

**Memorandum of Understanding
on Creating possibilities for Latvian students
to study at the Valga County Vocational Education Centre
between
the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Estonia
and
the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia**

The Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Estonia and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia (hereinafter jointly referred to as "Parties");

Noting the continuing successful co-operation in the field of education;

Considering the purposes set forth in the Latvian-Estonian Future Co-Operation Report 2010;

Considering the Joint Statement by the Prime Minister of Latvia Valdis Dombrovskis and the Prime Minister of Estonia Andrus Ansip on the Implementation of the Latvian-Estonian Future Co-operation Report in 2011 presented on the Latvian-Estonian Future Co-operation Report Stakeholders' Conference on 10th of December 2010;

Considering the decision of the Estonian Government from 7th of October 2010 stating teaching in Latvian at Valga County Vocational Education Centre as one of the Estonian-Latvian co-operation priorities;

Considering the decision of the Estonian Government from 17th of March 2011 stating the need for preparing a memorandum of understanding in the field of education between Estonia and Latvia;

Considering the outcomes of the 17th Meeting of the Baltic Ministers of Education and Science held in Ventspils, Latvia on June 1-3, 2011;

Seeking to ensure for students from the Valga and Valka border regions wider opportunities for obtaining vocational education and training, in addition to promoting mutual understanding and friendship between our two nations;

Have reached the following understanding:

SECTION 1

The Parties agree to work together to provide vocational education in the Latvian language at the Valga County Vocational Training Centre from the academic year 2012/2013.

SECTION 2

The Parties agree to co-operate to launch 2 (two) Latvian language study groups (up to 25 (twenty five) students each) and to create opportunities for Latvian adult learners for in-service training at the Valga County Vocational Education Centre starting from 1st of September 2012, which will stimulate mobility in the border regions, strengthen people-to-people relations, increase the quality and competitiveness of the labor force in the border regions, as well as improve the business environment at the border regions.

SECTION 3

In carrying out this Memorandum of Understanding, the Parties are to:

- 3.1. Set up a Joint Working Group including the representatives of the Parties, South-Estonian and North-Latvian enterprises, local governments, social partners, professional associations and vocational education institutions to develop a management and administration plan, as well as a work plan for co-ordination of the co-operation;
- 3.2. Facilitate the preparation of a project application for the Estonia / Latvia Programme to secure the funding for first 2 years of the project and search for funding for the continuation of the project;
- 3.3. Select the fields of study and curricula that best correspond to the needs of Latvian students;
- 3.4. Find out optimal solutions to provide Latvian students in Valga County Vocational Training Centre with social benefits.

SECTION 4

The Parties shall authorize the Joint Working Group to carry out the following activities:

4.1. Make preparations for the opening of the Latvian groups (recruiting the teaching staff; providing in-service training to the teaching staff; preparing the teaching materials; finding internship places and organizing other relevant activities);

4.2. Promoting and marketing the study opportunities at Valga County Vocational Education Centre (incl. introducing study opportunities to Latvian schools and their students and parents, organizing other marketing events).

SECTION 5

The Parties are to exchange information about the implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding and should resolve any disputes or ambiguities that may arise by consensus.

SECTION 6

6.1. This Memorandum of Understanding takes effect upon its signing by both Parties and will remain in force until signing of a new agreement.

6.2. This Memorandum of Understanding does not create rights and obligations under international law.

6.3. This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended in writing by mutual consent of the Parties.

6.4. This Memorandum of Understanding may, at any time, be terminated by one of the Parties, upon informing the other Party in writing at least six months in advance of the proposed termination.

The undersigned have signed this Memorandum of Understanding, in two identical copies in English.

For the Ministry
of Education and Research
of the Republic of Estonia

Janar Holm
Secretary General

On 29th September 2011

For the Ministry
of Education and Science
of the Republic of Latvia

Inga Štāle
Acting State Secretary

On.....2011