

Nordic Newsletter

Nordic events and activities in Latvia

November 2020

Recent events

Barbershop Conference 2020

Public debate on gender equality often lacks the men's point of view. The international conference on men's role in promoting gender equality in modern society that was held in Riga and online on October 22 offered a platform for dialogue and discussion on the important issue. The Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia in cooperation with NCM Latvia invited a range of experts, state and municipal officials and representatives from civic society to engage and reflect on questions related to men's wellbeing and challenges facing fathers, employers, employees and men's role in promoting gender equality.

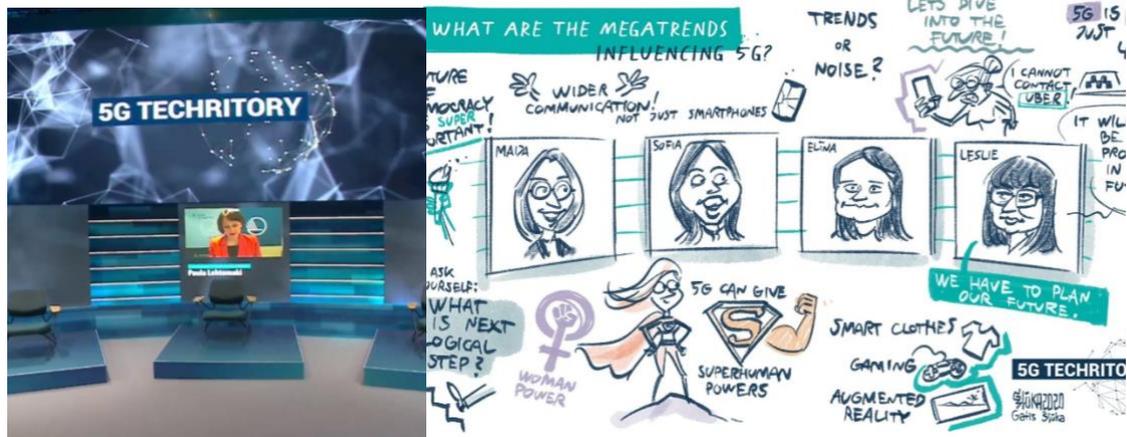


Mogens Jensen, the Danish Minister for Food, Fisheries and Equal Opportunities and Minister for Nordic Cooperation, opened the conference by highlighting two important perspectives on the issue; first men and boys need to be partners in promoting women's empowerment – they have to support ending the gender discrimination. Secondly, we have to acknowledge that men and boys have their own challenges and they should also benefit from increased equal opportunities. Minister Jensen added that it might seem provocative to focus on men's problems while women face the majority of discrimination, but the one does not exclude the other – it's the first step towards a modern policy on gender equality.

Nordic participation at 5G Techritory 2020

The third annual Baltic Sea Region 5G ecosystem forum "5G Techritory 2020" was held in Riga on November 11-12 to review a year of experience since the tentative rollout of the technology in the region and to look ahead for what the future of 5G brings. NCM Secretary General Paula Lehtomäki gave her opening remarks by stressing the importance of digital

innovation for the Nordic cooperation and urging Nordic and Baltic countries to take advantage of their position as one of the world’s most integrated regions in digital development. Furthermore, Morten Friis Møller, NCM Senior Advisor and team leader on Digital Governance mentioned talked about the driving forces behind the implementation of 5G in the region. Mr. Møller pointed out the fact that we are small countries – so we need to cooperate on advanced testbeds, encourage development of business cases and bring new services to the market.



“What are the megatrends influencing 5G?” was the question our colleague Maija Käle, Advisor for Digitalisation and Sustainability, asked the when she opened the panel discussion with three female leaders from the tech industry. The panel shared their understanding of what key megatrends that are likely to influence 5G technology over the next decades, discussing why its important to envision the future, the challenges and opportunities that lies ahead and topics such as gender equality and diversity in the industry.

“IKONER” – An Exhibition about the Right to Exist

In cooperation with the Swedish Embassy, Fotografiska in Stockholm and the Glada Hudik-teatern, the exhibition “ICONS” opened at the culture centre Sigulda DEVONS on November 11 and will be on display until December 10. It shows people with Downs syndrome taking the centre stage as rulers, queens’ dancers and whomever they dream of being.



In addition, the exhibition “Pippi Celebrate” is still on display in Daugavpils and the project “Fake ≠ Fact” is presented together with UNESCO Latvia at Madona Library. *The Fake ≠ Fact Info Lab* looks to raise awareness of the spread of misinformation and teach information literacy and source criticism.

Nordic Literature Week 2020

This year’s Nordic Literature Week is organised annually by the Confederation of Norden Association (*Foreningene Nordens Forbund*), and was this year held between November 9 to 15. The initiative brought Nordic readings, exhibitions and cultural experiences to 250 libraries in Latvia and were devoted to the topic *The Nordics in the World*. Among the contributions were the Norwegian children’s book “Everybody Counts” / «Visi skaitās» by Kristin Roskifte, which was donated by The Norwegian Embassy, in cooperation with NCM Latvia.

On display: Finnish photo exhibition “Relating Latvia”

From the 12th of November to 13th of December, the solo exhibition of Finnish photographer Henrik Dunker “[Relating Latvia](#)” can be seen at the Latvian Museum of Photography. Through his photos Mr. Dunker gives his reflections on Latvia and the last eighteen years he has spent here.

Baltic and Nordic youth spoke out on elections

On November 17, NCM Latvia invited youth councils from Baltic and Nordic countries to the webinar “Young and Free to Vote?” to share their views on elections as a pivotal element of political engagement for young people. The webinar was the final stage of the NCM-financed project *Digital Democracy in Schools*, which started in 2019 and saw high-school students test a digital system of mock elections in the run-up to the European Parliament elections.

The mock elections are meant to raise awareness and teach students of pre-voting age about democratic processes by arranging debates, campaigning and finally, casting a vote. The essence of the discussion was the long-standing tradition of having these educational experiments at Nordic schools. Among the participants at the webinar were Rut Einarsdottir from Iceland, Daniel Honoré Jensen from Denmark, Aivar Kamal from Estonia, Urte Petrulyte from Lithuania and Emils Anškens from the National Youth Council of Latvia.

Norwegian-supported conference on Whistle-blowers

In 2019 Latvia introduced the *Whistleblowing Law*, which provides legal basis for citizens to securely support possible violations that are related to their work and can harm the public interest. This new law is the background for the online conference “Whistleblowing: The Next Level” which was held on November 5-6, organised by Transparency International (Delna) –

with support from the EEA and Norway Grants-program in Latvia. The programme featured participation from a Norwegian whistle-blower.

Webinar on Trust-Based Public Management by Swedish expert

The Nordic region has a uniquely high level of trust, both in society and in each other – which was outlined in the NCM publication “[Trust – The Nordic Gold](#)” from 2017. The publication inspired NCM Latvia to initiate a project, that throughout the last couple of years has resulted in a range of public discussions and activities here in Latvia. In 2020, the Latvian State Chancellery has had values as the theme for its yearly development programme for high-level state officials, and NCM Latvia already for a Danish speaker for the first seminar in January this year.

On November 13 Louise Bringselius, associate professor in Management Studies and Lund University in Sweden delivered an online lecture to Latvian high-level state officials on the topic of “Trust Based Management”. Prof. Bringselius shared valuable experiences from her work as the Head of Research at “Tillitsdeligationen”, the Government Commission for Trust-Based Public Management in Sweden, underlining the positive effects that building a culture of trust can have on all aspects of an organisation. The main message was that a large administration with excessive measuring and focus on detail control does not always lead to better quality or performances – a trust-based approach can lead to increased productivity, better working environment and health, as well as increased tolerance for difference in the workplace.

Pitching for a Better Baltic Sea

On October 28-29, the Danish Cultural Institute in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and partners from Creative Ports held the online event “Pitching for a Better Baltic Sea”, which brought together entrepreneurs from Denmark, Estonia, Latvia and Germany to pitch their own ideas on how to make the Baltic Sea Region a better place to live. In the end, the winner of the pitching competition was the Estonian company Kira Shoes, that makes shoes from recycled car tires. In addition, there were several keynote sessions and a concert by the Latvian artist Chris Noah.

HARMONIC VOICES – Celebrating 30 years

Danish Cultural Institute in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania celebrated their 30th anniversary on the 28th of October by launching the project “Harmonic Voices”. Due to the current COVID-19 situation, much of the celebration took place online including the greetings from the former director of the Danish Cultural Institute in Latvia - Rikke Helms, and the former foreign minister of Denmark Uffe Elleman Jensen. There were also musical performances, live-streamed from all four countries.

Coming events

November 25

Stockholm School of Economics Riga organises the “Reinventing Media Business”- forum which will take place online – free of charge! Read the full programme and register following this [link](#).

November 26

The publicly accessible online summit “Toward Data-Driven Health: Sharing is Caring” will take place. The summit is organized by the Ministry of Health, the National Health Service, the American Chamber of Commerce in Latvia, with support from NCM Latvia. It aims to highlight the need for an efficient, patient-centred healthcare data strategy, to generate practice-based recommendations, and to facilitate its development and introduction in Latvia. The online summit is free of charge but requires prior registration. Read more about the agenda and register [here](#).

November 26

The media conference "Empowering Quality Russian-language Journalism in Baltics" will take place online and feature high-ranking public service and other media professionals and experts discuss the challenges and threats for a strong, competitive Russian-language media landscape in Baltics. The event finalises the NCM-funded project *Strengthening inclusive Baltic Journalism in a Digital Environment*. For more info and live stream follow this [link](#).

November 26

The Ambassador of Norway, Kristian Ødegaard is invited by the Latvian Trade Union of Education and Science Employees (LIZDA) to the RigaTV 24 programme "Education. Power. LIZDA" at 21'o clock to talk about social dialogue in Norway. The TV programme is a part of the Norway Grants Social dialogue project which LIZDA carries out in partnership with Utdanningsforbundet Alta (Norway).

November 27

Two online seminars will be held on November 27 and December 2 on the issue of district heating. The events will be organized in collaboration with Danish Board of District Heating and Latvian District Heating Association. The seminars are free of charge and you can sign up and get a link by sending an email to inelej@um.dk.