

**LOCALISING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS THROUGH
BALTIC MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES
23–24 September 2021**

*Online conference for museum and library professionals in Estonia, Latvia and
Lithuania*

An online conference – *Localising the Sustainable Development Goals through Baltic museums and libraries* – will be held in September with the aim of strengthening museums and libraries as key local actors in promoting sustainable development through cultural heritage. The conference motto is *Ask Your library! Ask Your museum!* This reflects the commitment of libraries and museums to playing the roles of expert and public advisor on sustainable development issues. The conference is being organised by the Latvian Museum Association, the National Library of Latvia and the Latvian Librarians' Association, in cooperation with the Estonian and Lithuanian Museum and Librarians' Associations. The project is being implemented with the financial support of the UNESCO Participation Programme.

The conference will present lectures by both local and international sector experts, as well as practical workshops at which to obtain knowledge, try out useful tools, and network with colleagues and like-minded people in the Baltic States. The conference's target audience is staff members at Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian museums and libraries. The conference will be held in English.

The first day of the conference, 23 September, will be devoted to understanding the regional context of the Strategic Development Goals (SDGs) within the Baltic States. The Council of the Baltic Sea States Secretariat will introduce the current situation in the Baltic Sea region in terms of SDG implementation, with particular emphasis on successes and challenges in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Researchers from Vilnius University will provide an insight into the field of Baltic culture through the SDG prism. The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions and the Network of European Museum Organisations will describe how libraries and museums have worked with the SDGs in Europe and the Baltics. Thus, the first part of the conference will outline the local context of sustainable development, both geographically and in terms of both sectors. This will be followed by a presentation of six case studies from Baltic museums and libraries, which will provide information on the different aspects of the SDGs that local libraries and museums are already working with, what methods they are using and how project results are measured. At the end of the first day, Baltic museum and library colleagues will participate in workshops to discuss their experiences of working with SDGs at the local level.

On the second day of the conference, 24 September, participants will find out about a number of tools, models and frameworks that can help museums and libraries plan, monitor, evaluate and communicate their work with SDGs. Tools that will be useful in the specific contexts of museums or libraries and those useful for various heritage institutions will be presented. The presentations will be followed by practical workshops, where participants can learn more about one of the tools or frameworks. The end of the second day will see a panel discussion, in which representatives of Baltic museums, libraries and governments will discuss how these sectors can best cooperate in support of the SDGs.

Please visit the conference website at <https://baltic-museums-libraries-sdg.lnb.lv/> for the full conference programme.

The conference will be streamed live on the *YouTube* account of the National Library of Latvia (NLL), as well as on the *Facebook* pages of the NLL, the Latvian Museum Association (LMA) and the Latvian Librarians' Association (LLA), and will be available free of charge to all those interested.

Registration of museum and library professionals for participation in the workshops will be coordinated by Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Museum and Librarians' Associations, and will take place in the second half of August.

Context

The joint resolution adopted by 193 countries at the 2015 UN General Assembly – *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* – is an ambitious and inspiring action programme addressing a wide range of global economic, social and environmental aspects. The programme aims to turn global development towards sustainability by 2030: reducing poverty, creating a just and equitable society and protecting the planet. The resolution or *2030 Agenda* sets out 17 sustainable development or global goals and 169 sub-goals, which bring together the world's most pressing challenges and involve everyone – civil society, the private sector, states, unions of states, the UN and other institutions. The attainment of the SDGs depends not only on the fulfilment of international strategic documents, but also to a very great extent on the on-the-ground delivery of the SDGs, on the development, implementation, monitoring and review of locally-appropriate SDG actions in each individual country.

SDG localisation is taking place not only at regional or national level, but also within individual sectors. Since 2015, museums and libraries all over the world have been striving to contribute to global UN 2030 Agenda implementation and have collected significant experience of working on sustainable development issues. The last two years (2018-2019) in particular have shown a growing commitment by the two sectors. In 2018, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) created its Working Group on Sustainability. ICOM's 34th General Assembly at Kyoto in 2019 adopted the resolution *On sustainability and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, Transforming our World*. In Tartu in 2019, the Network of European Museum Organisations annual conference *Museums 2030 – Sharing recipes for a better future* illustrated how museums can incorporate the UN SDGs and the 2030 Agenda in their operations.

Since 2015, the role of libraries in attaining the SDGs has been highlighted by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). At the 2017 IFLA Congress, the *Library Map of the World* was unveiled, with a section on SDG stories. IFLA has produced a number of publications drawing attention to the role, significance and performance of libraries in attaining the SDGs. Since January 2021, the Environment, Sustainability and Libraries section has been included in the list of official IFLA sections. The European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations (EBLIDA) also provides support to libraries in working with the SDGs. 2019 saw the EBLIDA Matrix published, a set of tools to help European libraries engage in the *Europe 2030* sustainable development programme. In 2020, EBLIDA published *Sustainable Development Goals and Libraries. The First European Report*, which emphasises the need for European libraries to set the 2030 Agenda as the basis for an expanded library concept.

In 2021, Baltic State museums and libraries are coming together to discover and discuss the relevance of the global 2030 Agenda in the Baltics as well as to discover the unique roles of museums and libraries in putting the SDGs into practice.

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