

NORDIC-BALTIC CONFERENCE

“Library as a Community Centre and a Meeting Place Promoting Integration”

Rēzekne, Latvia, 23–24 September 2025
Address: Centre of creative services “Zeimuļš”, 31 Krasta Street

PROGRAMME

September 23	
12.00–13.00	Arrival, lunch and registration
13.00–13.20	Introduction by the moderator Georgs Rubenis and the opening remarks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nina Hvid Enevoldsen, Director of the Nordic Council of Ministers’ Office in Latvia • Aleksandrs Kalējs, Parliamentary secretary, Ministry of Culture of Latvia • Zigrīda Gorsvāne, Director of the Rēzekne Central Library
Session 1. Situation map. Directions of public library development and their resources for the integration of newcomers. Refugee needs.	
13.20–13.40	Public libraries’ new functions. Amendments in the Library Law Katriņa Taurēna, Division of Archives, libraries and museums, Ministry of Culture
13.40–14.05	Situation and needs of Ukrainian civilians Iryna Bondarchuk, psychologist from Ukraine, employee of the Social Service of the Ķekava Municipality Research conducted by the Rēzekne Social Service on the needs of Ukrainian civilians in Rēzekne and other Latgale regions Gunārs Arbidāns, Head of the Rēzekne Social Service, and Linda Molodcova, Social Work Specialist of the Rēzekne Social Service
14.05–14.30	Presentation of the project “Library Bridges: Promoting the Integration and Inclusion of Third-Country Nationals in Europe through Libraries and Local Partnerships” (LIBRI) Agrita Sagalajeva, Cultural Information Systems Centre, Latvia
14.30–14.50	Coffee break
Session 3. Libraries’ experiences from supporting of integration process	
14.50–15.50	Panel discussion: Informal language learning – language cafes, language clubs, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Igeta Gredzena, Salaspils municipality library, Latvia - Anni Piits-Jamnik, Tartu City Library, Estonia - Oulu City library, Finland – tbc - Klaipėda City Library, Lithuania – tbc
15.50–16.50	Panel: Digital skills development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inga Niedra, Ogre Central library, Latvia - Veronicha Angeli Bergli, Director, Vadsø library, Norway - Experience from Estonia - Experience from Lithuania
16.50–17.00	Summary of the first day
17.00–19.00	Reception – buffet dinner

September 24	
9.00–9.10	Opening remarks, the agenda
Session 3. Library space as a resource in development of new services	
9.10–9.40	Library space as a resource for diverse activities Rūdis Rubenis, architect, architect of the Ogre Central Library, drawing a library in Lielvārde
9.40–10.40	Panel discussion on Libraries' experience in creating safe and welcoming meeting places Inga Niedra, Ogre Central Library, Latvia Krista Karabeško, Gāliņciems library, Latvija Veronika Angeli Bergli, Director, Vadsø library, Norway Library representative from Lithuania or Estonia
10.40–11.00	Coffee break
Session 4. Mapping other resources	
11.00–12.15	Dialogue Circles. Facilitator-led dialogues about resources and support points when planning activities for socially less active inhabitants, including refugees and other newcomers, and about the difficulties and concerns that library professionals face in this work.
12.15–12.30	Closing summary
12.30–13.00	Lunch. End of the joint programme
13.00–15.00	Excursions to Rēzekne libraries (optional programme with prior registration) – Rēzekne Central Library and the Library of adapted literature