

A photograph of the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights) in shades of green and blue, set against a dark, starry night sky. The lights appear as soft, flowing curtains of light, with some brighter spots visible. The bottom of the image shows a dark, silhouetted horizon line.

Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Latvia

Annual Report 2015

Foreword

A core function of the Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Latvia is to serve as a bridge-builder between Nordic and Latvian partners in a wide range of topical cooperation fields. A central tool is networking with knowledgeable, experienced and creative partners in the Nordic countries and in Latvia. We would

like to extend our warm thanks to all our contacts and cooperation partners in 2015 for providing us with inspiration, ideas and support for the benefit of solid Nordic-Latvian links and cooperation.



Jan Widberg
Director

< Photo: Reinis Oliņš

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One of the core functions of the Office is to produce a steady flow of public events in order to present relevant Nordic topics for Latvian audiences. Likewise, the Office strives to bring together participants from Latvia and Nordic countries in order to share and discuss a wide range of issues within literature, arts and politics. Here follows a number of examples of the Office's outreach events in 2015.

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This activity track covers a wide range of fields related to the various internal and external challenges of the globalized modern welfare society.

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The development of independent Russian-language media in the Baltic States is a major and essential challenge. Russian residents in Latvia, as well as in Estonia and Lithuania, almost exclusively consume media – news, current affairs, entertainment, and others – made in mainland Russia. Access to a broad choice of independent media is a cornerstone in a living democracy. It is a means of providing knowledge which enables active participation in democratic social and political processes.

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Mission

The overarching directives for the work of the Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Latvia, founded in 1991, are laid out in the Guidelines for the Nordic Council of Ministers' Cooperation with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which were adopted at the Nordic Council Session on 30 October 2013.

The Office in Latvia has a central role in facilitating and implementing Nordic cooperation with Latvia in various fields, on various issues and in various forms.

An important tool for the execution of this function is to maintain, nurture and develop networks of contacts in the Nordic countries as well as in Latvia. By consistent and persistent contacts and cooperation with local partners, the Office has managed to build an extensive network covering actors within all relevant aspects of its responsibilities. The network includes actors at ministerial and state agency level, as well as public institutions, other international organizations, academia and NGOs. The Office enjoys close and regular contacts with the embassies of the Nordic countries in Latvia.

Another aspect of the bridge-building role is to cater for Nordic visibility and supply a credible Nordic representation in various cooperation formats. This aspect spans a diversity of activities, all the way from public outreach activities to full-fledged joint Nordic-Baltic cooperation projects. During 2015, the Office placed great emphasis on events and cooperation activities that reinforce its role as a visible, constructive and credible Nordic partner.

In 2015, the Office staff consisted of seven persons. The work of the Office followed a number of tracks: culture, social welfare and safety, business and innovation, media support, as well as democracy and good governance. The Office also continued to accommodate the Secretariat of the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture, and in the latter part of 2015 provided space for the Baltic Centre for Media Excellence. Some highlights from the Office's work are described in the following pages.

One of the core functions of the Office is to produce a steady flow of public events in order to present relevant Nordic topics for Latvian audiences. Likewise, the Office strives to bring together participants from Latvia and Nordic countries in order to share and discuss a wide range of issues within literature, arts and politics. Here follows a number of examples of the Office's outreach events in 2015.



Nordic Contemporary Architecture Exhibition “Nordic ID”

tries to decipher what the modern Nordic identity is all about and how it is reflected in architecture. The exhibition shows 25 different architecture projects which in various ways reflect the qualities of contemporary Nordic architecture: its high quality, respect for nature, simplicity and modesty. During 2015 the NCM Office in Latvia organized the exhibition's tour in Latvian regions – in Ventspils, Madona and Cēsis.

*Cooperation partners:
Latvian Museum of Architecture,
Embassy of Norway,
Embassy of Sweden,
Embassy of Finland,
Embassy of Estonia.*

< Photo: NCM Office in Latvia Photo Archive



“Northern Lights” video installation, Riga Light Festival “Staro Rīga”

organised as part of the annual Riga lights festival, launched the upcoming 25th anniversary of the Office in 2016. The video artwork provided a unique opportunity to experience the miracle of *aurora borealis* from Northern Norway and to get acquainted with the old beliefs and legends surrounding this natural phenomenon. The light object/video installation “Northern Lights” resulted from cooperation between Norwegian photographer Kjetil Skogli and Latvian composer Ēriks Ešenvalds, initially supported from the Nordic-Baltic mobility programme “Culture”. The “Northern Lights” video show was attended by ca 5000 people. The project was widely appreciated, as it received the third place in a public voting on the most beautiful light object of the entire festival, competing with 41 other projects: kultura/news/cultureenvironment/balsojuma-noskaidrots-skaistakais-staro-riga-2015-objekts.d?id=46750851

Cooperation partners:

Embassy of Norway,

“Musica Baltica”,

Bergs Bazaar,

Lights Festival “Staro Rīga”.

"Nordic Highlights" and Nordic Noir at the Riga International Film Festival 2015.

The NCM Office took an active part in both initiating and opening the Nordic film program "Nordic Highlights" at the Riga International Film Festival (RIFF) taking place on October 15-25. The Nordic film program, comprising films by internationally acclaimed as well as new directors from Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Iceland, displayed a contemporary take of Nordic filmmaking.

In addition to the film screenings, those interested in the unbelievable success story of the dark and gloomy Nordic crime genre could attend a lecture by the Nordic Noir expert Kerstin Bergman, followed by the screening of film "Insomnia" (Erik Skjoldbjærg, 1997).

vimeo.com/144474662

rigaiff.lv/2015/en/category/films-cat/nordic-highlights/

Cooperation partners:

Riga International Film Festival,

Danish Cultural Institute,

Embassy of Denmark,

Embassy of Norway,

Embassy of Sweden,

Embassy of Finland.

> Photo: Andrejs Strokina

The Secret No





Nordic-Baltic Choir Festival,

celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2015, was the major closing event of the Latvian EU Presidency's culture program. The choir festival gathered about 10 000 singers from Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland. The festival was organised by the Latvian Ministry of Culture and the National Centre for Culture, with the NCM Office in Latvia serving as an information partner.

nordicbalticchoir.lv

Photo: Reinis Oligš





CĒSIS MĀKSLAS FESTIVĀLS

'15

Cēsis Art Festival

is an annual art festival organized since 2007 in the picturesque town of Cēsis. In 2015 the art festival focused on Nordic countries – the search for Nordic identity and its manifestations in visual arts, music, film and architecture. The festival program comprised more than 20 events, including the Baltic and Nordic contemporary art exhibition “Distant Moods on a Blue Evening” by 11 artists. It also featured Nordic contemporary architecture exhibition “Nordic ID”, contemporary dance performance “Our Social Democratic Bodies” by Maija Hirvanen (Finland), documentary “Liv & Ingmar. A Love Story. Painfully Connected”, avant-garde film program “The North”, concert “In the Light of the Northern Lighthouse”, and many more. The NCM Office in Latvia was the festival’s cooperation partner, contributing both financially and content-wise.

cesufestivals.lv

< Photo: *cesufestivals.lv*

A travelling exhibition about the legendary Norwegian actress Liv Ullmann and the widely acclaimed Swedish filmmaker Ingmar Bergman is composed of film stills,

behind-the-scenes images and special portraits, reflecting personal and professional relationship between the two celebrities. During 2015, the NCM Office in Latvia organized the exhibition's tour through Jaunjelgava, Rundāle, Tukums, Cēsis, Bauska, Madona, Jēkabpils and Valmiera.

Cooperation partners:

*Riga International Film Festival,
Norwegian Film Institute,
Embassy of Norway.*

Photo: Riga International Film Festival



Regional visits

The NCM Office director, Jan Widberg, visited local municipalities, schools, libraries and enterprises in connection with the Swedish Days – this year in Talsi and Daugavpils. Meetings were held with local government representatives and various future cooperation options discussed. In the eastern city of Daugavpils the NCM Office director opened the exhibition of the Swedish Crime literature at the Latgale Central Library.

Cooperation partners:

*Embassy of Sweden,
Latgale Central Library.*

^ Photo: NCM Office in Latvia Photo Archive



Nordic Library Week,

organized in Latvia for the 18th time, covered more than 350 public and school libraries, kindergartens and community centres in Latvia. This year's theme was "Friendship in the North", which aimed at highlighting various facets of the notion of friendship, viewing it from unusual and sometimes unexpected angles.

bibliotek.org

Cooperation partners:

Latvian National Library and Föreningen Norden.

Illustration: Sara Lundberg, Sverige

A special feature of the public outreach activities are literary events and lectures. Here are some examples from 2015.

“Finnish comics phenomenon” –

public lecture by Ville Hänninen, Finnish comics journalist, critic and chairman of the Finnish Comics Society.

vimeo.com/121460470

Cooperation partners:

*University of Latvia,
Comics anthology *kuši*,
Embassy of Finland.*

“Life here and in the darkness” –

public lecture by Viktors Freibergs, film expert and university lecturer, based on the Icelandic film “Angels of the Universe” (2000) directed by Fridrik Thor Fridriksson. The story is based on Einar Már Gudmundsson’s novel by the same name, which is an ironic, semi-fictional story about living in two realities.

“The Red Nose Day” –

opening of the Finnish writer’s **Mikko Rimminen** latest book and its translation into Latvian.



Cooperation partners:

*Publishing house Jumava,
Embassy of Finland,
FILI.*

^ Photo: NCM Office in Latvia Photo Archive

Literary event with Finnish writer Salla Simukka,
author of the international success story
"The Snow White Trilogy".

vimeo.com/139954784

Cooperation partners:
publishing house "Zvaigzne ABC",
Embassy of Finland, FILI,
Finnish Literature Exchange.

"An Injection of Swedish Humor" – literary event
focusing on the worldwide success of contemporary Swedish
literature. The event featured a discussion on the challenges
of aging society and its depiction in literature.

Cooperation partners:
publishing houses "Zvaigzne ABC",
"Jānis Roze",
"Latvijas avīze".

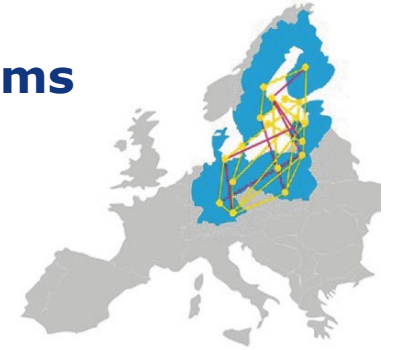
Literary event **"In the Crosswind"** with the participation
of the Nordic and Baltic writers – Rosa Liksom from Finland,
Sigitas Parulskis and Undine Radzeviciute from Lithuania
and Meelis Friedenthal from Estonia.

The event aimed to promote the Nordic Library week's
cooperation network and was a launching event of the new
Nordic writers' visits program in the Baltic countries.

vimeo.com/151632930

Cooperation partners:
Föreningen Norden,
NCM Office in Estonia,
NCM Office in Lithuania.

Specific cultural projects and programs



Culturability BSR – Culture for Sustainable Development in the Baltic Sea Region

Culturability BSR is one of the flagship projects listed in the
2013 Action Plan of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.
The project has been led by the Nordic Council of Ministers in
partnership with the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage
of Poland and the Government of Schleswig-Holstein. The
Danish Cultural Institute functioned as a consultant and
supporting organisation.

The overall objective of the project was to promote the
awareness of culture as a driver for sustainable development
and to encourage the multiplication of good/best/next practices
for culture and sustainability in the Baltic Sea Region. The
project focused on three fields: urban development, creative
industries and social innovation.

During 2015 the project was followed up by meetings and
workshops, and integrated as part of a number of BSR regional
policy conferences. At the end of 2015 a project application for
the continuation of the Culturability BSR was submitted to the
NCM Secretariat for further funding.

vimeo.com/129872316
culturability.lv

< Photo: NCM Office in Latvia Photo Archive

International Conference “Cultural and Creative Crossovers”

Workshop “**Cultural and Creative Crossovers for a Sustainable World**” was part of the Latvian EU Presidency conference “CULTURAL AND CREATIVE CROSSOVERS – Partnering culture with other sectors to maximize creativity, growth and innovation”. The workshop also presented “Culturability BSR” project, raising the following questions: How can we make sustainability a part of all cultural processes? How do we do this most efficiently? What are the next steps we need to take? How do we connect across sectors?

*Cooperation partners:
Danish Cultural Institute,
Latvian Ministry of Culture.*

Photo: radilatvija.lv/lv/radi-hronika

NORDIC-BALTIC MOBILITY PROGRAMME



Culture

Nordic-Baltic Mobility Programme “Culture”

The overall objective of the Nordic-Baltic Mobility Programme “Culture” is to enhance cultural and artistic collaboration in the Nordic and Baltic countries by supporting traveling, networking activities and artists’ residencies.

Interest about the programme is growing, manifested by the large number of applicants. During last year Latvian applicants submitted 126 applications, of which 27 were granted support. All in all Latvian applicants received EUR 246 890, divided in the following way: 20 individual or small group mobility grants, 3 short-term network projects, 2 long-term network projects, 2 artists’ residencies. In addition, participants from Latvia are involved in 4 short-term network projects and 2 long-term network projects submitted by other countries.

kulturkontaktnord.org

SOCIAL WELFARE AND SAFETY

**This activity track
covers a wide range
of fields related to the
various internal and
external challenges of
the globalized modern
welfare society**

Combating Trafficking in Human Being

“Trafficking in Human Beings – Border Regional Co-operation.

Part II: Trafficking in Human Beings with Focus on Forced Labour, Children and Sexual Exploitation” (2014-2015).

The final activities under responsibility of the NCM Office in Latvia were implemented.

*Cooperation partners:
Ministry of Interior.*



“Preventing exploitation and trafficking of children”

is a joint project devised by the CBSS Child Unit and the Nordic Council of Ministers as a follow-up to the EU co-funded CBSS project “PROTECT Children on the Move”. NCM in this project is represented by the NCM Office in Latvia.

The project is implemented via a series of training seminars about handling child victims and children who are at risk of exploitation and trafficking. The training is tailored for caseworkers and case officers such as social and child protection workers, immigration officers and border guards, police officers, prosecutors and judges who are involved in decision making, case management, service delivery and awareness raising. The overall aim of the project is to foster networking, cooperation and trust among officials and professionals from the Nordic and Baltic countries as well as Northwest Russia.

*Cooperation partners:
Ministry of Welfare.*

“Gendered Violence – Nordic-Baltic Dialogue and Expert Round Table Seminar”

focused on gender-based violence in close relations, new forms of trafficking in human beings (e.g., shame marriages) as well as web-based criminal activities. Judging from the positive feedback from the audience, these issues were considered highly relevant by Latvian professionals.

*Cooperation partners:
NBNP (Det Nordisk-Baltiske Politikvinnernettverk).*

< Photo: NCM Office in Latvia Archive

Summer session of the Nordic Council Citizens' and Consumer Rights Committee

was held in Riga. Discussion themes revolved around combat of human trafficking, which entailed a two-day agenda of meetings with all the local key actors in this field.

Cooperation partners:

Saeima Committee for Human Rights,

Ministry of Interior,

Ministry of Welfare,

Prosecutors' General Office,

State Police,

NGO "Resource centre for women "Marta" and

"Shelter "Save house".

Gender Equality and Family Issues

International conference "Free and Safe-Cross-institutional cooperation for preliminary protection, rehabilitation for victims of violence and perpetrators of violence: Best practices and challenges"

gathered 200 participants – several experts from the Nordic countries and local professionals working with victims of domestic and gender violence. These included state and



municipal police officers, social workers, family doctors, NGOs, crisis and counselling centres as well as decision- and policy makers. The conference focused on devising an efficient cross-institutional collaboration model, adoption of policies and sharing of best practices with regard to community responses to domestic violence in the Nordics and Latvia. Nordic experts brought the added value of sharing *knowledge on gender aspects in dealing with intimate partners' violence*, which is currently not available for studies in Latvia. The main outcome of the project was the empowerment of practitioners to develop more flexible cross-institutional collaboration models in local communities.

Cooperation partners:

Ministry of Welfare,

Ministry of Interior,

Embassy of Finland,

NGO Resource centre for women "Marta",

NGO Alternativ til Vold,

The International Women's Club of Riga (IWCR).

^ Photo: NCM Office in Latvia Archive



A seminar for professionals working with perpetrators of violence

was delivered by Inger Brit Line and her team from *Alternativ til Vold*, targeting psychologists and social workers from various Latvian municipalities, Latvian State Police, Riga municipality police officers, State Probation officers and experts from MARTA Resource Centre for Women.

Cooperation partners:

NGO "Resource centre for women "Marta"",
NGO *Alternativ til vold*,
Ministry of Welfare,
Embassy of Finland,
Embassy of Sweden.

^ Photo: NCM Office in Latvia Archive

Exploring new areas for action in future – integration of persons with special needs in labour market and society; support to children and youth who are at risk for social exclusion.

During 2015 the NCM Office was exploring possibilities of cooperation concerning persons with special needs. Updates on current situation and needs were gathered from representatives of different interest organisations.

Labour Migration

Project "Enhanced Nordic-Baltic cooperation on challenges of labour mobility in the Nordic-Baltic region 2014-2015".

In the frame of the project an experts' round table discussion on labour migration was arranged on August 21, where the researchers from NORDREGIO met with researchers and senior officials from Latvia in order to discuss the challenges and current developments of labour migration in the Nordic-Baltic region. NCM Office in Latvia assisted to NORDREGIO with distribution of the questionnaire to local municipalities in Latvia and collecting the responses.

Cooperation partners:

NCM Offices in Estonia and Lithuania,
NORDREGIO,
The Latvian Association of Local and
Regional Governments (LALRG).

The intra-EU mobility conference "How to improve Intra-European Mobility and Circular Migration? Fostering Diaspora Engagement".

NCM Office assisted with finding Nordic experts as well as Nordic and Baltic participants.

Cooperation partners:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Latvian Institute of International Affairs.

Societal Security

Societal security is a concept that refers to the capacity of society as a whole to prevent, manage and recover from various threats, spanning from natural hazards to intentional man-made threats such as terrorism. The Office has cooperated with the **Nordic Societal Security Research Programme** coordinated by NORDFORSK in order to explore the possibilities to expand the research programme with a **Nordic-Baltic strand**. The plan is to run a Nordic-Baltic societal security workshop in Riga in early fall 2016.

Cooperation partners:
NORDFORSK,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

International seminar and book presentation “Societal security: 25 years after and beyond”.

Arranged together with the Centre for International Studies at the University of Latvia and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, in order to discuss the significance of the human and gender security issues in the Baltic Sea Region.

Cooperation partners:
Center for International Studies in Latvia,
Konrad Adenauer Stiftung in Latvia.

The Riga Conference 2015, a high level political forum, organized by LATO (Latvian Transatlantic Organization) welcomed over 500 participants from more than 40 countries worldwide. The Office sponsored the conference.

Cooperation partners:
LATO.

Photo: NCM Office in Latvia Photo Archive



BUSINESS AND INNOVATION

The Nordic-Baltic Mobility program within the field of Business and Innovation was concluded successfully during 2015. In 2016, the office will turn towards the field of Sustainable Economic and Social Development, and start developing competencies and cooperation on issues such as green growth, bioeconomy, energy efficiency, and social innovation.



Nordic-Baltic Mobility and Network Programme “Business and Industry”

The Nordic-Baltic Mobility program within the field of Business and Innovation was concluded successfully during 2015. In 2016, the office will turn towards the field of Sustainable Economic and Social Development, and start developing competencies and cooperation on issues such as green growth, bioeconomy, energy efficiency, and social innovation.

< Photo: NCM Office in Latvia Archive

BSR Stars

The Office facilitated NCMs efforts in finally establishing a structure for the functioning of BSR Stars network in Latvia. Via contacts in the Ministry of Economy, Latvian in-kind contribution to the project has been defined and a suitable contact person for the future BSR Stars operation in Latvia has been selected. The person is an employee of the Latvian Investment and Development Agency, which operates under the auspices of the Latvian Ministry of Economy.



Seminar “Fashion and Design: Trends, Business, Creativity”

Competition for Young Fashion Designers “Habitus Baltija 2015”

The seminar was organised in order to bolster the export capacity and the competitiveness of Latvian fashion designers and textile industry companies by offering the know-how of foreign experts. Swedish expert Margareta van den Bosch was invited to chair the jury panel at the competition of young fashion designers “Habitus Baltija 2015”.

Cooperation partners:

International Exhibition Company BT1.



Nordic-Baltic Business Forum 2015 “Moving forward – Innovation driven competitiveness and growth”

The Office part-funded the Forum.

Organisers:

Norwegian,

Swedish,

Finnish and Danish Chambers of Commerce in Latvia,

Embassy of Norway, Embassy of Finland,

Embassy of Sweden, Embassy of Denmark,

DNB Bank,

Stockholm School of Economics in Riga,

HD FestForest and GatewayBaltic.

^ Photo: facebook.com/NordicBalticBusinessForum/photos

SUPPORTING INDEPENDENT MEDIA

The development of independent Russian – language media in the Baltic States is a major and essential challenge. Russian residents in Latvia, as well as in Estonia and Lithuania, almost exclusively consume media – news, current affairs, entertainment, and others – made in mainland Russia. Access to a broad choice of independent media is a cornerstone in a living democracy. It is a means of providing knowledge which enables active participation in democratic social and political processes.

NCM Latvia support to independent media.

The Office has been instrumental in supporting various measures to strengthen Russian-language media in Latvia. The Office has provided support to **two training courses in investigative journalism**, one in Daugavpils and one in Narva, which were intended for Russian-speaking journalists. Support was also given to two **training courses in News Verification**, held in Tallinn and in Narva, in October. Furthermore, the Office has provided initial funding for the start-up of the **Baltic Centre for Media Excellence (BCME)**, which was formally launched in December. BCME is a clearinghouse for journalism training and a facilitator of professional dialogue in the Baltics and beyond.

The media support efforts have included a number of **outreach activities**. The Office hosted a seminar in May for communication advisers from Nordic institutions. The Office also took active part in a panel debate at the democracy festival Almedalen in Sweden in July, which discussed the media situation in Russia and its surroundings. In October, together with the Lithuanian NCM Office, Meduza and Re:Baltica, the Office participated in a seminar on Russian-

language media arranged by the Nordic Culture Point in Helsinki. Moreover, the Office sponsored an event during the Latvian LAMPA Festival in June devoted to the media situation in Russia, involving Meduza and a Russian journalist. The work in the media field has entailed extensive networking with local ministries, agencies, institutions and embassies, as well as with joint Nordic institutions in the media field.

Cooperation partners:

*Embassy of Norway,
Embassy of Finland,
Embassy of Sweden,
Embassy of Denmark,
Danish Cultural Institute in the Baltic States,
Centre for Media Studies at Stockholm School of Economics,
Re:Baltica,
Meduza,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Ministry of Culture,
Nordic media institutions,
Baltic Centre for Media Excellence (BCME),
and other actors in the Nordic and Baltic media sphere.*



NB8 Workshop on Balanced Russian-Language Media

initiated discussions and gathered facts and ideas on strengthening balanced Russian-language media in the Baltic States, Ukraine and beyond. Target participants in the workshop was media experts and professionals from Ukraine and the three Baltic countries as well as peers from the other NB 8 countries.

Cooperation partners:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.

5th Belarus Reality Check,

held in Riga on May 19, convened top Belarusian and international analysts, observers and practitioners.

The aim was to gather evidence and ground-based analysis as well as balanced policy advice. The Nordic Council of Ministers supported the Belarus Reality Check together with Latvian and Lithuanian ministries of foreign affairs and other local and international partners.

< Photo: norden.lv/en/news/archive/gads2015.



World Press Freedom Day 2015

World Press Freedom Day 2015,

which is one of the largest and most widely known UNESCO initiatives, took place in Riga May 2-4. The Latvian National Library was the venue of an international conference on press freedom and freedom of speech under the title *"Let Journalism Thrive! Towards Better Reporting, Gender Equality and Media Safety in the Digital Age"*, which was also supported by the NCM Office.

*Organizers of the event:
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
UNESCO,
Riga Stockholm School of Economics.*

> Photo: Zane Peneze



DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

One of the most important functions of the NCM Office in Latvia is to increase the public debate about certain key values, including democracy, transparency, good governance and social solidarity.



sarunu
festivāls

Democracy festival – Conversation festival LAMPA

NCM Office in Latvia participated in the first conversation festival LAMPA (festivalslampa.lv/gb) by setting up a “Norden” tent, arranging participation of Latvia-based Russian news agency Meduza (meduza.io/en), organizing a discussion on independent Russian media and by supporting organisation of the festival financially. The Almedalen Week in Gotland (Sweden), the “Folkemødet” People’s Meeting in Bornholm (Denmark) and the more recently organised Festival of Opinion Culture – Arvamus Festival in Estonia have served as sources of inspiration. LAMPA organisers consider it of utmost importance to promote the Nordic culture of transparency, accountability, democracy, equality and common-sense in consensus seeking also in Latvia. The organisers are planning to strengthen the Nordic dimension and cooperate closely with the organizers of similar festivals/ people’s meetings in Denmark, Sweden, Estonia and Finland. Annual meetings will be organized on the sidelines of one of the festivals to share experience and know-how. Discussions have already started about the possible cooperation on LAMPA 2016.

festivalslampa.lv

*Cooperation partners:
Foundation “Dots”,
Embassy of Norway,
Embassy of Finland,
Embassy of Sweden,
Embassy of Denmark.*

< Photo: NCM Office in Latvia Photo Archive



Nordic-Baltic Mobility Programme “Public Administration”

Information about the annual deadline for applications was spread via e-mail to governmental and municipal institutions (about 1500 addresses) as well as placed on the Office's homepage norden.lv/en/grant-programs.

Two information seminars (January 29 and November 19), where grant recipients presented good practice examples, were arranged in co-operation with the School of Public Administration, which is Latvia's representative in the Steering group of the mobility programme.

The programme was also presented at the information seminar arranged by the Ministry of Welfare about international financial instruments available for social and welfare related projects.

The eventual applicants were consulted individually throughout the year.

nb8grants.org
vas.gov.lv/en/

Cooperation partners:
School of Public Administration,
Ministry of Welfare.



Nordic-Baltic NGO programme

22 applications were received and 5 projects were granted support. The projects deal with such issues as benchmarking Swedish advocacy on CSR, provision of quality care for children with post-traumatic experience, empowering girls in the Baltics, e-democracy, integration of persons with autism-spectrum disorders into labour market.

Several seminars were arranged, research was conducted, professionals were trained and the capacity of NGOs and voluntary workers was raised.

Baltic Sea Region NGO programme

The programme was presented at the Ministry of Welfare information seminar about international financial instruments available for social and welfare related projects. Information about the program was also placed on the Office's homepage norden.lv/en/grant-programs and eventual applicants were consulted continuously during the year per phone, per e-mail and in person.

^ Photo: NCM Office in Latvia Photo Archive



Miscellaneous

Awards

During the 34th Session of the Baltic Assembly and the 21st Baltic Council in Vilnius in November, Jan Widberg, Director of the Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Latvia, received the Medal of the Baltic Assembly for "promoting and strengthening cooperation between the Baltic and the Nordic countries".

Our team

Photo: NCM Office in Latvia Photo Archive

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Office in Latvia