

# Nordic Newsletter

Nordic events and activities in Latvia

December 2020

## Recent events

### The Future of Food: 8 megatrends in Nordic-Baltic region

In the context of climate change, future-oriented thinking is more important than ever before. The Nordic Council of Ministers has published a report identifying [eight megatrends affecting the future of food in the Nordic-Baltic region](#). The megatrends identified range from the redesign of food systems and modern technological impact to changes in dietary preferences and consumption patterns, and even a trend of societal anxiety around changes linked to overconsumption and climate change. Aimed at drawing attention to likely future scenarios, the project's goal is to overcome food system-related hurdles ahead of time before these issues become disruptive. This study looks to benefit entrepreneurial minds in the Nordic-Baltic region and serve as a baseline for discussions among policy makers and in broader society.



The megatrends can already be observed in action in a variety of industries. Most notably, the side effects of a generation looking to sustainable lifestyle solutions, including dietary changes, urban gardening, circular economy choices, significantly shifting market demand.

The Future Trends of Food in the Nordic-Baltic Region project consists of various components, including a report, a hackathon, and an upcoming survey on Covid-19's impact on consumers. The project is led by NCM Latvia with partners from the Nordic Food Policy Lab, EIT Food, the Baltic Studies Centre (LV), Sitra (FI), Matis (IS), BIOR (LV), TFTAK (EST), Nordic Food Tech (DK), and LitMEA (LT).

Read more about the [Future of Food-project](#).

## **“Insulted. Belarus (sia)”**

The play “Insulted. Belarus(sia)” tells the story of the first month of the Belarusian revolution, its ups and downs on the eve of the inevitable democratization of the country after 26 years of dictatorship. All characters have real prototypes, in some you will recognize former and current leaders of the country, in others - incredible Belarusians who have gone out to battle the totalitarian machine, sometimes at the cost of their lives, their freedom, and their loved ones. They represent polar points of view in the awakened Belarusian society.



The author, Andrei Kureichik, seeks to understand how the Belarusian revolution differs from Prague in 1968, Russia in 1991 and Ukraine in 2014. He portrays the tragic escalation of violence and repression employed by the authorities to repress freedom-seeking Belarusians with bayonets and clubs, and how solidarity, truth and faith in human values inevitably lead to victory over evil.

In solidarity with the people and theatre community of Belarus, readings and performances of the play are featured at more than 50 theatres worldwide and in Latvia, the Daugavpils theatre are presenting a reading of Kureichik’s play with support from the Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Latvia, the Swedish Embassy in Latvia and the portal CHAYKA.lv.

Stefan Eriksson, Director of NCM Latvia, who initiated the making of a Latvian performance, believes that performing this play is very important: “No one has absolute truth. But it seems to me that Kureichik's view of this time is very important. He speaks on behalf of a many people in Belarus who are currently in an extremely difficult situation.”

You can watch the whole reading [here](#).

## **Together against corruption**

Corruption thrives in times of crises and the ongoing pandemic is no exception. “Recover with integrity” was this year’s motto for the International Anti-Corruption Day, marked in Latvia and the world on December 9th. On this occasion the Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish

Ambassadors joined the President of Latvia, other Latvian officials and foreign Ambassadors in a [joint video-statement](#).

### **Virtual Independence Day of Finland**

On December 4 we celebrated the Independence Day of Finland together in a virtual world portraying the island of Lonna outside of Helsinki. During the event guests could chat with each other and watch a mix of videos portraying Finnish core values. Among others, “Nature’s Voice” by photographer Ossi Saarinen’s beautiful nature photos and the sounds of nature followed by adorable comments by Finnish preschoolers and the male choir Huutajat shouting an original song in English called “This is Finland!” about the values of Finland.

### **Digital celebration of Lucia**

Lucia is one of the foremost cultural tradition in Sweden and is celebrated widely in the Scandinavian countries. Lucia can be perceived as a symbol of the good forces in life and a symbol of hope and light in the dark winter. Its mission is to bring light and kindness, which is related to the meaning of “Lucia” (in Latin “lux” – light). On Sunday 13 December a Lucia concert was held on a screen by the St Peter’s Cathedral in Old Town. The concert has been prepared by conductors Gunta Malevica and Irina Švarcbaha with the Riga Chamber Choir, Riga Student’s Palace Girls’ Choir “Riga”, with the support of the Swedish Embassy.

### **Imagining Riga for people**



Putting a new spotlight on city planning and architecture and aims to improve the conditions for everyday living was on the agenda when the Embassy of Denmark in Latvia and DCI hosted the virtual event “[Imagining Riga for People](#)”. Building on Danish and Latvian competencies, “Imagining Riga for People” focused on how creativity and active citizen engagement can be used to make neighbourhoods more sustainable and better for the people who inhabit them. The event offered participants a valuable insight to ground-breaking city planning and architecture projects taking place in the Baltic Sea Region. Experts discussed their innovative

ideas and visions for building cities and in addition viewers got to experience Danish and Latvian cities on two live digital city walks led by local experts.

### **Work+Life 2020**

On December 5, Ambassador Flemming Stender took part in the online conference where he was interviewed about work-life balance and the concept of “hygge”. He shared his personal experiences on how to keep a good balance between work and personal life during the covid-19 pandemic and explained the concept of hygge. Denmark is generally considered among the countries with the best work-life balance. The conference included 20 key speakers and among the speakers was the Danish researcher and anthropologist Jeppe Trolle Linnet, who has been interviewed for an article about hygge in [TVNET](#) (Latvian).

### **EUNIC Baltic Roadtrip Follow-Up Event**

On 1 December, the Danish Cultural Institute held the virtual EUNIC Baltic Roadtrip Follow-up event in collaboration with partners in EUNIC-Latvia. The event was a sequel to last year’s roadtrip where a number of young people from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania travelled around three Baltic cities.

This year, the focus was mainly on climate change in the Baltics and around the world. During the day, a session was held by Kadi Kenk from Let’s Do It Foundation as well as a workshop on climate change in the Baltics by Xavier Landes, Associate Professor at the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga. Here the participants discussed what climate change means to the Baltic countries and how the citizens can prepare for the threats that climate change poses and will pose on their countries in the coming years. In addition, the participants also discussed a possible future Baltic Roadtrip projects and suggested their vision of the route and the activities. In the evening, the participants had the opportunity to watch the Danish documentary film “The Human Scale” from 2012.

## Coming events

### **December 11 – 29**

The exhibition “Ikoner” can still be visited and have relocated to Rietumu Gallery, Rietumu Capital Centre, 7 Vesetas Street.

### **December 16**

NCM LV will take part in the Latvian Gender Equality Committee meeting.

### **December 17**

On December 17 at 19.00 EET, the Danish Cultural Institute in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania holds the virtual literary event “Between the lines” that aims to create a focus on young poets and youth life in Denmark and Latvia. During the event, the Danish poet Frederik Drescher Kluth (b. 1996) and the Latvian poet Kaspars Zalāns (b. 1994) will read some of their poems and discuss the challenges in youth life that they each thematise in their poems.

### **February 1**

The Norplus programme of the Nordic Council of Ministers invites Nordic and Baltic organisations working with education and training to apply for funding in all five sub-programmes in the application round of 2021. The deadline is 1st of February 2021. Read more [here](#).



Priecīgus Ziemassvētkus un laimīgu Jauno gadu!

Glædelig Jul og Godt nytår!

Gledilig jól og gott nýggjár!

God jul och Gott nytt år!

Juullimi ukiortaamilu pilluaritsi!

Buorit jouvllat ja Buorre oddajahki!

Hyvää joulua ja Onnellista uutta voutta!

Gledileg jól og farsaelt komandi ár!

God Jul og Godt nytt år!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!