

Nordic-Latvian cooperation in 2019



Nordic Council of Ministers'
Office in Latvia



Ziemeļvalstu Ministru padomes
birojs Latvijā

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#FOREWORD



The Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Latvia (NCM LV) was engaged in and supported a wide range of activities and projects during 2019. With this publication, NCM LV aims to highlight some of these events and offer readers a glimpse of the wide spectrum of cooperation taking place between Latvia and the Nordic countries.

During 2019, NCM LV had three priority areas — digitalisation, social welfare/health and children/youth. Beyond these priorities, NCM LV was also deeply involved in areas like media support, sustainability and culture. The Nordic-Baltic mobility programmes remained an important instrument for strengthening mutual cooperation. In addition to the events described in this booklet, plenty of Nordic-Latvian initiatives and projects were of course running on their own merits, sometimes with support from Nordic embassies in Riga or other Nordic organisations.

Looking back at 2019, two particular events come to my mind. One is the opening of the "Weather Diaries" exhibition at the Latvian Museum of Decorative Arts and Design in February. This extraordinary fashion and design exhibition focuses on the use of traditional materials in a contemporary and sustainable way, showcasing installations and photographs from Iceland, Greenland and the Faroe Islands. Later on, in November 2019, our office hosted a meeting of the ad hoc Nordic-Baltic Ministerial Council for Digitalisation, which took place in parallel with the second Baltic Sea Region 5G Ecosystem Forum "5G Techritory" — an event supported by NCM. This is a clear indication that Nordic-Baltic cooperation in the digitalisation field is a success. In addition, it should be mentioned that Latvia decided to join the NordForsk research programme on digitalisation in the public sector in 2019.

The Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Latvia would like to express gratitude to all our partners for a fruitful cooperation during 2019. In the coming years, we are ready to expand our networks and explore new areas of common interest that will bring Latvia and the Nordic countries closer together. In 2020, our work will focus on the new vision for Nordic cooperation, which consists of three pillars: a green Nordic region, a competitive Nordic region and a socially sustainable Nordic region.

At the time of printing, the COVID-19 crisis has unfortunately already had some effects on our planned activities during spring 2020. NCM Latvia will closely follow the developments and endeavour to implement our planned activities when possible.

*Stefan Eriksson,
the Director of the Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Latvia*

#DIGITALISATION



Photo: Imārs Znotiņš



Publicity photo



Photo: André H. Jamholt/norden.org



The second "5G Techritory" Baltic Sea region 5G Ecosystem Forum

Nordic-Baltic ministerial cooperation in the field of digitalisation continued to develop dynamically in 2019. With support from NCM LV, "5G Techritory", the first Baltic Sea region 5G Ecosystem Forum, was held in Riga in 2018, followed by a second "5G Techritory" in November 2019. The main cooperation partners were the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development in Latvia and the Electronic Communications Office of Latvia.

The forum's primary goal was to strengthen the Baltic Sea region's role in the global development of 5G-related technologies by gathering together all relevant stakeholders from government, business, academia and civil society. A total of 800 participants from 35 countries participated.



Publicity photos



One day before the forum, an MR-DIGITAL ministerial meeting hosted by the NCM Icelandic presidency was held in Riga, where, among other topics, common drivers for 5G development in the region were discussed. The ad hoc Nordic-Baltic Ministerial Council for Digitalisation (MR-DIGITAL) and a Policy Makers Hackathon were also organised before the forum to bring industry and policy makers together to identify joint legal challenges for developing 5G in the Baltic Sea region.

Nordic and Baltic ministers and the NCM Secretary General were invited to meet with President of Latvia Egils Levits, demonstrating the importance Latvia gives to 5G issues.





Photo: TechChill

Technology and start-up event — TechChill

One of the largest technology and start-up events in the Baltic region, TechChill 2019, was held in Riga in February 2019. The theme for this year's event was "Tech which matters" with a focus on emerging technology and innovation that has the potential to significantly change society and the world around us. Several speakers from leading companies represented the Nordic region: Kaja Lilleng from Denmark, Rünno Allikivi from Sweden and two speakers from Finland — Voitto Kangas and Pekka Viilto.



<https://techchill.co/>



Photo: Krišjānis Sietiņš

International urban planning event — MadCity

The MadCity conference focuses on urban development and smart cities, and the theme for 2019 was "Knowledge and the City". NCM LV supported the participation of Michail Galanakis, professor at the University of Helsinki (Finland), who gave a presentation on the social aspects of public space.



<https://madcity.lv/>



Technology, start-up, policy and lifestyle festival — Digital Freedom Festival

The Digital Freedom Festival (DFF) took place in November 2019 in Riga. For the fifth year, it attracted more than 1,600 technology and start-up entrepreneurs, experts, policymakers, investors, journalists and motivational speakers from all over the world.

DFF 2019 focused primarily on the role and benefits of digital technology for sustainable development based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Support was given to sponsor two Nordic female keynote speakers — Finnish writer and programmer Linda Liukas and Marie Louise Gørvild from Techfestival Copenhagen.





Photo: Women Go Tech

Women Go Tech

To increase women's presence in the IT sector, support was given to various events organised by Riga TechGirls — an organisation started in 2016, the first in Latvia devoted to helping girls and women learn the basics of computer programming and develop digital literacy skills valued in the information age. Riga TechGirls participated in the NCM LT initiated project, Women Go Tech. The goal of this project is to map existing good practice initiatives across the Baltic and Nordic region — in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Iceland. Through cooperation, the project organisers are hoping to have a stronger and more sustainable impact on gender equality in the technology sector.



<https://www.womengotech.lt/en/>



Open data hackathon

NCM LV supported the Latvia Open Data Association, which organised an international open data hackathon for municipalities in Valmiera in November 2019. Open data is freely available information that everyone has the right to use to create new products and services. Hackathon participants, using Latvia's Open Data Portal data sets, tackled various topics, but the winning teams worked on evaluating the sustainability of schools, developing interactive municipality maps and inventing helpful solutions for people with rare diseases.





Publicity photo

School of Data

Open data is a digitalisation topic tackled at the EU level and is highly relevant for Nordic and Baltic societies. The Anti-corruption Data Hackathon, organised in cooperation with the Data School, took place in March 2019. In this hackathon, data analysts, corruption experts, programmers and journalists developed three open data solutions to help identify corruption risks and suspicious cash flows. The winning idea was a tool that helps identify suspicious public procurement activity; a prototype of this tool is currently being developed.



Rethinking bioeconomy value chains through digitalisation

In October 2019, the “Rethinking bioeconomy value chains through digitalisation” forum was organised in Līgatne, in cooperation with the Vidzeme Planning Region, the Institute for Environmental Solutions and Nordregio.

Innovative solutions in bioeconomy introducing practical examples of value chain innovations and digitalisation opportunities, as well as challenges in bioeconomy value chains for small- and medium-sized businesses were presented to local entrepreneurs, municipalities and research institutes.

PRECISION MEDICINE CONFERENCE



May 22, 2019

University of Latvia, House of Science,
Jelgavas Street 3, Riga



Ministry of Economy
Republic of Latvia



NATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
PLAN 2019



EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional
Development Fund

INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE

Precision medicine

Precision medicine is an emerging approach to disease prevention and treatment that considers each person's individual variability in terms of genetics, environment and lifestyle. During a conference held in May organised by the Ministry of Economy and the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia, NCM LV provided support to a Nordic keynote speaker from the Swedish agency Vinnova, who talked about a precision medicine research programme sponsored by Nordforsk and Nordic innovation agencies. The aim of the conference was to explore trends and opportunities in precision medicine, covering topics such as big data and analytics for life quality improvement, ICT and technology's impact on precision medicine, the role of research and universities in biomedicine development, prevention and next generation national health systems.



www.em.gov.lv/en



Photo: Ansis Vegners/norden.lv

Discussions on digitalisation during the conversation festival LAMPA

During the conversation festival LAMPA held in Cēsis in June, there were two Nordic-Baltic panel discussions on digitalisation. One was titled "Are we approaching post-digitalisation? — Baltic and Nordic perspectives", and the second addressed the role of artificial intelligence in the media. LAMPA is an excellent platform for enriching the discussion of complex issues in Latvian society, and NCM LV has supported it from the start.

#SOCIAL WELFARE AND HEALTH



Photo: Ansis Vegners/horden.lv

Trust — the Nordic Gold

The project on trust, inspired by NCM's report "Trust — the Nordic Gold", continued in 2019, and several events were organised throughout the year.

An open lecture, "How can you increase trust in government?", given by professor Jón Ólafsson from the University of Iceland, was held at the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga (SSE Riga) in March 2019.

Jón Ólafsson wrote a report commissioned by the Icelandic government on restoring trust in Iceland. In addition to speaking at the open seminar on trust at the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga, he met with the vice-speaker of the Latvian Parliament and representatives of the State Chancellery. This indicates the importance given to the discussion on trust in general and at the governmental level in particular, in Latvia today.

Ulf Andreasson, author of the NCM report "Trust — the Nordic Gold", participated in the second event in March 2019, a seminar titled "Trust — the Cornerstone of Development". This was organised by the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments, the State Chancellery and the European Parliament's office in Latvia. Mr Andreasson was the seminar's keynote speaker. During his visit, a seminar was also organised at the Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences in Valmiera.

During the conversation festival LAMPA in June, several Nordic experts took part in panel discussions related to trust. One such discussion, arranged by NCM LV and led by social anthropologist Agnese Cimdīņa, was dedicated to diversity management. Norwegian writer and diversity expert Loveleen Rihel Brenna participated, together with Mayor of Cēsis Jānis Rozenbergs, Director of the Clarion Collection Hotel Valdemars Lennart Rasmussen-Lagnehag and Group HR partner at AS Swedbank Alise Rupeka.



Photo: Ansis Vegners/norden.lv

The 2019–2020 Nordic-Baltic pilot project on cooperation on social affairs and health

The Swedish NCM Presidency's initiative in 2018 to strengthen Nordic-Baltic cooperation on social and health issues led to the initiation of a pilot project in March 2019 coordinated by NCM LV with support from NCMS and EK-S.

NCM LV has taken the lead on the issues of elderly-friendly cities and dementia, two priorities chosen by the project's Nordic and Baltic partners. NCM EE has been focusing on disability-related activities, while NCM LT has been concentrating on children and youth, the two other priorities selected by the project's partners.

Several activities were successfully carried out in 2019, helping to strengthen the Nordic-Baltic network and promote the exchange of experiences in important policy areas.

In November, the NCM LV Office organised a study visit for Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian government and municipal officials to Mariagerfjord in Denmark to learn from this municipality which is especially sensitive to the needs of people with dementia. The Nordic hosts at the dementia centre in Mariagerfjord and the Danish Board for Social Services have expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to exchange experiences with their Baltic counterparts.

A young Icelandic expert by experience on mental illness, Magnús Friðrik Guðrúnarson, visited Latvia and Lithuania to share his experience with mental illness. He spoke to an audience of professionals in the fields of education and medical and social care, as well as parents.

During the conversation festival LAMPA, NCM LV cooperated with the Ministry of Welfare to arrange a panel discussion on youth mental health. The purpose of this conversation was to discuss rights and opportunities for equality by presenting other countries' experiences and to raise awareness of the situation in Latvia. Two experts from Denmark participated in the debate: Anders Friche and Karla Brandt Lange, representing the mental well-being counselling service for young people headspace.dk.

In November, a group of Latvian delegates took part in the Nordic-Baltic Meeting on Disability Policy and Practice in Tallinn organised in cooperation with the Nordic Welfare Centre and the NCM EE Office.



Nordic Council of Ministers'
Office in Latvia



A Forum on Corporate Responsibility of Businesses: Prevention of Labour Exploitation

Riga, 6 – 7 June 2019

A Forum on Corporate Responsibility of Businesses: Prevention of Labour Exploitation

With cooperation from the Ministry of the Interior of Latvia, the "Forum on Corporate Responsibility of Businesses: Prevention of Labour Exploitation" was held in June 2019 and attended by almost 70 Nordic and Baltic professionals, including experts from CBSS and OSCE. The aim of the forum was to encourage companies and businesses to respect human rights, integrate corporate responsibility and develop policies and appropriate processes to create the good working conditions required by national laws and international conventions. Participants discussed preventing labour exploitation as an indicator of corporate social responsibility (CSR) as well as supporting cooperation among employers (industry), trade unions and labour inspection authorities during the recruitment process to guarantee working conditions that are in line with legislation.



Photo: Ģirts Ozoliņš

The seminar on deafblindness

In October 2019, a seminar on deafblindness was organised to raise awareness about the issue and to give professionals and others involved in the field the opportunity to learn from the experiences of Nordic countries and to better face its challenges. Two Nordic experts participated in the seminar — Trine Skov Uldall from Denmark, a consultant on acquired deafblindness, and Maria Creutz, a senior adviser at the Nordic Welfare Centre responsible for deafblind issues.

The “Motivational conversations” conference

In February 2019, the “Motivational conversations” conference was arranged by the NGO Velki in cooperation with NCM LV for parents raising children with functional disorders; a Nordic expert Bo Hejlskov Elven and several hundred local participants took part.



Publicity photo

Public discussions about social change and responsibility

In cooperation with the Latvian Sociologists Association, Latvia's key social scientists presented a series of five public discussions throughout the year titled "Social change and responsibility" on issues that concern everyone, such as inequality and the economic system maintaining it, and the benefits, challenges and risks of migration. The aim of this project was to increase awareness of a higher quality perspective on key societal issues, one that is analytical and deep yet provocative and fresh, to counteract the impact of the fragmented and partial messages that are common in the public space.



Towards healthy and sustainable food systems in the Baltic region

The three-day seminar “Towards healthy and sustainable food systems in the Baltic region” was organised in cooperation with the World Health Organisation and Riga Stradins University. Its goal was to discuss data needs, available policy options and the role of transformation partners and stakeholders in the Baltic region. Participants explored various perspectives and initiatives on sustainable and healthy diets in the Baltic region. The thought-provoking and interactive programme included presentations of positive examples, system mapping sessions, a seasonal dinner prepared by some of Latvia’s top chefs and a trip to Riga Central Market, one of Europe’s largest marketplaces. The NCM Office supported the participation of the event’s main speaker, an independent consultant in sustainable food system transitions, Afton Halloran.

#CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Digital Democracy in Schools

The Digital Democracy in Schools project was launched in cooperation with the NGO Manabalss. Its goal was to provide a digital democracy platform with voting tools for internal school community decisions as well as election tools for external political legislative voting. The system was tested in six selected schools in Latvia where students also participated in digital mock elections before the May 2019 European Parliament elections. In addition, there were various educational events and debates intended to engage students in the democratic process. To learn from mock elections in practice, study visits were organised to Finland and Norway in 2019, where traditional school elections were taking place. Results of the project were presented in Oslo at the Nordic Democracy, Inclusion and Safety Network meeting in September.

The panel discussion "Mock elections go to School!" was held at the democracy festival LAMPA 2019 to present the project and to discuss the development of young people's motivation to participate in politics.

Worldwide, 24-31 October

Global Media and Information Literacy Week 2019

MIL Citizens: Informed, Engaged, Empowered



Gothenburg, 24-26 September
Feature Conference



Publicity photo

Media and information literacy

At the UNESCO MIL Global Conference in Gothenburg in September, a group of students from the University of Latvia took part in a joint Nordic-Baltic MIL seminar arranged by UNESCO Latvia, NCM LV and Nordicom, including Finnish and Lithuanian participants. One of the conference's side events was the discussion "Empowering Youth as Agents of Media and Information Literacy: The Role of Informal Education" to talk about the role of young people in promoting media literacy and to share examples of good practice. The Latvian representatives, students from the University of Latvia's Department of Social Sciences, presented an innovative method for youth to engage their peers on MIL issues. Baiba Molņika, Secretary-General of the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO, moderated the discussion.



NORDISK
LITTERATURVECKA

11-17/11 2019



Nordiska
ministerrådet



Peter Oskarsson

Nordisk litteraturvecka
Fest i Norden

Nordisk litteraturuge
Fest i Norden

Nordisk litteraturuke
Fest i Norden

Pohjoismainen kirjallisuus-
viikko
Juhla Pohjolassa

Norræn bókmenntavika
Norræn hátíð

Norðurlenskh bókmentavika
Hátíðarhald í Norðurlöndum

Nunat Avannarliit atuagaataasa
sapaatip-akunnerat
Avannaani Fiisternerinnaavoq

Nordic Literature Week
Nordic Celebration

Nordic Literature Week

Once again, the annually held Nordic Literature Week invited children, young people and adults to a celebration of literature. With the Nordic Association in Denmark, Norway and Sweden marking their 100th anniversary, "Nordic Celebration" was the theme for Nordic Literature Week 2019. Three hundred and eighty-five libraries in Latvia participated in various events and read works by Astrid Lindgren, Jostein Gaarder and Karen Blixen. The project was run jointly by NCM LV and the Children's Literature Department at the Latvian National Library.



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Photo: Ansis Vegners/horden.lv (1,3,4), and publicity photo (2,5,6,7)



Nordic Authors Crossing Borders

Within the Nordic Authors Crossing Borders programme, implemented in partnership with the Nordic Association, children's literature was given special attention in 2019. Three of the artists/authors invited to participate — Finnish illustrator, comic book artist and art educator **Anna Sailamaa**, Swedish writer **Jukka Wieslander** and Swedish illustrator **Linda Bundestam** — work primarily in children's literature. During Nordic Literature Week, Linda Bundestam visited libraries in Broceni, Saldus and Liepāja to offer creative workshops for children.

During 2019, ten Nordic authors visited Latvia, participating in 40 events throughout the country. Among them was Finnish poet **Heli Laaksonen**, Norwegian and Sámi playwright and author **Rawdna Carita Eira**, Finnish writer **Riitta Jalonon**, storyteller **Meg Nömgård** from Sweden and storyteller **Ivanir Sibylla Hasson** from Norway. During the Prose Readings literary festival, **Mako Ishizuka**, a Japanese artist living in Sweden, visited Latvia and in Riga presented a "map of thoughts" related to her research on language and cultural translation.



Publicity photo

Baltic Road Trip 2019

The European National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC) network in Latvia arranged a collaborative project for young people from the Baltics. Twenty-four young people from three different border cities, Šalčininkai (Lithuania), Daugavpils (Latvia) and Valga (Estonia), went on a road trip together to visit each other's hometowns, explore their history, common features and shared challenges, and participate in various workshops and discussions with international experts. In Daugavpils, a seminar on participation in general was arranged in partnership with the local university. The road trip created a greater sense of togetherness in these less privileged border zones and a greater understanding across nations by establishing personal contacts through shared learning experiences. The project was implemented jointly with EUNIC Estonia and EUNIC Lithuania.

The "Voices of Europe" radio show

NCM LV also took part in a new EUNIC project in cooperation with Latvian Radio 5, which produced a series of six 60-minute musical radio shows called "Voices of Europe" about young people from various EU countries who are currently living, studying or working in Latvia. The goal was to present European countries by portraying selected young people and playing music from their home countries. Listeners met Nikita from Scotland, Teresa from Germany, Juulia from Finland, Michael from Denmark and Julia from Sweden. The project was implemented in cooperation with Latvian Radio 5 — a public broadcasting service for youth — and received positive feedback. NCM LV contributed to co-producing two Nordic programmes by inviting participants from Sweden and Finland. The Danish Cultural Institute also co-produced one show with a Danish participant.



Publicity photo

Workshop on wooden architecture

The 2018 Swedish NCM Presidency highlighted the theme of wooden architecture, and as a follow-up, an international workshop for architecture students called “Wooden Architecture Heritage” was held in Aizpute in May. During the workshop, the values associated with wooden architecture in Aizpute were identified and ways to develop the town’s heritage of wooden architecture were put forward — a cityscape, street landscape, materials, colour schemes and signs. Participants from RISEBA, the Vilnius Academy of Arts in Klaipeda, the Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies (landscape architects) and Riga Technical University took part in the four-day programme. The Nordic Council of Ministers’ Office in Latvia supported one of the lecturers, Malin Belfrage from Sweden.

#OTHER PROJECTS



Photo: Ansis Vegners/norden.lv

The "Circular Economy in the Nordic-Baltic Region – How Far Have We Come?" conference

This conference took place in Riga and was organised in cooperation with the Latvian Environmental Investment Fund, the NGO Green Liberty and the Dutch Embassy. The purpose of the event was to continue the dialogue among primary stakeholders—consumers, suppliers, policymakers and legislators — on progressing towards a circular economy in the public and private sectors.



Nordic Days in Jelgava

The fourth annual Nordic Days were held in October, this year in Jelgava, where NCM LV prepared a programme that included a seminar on biomass, energy and transport at the University of Life Sciences and Technologies, an information seminar about Nordic mobility programmes, various exhibitions and a Danish choir concerts.



Photo: Ansis Vegners/horden.lv



The “Weather Diaries” exhibition

2019’s main cultural event was the “Weather Diaries” exhibition. It was originally produced by the Nordic House in Iceland and has received a great deal of positive attention in many countries since it premiered at the Nordic Fashion Biennale in Frankfurt. NCM LV coordinated the exhibition’s Baltic tour, which opened in Riga in February at the Latvian Museum of Decorative Arts and Design and then continued to Vilnius and Tallinn.



Small informational text label on the wall.

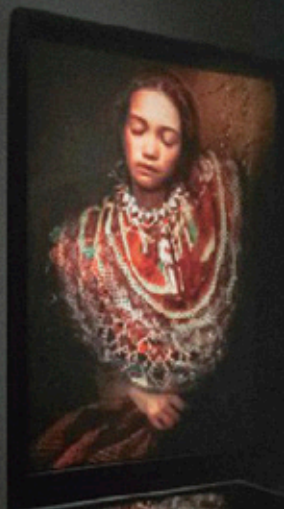
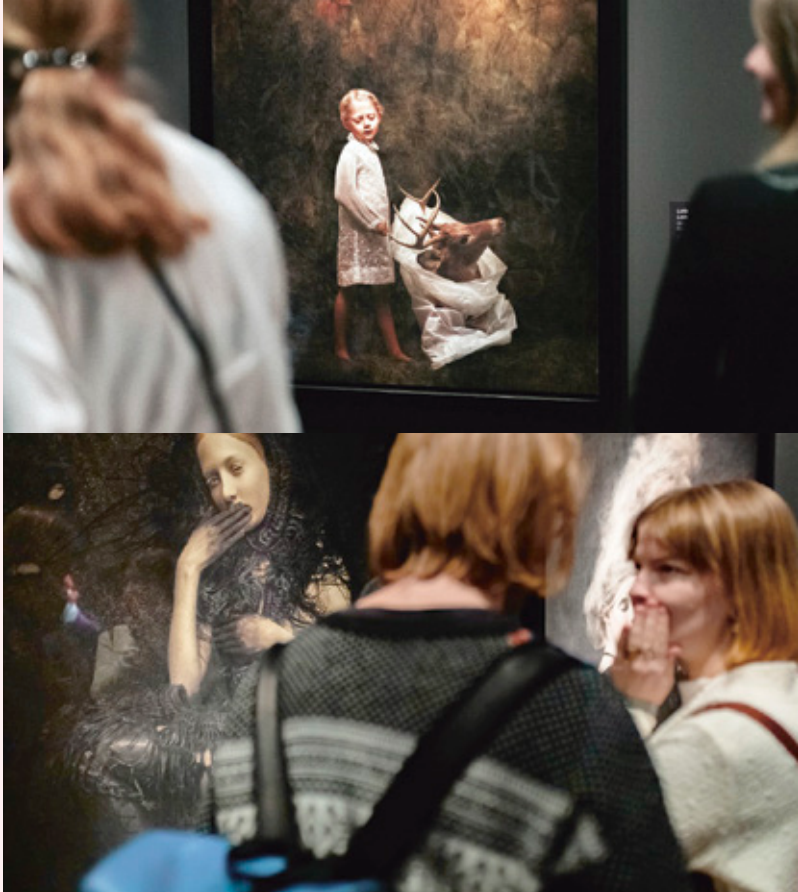




Photo: Ansis Vagners/norden.lv



Photo: Ansis Vegners/horden.lv



The exhibition showcases installations and photographs from Iceland, Greenland and the Faroe Islands and focuses on the contemporary and sustainable use of traditional materials. It was also supplemented by a set of events promoting sustainability in the fashion industry, with particular emphasis on the designer's role.



Photo: Thomas Huhn

The Baltic Sea Festival

Culture and sustainability were also highlighted in NCM LV's cooperation with Swedish Radio during the Baltic Sea Festival in August. One of the concerts held was live-streamed from the Latvian National Library, while talks and exhibitions related to sustainability issues complemented the musical programme. Latvian Radio also broadcast two concerts from Stockholm during the festival week.



The Baltic Sea region NGO forum

The Baltic Sea region NGO forum 2019 took place in May in Riga. The aim of the event was to express strong commitment to the region's sustainable development by building a regional identity of active and responsible citizenship and promoting trust among various stakeholders and civil society. During this three-day event, approximately 100 CSO activists, government representatives, academics and people working in the media from 11 Baltic Sea region countries met to discuss developing and strengthening civil society co-operation in the Baltic Sea region, establish personal contacts and find project partners.



Publicity photo

The international conference "Architecture of Migration"

The international conference on architecture and territorial planning considered global migration from the viewpoint of geographical North, sitting at the crossroads of worldwide circulation. It focused on the overall ecosystem of countries in the Baltic Sea region and in raising awareness of the processes initiated by mobility — flows of people, transport, goods, services, data and more — highlighted the unique experiences of other countries.

The event was organised by the Baltic Architecture Union Association — the Latvian Association of Architects in partnership with the Architects Association of Lithuania and the Union of Estonian Architects. Also among the event's supporters was the Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Latvia.



Nordic Highlights at the Riga International Film Festival

In 2019, the RIFF continued to bring the Latvian and European film industries together, developing film culture and film literacy; it also raised the bar in terms of its own production value and content. The festival showcased 148 films, with 11 separate thematic programmes. One of these programmes was NORDIC HIGHLIGHTS, which presented 11 of the latest Nordic films. NORDIC HIGHLIGHTS was created in collaboration with the embassies of Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland, as well as the Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Latvia and the Danish Cultural Institute in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Mobila pilsēta

– drošs
un tīrs
transports
visiem



Mobilā pilsēta

Kā padarīt velobraukšanu pašsaprotamu



Kopenhāģenes iedzīvotāji, ko cilvēki
pavada satiksmes satiksmes, piedāvā
22 000 pilnām darba stundām gadā. Lai
samazinātu satiksmes, trāķoni un gaisa
piesārņojumu, Kopenhāģenes pašvaldība
cenšas atvieglot velobraucēju nokļūšanu
no priekšpilsētām līdz centram.

Lai gan tālāk padarīta kļūst arvien vairāk, kopš
veiksmas ir kļuvušas arvien vairāk. "Tas 2019. gada
pārtikas un dzīvības reģions ir apvienojis spēkus,
lai veidotu "velo ekspertu grupu" – ekspertu grupu, kas
veiksmas ir kļuvušas arvien vairāk. Kopš
pārveidota no mājām uz darbu un atpūtu, Mēģināt
pārtiku un veselību, lai savienotu ar citiem
mācīties un atpūties, lai padarītu velo braucienu.

Veiksmas ir kļuvušas arvien vairāk, kopš
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mācīties un atpūties, lai padarītu velo braucienu.



Veiksmas ir kļuvušas
arvien vairāk.



Veiksmas ir kļuvušas
arvien vairāk.

The "Nordic Sustainable Cities" exhibition

The exhibition showcased Nordic solutions to challenges in five fields — health, mobility, low carbon, the circular economy and resilience. All of these are connected to at least one UN17 Sustainable Development Goal, as the UN17 offer the best framework for working with sustainability issues to achieve a better, more sustainable and secure future for all.

The exhibition was created by the Danish Architecture Centre (DK), Design and Architecture Norway (NO), ArkDes & Form/Design Centre (SE), the Iceland Design Centre (IS) and Archinfo (FI). The exhibition was funded by Nordic Innovation and adapted for a Latvian audience by the Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Latvia.

#FUNDING SCHEMES



Photo: Ķekava municipality

Nordic-Baltic Mobility programme "Public Administration"

The Nordic-Baltic Mobility Programme "Public Administration" is a well-established cooperation programme featuring a steering committee with representatives from all eight countries. The overall purpose of the programme is to increase the region's global competitiveness by promoting cooperation and facilitating efficiency in public administration structures at all levels. Interest from the Latvian side increased in 2019, in large part due to NCM LV's efforts. Latvian partners made a total of 28 applications to the programme, of which 26 visits were approved. In ten approved applications, municipalities were particularly active, including larger cities like Riga and Jelgava, as well as smaller municipalities like Ropaži and Ikšķile. Among the grant recipients were also four ministries, several judicial agencies, the Latvian Ombudsman Institution, the Competition Council and the Latvian National Library. Several of the projects addressed issues relevant to NCM LV's priorities in 2019.

 <http://www.nb8grants.org>

Within the framework of the Nordic-Baltic Mobility Programme "Public Administration" project "Experience exchange for integrated energy policy and smart town strategy planning", in September and November 2019, eight employees from Ķekava municipality participated in exchange visits to Aarhus municipality in Denmark and Joensuu municipality in Finland. The aim of the project was to gain experience with energy efficiency issues, the development and administration of an energy management plan, implementation of smart city principles, organisation of citizen involvement processes and the transfer of good practices from two Nordic countries.

In Aarhus, they explored a once disadvantaged area now transformed into an attractive residential district, BLIXENS & Gellerup, they visited a newly built school, Midtbyksolen, and learned about the green transformation of Aarhus city and sustainability in their school system. Participants remarked that it was interesting to see Aarhus city's vision come to life — a vision of a new, diverse area with its own identity, architecture and urban life, developed on existing foundations, but adding new layers by creating new neighbourhoods, roads and traffic patterns, buildings and green spaces. In Joensuu, participants visited Joensuu Science Park and Business Joensuu Ltd., which offers services for businesses, entrepreneurs and investors. They also visited Elli Lighthouse (student housing) — just one example of Joensuu's commitment to becoming CO2 neutral by 2025. During the second visit, day participants attended presentations and exchanged experiences about Joensuu's environmental strategy, activities connected to it and about Finland's education system. During all the visits, participants were given the opportunity to share their individual experiences.





Delna

SADARBOMĖ PAR ATKLAŠTŲ
TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL
KALTIVAS NODALA



**TRANSPARENCY
INTERNATIONAL**

Lietuvos skyrius



**OPEN
KNOWLEDGE
SWEDEN**

OPEN DATA AND POLITICAL INTEGRITY IN THE NORDIC REGION

Publicity photo

Nordic-Baltic Grant Programme for NGOs

The objective of the Nordic-Baltic NGO Programme is to strengthen civil society in the Baltic Sea region and make it more dynamic by increasing the capacities of Baltic NGOs, through cooperation and knowledge sharing with Nordic NGOs. The programme's overarching priority in 2019 was sustainable development in a broad sense. The five projects (out of ten applications) supported in Latvia in 2019 dealt with the use of large data in preventing corruption, training local civil society activists, supporting innovative approaches in regional development, promoting the participation of local residents in spatial planning, and an exchange of experiences between Nordic and Baltic youth related to working towards the SDGs. At least one of the projects was relevant for the NCM LV digitalisation priority, and one project involved a youth NGO.

 <http://www.nb8grants.org>

Within the Nordic-Baltic NGO programme in 2019, support was given to the "Building a Nordic Open Data Ecosystem for Anti-Corruption", which aimed to make better use of open data in fighting corruption. The project was implemented by Transparency International Latvia in cooperation with Transparency International Lithuania and Open Knowledge Sweden. Political corruption appears to be an ongoing problem in the Nordic region. While the Baltic countries have experienced no significant breakthrough in recent years and trust in the political system is still low, a number of cases of gross conflict of interest and abuse of power in Denmark, Finland and Sweden have shown that these countries are not immune to the problem and raised concerns about the real extent of the relationship between business and politics in these countries. The "Open Data and Political Integrity in the Nordic Region" report was published in November 2019.

 https://delna.lv/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Open-Data_TI-LV_2019.pdf

The Nordic-Baltic Mobility programme "Culture"



Photo: Riga Circus

The overall objective of the Nordic-Baltic Mobility Programme "Culture" is to strengthen cultural and artistic collaboration within the Nordic and Baltic countries by supporting travel, networking and residential activities. The programme is jointly financed by NCM and the three Baltic states. It is administered by the Nordic Culture Point in Helsinki, and the NCM Office serves as a local information point. In 2019, there were a total of 109 applications from Latvia, of which 28 were granted support. Altogether, this support amounted to 99 731 EUR, divided among 26 individual or small group mobility grants and two short-term network projects. Latvian participants were also involved in network projects whose lead partners came from other countries. No artists' residencies were supported in Latvia in 2019, although eight applications of this type were received.



www.nordiskkulturkontakt.org

The Riga Circus residency programme was started in 2018 with support from the Nordic-Baltic Mobility Programme for Culture. It was created as a laboratory for new forms of artistic research and art practices in interdisciplinary art. Its mission is to promote contemporary artistic practices, mainly focusing on circus development in Latvia and the Baltic Sea region and to foster exchange, discussion, experimentation and collaboration. In 2019, the Riga Circus residency programme supported four residencies, each of which was two to eight weeks long, for individual artists or artist groups from Nordic and Baltic countries. Odrija Fišere, programme curator at the Riga Circus, remarked: "We want to support artists who are creating new performances; we want foreign artists to have the opportunity to meet with local artists and collaborate. It's also important for the Riga Circus to be a place where new ideas and artistic concepts emerge."



<http://cirks.lv/en/pro/residency-program>

The Nordic-Baltic Mobility programme "Nordplus"

The Nordplus education programme promotes lifelong learning and aims to strengthen cooperation between Nordic and Baltic countries at all levels of education. The programme supports Nordic and Baltic cross-border mobility for students and teachers as well as joint projects and networks between Nordic and Baltic institutions and organisations. Nordplus consists of five sub-programmes covering the entire educational sector. In Latvia, the programme is administered by the State Education Development Agency (www.viaa.gov.lv). NCM LV mainly assists by disseminating information about the programme and on three occasions participated in joint information events covering all Nordic-Baltic mobility programmes. In 2019, Nordplus received 58 applications from Latvia, of which 33 were approved. The highest number of approved project applications were for the Nordplus Higher Education sub-programme — 13 in total. The Nordplus Junior subprogramme approved 12 applications, the Nordplus Adults subprogramme approved six, and two applications were approved for the Nordplus Horizontal sub-programme.



Within the Nordplus Adult programme in 2019 the "Link between social rights and social entrepreneurship" project was submitted by the "EAPN-Latvia" association. It involved ten adult educators from Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Denmark and Norway gaining knowledge and experience regarding compliance with and the practical application of social rights principles in relation to the development of social entrepreneurship in NGOs. The "Is social entrepreneurship socially responsible?" conference took place in Riga on 22 November; 35 participants from Latvian NGOs and partner country NGOs, together with experts from the National Education Development Agency, the Ministry of Welfare and social enterprises, discussed how to consolidate the basic principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights.



Baltic Media Grant Scheme

This scheme was finalised under NCM LT's administration. The programme supports the vulnerable ecosystem of Russian-language media in Latvia and has helped make locally produced quality content in a minority language more available. Altogether, nine projects were implemented in Latvia. The media training project "Strengthening inclusive Baltic journalism in a digital environment", which primarily but not exclusively targeted the Russian-language sector, continued in 2019 with the Baltic Centre for Media Excellence and the Nordic Journalist Centre (NJC) as its main partners. Regional training workshops for local media, with guest experts from Nordic countries, were arranged in Daugavpils and focused on themes like social listening and digital business strategies. This has helped local media adapt to and change their management style in a digital environment. In October, NCM LV organised an extensive programme for a group of 15 Nordic journalists visiting Riga for the Aarhus Course (NJC's main training course), which included visits to the Latvian Parliament's media subcommittee, media outlets and other important media stakeholders. This was the first time the course programme included a visit to Latvia.



LETA is a national information agency in Latvia that produces trusted content and provides personalised services to professional information users. Within the Baltic Media Grant Scheme, the "Section LETA+" project was given support to create quality analytical content in the Russian language, available for free to all Latvian media for republishing. In addition to content created specifically for the project, LETA+ also featured specially selected current Russian-language LETA news pieces that were important to Latvia's ethnic minorities. The materials — feature stories, interviews and informative articles — focused on the latest developments on topics important to the audience, presenting them objectively and covering different opinions and perspectives. LETA also translated Latvian-language content, e.g. features and interviews, into Russian when this content was useful or interesting to the Russian-speaking audience.

In total, 30 feature stories and interviews were created specifically for Russian readers on subjects of interest to them, 21 interviews were translated from their Latvian-language versions and 288 LETA news stories and 506 photographs from LETA's photo archives were published as open-access materials in the Russian-language version of LETA+.



NOIM – Nordic Organisations' and Institutions' Mobility Programme

In 2019, NCM LV took part in the NOIM programme in order to organise professional capacity building visits. In total, 12 visits to Nordic organisations and institutions were arranged for 22 people. At least two of these visits served as a starting point for NCM LV's engagement in larger Nordic-Baltic cooperation projects. In January 2019, when a Latvian youth organisation was preparing the Digital Democracy in Schools project, three young representatives visited Denmark to learn from mock elections taking place in that country. A group of four Baltic representatives visited the Nordic House in Iceland in order to help them prepare for the children's literature exhibition "Nordic Book Flood", which later in the year received support from Nordic Branding and in the spring of 2020 will be exhibited at the Latvian National Library. Several other visits were relevant to larger projects in an indirect way or explored that possibility: experts visited the MIL seminar in Reykjavik, the Ministry of Welfare visited the Nordic Welfare Forum in Stockholm and two Latvian experts participated in an NCM roundtable discussion on 5G-related issues in Stockholm.

Funding for Nordic cooperation among organisations for people with disabilities

The funding is intended to help organisations that serve people with disabilities in the Nordic countries to exchange experiences and knowledge, develop projects and build partnerships with corresponding organisations in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Northwest Russia. Funded activities must promote the interests of people with disabilities in society in some way.



<https://nordicwelfare.org/en/disability-issues/the-funding-scheme>

Research and Innovation Programme on Digitalisation of the Public Sector

The overarching aim of this programme is to combine and integrate knowledge-based, digital innovation efforts with research on its related effects and/or impact on society and end-users, based on factors that enable and drive the public sector's digital transformation: emerging technologies, emerging organisational practices and/or emerging regulatory frameworks and governance mechanisms.



<https://www.nordforsk.org/en/programmes-and-projects/digitalisation-of-the-public-sector>

Research programme involving Nordic Energy Research (NER) and the Baltic countries

The programme has three main goals: to promote intra-Baltic and Baltic-Nordic energy research projects, to create a Baltic-Nordic PhD programme and to foster energy research exchange within the Nordic-Baltic region. These projects should address research questions from a Baltic-Nordic perspective and focus on regional perspectives or solve questions that increase Baltic-Nordic knowledge.



*[https://www.nordicenergy.org/programme/
the-joint-baltic-nordic-energy-research-programme/](https://www.nordicenergy.org/programme/the-joint-baltic-nordic-energy-research-programme/)*

Nordic Council of Ministers' funding programme for NGO co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region

The overall objective of the programme is to promote co-operation between Nordic, Baltic, Polish, Belarusian and Russian NGOs to underline the key role that NGOs play in building networks and cross-border co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region. The programme has existed since 2006, and NGOs are invited to apply for funding from the programme for international co-operation projects. Focus areas of the programme is Social and health, Culture, Environment and Development of democracy.



*[https://www.norden.org/en/funding-opportunities/
nordic-council-ministers-funding-programme-
ngo-co-operation-baltic-sea-region](https://www.norden.org/en/funding-opportunities/nordic-council-ministers-funding-programme-ngo-co-operation-baltic-sea-region)*

#UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has affected everyone around the world since the beginning of 2020, disrupting the rhythm of our daily lives and impacting our plans and activities. Below you will find some of the projects planned for 2020. To receive the latest updates, check www.norden.lv and follow us on social media channels.

18–19 February

The **Future of Food Hackathon** will provide a platform to connect students, food innovators, founders of start-ups and leading industry experts to brainstorm, build and validate new ideas that have the potential to transform the food sector. Participants will be invited to offer fresh perspectives on current issues in food production, processing and consumption, and develop new approaches using digitalisation and technology to work towards a more sustainable and thoughtful future.

5 March

The **Conference on Children/Youngsters with Functional Disabilities** will be held to mark the publishing of the Latvian translation of "Act! Assess! Change! A peaceful approach and structure-based methods", a book written by Bo Hejlskov Elvén (DK), clinical psychologist, lecturer and writer specialising in autism and problem behaviour in the Nordic countries, and Anna Sjölund (SE), CBT psychotherapist, behavioural researcher with an interest in neuroscience and educator of autism specialists. Both authors will lecture at the conference.

June–August

The Riga Photography Biennial 2020 — an international contemporary art event focusing on the analysis of visual culture and artistic representation. Several Nordic artists will be taking part.

June–August

"Nordic Book Flood"

is a children's literature interactive exhibition for children between the ages of 5 and 11. Reading is the key to learning, and children's interest in reading is best encouraged through play and creativity. The exhibition will invite young visitors to be active participants.

7–8 August

Wood Days in Cēsis

The main theme of this year's Wood Days is "Affordable Housing — from Wood". Attendees will have the opportunity to attend talks given by keynote speakers from several Nordic countries — Sweden, Finland, Norway and Denmark.

30 August

The Baltic Sea Festival

This will be the second time Latvia takes active part in this festival combining classical music appreciation with caring for the Baltic Sea environment.

4–5 September

Conversational festival LAMPA

There will be a discussion panel focusing on impact in order to encourage dialogue about what we really can and cannot influence.

24–25 September

Nordic Days in Rēzekne

This popular regional outreach event, organised in partnership with Nordic embassies in Latvia, continues, this time in Rēzekne.

20–23 October

The DHN (Digital Humanities in the Nordic Countries) conference

will bring together Nordic and Baltic researchers from the new interdisciplinary field of Digital Humanities. This year's focus will be on the intersection between the humanities and social sciences, including data journalism, human-computer interaction and AI challenges related to the social sciences.

11–12 November

The **3rd-annual Baltic Sea region 5G ecosystem forum** – a platform for cross-border, cross-sectoral, and cross-level collaboration.

9–15 November

Nordic Literature Week

Nordic Literature Week is a reading event where a chosen piece of Nordic literature with a particular theme is simultaneously read aloud across the Nordic and Baltic countries. More than 350 libraries in Latvia will participate.

Autumn 2020

Discussions on Disability

A series of discussions will be held throughout the year in cooperation with the Ministry of Welfare, within the national campaign marking ten years since Latvia ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The first discussion will be about disability and gender equality; there will be a discussion on disability and enjoying a physically active life; and in November, there will be a discussion focusing on children and disability.

The Nordic- Baltic workshop on national strategies for dementia

Nordic and Baltic senior officials will exchange their experiences regarding developing a national strategy or action plan for dementia and the main challenges of implementing it.

Nordic-Baltic conference on senior friendly cities and communities

The conference will be held in order to offer a platform for exchanging good experience regarding senior-friendly designed solutions for built public space and services.

The Barbershop

Conference will bring opinion leaders together to discuss masculinities in today's society: what society expects of men, the challenges and benefits of harmonising professional and family life, the employer's role in this process and the positive gains that have been made, as well as understanding men's physical, psychological, emotional and mental health and wellbeing from a holistic perspective.

The "Nordic Sustainable Cities" exhibition

This exhibition will be displayed in Riga at the Latvian Museum of Architecture and will feature Nordic solutions for creating sustainable, liveable and smart cities focusing on the following five areas — health, mobility, low carbon, the circular economy and resilience.

Sustainable Events Conference

Possible topics to discuss are transport management, reduction of GHG emissions and waste, sustainable food options, work with supply chains and staff, energy consumption and saving, environmental education at the event, and so on. This would be a chance for everyone to learn about real-life obstacles and possible solutions to sustainability issues at a concert, conference, ice-hockey game, camp or any other type of event.

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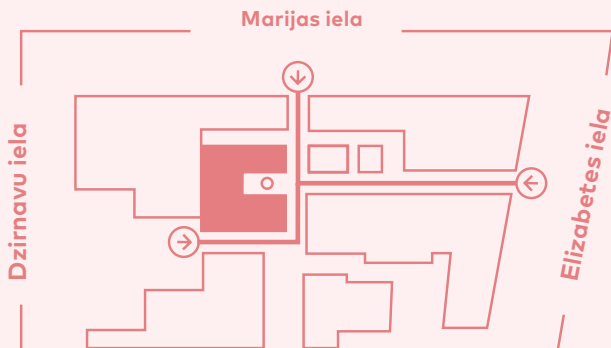
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