Baltic Exhibition of Contemporary Architecture

The Nordic-Baltic exhibition of contemporary architecture "Nordic Block" attempted to explore how Nordic identity is manifested in the specific context of Nordic and Baltic urban districts as well as in St Petersburg, Russia.

The exhibition was originally created by architecture journal "Project Baltia" in Russia. NCM Office in Latvia supported its re-design for a Latvia, published a Latvian version of the exhibition catalogue and organized a seminar titled "Nordic Model of the Urban Block", where curators from the Nordic and Baltic countries and Russia took part.

During 2017 the exhibition was displayed at the Latvian Museum of Architecture in Riga and at Liepāja Concert Hall "Great Amber".

Cooperation partners: Project Baltia, Latvian Museum of Architecture, Latvian Architecture Union, Embassy of Sweden, Embassy of Norway, Embassy of Finland, Embassy of Denmark, Danish Cultural Institute



Photo: Ansis Vegners/norden.lv



Nordic Writers in Latvia

In the framework of the “Nordic Writers Crossing Borders” programme, initiated and supported by the Confederation of Nordic Associations, eight Nordic writers visited Latvia and met with local readers in 2017:

Sjón and Steinunn Helgadóttir from Iceland; Johanna Sinisalo, Zinaida Lindén, children’s book illustrators Linda Bondestam and Jenny Lucander from Finland; Jacob Wegelius from Sweden; and children’s book illustrator and writer Mari Kanstad Johnsen from Norway.

The writers participated in 28 events across the country, with more than a thousand people in total attending the book openings, workshops, discussions and literary festivals arranged in Daugavpils, Gulbene, Liepāja and Rīga.

Cooperation partners: Embassy of Sweden, Embassy of Norway, Embassy of Finland, Embassy of Denmark, Danish Cultural Institute, printing house Mansards, kuš! comics, printing house Pētergailis, Latvian National Library, Kalnciems District

Photo: Ansis Vegners, Undīne Vegnere, Dāvids Bīrulis/norden.lv



Photo: Ansis Vēgners/norden.lv

“Writers Without Borders” in Riga

In an inspiring literary event, the Latvian audience was introduced to five European writers with the bicultural backgrounds, including participants from the Nordic countries – the Danish-Afghan debater and author Geeti Amiri and the Russian-born Finnish/Swedish-language prose writer and publicist Zinaida Lindén.

The ensuing discussion provided insights into the writers’ personal and professional journeys, offering valuable discoveries in connection with the writing process and the role of bicultural heritage.

Organisers and supporters: Network of European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC) in Latvia, Latvian Prose Reading Festival, European Commission Representation in Latvia

Nordic Library Week

In 2017, the Nordic Library Week – a well-known hallmark of the public literary events in Latvia – celebrated its 20th anniversary in the Baltic countries.

This year, the dark November days were lightened up by thinking and reading about Nordic islands. Surrounded by the sea, islands and their inhabitants are a microcosm and a fascinating starting point for stories that have inspired many Nordic writers.

More than 350 libraries in Latvia were united by the public readings of translated excerpts from “*Treasure Island*” by Mauri Kunnas, fantasy novel “*Maresi*” by Maria Turtšchaninoff and novel “*Ice*” written by Ulla-Lena Lundberg.

Cooperation partners: Latvian National Library, Confederation of Nordic Associations (FNF)



Photo: We Are Museums



Photo: We Are Museums

"We Are Museums"

The international conference *"We Are Museums"* brought together high-level museum professionals to discuss the current challenges in museum work. This year's focus lay on inclusion, empathy, social added value, the use of modern technologies and attracting new audiences. The discussions highlighted gender equality and acceptance, diversity and inclusivity as essential parts of the museum missions.

The conference gathered more than 300 participants. Talks by Merete Sanderhoff, Curator and Senior Advisor of the National Gallery of Denmark, and Julie Rokkjær Birch, Curator of the Women's Museum in Denmark, were especially appreciated by the audience.

Organisers and supporters: "We Are Museums", Latvian National Museum of Art, Latvian Ministry of Culture

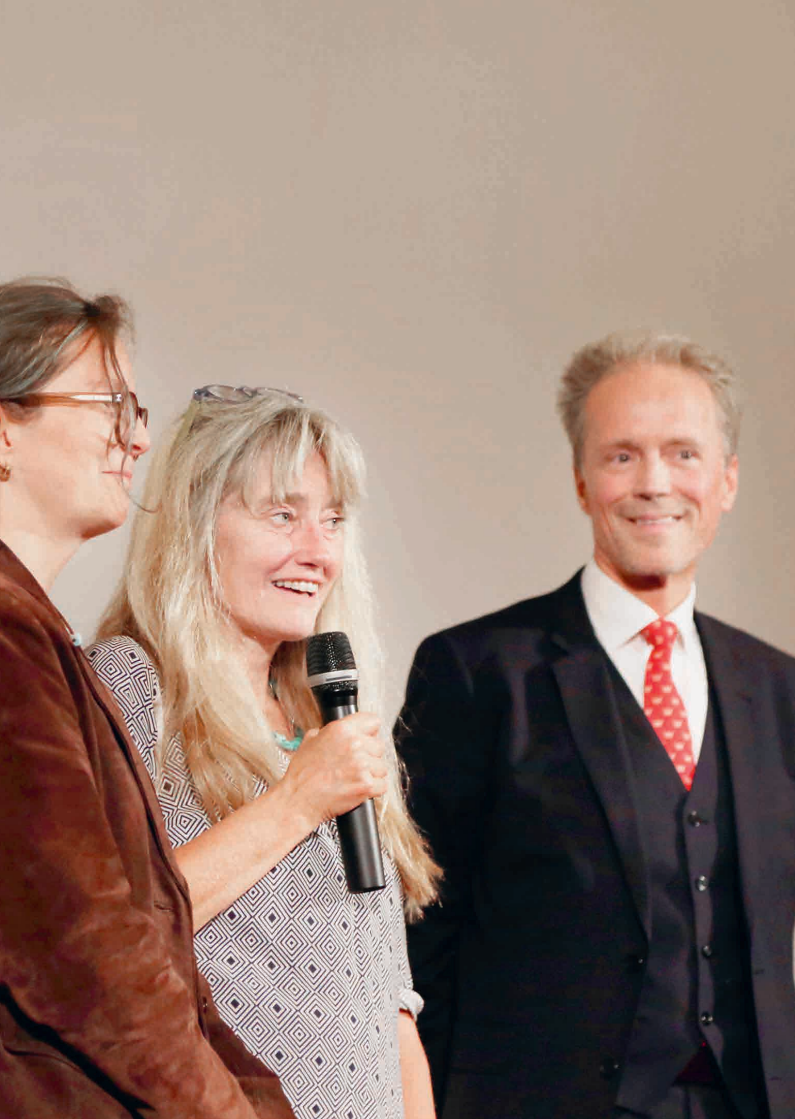


Photo: Valery Dozartseva

“Nordic Highlights” at Riga International Film Festival

“*Nordic Highlights*” is a film programme and part of the annual Riga International Film Festival offering public screenings of the latest Nordic films and bringing together film industry professionals from the Nordic and Baltic countries.

In addition to film screenings, various industry events were taking place in 2017, involving a number of Nordic film professionals. Film journalist Thor Joachim Haga from Norway gave a lecture on film music and moderated a discussion on the creative process of writing an original film score, while Swedish film directors Kersti Grunditz Brennan and Maud Nycander presented “*Citizen Schein*”, the opening film of the *Nordic Highlights* programme.

Organisers and supporters: Riga International Film Festival, Embassy of Sweden, Embassy of Norway, Embassy of Finland, Embassy of Denmark, Danish Cultural Institute



Photo: Valters Peļns

Photo: Valters Peļns



“Spirit of the North – Nordic Art Cargo in the Baltics”

A 20-foot shipping container full of Nordic art, music, colours and sounds served as a modern symbol of trade, exchange and travel. It was a collaboration project bringing together professional artists with children, musicians, museums and cultural organisations, who jointly created light and sound installations in public spaces. The artists invited children and adults to examine the spirit of the place with the help of images and sounds.

The initiator of the art project was Danish-German-Greenlandic art group Tura Ya Moya. The NCM Office in Latvia contributed to hosting the project in Liepāja, Latvia, where the multimedia artwork was projected on the facade of Liepāja Museum.

Cooperation partners: TURA YA MOYA art group, Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Lithuania, Embassy of Norway in Lithuania, Liepāja Museum, Liepāja Art School, science & curiosity centre ZINOO in Liepāja



Photo: Kuldīga Artists' Residence

Kuldīga Creative Summer School

Public lectures and two week-long workshops on service design were arranged in Kuldīga, led by international experts. One of them was service design expert Stefan Moritz from Sweden.

During the workshops the participants learned how to apply service design methods when solving strategic and customer service related issues. The workshops focused on practical application of theory and were conducted in close cooperation with Kuldīga Hospital and Latvian Postal Service.

Cooperation partners: Kuldīga Artist Residence, Kuldīga Municipality, Kuldīga Hospital, Latvian Postal Service



Photo: Mikus Klavins

Culturability BSR Phase II: Culture for Sustainable Development in the Baltic Sea Region

Culturability BSR is one of the flagship projects under the EU Action Plan for the Baltic Sea Region. The goal of the project is to build knowledge on three topics: urban social inclusion/cultural planning, sustainable cultural tourism/innovation and gaming/digital tools for sustainability and their interrelation. Through sharing knowledge of participant practices, experiences and ideas in relation to the above-mentioned themes, the project has built a platform for further cooperation on culture and sustainability in the Baltic Sea Region.

In 2017 the workshops took place in Gdansk (Poland), Pori (Finland), Tallinn (Estonia). The final meeting took place in Riga (Latvia).

Cooperation partners: Danish Cultural Institute, Latvian Ministry of Justice, Cultural and European Affairs of Land Schleswig-Holstein, Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of Poland, Estonian Ministry of Culture, Latvian Ministry of Culture, Lithuanian Ministry of Culture, Skåne Region (Sweden), and ARS Baltica 2017-2018



Photo: Dāvids Birulis/norden.lv

Nordic Days in Liepāja

Days full of inspiring meetings and cultural events in Liepāja were organized jointly by the NCM Office and Nordic embassies in Latvia, with the aim of strengthening regional cooperation, initiating a regular and coordinated dialogue and sharing good Nordic practices.

The agenda included an official visit of the Nordic delegation to Liepāja City Council, a roundtable on the opportunities and challenges in business cooperation between Latvia and the Nordic countries, an information seminar on the Nordic-Baltic mobility programmes, as well as exhibitions, film screenings and music performances. The two-day programme addressed various target audiences and created great interest among the public.

A similar event was held in Daugavpils in 2016.

Cooperation partners: Embassy of Sweden, Embassy of Norway, Embassy of Finland, Embassy of Denmark, Danish Cultural Institute, Liepāja City Council, Liepāja Concert Hall "Great Amber", Liepāja University, Liepāja Central Library of Science, other local partners

#SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Photo: Ansis Vegners/norden.lv



“Fostering Nordic-Baltic Innovation for Sustainability in the Russian-speaking Markets of Central Asia”

A matchmaking event intended to foster collaboration among clusters and SMEs in the Nordic-Baltic region and explore the joint exportability potential of energy solutions beyond the Nordic-Baltic region, e.g. Central Asia.

Cooperation partners: NEFCO, Nordic Innovation, Latvian Ministry of Economics, Cleantech Cluster, Embassy of Sweden, Embassy of Norway, Embassy of Finland, Latvian Investment and Development Agency



Photo: Ansis Vegners/norden.lv



Photo: Ansis Vegners/norden.lv

“Towards a Sustainable and Innovative Bioeconomy”

Several representatives from Baltic and Nordic countries gathered in Riga in order to share their insights regarding innovation and development in bioeconomy in the Nordic-Baltic region. The forum raised awareness of various innovation endeavors implemented in the region and initiated cross-sectoral institutional collaboration.

Cooperation partners: Latvian Ministry of Agriculture, Green Technology Incubator



Photo: Ansis Vegners/morden.lv



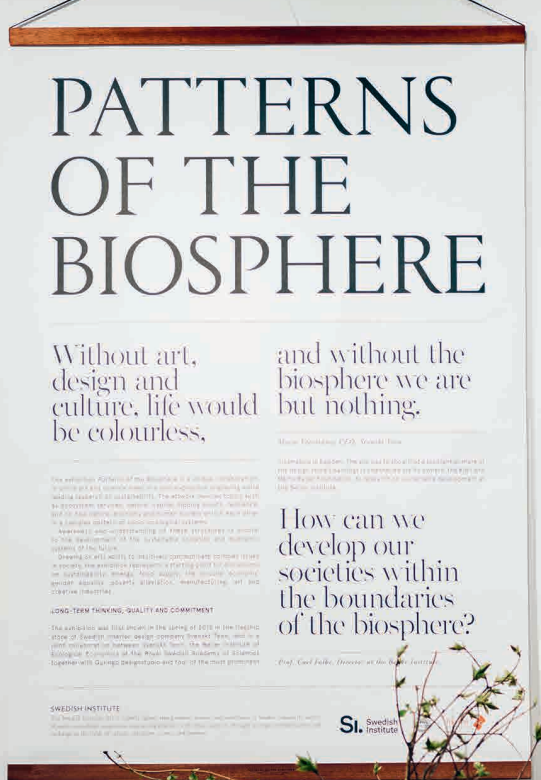
Photo: Ansis Vegners/morden.lv

“Nordic-Baltic Energy Perspectives: Climate Change, Energy Security and Exportability of Energy Solutions”

International conference on Nordic-Baltic energy perspectives aimed to identify challenges in energy security and set a vision for the future energy cooperation between Baltic and Nordic a regions. Issues on the agenda encompassed energy security, cybersecurity, market governance, as well as increased awareness of how renewable energy resources will impact the energy playground within the climate change regulatory framework.

More than the 120 participants and six Nordic keynote speakers took part. Connections between cyber security and energy governance were highlighted; discussions also touched upon the Nord-Stream 2 project and Nordic-Baltic cooperation in electricity markets.

Cooperation partners: Embassy of Norway, Embassy of Finland, Embassy of Sweden, Latvian Ministry of Economics, Cleantech Cluster, Latvian President's Chancellery



Exhibition "Patterns of the Biosphere"

The exhibition launch gathered more than 60 representatives from cross-sectoral institutions for an in-depth critical discussion on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and bioeconomy.

Bioeconomy and biotechnology are associated with about half of the 17 SDGs, which means that bioeconomy is of common concern for the entire society. The audience was encouraged to ponder on the hidden and not-so-hidden implications of mainstream bioeconomy initiatives, technologies and policies and the ensuing consequences, both positive and negative.

Photo: Ansis Vegners/morden.lv

Cooperation partner: Embassy of Sweden



Photo: Ansis Vagners/norden.lv



“Nordic-Baltic Solutions for Smarter Cities in the Region”

The conference aimed to address energy efficiency issues on all levels of governance – from state to municipalities and municipal SMEs – in order to facilitate the exchange of know-how among Nordic and Baltic energy actors. Practical examples of the current regulatory gaps were discussed and directions for the future development of smart cities were outlined, focusing on two areas in particular – district heating and mobility solutions, including integrated smart street lighting.

Site visits and demonstrations of smart city solutions in practice were organized to JSC Rīgas Siltums and its combined heat and power unit in Ziepniekkalns, as well as Jelgava City Council and Municipal Operative Information Centre and LED luminaire production facility VIZULO.

Cooperation partners: JSC Rīgas Siltums, Latvian Ministry of Economics, Latvian President's Chancellery Energy Security Commission, Embassy of Sweden, Embassy of Finland, Embassy of Denmark, Latvian Smart City Cluster, Nordic Energy Research

Photo: Ansis Vagners/norden.lv un Inga Puriņa/norden.lv

BSR Innovation Express

BSR Innovation Express is a BSR Stars (EUSBSR) programme that serves as a platform for cross-sectoral and regional match-making, thus enhancing the capacity of national clusters to work more efficiently at a regional level. It also boosts the transfer of best practices connected to smart use of resources, decent work and sustainable product/service design – values which have long been on the agenda of the Nordic countries as well as the EU.

During 2017 two cluster projects were implemented:

/ Latvian ICT Cluster together with their Swedish partners visited Astana, Kazakhstan, as part of a joint exportability project in Central Asia.

/ Latvian High Added Value and Healthy Food Cluster with their Danish partners developed smarter packaging for SMEs in food industry.

Latvian ICT Cluster has also received go-ahead for “X-Industry Hackathons for Corporate Customers” – a project that will be implemented in 2018 in collaboration with partners from Sweden and Norway. The objective is to boost cross-over digitalization by organizing hackathons in all the three countries.

TechChill Baltics

The Nordic perspective was present at *TechChill Baltics*, one of the biggest technology conferences in the Baltic countries, which brings together the world’s top-notch tech speakers.

In 2017 two Nordic speakers were invited – founder and angel investor Hampus Jakobsson (Sweden) and “Wonderloop” app founder and CEO Hanna Aase (Norway). While the former shared the secrets of attracting investment, the latter acquainted the public with the latest social media trends and challenges faced by women in the tech world.

Organiser: *TechHub Riga*



“Baltic Pathway Towards Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Development”

The international conference gathered Baltic officials in charge of environmental issues, who shared their views on the present conditions and future challenges of low carbon development in the region.

The conference was attended by Lithuanian Minister of Environment Kęstutis Navickas while Latvia and Estonia were represented by state secretaries of the respective ministries. Valuable high-level expertise was presented by the EU DG Environment and International Environment Agency.

Cooperation partners: Latvian Ministry of Environment Protection and Regional Development



Photo: Zane Purina

“Promoting Bioeconomy Opportunities in Local Partnerships”

A forum was organised to advance common understanding of bioeconomy as a concept and raise awareness about it among the different stakeholders interested in new approaches to regional development. Possibilities for closer cooperation, including cross-territorial and international projects, and new entrepreneurial initiatives in rural areas were explored.

The contribution of two esteemed Nordic experts – Jukka Lokka, Development Manager at Sydankylä Municipality (Finland) and sustainability consultant Mads Randbøll Wolff (Denmark) – was highly valued by the local communities.

The forum was attended by local action groups from more than 15 regions of Latvia.

Cooperation partner: Latvian Rural Forum



Photo: Ansis Vagners/morden.lv

Responsible Food Consumption and Reduction of Food Waste

A whole series of educational and interactive workshops, started in 2016, involved 168 students from four vocational schools in Rēzekne, Kandava, Saldus and Kuldīga. The project was designed to educate vocational students specialising in cookery about the principles of responsible food consumption and food waste.

The final event was organized together with chef Renārs Purmalis at Kārļamuiža Country Hotel.

Organiser: NGO "homo ecos"



Photo: Ansis Vegners/norden.lv

Photo: Ansis Vegners/norden.lv



“Clash-ter Night”

During an informal evening of honest discussions and sharing the limelight was directed at failure as an indispensable part of learning and reaching success.

Failure stories related to entrepreneurship, cluster building and personal development were shared by Kaspar Nielsen (Cluster Excellence Denmark), Gatis Zāmurs (Latvian Wood Construction Cluster), Evija Pudāne (Latvian Cleantech Cluster) and Oskars Priede (Riga Technical University).

The event was organized in the framework of the international conference COMP-INTER-INNO: COMPetitiveness, INTERNationalization and INNOVations.

Cooperation partner: Latvian Ministry of Economics

#SOCIAL WELFARE AND SECURITY

Photo: Ansis Vegners/norden.lv



"No Fighting, No Biting, No Screaming"

Two seminars devoted to ways of coping with problematic behaviour of children with special needs were held by Swedish-Danish clinical psychologist, experienced counsellor and lecturer specialising in autism and behavioural issues, Bo Hejlskov-Elvén. The aim of this project was to introduce his approach to Latvian education and care professionals and family members of the children concerned, presenting efficient and harmless problem-solving methods based on human dignity and children's rights.

The seminars were followed by the publication of Hejlskov-Elvén's book with the same title in Latvian.

*Organisers and supporters: NGO Association "Velki",
Embassy of Sweden*



Photo: NGO Association "Veiki"

Pedagogical Methods of Assistive Communication

Swedish habilitation expert Inger Lilja held two-day seminars in Bauska, Alūksne and Riga, where practitioners were presented with pedagogical methods applicable to children affected by different functional disorders, including autism. General information on the benefits of an inclusive society were also presented.

Parents were educated about practical methods, skills and steps that would help to foster their children's integration in local communities.

Organisers and supporters: NGO Association "Veiki", NGO Star of Hope (Sweden), NGO "Diakonijas centrs", pre-school educational institution "Saulspuķe" in Rundāle, Bauska Municipality, Alūksne District High School and Alūksne Municipality



Photo: NGO Resource Centre for Women MARTA

Barnahus Model and Children's Rights

The General Director of the Icelandic Government Agency for Child Protection, Bragi Guðbrandsson, and the Director of Barnahus in Iceland, Ólöf Ásta Farestveit, visited Latvia to participate in a conference for professionals working with sexually exploited children and their families.

The conference raised awareness among Latvian professionals of the *Barnahus* ("children's house") Model as a comprehensive way of working with sexually exploited children and their families. Both professionals also conducted a full-day training for psychologists on the forensic interviews of child victims and participated in a roundtable discussion at the Latvian Ministry of Justice.

Organisers and supporters: NGO "Dardedze", Latvian Ministry of Welfare, State Probation Service, State Police, Prosecutor General's Office, Courts Administration, Latvian Ministry of Justice.



Photo: NGO "Dardedze"

Combating Gender-Based Violence

Nordic gender equality experts were on several occasions invited to share the Nordic know-how and experience concerning the prevention of gender-based violence. A number of seminars and workshops were held, gathering local social workers, police, judges, prosecutors, health and education specialists.

Nordic experts provided much-needed insights into the gender-specific aspects of domestic violence cases, which in Latvia have not been duly studied yet.

Organisers and supporters: Latvian Ministry of Welfare, NGO Resource Centre for Women MARTA, Latvian Ministry of Interior, Latvian State Police, Latvian Judicial Training Centre, social service departments of Tukums and Liepāja, Embassy of Sweden, Embassy of Norway, Embassy of Finland

Integration of Asylum Seekers and Relocated Refugees

A roundtable on the integration of accepted asylum seekers, relocated and resettled refugees in the Baltic Sea Region was organised, thus raising the professional capacity of Latvian, Estonian and Lithuanian practitioners who work in public administration, municipalities and NGOs with asylum seekers and refugee issues.

Fifty local professionals and experts from UNHCR (Sweden), Denmark, Sweden and Iceland exchanged experiences on how resettlement and integration programs for refugees and asylum seekers can be managed and what they should encompass. Practitioner Bitten Holmer Flansmose from Denmark shared her experience with cross-cultural communication, civic guidance, municipal integration planning and provision of services to refugees.

Organisers and supporters: Society Integration Foundation of Latvia, UNHCR Regional Representation for Northern Europe, Latvian Ministry of Interior, Friedrich Ebert-Stiftung Country Office in Latvia



Photo: Ansis Vegners/norden.lv

#PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR 2018

Below, you will find some examples of projects planned for implementation during 2018 at the time of printing of this booklet. For latest updates, check www.norden.lv or follow us on www.facebook.com/norden.lv

29-30 June

LAMPA Breaking News & Measure Your Own Media

Literacy – news simulation game during the Conversation Festival LAMPA in Cesis; various activities in other Latvian cities during city festivals and other public occasions, drawing attention to the importance of awareness and reliability of media sources.

29-30 June

LAMPA – a Nordic panel on trust

– a Nordic-Baltic panel based on the report “Trust – the Nordic Gold”, that will focus on how the importance of trust in society.

26-27 January

“Empowering Quality Russian-Language Journalism in the Baltics”

– a needs-assessment forum targeting specifically Baltic Russian-speaking media practitioners. It will gather around forty editors and journalists from the leading minority journalism outlets, both national and hyper-local, as well as media academics from top journalism schools in the region.

26 April

“Wooden Architecture: History and Future in the Nordic-Baltic Region”

– the conference will highlight the latest trends in

wooden architecture and the construction sector in general. The focus will lie on upcycling, energy efficiency and health issues, particularly in relation to contemporary architecture and possible developments in the future. Target audience: architects, developers, policy makers, climate change experts, sustainable building specialists and social sustainability activists.

30 May

“Green to Scale” launching event in Riga

– particular attention will be paid to residential heating, wind energy and smart mobility. “Green to Scale” is part of the “Nordic Green to Scale” initiative, which analyses the potential, costs and benefits of scaling up Nordic climate solutions. The project aims to contribute to stronger climate action and boosting Nordic exports.

18-20 September

Baltic Sea Region 5G

Ecosystem Forum – with smart mobility, smart city and e-health in focus. The forum will seek coordinated steps to create a platform for the Baltic Sea region community, businesses and consumers for the development of a healthy 5G ecosystem.

10-11 May

“Book Museums and Their Audience”

– an international seminar will gather librarians, museum representatives, museology theoreticians and designers for mutual sharing of experiences in relation to visitor-centred book exhibitions. Special attention will be paid to the existing challenges and possible solutions. Speakers from Denmark and Finland will be invited.

18-31 October

“Nordic Highlights”

at Riga International Film Festival

2018 – the film programme will retain its spot at the Riga International Film Festival. Screenings of the most recent Nordic films will be complemented by various industry events with the participation of film professionals.

17-18 May

“The Challenge of Climate

Change: from Science to

Society” – conference will strive to define the role of universities in educating about climate change, contributing to public debate and policy making and cooperating with business community in relation to climate change and its socioeconomic, political and ethical impacts.

1 March

Accessibility Mapping –

a planning meeting and a seminar with the Norwegian governmental agency Kartverket will delve into the methodologies and practices of accessibility mapping and the relevant legislative framework.

Children at Risk of Exploitation and Trafficking

– training professionals and finding good practices in the identification and referral of children at risk of exploitation and trafficking is a joint project between the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Council of the Baltic Sea States. Training seminars and meetings with youngsters are on the agenda.

Prevention of Violence and Maltreatment of Children

– Nordic-Baltic follow-up activity on the prevention of violence and maltreatment of children will be conducted in the framework of a cooperation project between the Nordic Council of Ministers and the World Health Organisation.

11-12 October

Nordic Days in Valmiera

– the well-received regional outreach, organised jointly with Nordic embassies in Latvia, will be continued – this time in Valmiera.

#FUNDING SCHEMES

The Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Latvia serves as the administrative body and local contact point for several Nordic-Baltic grant programmes. Here you will find information about different funding schemes offered by the Nordic Council of Ministers that are relevant for Latvia.

Nordic-Baltic Mobility Programme for Public Administration is designed for civil servants of all administrative levels, encouraging the exchange of ideas and expertise, providing opportunities for networking and promoting the harmonisation of working standards, thereby raising the competitiveness of the Baltic Sea Region in the increasingly globalized world. The programme comprises study visits, internships, and network activities, where partners from three or more Nordic and Baltic countries are involved.

In 2017, Latvian applicants received funding for 19 projects, and 1 approved project featured Latvia as a participant country. The successful applications covered a wide range of topics: culture as a tool for municipal development, education and management, children with special needs, corporate governance in state-owned enterprises, green public procurement and planning, digitalisation of building processes, migration, social inclusion and media policy.

www.nb8grants.org

Nordic-Baltic Mobility Programme for Culture aims to enhance cultural and artistic collaboration in the Nordic and Baltic countries by supporting travelling, networking and residential activities. It provides artists and cultural practitioners with an opportunity to gain new contacts, exchange resources and skills, present artistic and cultural productions, raise public interest in the Nordic and Baltic arts and share sources of inspiration. The programme is becoming increasingly popular, which was manifested by a large number of applicants in 2017. During the year, Latvian applicants submitted 113 applications, of which 26 were granted support. All in all, the approved Latvian applications were divided in the following way: 21 grants for individual or small group mobility, 3 short-term network projects, 2 artist residencies. In addition, participants from Latvia were involved in 8 short-term network projects submitted by other countries.

www.nordiskkulturkontakt.org

Nordic-Baltic Grant Programme for NGOs is intended for NGOs from the Baltic States and its aim is to support the development of a strong and dynamic civil society in the

Baltic Sea Region by giving the local NGOs an opportunity for capacity increase by learning from the experiences and know-how of their Nordic counterparts. Eligible projects must include at least three partners from the Nordic and Baltic countries. Five projects from Latvia received support within the Nordic-Baltic NGO programme in 2017, out of which four are still ongoing. The topics supported were financial sustainability of civil society organisations, training of young debate leaders, Roma culture and history, capacity building for social start-ups' as well as local NGO leaders.

www.norden.lv

Practice in Nordic

Institutions is a programme designed for the promotion and strengthening of collaboration between Latvian public sector, NGOs and Nordic Council of Ministers' institutions and cooperative bodies. Funding is allocated for visits, networking, and participation in conferences. In 2017, five professional capacity building visits were organized. Experts, civil servants, librarians, NGOs and academia representatives – 24 persons in

total – visited Nordic institutions in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland. The destination institutions were Nordregio, Nordic Energy Research, NORDICOM and Nordic House in Reykjavik, where such diverse and currently topical issues as energy, democracy and media were discussed and experiences shared.

www.norden.lv

Education Programme

NORDPLUS promotes lifelong learning and aims to strengthen cooperation between the Nordic and Baltic countries on all levels of education. The programme supports Nordic and Baltic cross-border mobility among students and teachers as well as joint projects and networks between Nordic and Baltic institutions and organizations. Nordplus consist of five sub-programmes covering the entire educational sector. In Latvia the programme is administered by the State Education Development Agency. During the year, 74 applications from Latvia were submitted, and 39 were approved. The highest number of project applications was submitted to the Nordplus Junior subprogramme.

www.viaa.gov.lv

#OUR TEAM

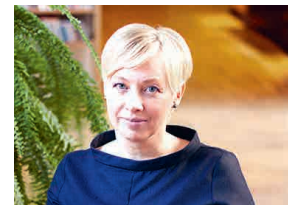
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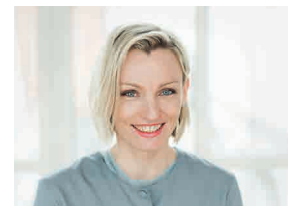
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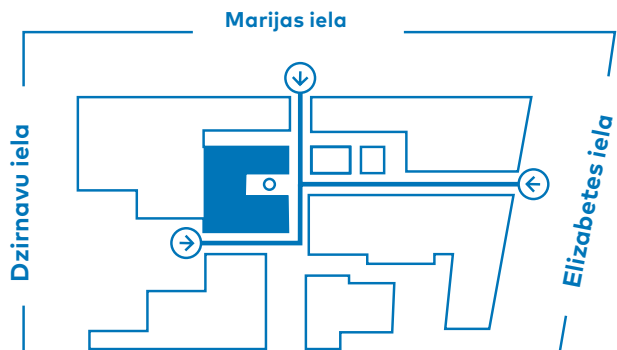


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