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LINGUA FRANCA  
DAUGAVPILS  
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DAUGAVPILS INVITES YOU TO SPEAK A CULTURAL *LINGUA FRANCA*

# DAUGAVPILS

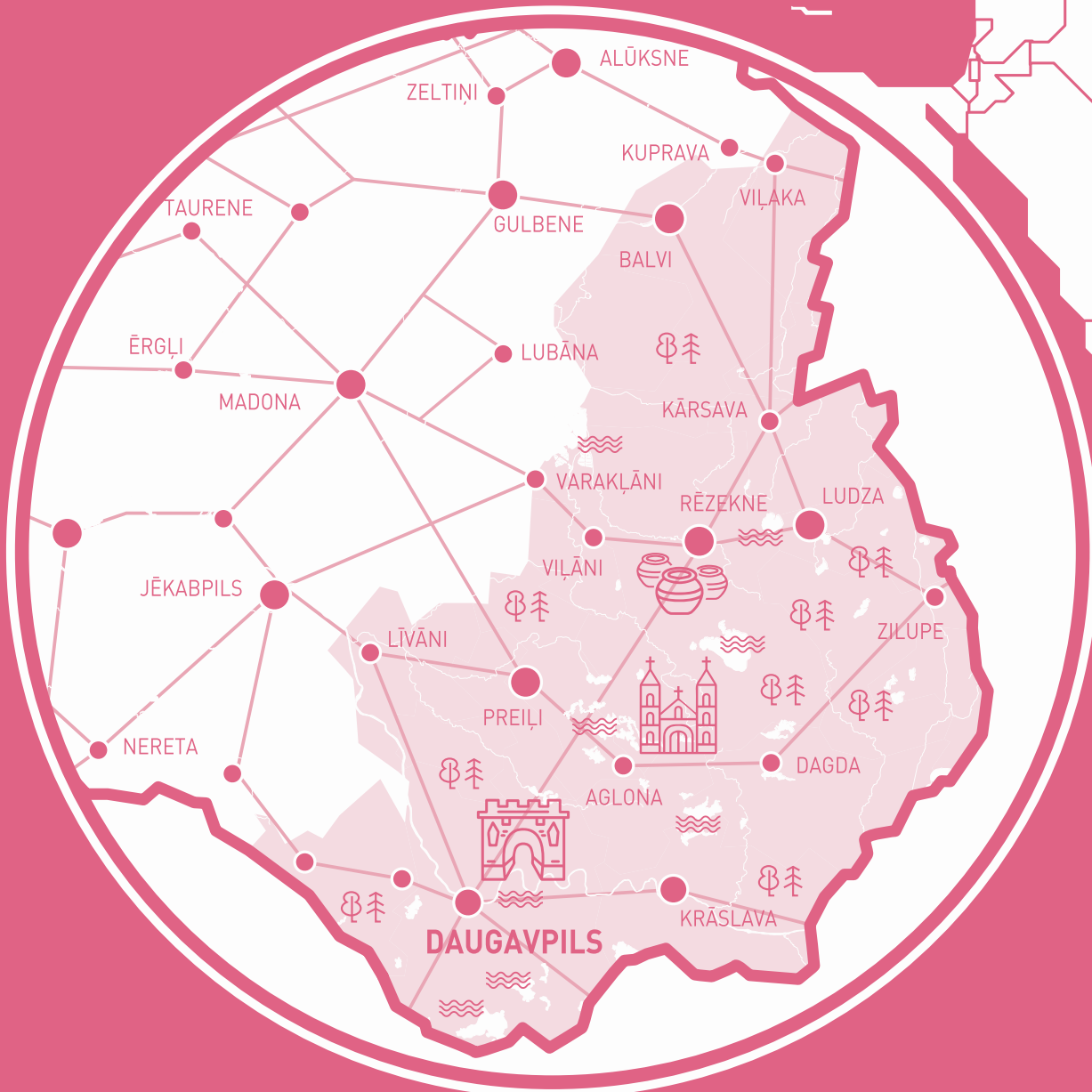
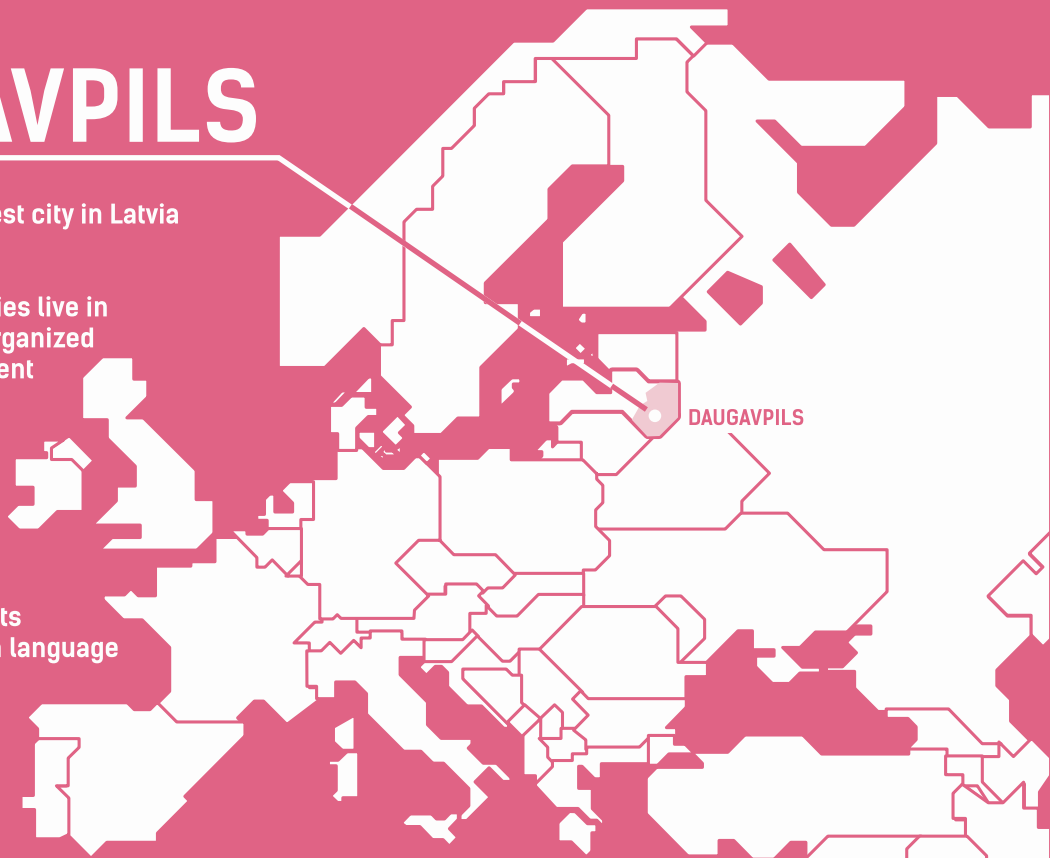
Daugavpils is 2nd largest city in Latvia  
(82 604 inhabitants)

More than 70 nationalities live in  
Daugavpils and have organized  
themselves in 17 different  
ethnic and cultural  
associations

13% of Latvians  
inhabitants live  
in Latgale region

9% of Latvians inhabitants  
speak extinct Latgalian language

Daugavpils bid  
unifies Latgale Region,  
comprised of  
21 municipalities



# ACCESSIBILITY

DAUGAVPILS IS AN EU EAST-WEST AND NORTH-SOUTH TRANSPORTATION GATEWAY

-  RĒZEKNE 90 km
-   KRĀSLAVA 55 km
-  PREIĻI 66 km
-  LĪVĀNI 63 km
-  AGLONA 65 km
-  LUDZA 127 km
-  BALVI 182 km
-  INDRA 75 km



THERE ARE 31 HOTELS AND HOSTELS WITH 1288 BEDS IN DAUGAVPILS

THERE ARE 360 HOTELS AND HOSTELS WITH 6955 BEDS IN LATGALE REGION



THERE ARE 62 RESTAURANTS AND CAFES' WITH 2445 SEATS IN DAUGAVPILS

THERE ARE 273 RESTAURANTS AND CAFES' WITH 9405 SEATS IN LATGALE REGION




100 FREE HIGH SPEED HOTSPOTS ACROSS CITY

## RUSSIA

140 MIL. INHABITANTS

### ST. PETERSBURG

5 MIL. INHABITANTS

 530 km

### MOSCOW

17 MIL. INHABITANTS

 690 km

### PSKOV

 242 km

## SWEDEN

9 MIL. INHABITANTS

## FINLAND

5 MIL. INHABITANTS



## ESTONIA

1,3 MIL. INHABITANTS

## RĪGA

1 MIL. INHABITANTS

200 km

  RIX 92 DESTINATIONS IN 35 COUNTRIES



INDRA IS THE FURTHEST POINT ON EU EXTERNAL BORDER WITH CIS COUNTRIES

## POLAND

38 MIL. INHABITANTS

 **WARSAW**  
 606 km

## LITHUANIA

3,2 MIL. INHABITANTS

 **ZARSAI**  
 25 km


## BELARUS

10 MIL. INHABITANTS

 **VITEBSK**  
 277 km

## VILNIUS


250 T. INHABITANTS

 175 km

 VNO 59 DESTINATIONS IN 26 COUNTRIES

## MINSK

2 MIL. INHABITANTS

 281 km





EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF  
CULTURE CANDIDATE

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# 1

## INTRODUCTION – GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

### 1. Daugavpils motivation to take part in the competition for the title of European Capital of Culture

Daugavpils is the second-largest city in Latvia – an industrial manufacturing and freight transportation hub near the European Union's eastern border. It is still in the shadow of its post-Soviet heritage, which stifles growth opportunities for the city's residents and results in the spread of stereotypes about the city nationally.

If one was to ask Latvia's population today to name its favourite cultural tourism destination, Daugavpils would be mentioned by only a few. The city's creative potential has not yet come to light, but it exists and can surprise visitors through the sincere hospitality of its residents of various nationalities (Latvian, Latgalian, Polish, Russian, Lithuanian, Belarusian, Ukrainian and Jewish, etc.) and its colourful cultural heritage.

Today, **although Daugavpils is known as an important centre for cooperation with the European Union's neighbouring eastern countries, the city has very strong historical links to Western Europe.** In previous centuries, it was an important stopping point facilitating the flow of goods, ideas and people along the Berlin–Warsaw–St. Petersburg railway line, which connected the west to the east. Today the city wants to regain its important role and once again become a meeting place, where people from different parts of the world jointly develop ideas of future importance and foster an open, curious and critically thinking society.

**Daugavpils wants to continue to discover and highlight its multinational history** and to recognize the contribution of various peoples to the formation of the city's culture and identity. Gradually the world-class cultural oeuvre and heritage of Daugavpils' large Jewish community, which was destroyed or lost during the tragic events of the early 20th century and Second World War are being identified and recovered. One of the most notable representatives of this community is a genius of modernist painting Mark Rothko. Since 2013 the city's art centre named in his honour (Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre) has become an important place in European contemporary art. The art centre operates within the grounds of Daugavpils Fortress, a location of great importance to the city. Built in the 19th century for the military defence of Russia against invasion by the armed forces of European countries, today the fortress hosts international art events and residencies that attract artists from both West and East.

However **the existence of internationally renowned artistic processes in the city** is only one reason to take part in the competition. A recent survey revealed that 88% of Daugavpils' inhabitants support the city's candidacy for the title of European Capital of Culture. They want to develop the skills of self-initiative and self-organisation, to increase their involvement in cultural events, and to undertake responsibility for their local environment and community. Brainstorms seeking to generate ideas for a cultural programme were attended by representatives from the whole of Daugavpils, whose passion and eclectic ideas testified

to how much **the opportunity to jointly shape the city's life in the context of European life** matters to them. The desire to change the city's image and foster open, contemporary, friendly and inclusive relations with the rest of Latvia and Europe is the most important reason motivating them to take part in the competition.

Daugavpils' interesting historical cultural environment and proximity to untainted nature, Soviet heritage and multinational co-existence, unique Latgalian cultural heritage and its development can provide **a powerful creative and inspirational impulse** for any visitor to the city and Latgale region. Daugavpilians want the city to become a place, where inhabitants and artists from Europe, Latvia, Latgale and Daugavpils meet to talk in a common language, seek and find common values, **precipitate encounters between East and West and jointly create cultural and art projects of European significance.**

### 2. Cooperation with the surrounding region

Daugavpils is **the biggest city in the Eastern Latvian region of Latgale.** Home to a multinational community of inhabitants, it is a place where one can feel the presence of various national cultures. In turn Latgale is notable because of its unique Latgalian language and the cultural life rooted in it. Latgale and Latgalians played a very important role in the founding of the Latvian state, because during the first congress of Latgale Latvians in 1917 it was decided that Latgalians are part of the Latvian people and Latgale must merge with Kurzeme and Vidzeme.

During the Soviet occupation a discriminatory policy was directed against the Latgalian language and culture – not only were they banished from the cultural landscape, but also from everyday usage. These days Latgale is regaining its self-awareness. As a consequence, cultural traditions and traditional vocational skills (in the form of pottery, ceramics, black saunas, handicrafts and cooking) are being nurtured and new works are being created in Latgalian (prose, dance, plays, music and contemporary art). Latgalian culture is a living process, which reflects on its unique situation and current issues of pan-European relevance. For this reason **Latgalian culture has an important place in the preservation of the diversity of European cultures.** It is one of the focal points of our cultural programme.

Latgale region's second special attribute is untainted nature. Its uniqueness lies in its **wealth of lakes** and the ancient valley of Latvia's largest river, the Daugava. With over 1,200 lakes, Latgale is known as the land of blue lakes. Of all Latvia's regions, it is blessed with the most water bodies, which are characterised by **great natural diversity.** People in Latgale can experience what it means to be in balance, what it means to be part of nature, not battling and exploiting, but finding harmony with the rest of the world. Here, minds tired of urban culture can easily find so-called peace, while those involved in contemporary art can experience for themselves what it means to create in and for nature so as not to leave any contaminating footprints.

**Latvia's largest river,** the Daugava, flows through Daugavpils and Latgale to the Baltic Sea. From it

## I INTRODUCTION – GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

the city derives its name – Daugavas pils (*Daugava Castle*) – Daugavpils. When the occupying authorities decided to build the Daugavpils hydropower plant in 1986, the whole of Latvian society joined forces resulting in protests that took place on an unheard of scale, thus not only saving the unique natural heritage of the ancient Daugava river valley, which is currently protected by UNESCO, but also precipitating the process by which Latvia eventually regained its independence.

**Stories of the power of civic activity are also important today.** Latgale's inhabitants want to not only take part in their municipality's daily decision-making, but also to form a joint understanding of a future based on solidarity, and here inclusive and involving art processes are of great importance, because they highlight the community and the stories of the Latgalian population. To this end, **all Latgale region municipalities** (currently twenty-one municipalities,

which will merge into nine municipalities after the administrative territorial reforms that will come into force in June 2021) **have actively participated in the development of the ECoC cultural programme** and made a major contribution to those sections of the programme, where attention is drawn to Latgale's traditional and contemporary culture, preservation of natural diversity, human stories and involvement processes.

A special place in the development of the programme has been allotted to Latgale's second-largest city Rēzekne. At its heart is the Latgale Embassy-Concert Hall GORS, where intensive world-class cultural processes take place alongside a programme of events specially devised to bring the cultural life of Latgale into the limelight. In our cultural programme, the City of Rēzekne becomes the main emissary of Latgalian culture.





## I INTRODUCTION – GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

### 3. The overall cultural profile of Daugavpils

Daugavpils' cultural life is currently shaped by several important cultural organisations, whose priorities are preserving cultural-historical heritage and multinational traditions, as well as developing contemporary art and cultural programmes.

**Cultural-historical heritage** is on view in Daugavpils' historical centre, which is made up of unique buildings in the styles of classicism and eclecticism, as well as within the grounds of Daugavpils Fortress, whose development has attracted particular attention in recent decades. Various live historical events take place here, which introduce audiences to the era of the Napoleonic War and to historical epochs following it. Next year the Museum of Machinery and Industrial Design will open within the territory of the fortress. In turn the Daugavpils Local History and Art Museum has started work on organising a contemporary history exhibition.

In **visual art** the lead institution is Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre, which not only offers visitors the opportunity to view original works by Mark Rothko, but regularly organises European and global exhibitions, symposiums, residencies and masterclasses for artists in various fields. The centre also organises an international ceramics biennale. An extensive collection of art has also been assembled at the Daugavpils Local History and Art Museum, whose goal is to ensure that traditional crafts skills are passed on. In turn, the pupils and graduates of Daugavpils Professional Design and Art School "Saules skola" actively work in media synonymous with contemporary art. The city's art scene is also actively enlivened by the Daugavpils Regional Art Association and groupings of new artists.

When it comes to **music**, Daugavpils' offering is very diverse. The city has its own professional chamber orchestra, the Daugavpils Sinfonietta, the wind orchestra "Daugava" and the Daugavpils Orchestra of Accordionists, which regularly performs concerts with world-class musicians. The city also hosts international festivals and competitions in various musical genres including jazz, choice music, tango and accordion music. Daugavpils is home to "Varang Nord", a pagan metal band of European renown. Pupils from Daugavpils Professional Music School of Stanislavs Broks regularly participate in concerts and performative events.

**Theatrical art** is represented by the Daugavpils Theatre, which performs plays in Latvian, Latgalian and Russian and is not only the largest, but moreover the only professional theatre in Latgale with a broad and interesting repertoire that is highly rated nationally. Guest performances and concerts not only take place at the theatre, but also at Unity House.

In the realm of **dance**, Daugavpils is renowned as the home of exciting modern dance groups. Kids and teenagers in the city learn hip hop, breakdancing and other street dance styles, while professionals also show off their skills. An important role is also played by the folk dance troupes of various Latvian and national cultural organisations in which Daugavpilians of all ages participate.

In the field of **education**, Daugavpils University (DU) is particularly important. At the university, alongside various natural sciences and technical fields, students can acquire a higher education in the humanities, a higher professional education in music or design, cultural management or intercultural relations. One should add that DU lecturers in natural sciences actively cooperate with artists on joint creative projects. In turn, Daugavpils writers and translators converge around the Philology Department. A unique place for education and research in Daugavpils is Latgale Zoo, which offers a modern and captivating exhibition offering visitors the opportunity to learn about living nature.

In the context of **religious heritage** visitors to Daugavpils are drawn to Church Hill, where in a small territory in between Soviet architectural buildings churches of four denominations (Lutheran, Catholic, Russian Orthodox and Greek Orthodox) rise up, whose centuries of respectful co-existence is testimony to the city's tolerant society.

In the field of **creative NGOs**, the city is home to actively functioning multinational (Polish, Russian, Lithuanian, Belarusian, etc.) cultural centres and organisations, whose work is focused on preserving traditions and implementing contemporary cultural programmes. Some of these organisations have demonstrated initiative in developing the city's creative quarters. The NGO New East is developing the new Saules Street creative quarter with coworking spaces for creative businesses and NGOs in the city's historical centre, while a plan to artistically revive the community garden and Soviet block houses is being implemented within the grounds of the fortress.

### 4. The proposed concept for the European Capital of Culture programme

Daugavpils' European Capital of Culture 2027 programme concept is

#### LINGUA FRANCA: Find, Make, Speak

*Lingua Franca* (from the Latin – 'language of the Franks') is a linguistic term used to denote a language that speakers of different nationalities in ethnically mixed areas use to communicate with one another. Its objective is very practical – to create the opportunity for people with different languages, traditions and cultures to not only exchange goods, but also ideas, and to foster cooperation for the attainment of shared goals. **Lingua Franca is a creative synthesis of existing words, thoughts and ideas, which stems from the need to understand and be understood, to agree and connect.** Language determines human existence. National languages delineate the borders of nations, peoples and states, they communicate differences. **Lingua Franca creates an inclusive world in which the different, special and unique retain their identity and simultaneously participate in shaping a common world.**

## I INTRODUCTION – GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

In our interpretation, art and culture are this *Lingua Franca* or *common language*, which must be found and made, which must be spoken in order to resolve challenges characteristic of the modern age: growing inequality, human rights' violations, confusion generated by information technology, injustice, the climate and mental health crisis, as well as ethnic, cultural and religious discord. These issues are relevant in Daugavpils, Latgale and Europe as a whole. Their solutions are not simple or easy to attain; they require social cohesion, the ability to speak a common language and act harmoniously.

In Daugavpils and Latgale linguistic and cultural diversity have existed for centuries, and this creates the foundation for a colourful and interesting life rich in cultural events and full of surprises. The fact that, together with 19 municipalities, Latgale's largest cities Daugavpils and Rēzekne were able to agree on a joint candidacy for the title of ECoC is testimony to the possibility of a joint language in this region. We really do speak a *Lingua Franca*!

However, parallel to the benefits that diversity confers, there are also risks of conflict. Particularly nowadays, when the reality in which we live is determined by differing media spaces and sealed social "bubbles". In them language is not used to seek that which unites, but instead to divide and to create a feeling of disenfranchisement. It is no secret that Daugavpils and Latgale are characterised by a society of two linguistic communities with ethnically diverse residents and the considerable influence of the Russian media space. Differing interpretations of history and impressions about the future of Latvia

and Europe often give rise to conflicts where current differences can be used to spread hate. Therefore, it is important that **our cultural programme offers events and processes that enable people to realise their affinity to the space of European values in which everybody can be actively involved** and discover how important we are to one another.

The pride of Daugavpils has always been its fortress, where for centuries various powers have asserted themselves with their military and repressive might. These days, contemporary culture and art showcase their creative powers within the fortress, opening the gates of the fortress and the city to people, who transform defence into trust, and attack into cooperation. This tactic is characteristic of Daugavpils and Latgale's ECoC cultural programme in which culture and art become the foundation for a *Lingua Franca* in a society with an understanding of different values.

**As a ECoC Daugavpils would invite people speaking in all languages to jointly create and cooperate** in support of a sustainable common existence in which people care for one another and nature joyfully, in which art and science help one another to find answers to questions of vital importance for a meaningful future, and in which culture and art put a full stop to disagreements, a question mark against ambiguity and an exclamation mark behind civilisation.



# 2

## CONTRIBUTION TO THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY

### 5. Cultural strategy

We aspire for a dynamic development of the cultural sphere, which includes creating new cultural infrastructure, developing cultural entrepreneurship and cultural tourism, supporting the cultural initiatives of NGOs and modernising our cultural management model.

Through broad discussions with representatives of local cultural organisations, we have written the Daugavpils City Cultural Development Programme 2021–2027. It aims to shape Daugavpils into a dynamic city of culture on the eastern border of Latvia with a

visible presence on the national and European stage by generating a diverse and contemporary supply of culture, stimulating creative freedom and self-expression, keeping custody of the cultural heritage, boosting the community's local patriotism and their sense of belonging to their city. In May 2021, the programme was ratified by Daugavpils City Council.

To draft the strategy, we have drawn from the principles of sound cultural management stipulated in *United Cities and Local Governments Agenda 21* about inclusive and sustainable cultural policy.

Our cultural strategy rests on **four key priorities**.

### DAUGAVPILS 2027

#### Priority 1:

##### **A creative, culturally educated and culturally active citizen**

Daugavpils offers a wealth of diverse and contemporary cultural services for different resident groups, making it an attractive place to live and boosting citizen quality of life.

#### Priority 2:

##### **An inclusive cultural environment that respects the cultural and historical heritage**

Daugavpils takes care of its cultural and historical heritage. Meanwhile, its traditions change with the time, respecting the historical context – citizens have a sense of belonging to a unique location. Cultural and historical values are preserved, researched and promoted to create a thoughtful and values-oriented community, make the rich cultural and historical heritage of Daugavpils meaningful and available to the general public as well as encourage local patriotism and a sense of identity among the region's residents.

#### Priority 3:

##### **Dynamic growth of cultural and creative industries**

Daugavpils has made a name for itself as a popular tourist destination in Eastern Europe that offers cultural events on an international scale. The public image of Daugavpils as a site for learning about history, enjoying premium art events and recreation opportunities is made and maintained with a focus on increasing the inflow of domestic and international tourists to the city as such and the many tourist attractions in the area, thereby boosting economic growth.

Daugavpils is an inspiring place for creative entrepreneurship that supports professional growth. Development of a high added-value creative economy is boosted by taking full advantage of the available cultural resources and the labour force in the creative disciplines.

#### Priority 4:

##### **Sustainable, focused and participatory cultural governance**

Daugavpils implements an open, focused and sustainable cultural policy, taking into account the interests of different stakeholders from the cultural and creative sector, and promoting cooperation and participation in municipal decision-making processes.

Each priority entails specific actions with attainable results, mainly focusing on **expanding international cooperation through joint projects with European partners**.

We have drawn up our detailed cultural development programme for the mid-term until 2027 because, in Latvia's municipal development planning system, the only long-term planning documents are the general municipal sustainable development strategies. In contrast, branch policies, including culture, are only planned in the middle term.

We have been careful to integrate culture with the broader goals stipulated in the Daugavpils City Development Programme 2021–2027, specifically, the goals to do with **the public quality of life, environmental sustainability and economic growth**.

**Integration of culture and an emphasis on culture** in Daugavpils City and Augšdaugava District **Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 will ensure continued implementation of the planned goals after 2027**, meaning that the cultural discipline will keep developing without rupture.

## II CONTRIBUTION TO THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY

The development vision outlined in Daugavpils Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 maintains:

“ Daugavpils is a popular tourist destination with fine visibility and profile in international circles. The city receives international and domestic guests from other Latvian cities and districts who come to see unique cultural and historical sites and use the vast supply of opportunities in culture, sports, active recreation, education and healthcare. The city's historical and multicultural environment is a solid foundation for highly exportable services. Citizens are proud of their city, feel a sense of belonging and are actively involved in shaping its social, cultural and economic environment. ”

### 6. Daugavpils plans to strengthen the capacity of the cultural and creative sectors

In our development plans, we have envisioned **tighter cooperation among different disciplines** that would strengthen the cultural and creative industries sector and, through the input of the latter, have a positive impact on the development of other areas within the city.

While preparing our ECoC bid, we have created a **cross-disciplinary workgroup** with representatives from different municipal departments that work with development, urban planning, education, entrepreneurship, youth, tourism and other sectors, bringing them together to plan development projects for culture.

#### **Culture/urban development – an aesthetically pleasing and engaging urban environment**

We strongly believe in art in the urban environment as a necessary prerogative of a creative city. Art can serve aesthetic purposes and be a socially active medium that draws public attention to socially sensitive and debatable issues. For all that, enhancing urban design with smaller architectural forms can, on the one hand, encourage meeting and interaction among different community groups whilst also stimulating segregation. In Daugavpils, we have started building a well-weighted conceptual framework to address these issues in a targeted manner, respecting the needs of local communities.

#### **Culture/environment – integrated governance of natural and cultural heritage**

The city's cultural and historical heritage shapes its public image and character – the redbrick and wooden architecture, the fortress, and the Church Hill are the quintessential symbols of Daugavpils. Researching and conserving the city's cultural and historical heritage should involve local communities, so Daugavpils develops several educational programmes in the heritage sector, supports the local tour guide movement and training programmes for restoration specialists, etc. Every so often, the cultural and historical landscape is closely tied with the natural world. So again, art activities in this area can focus public attention on a more considerate approach to using natural resources.

#### **Culture/integration and civic activity**

Daugavpils has numerous NGOs, including national minority associations that involve the city's diverse communities in cultural activities and play a key role in shaping its cultural life. Neighbourhood associations that unite citizens with a shared interest in a particular territory are especially significant because their participants come forward with their initiatives and do volunteer work to improve citizen quality of

life. To nurture these endeavours, the council plans to support them with informational and financial backing, potentially introducing a participatory budgeting mechanism for projects with a significant impact on the local community.

#### **Culture/education – lifelong cultural education**

An essential municipal priority is providing all age groups with access to cultural and art education. Educational institutions operate a vast array of creative hobby groups and clusters whilst cultural institutions create the cultural education supply for the region's learners. Meanwhile, the city's network of culture centres offers creative classes for adults. Our future focus will be on using new technologies in cultural education. In addition, the creative sector will play a vital role in the new Lifelong Learning Centre of the city's Science Park.

#### **Culture/the social sphere – social wellbeing, health and creative self-expression**

We are increasingly aware that participation opportunities in culture are closely tied to our wellbeing. Therefore, creating a cultural supply for socially disadvantaged groups is an essential part of cooperation for our shared wellbeing. Consequently, the city's cultural organisations are increasingly concerned with organising inclusive cultural events in collaboration with local social services and other health and social sector institutions.

#### **Culture/entrepreneurship – creative economy**

So far, Daugavpils has not tapped into its full potential in terms of creative tourism, which could be a material boost to income and employment. Creative industries are another relatively less developed sector. The council has planned several support instruments to stimulate growth in these areas, such as a targeted development of the city's creative quarters and coworking spaces, and a business grant contest to develop creative industries and tourist products. In the following years, we will continue to seek new opportunities for even tighter integration of culture and business, incorporating innovative design solutions to develop new business products and services.

Cross-discipline cooperation is largely included in our proposed ECoC projects, which will bring us closer to our intended goals.

Meanwhile, to strengthen cooperation and capacity within the cultural sector, we will establish a **collaborative discussion platform** and provide a **learning and mentoring programme** to encourage the professional growth of individuals employed in the culture and creative sector and support international experience exchange.

## II CONTRIBUTION TO THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY

### 7. European Capital of Culture action as integral part of culture strategy

We have prepared our ECoC bid together with our cultural development programme, and **ECoC2027 goals are closely tied** to our long-term vision for cultural development.

Take a look at Daugavpils Cultural Development Programme 2021–2027



#### Daugavpils cultural development priorities 2027

#### Daugavpils goals in its ECoC 2027 bid

##### Priority 1:

###### A creative, culturally educated and culturally active citizen.

- Diverse and modern culture and art venues in the city.
- Self-organised and inclusive cultural activities.
- Opportunities for lifelong cultural education.

To **involve citizens on a broad scale** in the implementation of cultural and cross-disciplinary projects, boosting **citizen wellbeing and quality of life** with particular care for citizen groups at risk of social exclusion.

To develop a public **culture of critical thinking and discussion** as well as media literacy and **civic initiative**, creating diverse **cultural education opportunities** for citizens across all ages.

##### Priority 2:

###### An inclusive cultural environment that respects the cultural and historical heritage.

- Conservation and viability of cultural heritage.
- Aesthetic urban design and public art.
- Inclusive cultural venues in the city centre and its neighbourhoods.

To help **implement the principles of sustainable development thinking in the city's cultural life and the urban environment**, learning from international partners and working towards revitalisation and development of the city's neighbourhoods.

##### Priority 3:

###### Dynamic growth of cultural and creative industries.

- Enterprising, highly qualified and competitive professionals in the cultural and creative sector.
- Support for entrepreneurship in cultural and creative industries.
- Development of cultural infrastructure and introducing innovative technologies.
- Producing a quality cultural supply with a national and international appeal.

To develop the **public image of Daugavpils as a city of culture and creativity** and to boost its **visibility and profile in international circles**, implementing a broad cultural programme rooted in unique cultural values in cooperation with diverse European partners.

To develop the **cultural and creative economy** of Daugavpils and its surrounding region whilst implementing bold and innovative ideas in close cooperation with stakeholders from different disciplines and communities, universities, businesses, surrounding districts and towns.

The ECoC bid helps us pool our resources for focused work on our cultural sustainable development goals with committed political backing across the board. Through our ECoC programme, we will be able to attract a broader cohort of international partners, draw financial support from both the public and the private sector, boost the capacity of our cultural sector and its motivation to step out onto the global stage, as well as achieve material improvements in the diversity and quality of cultural supply within the region.

### 8. Long-term impacts of Daugavpils 2027

We estimate that the ECoC programme should stimulate rapid growth in the city across cultural, social and economic dimensions, fostering improvements in the surrounding environment of Daugavpils city and Latgale region.

## II CONTRIBUTION TO THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY

### Impact areas Daugavpils 2027 ECoC programme

	Cultural sustainability	Social sustainability	Economic sustainability	Environmental sustainability
<b>European dimension</b>	<p>Developing international cooperation skills in cultural and creative organisations, joining European cooperation networks, establishing diverse partnerships; developing external EU cooperation with countries along the union's eastern border.</p> <p>Joining European and Baltic cultural routes, etc.</p>	<p>Rise of local pride in the general public about their place of residence as a European rather than a post-socialist city.</p> <p>Improvements in media literacy, critical thinking and discussion culture.</p>	<p>Cultivating the public profile of Daugavpils and boosting its visibility as a city of culture and creativity on domestic, Baltic and Eastern / Northern European scale.</p> <p>Export of the cultural products of Daugavpils and Latgale to Europe, international competitiveness of Daugavpils-based artists and creative professionals.</p>	<p>Cultural contribution to changing public models of behaviour towards care for the environment.</p>
<b>Regional dimension</b>	<p>Internal cooperation within the cultural and creative sector, improving governance and communication, targeted pursuit of shared goals towards better shared outcomes.</p> <p>Contemporary development of unique locally rooted cultural processes through professional management and international competitiveness.</p>	<p>Strengthening the shared Latgalian cultural space and local identity.</p> <p>Strengthening integration, cooperation and solidarity among residents from different ethnical groups.</p> <p>Participatory management of cultural heritage – care for heritage maintenance and revival.</p>	<p>Rising role of cultural and creative economy in the overall economy of Daugavpils and Latgale (GDP, export, tax revenue).</p> <p>Growing tourism in the Latgale Region: rising numbers of cultural tourists, longer stays.</p>	<p>Integrating sustainability factors into culture supply – green thinking in cultural organisations, reducing the ecological footprint of cultural events.</p>
<b>City and region dimension</b>	<p>Diversifying the culture supply by building contemporary culture supply as a counterpart to the traditional one.</p> <p>Rise of new cultural organisations and services.</p> <p>Professional and quality development in the organisation of cultural events, implementing innovations (including high-tech and digital solutions), improving cultural marketing and public communication.</p> <p>Attracting new audiences, especially the hard-to-reach ones.</p>	<p>Diversifying the opportunities for cultural education – lifelong education for all age groups, improving cultural literacy.</p> <p>Improving access to cultural heritage among different social groups and strata, including residents of retirement homes, prison inmates, etc.</p> <p>Fostering civic activities and self-organisation by improving community environment and living conditions through cultural activities.</p> <p>More active youth involvement in urban development.</p>	<p>New businesses and workplaces in creative industries and tourism.</p> <p>Diversifying the cultural tourism supply, making the existing supply available in multiple languages and developing new and unique locally rooted supply.</p> <p>Attracting investment towards development of existing cultural landmarks and heritage sites.</p> <p>Growth of private funding for culture – better cooperation with businesses, creative solutions in entrepreneurship.</p>	<p>Improvements in the urban environment through new cultural spaces and international public art while respecting the city's green natural environment.</p> <p>Urban revitalisation through creative quarters – repurposing abandoned buildings.</p>

## II CONTRIBUTION TO THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY

### 9. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and assessment activities will be carried out in cooperation with Daugavpils University and the Latvian Academy of Culture, working together with the University Network of European Capitals of Culture.

The research team from the Latvian Academy of Culture (LAC) involved in monitoring and assessment activities is experienced in the internal and external assessment of Rīga as the European Capital of Culture 2014 and other major initiatives in Latvia's cultural policy. **LAC cooperation with Daugavpils University**, a UNESCO Chair institution, will enrich the research experience of both parties. Involvement of LAC and Daugavpils University students in research seminars and field practice to gather data will stimulate student research into ECoC topics and the integration of their research outcomes into the study programmes of the respective institution. We also intend to **borrow best practices from other ECoC assessment studies**, such as Aarhus 2017, and other upcoming studies to improve the quality of our research.

In summarising our data, we value the **principle of integration and succession**, so our data summary and analysis are integrated with performance assessment of the Daugavpils Cultural Development Programme 2021 – 2027.

We acknowledge the importance of the **principle of timeliness** in research, so we began drawing up our key indicators and assessment principles together with our ECoC programme. This year, we have summarised our preliminary data into a database for future comparisons and conclusions about our development dynamics.

We will draft our monitoring indicators for programme implementation around **European Commission Guidelines** to Assess ECoC Programmes, including different category **indicators** to measure **outcomes** and **impact** related to primary and specific ECoC goals proposed by Daugavpils city, as outlined in the previous chapters.

To draft and implement our assessment plan, we will apply **contemporary assessment methods** to best reflect different ECoC impacts, including those on specific target groups (for instance, network analysis for mapping connections among different operators to determine the interaction of cultural, economic and social implications).

**Chief indicator groups** are to determine the middle and long-term impact of Daugavpils 2027 in line with the proposed goals (Section 8). The table outlines suggestive indicators and data sources. More detailed indicator system will be developed in the next round of the competition.

### Programme assessment timeline



## II CONTRIBUTION TO THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY

### Indicators and data sources to assess the impact of Daugavpils 2027 ECoC programme

	Cultural sustainability	Social sustainability	Economic sustainability	Environmental sustainability
European dimension	<p>Diversity of European themes in the programme, in the media (analysis of the programme, media monitoring).</p> <p>Increased international cooperation in the cultural sector and beyond; new cross-border collaborations, co-productions and exchanges involving local and international operators (survey of cultural operators, programme analysis).</p>	<p>Increased citizen awareness and appreciation of European cultural diversity, citizens perceiving themselves as Europeans (local resident survey).</p>	<p>Improved international visibility of Daugavpils city as a creative hub on domestic, Baltic, Eastern European and Nordic region levels, coverage of cities (analysis of amount and % of positive media coverage and reach).</p> <p>Increased export of creative industry products from Daugavpils and the Latgale Region (statistics, information collected from cultural and creative industry operators).</p>	<p>Awareness of cultural operators regarding their contribution of cultural activities towards green thinking among residents (cultural operator survey, programme analysis).</p>
Regional dimension	<p>Increased number and quality of cooperation between different culture and creative subsector organisations (programme analysis, survey of cultural operators).</p> <p>Number of new cultural projects and products rooted in local uniqueness, increased management skills and international competitiveness of local cultural operators (programme analysis, survey of cultural operators).</p>	<p>Increased citizen awareness and appreciation of the sense of belonging to the Latgale Region (local resident survey).</p> <p>Increased social solidarity among ethnically diverse resident groups (resident survey).</p> <p>Increased cases of participatory governance in the heritage sector (case study analysis; interviews and focus groups with heritage communities).</p>	<p>Increase in GDP and employment in the CCI sectors of Daugavpils city and Latgale region (statistical analysis).</p> <p>Increase in tourist visits (day visits and overnight stays on both domestic and international levels) to the Latgale Region (statistics, tourist surveys).</p>	<p>Increased awareness of eco-efficient design in cultural events (cultural operator survey).</p>
City and region dimension	<p>Number of events blending traditional and contemporary art (programme analysis, survey of cultural operators).</p> <p>New cultural organisations emerged and new services developed (survey of cultural operators, expert interviews and focus groups).</p> <p>Quantity, quality and sustainability of the schemes and programmes supporting professional development of cultural managers and artists (including innovative and digital solutions) (programme analysis, survey of cultural operators, artist focus groups).</p> <p>Cross-sectoral collaborations, including the cultural sector (programme analysis).</p> <p>Attendance of Daugavpils 2027 events and evolution compared to the city's regular cultural audience (resident survey; focus group to assess particular target groups).</p>	<p>Number of events including educational, life-long learning and cultural literacy dimensions (programme analysis).</p> <p>Increased accessibility of cultural supply to diverse socially disadvantaged groups (resident survey; programme analysis; number and profile of people reached via media coverage).</p> <p>Participation of diverse local community groups in neighbourhood activities (programme analysis – number of local grassroots activities; focus groups with community members).</p> <p>Increased participation of youth in policy development and debate (focus groups with particular target groups).</p> <p>Number of events and initiatives encouraging active engagement and varied participation levels (programme analysis, cultural operator survey).</p> <p>Number and profile of active volunteers and level of their commitment (analysis of data provided by Daugavpils 2027 organisers).</p>	<p>Identification of creative brokers and networkers and their contribution to the development of local CCI (network analysis of CCI on the local level).</p> <p>Diversification of cultural tourism products and services, including linguistic diversity (case studies, interviews with tourist service providers).</p> <p>Value of investment in cultural infrastructure and facilities (statistics by local governments).</p> <p>Value of private investments in culture, public-private partnerships (interviews, statistics).</p> <p>Increase in the availability of affordable spaces for cultural production (cultural operator survey, interviews).</p>	<p>New cultural spaces in green urban areas developed, number of international public artworks displayed (analysis of information provided by local governments and Daugavpils 2027 organisers).</p> <p>Integrated governance of cultural, natural and industrial heritage, number of new best practices developed (case studies, interviews).</p> <p>Investments in the cultural and industrial heritage infrastructure, heritage re-purposed or re-interpreted, development of creative quarters (statistics by local governments).</p>





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### 10. Artistic vision and strategy

The programme's artistic vision is rooted in the concept **LINGUA FRANCA: Find, Make, Speak**. Our planned programme will be made up of diverse genres with engaging cultural and arts events taking place throughout the year, with sub-programmes and projects planned in accordance with the main thematic directions.

**The strategy for the *Lingua Franca* programme** is based on three simple questions. Each of the arts events and processes included in the cultural programme will pose one or more of these questions.

#### 1. How does this event help us to find a common language?

We are offering arts and cultural events that deliberately draw on differences and celebrate them, but concurrently highlight challenges and conflicts that stem from misunderstandings, and offer bold solutions on how to overcome them.

#### 2. How does this event help us to make a common language?

Our programme includes art and cultural events, whose goal is to foster extraordinary conversations and surprising meeting places, to encourage event participants to use new "alphabets", strange "grammar" and to play with the meaning of words in interdisciplinary projects. We are interested in the creation of new words and new stories that form a common understanding of people and environmentally friendly everyday life in which trust and respect prevail.

#### 3. How does this event help us to speak a common language?

Our programme includes art and cultural events that reflect on the possibility of a common language and propose using it in practice. These are events in which culture reveals itself as a common platform for communication and as an everyday necessity in which cooperation between people is oriented towards creative and developmental power. Speaking a common language means seeing the inviolable connection between one's personal values and those of others, and respecting and caring for one another.

Our programme's cultural and art events, which are produced in diverse artistic genres, invite you to speak a *Lingua Franca*, to trust shared values and to act and live in accordance with them.

### 11. Give a general overview of the structure of your cultural programme, including the range and diversity of the activities/main events that will mark the year.

The cultural programme's structure is based on understanding how language is constructed and the objectives for which it is used. Accordingly, the whole cultural programme is arranged in five thematic lines:

#### LETTERS AND SYLLABLES, WORDS, SENTENCES, STORIES, PUNCTUATION

The cultural programme has been created so that it has room for projects of various sizes including very small cultural initiatives proposed by the public on the Letter and Syllable thematic line, as well as large long-term and transformational events on the Punctuation thematic line.

### Interwoven priorities of the programme

Interwoven priorities are of vital importance to us in planning all our proposed projects, in order to ensure that the programme we implement is environmentally friendly, inclusive and accessible. We want to initiate the most diverse new forms of cooperation at local and international level, generating opportunities for various innovations in forming cultural content and communication with audiences.

#### 1. Cooperation development

The cultural programme includes projects, in the course of the implementation of which, new cooperation partners will be found and new cooperation models will be established between:

- various social groups – linguistic, ethnic, social and generational, etc.,
- various sectors by involving education, environmental and social institutions in the implementation of projects,
- regions, cities European states and countries of the world.

#### 2. An aspect including and educating different generations

The cultural programme has been devised to:

- demolish the accessibility barrier so that projects are accessible to any type of audience regardless of social status, affinity, age and mobility;
- to give the audience the opportunity to become co-organisers of events;
- foster events that include an educational section intended for kids and teenagers.

This applies to not only the inhabitants of Daugavpils, but to the entire population of Latgale, involving and including the most diverse social groups in cities, villages and courtyards.

#### 3. Environmentally friendly organisational solutions

The organisers of all events and projects are being challenged to observe the principles of sustainable development, reducing the ecological footprint of their events to a minimum. Help in assessing this criterion will be provided by the *Creative Green* ecological footprint calculator developed by the British organisation *Julie's Bicycle* for use by various types of cultural organisations. The calculator measures and helps them to understand the impact of their activities on the environment and ecology.

#### 4. Digital accessibility

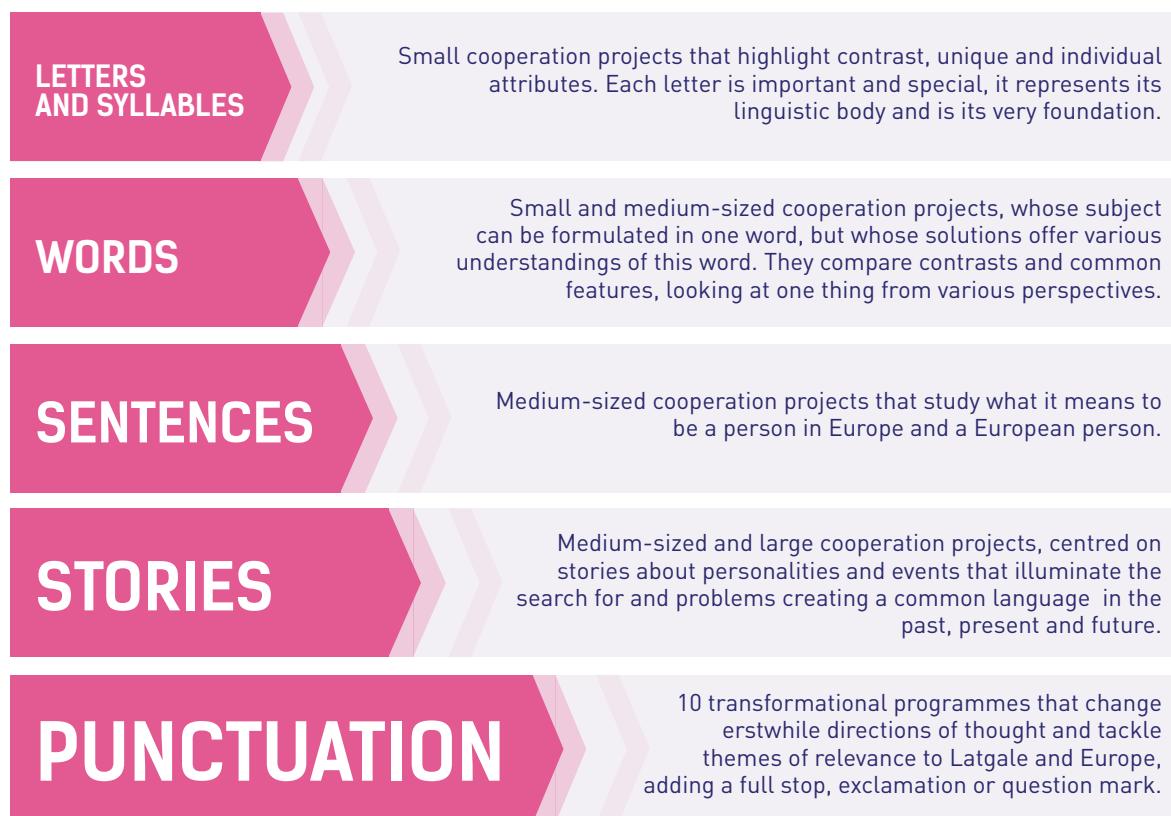
The organisers of all events and projects are invited to think about making their events more accessible, planning the broadcasting of the events virtually, making various innovative event broadcasting formats relevant so that they are also accessible to people with hearing, sight and other sensory difficulties, as well as to people with limited mobility.

#### 5. Usage of the Latgalian language

One of the cultural programme's major goals is promoting the use of Latgalian. This means not only art and cultural events in Latgalian, but the fact that Latgalian will become the European Capital of Culture's second official language. Project and event descriptions and event descriptions will be translated into it in both analogue and digital media.

### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

#### THE PROGRAMME'S 5 THEMATIC LINES



The first word in the programme's titles defines the programme's theme, while the second word is **RADA** which has two important meanings in Latvian. **RADA** – we are relatives with or similar to someone and create or dedicate our work to a specific theme that is relevant to us.

<b>CREATE FOR SILENCE</b>	a contemplative art programme
<b>CREATE FOR THE SUN AND THE WORLD</b>	a traditional cultural programme in non-traditional form
<b>CREATE FOR ROTHKO</b>	an interdisciplinary art programme
<b>CREATE FOR NATURE</b>	a contemporary art programme in nature
<b>CREATE FOR THE CITY</b>	an urban location-centric creative, environmental art and design programme
<b>CREATE FOR LATGALE</b>	an interdisciplinary programme dedicated to contemporary Latgale art and culture in Latgalian
<b>CREATE FOR GROWTH</b>	an interdisciplinary art, education and social programme to promote cooperation between young people and senior citizens
<b>CREATE FOR THE FUTURE</b>	a contemporary art, science and cutting edge technology cooperation programme
<b>CREATE FOR PEOPLE</b>	a programme of involvement in storytelling and different artistic genres
<b>CREATE FOR A LINGUA FRANCA</b>	a programme of conversations and discussions

### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

# PUNCTUATION

PĪTURZEIMIS INTERPUNKCJAPONTUAÇÃO SKYRYBA

PUNCTUATION is *the spine* of the programme offering. The planned events encompass, connect and include inhabitants, artists and organisations from Latgale, Latvia, Portugal and other European countries. Each programme will have its own curator, who will be responsible for its unified artistic vision and focus on the salient questions arising from the theme.

#### CREATE FOR SILENCE



Our search for a common languages starts with silence, pausing for thought, noticing what matters, listening and hearing.

##### A contemplative art programme

The events that make up *Create for Silence* focus on mental health problems and how they affect quality of life, analyse the coexistence of opposing value systems, interfaith cooperation and the role of faith in building an inclusive society, introducing people to contemporary contemplative practices and the arts as a mental health tool.

In January 2027, we will start the ECoC's year with silence and concentration – the first step towards finding a common language.

In the Latgale region, the presence of different religions is a very strong element in people's daily lives. In Daugavpils, this is exemplified on Church Hill, where there are churches of four denominations – Roman Catholic, Old Believer, Orthodox and Lutheran. All over Latgale during the month of January, sacred music and sacred art will be accessible both in their traditional forms (choral performances in churches, organ music concerts and icon exhibitions) and in contemporary forms (contemporary sacral music works and contemporary works of art in urban environments and exhibitions).

We will start the year with a **concert showcasing Daugavpils' new organ, performative events inspired by silence and involving communities** in the urban environment, which will be produced by the community theatre society INITIUM in cooperation with Daugavpils Theatre and Rēzekne Theatre.

**The spiritual choir music programme** will be devised, with the cooperation of the organisers of the choir festival *Silver Bells* and the Artistic Director of the Latvian Radio Choir Sigvards Kļava. In cooperation with Portugal's European Capital of Culture, **church concerts will be broadcast**, broadcasting new works of spiritual music by European composers and joining in an ecumenical prayer for understanding, inviting representatives of various denominations to cooperate. Rēzekne's GORS Concert Hall will host the **first performances of silence-inspired compositions** by Latvian and Portuguese composers.

In the grounds of Daugavpils Fortress, in the spot where a cathedral was destroyed during the Second World War, in cooperation with the Mark Rothko Art Centre, **an ecumenical chapel designed by artists** will be opened as a place of contemplation for all, regardless of their religious denomination in a

creative interpretation of Mark Rothko's observation that, "*Silence is so accurate...*". Light artists will join musicians in producing **a light performance dedicated to the frozen River Daugava**.

Together with the European Association for the Study of Religions, Daugavpils University will organise a conference on promotion of religious tolerance.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils City Culture Department, Unity House, the Daugavpils sacred music festival Silver Bells, Latvian Radio Choir, various Daugavpils religious congregations, Daugavpils Local History and Art Museum, Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre, the Rothko Chapel in Houston (USA), Daugavpils University, EASR (European Association for the Study of Religions), Institute of Integral Education, European Choral Association, Portugal's European Capital of Culture and musical ensembles.

#### CREATE FOR THE SUN AND WORLD

Creating a common language by exploring similarities and differences in national and ethnic traditions



##### A traditional cultural programme in non-traditional form

Modern urban ways of living provide us with physical comfort, but at the same time can create alienation from nature, self-doubt based upon images of an 'ideal' life, and loneliness even in the middle of all-pervading communication culture. The digital divide imposed by the pandemic has created even greater challenges to people's mental health and has shown that being in nature and being with others can help.

Within the framework of this project, it is planned to create a common solar calendar to compare the traditions of different ethnicities and understand how they affect the modern values of each community. Within the project it will be possible to learn to celebrate the anniversaries of different peoples living in Latgale (Latvian, Russian, Belarusian, Polish, Jewish, Latgalian, etc.), to prepare traditional dishes, to sing and dance the songs typical of the seasons, to learn to recognize and collect medicinal plants, to learn traditional skills, etc.

The programme's events will be organised through the cooperation of representatives of various national organisations throughout Latgale. Based on the calendar of seasonal festivals celebrated by various peoples, an individualized creative tourism offer will be created, which introduces eco-farms and craft workshops in Latgale and provides a unique experience for European travellers of a sustainable tourism development environment.

### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

#### Examples of events

##### TOMORROW STARTS TODAY

A cycle of events handing down skills and disciplines will take place at Unity House's House of Traditions in Daugavpils, the Skrinda Family Museum in Daugavpils Region, the Traditional Crafts Skills Camp at Baltinava and at Andrupene Farm in Dagda. The cycle will include seasonal creative workshops for kids, handicrafts masterclasses and classes in basic ethnographic crafts (weaving, stitching, colour embroidery, and knitting, etc.). Masterclasses and classes will take place throughout the year.

##### SMART TABLE digital skills data repository

At the House of Traditions in Daugavpils, collated video materials about crafts skills and knowledge in artistic form will provide documented visual information about crafts skills and intangible cultural heritage assets. A digital exhibition will present crafts skills that have been handed down over the years from generation to generation and which are at risk of dying out in changing times.

**STORY DAY** – printed and digital material that will compare different people's traditions celebrating the four seasons.

The **Spring Sun** will herald celebrations and events such as **Aizgavēņa danči** – an exciting folklore dance and play event involving pancake eating and bragging. **Masļeņica** is a celebration with skomorokhi, horse riding, pancake eating and the burning of the Masļeņica doll. **Fat Thursday** is a celebration held at the Polish House with dances and songs and doughnuts with jam. **The Great Day celebration** will be marked by a celebration of the Sun at sunrise. Various national choirs will come together to sing on the shores of the Daugava, while eggs will be painted and rolled, and people will play on swings. There will also be festivities to mark Jewish **Lag ba-Omer** and **Pesahs** with bonfires being lit and traditional meals being served. In the **Ūsiņš** celebration men compete against one another to demonstrate their strength, women accentuate their beauty, and people join up to cook *pantāga*, exchange vegetable/flower seeds and share inspiring stories about seasonal work in spring.

Also taking place in the spring will be the international children's art folklore festival *Cīruļi* and the international festival *Polish Folklore in Latgale*.

The **Summer Sun** will include celebrations and events like the **Summer Solstice** during which *līgo* songs are taught, crowns are woven, cheeses are bound, the sun is greeted, and folk ensembles of various nationalities regale one another in song by the Daugava, and a bonfire is lit on the banks of the Daugava. **Jabločņij Spas** is the summer harvest festival with songs, dances and product sampling including apples, jam, honey with bread, and apple tarts. **Kupalo** is a vibrant Ukrainian celebration, which concludes the calendar pagan summer solar cycle. Other traditional festivals held during the summer are the folklore and ethnic festivals *Ļīpa kust* at Viļaka and *Gosti* in Rēzekne.

The **Autumn Sun** will include celebrations and events such as the **Jumis** celebration – in which participants call out to one another in a natural acoustic space with

the help of songs celebrating various people's work bees, try to catch *Jumītis* and bake bread. There will be an evening during which bread baking experiences and inspirational stories will be exchanged. Other celebrations include the **Ukrainian harvest festival**, **the Jewish Rosh Hashanah** festival with the honouring of bread, as well as **Sukkot**. **Osejini** is a Russian celebration which is dedicated to the collected harvest, fertility and family welfare. Autumnal songs, dances and games. Other events include the autumnal product fair and the international cultural festival *The Annual Belarusian Fair in Daugavpils*.

The **Winter Sun** includes festivals and events like the **Ventilation of the Dowry Chest**, a dining event with wedding stories and folk ensembles singing to one another. Other events include the **Winter Solstice Celebration** which will involve the ritual of dragging a log through the city streets, winter children's games and the celebration known as **melanki, koljadki and svjatki**.

**The conference "Tradition and Religion. Similarities and Differences. Latgale's Contexts"** will study how to understand people from different cultures and religions, in order to improve intercultural cooperation in future, to foster respectful and tolerant attitudes, accepting and respecting differences.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils Unity House, Daugavpils multi-national cultural centres and organisations, Latvian National Centre for Culture, the NGO *Sadarbības platforma*, the ethnic festival *Gosti* in Rēzekne, the festival *Ļīpa kust* in Viļaka, *Andrupenes sēta*, the Skrinda Family Museum in Daugavpils Region, the Traditional Crafts Skills Camp at Baltinava, Ludza Artisans' Centre, Aglona Bread Museum, Daugavpils University, Kaunas Cultural Centre of Various Nations, Viciëbsk Cultural Centre, etc.

#### CREATE FOR ROTHKO

Finding a common language between various fields of art means surprising creative works.



#### An interdisciplinary art programme

The programme includes works inspired by the ideas of the Daugavpils-born world famous artist Mark Rothko. The programme accents the co-creativity of jazz, visual art and contemporary dance in cooperation with artists from Portugal and other European countries. Creativity – form, space and colour manifested in the most diverse ways are this programme's keywords.

The world famous modernist genius Mark Rothko was born in Daugavpils, and currently his works are on view at Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre, which regularly hosts exhibitions showcasing the works of Latgale artists, as well as international exhibitions. On this occasion the traditional April Art Days are planned as an interdisciplinary art festival, with new works of jazz, visual art and contemporary dance inspired by Rothko's art. The city will unveil Rothko-inspired Daugavpils wall murals, which will become important meeting points for local communities.

### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

#### Examples of events

##### ROTHKO WALL MURAL

As a result of the international artists' competition organised by the Rothko Centre and Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art, ten wall murals will be created in Daugavpils on the walls of high rise suburban apartment buildings which will be unveiled in the spring. The areas in the immediate vicinity of these walls will be landscaped and transformed into small public stages where local communities can gather and hold events. Trees will be planted and conversation benches will be installed. The set of wall murals will form a new tourism route that will introduce the public to the heritage of Daugavpils' neighbourhoods and Soviet history.

##### INTERNATIONAL ART EXHIBITION INSPIRED BY ROTHKO

April will witness the opening of a major international art exhibition at the Rothko Centre and in Daugavpils' urban environment. The team of curators will include David Anfam, Farida Zaletilo, Solvita Krese and representatives of two major European museums. The exhibition will be organised in two parts – one in Daugavpils and the other in Portugal's European Capital of Culture. Over the course of the year, the exhibitions will swap locations and after 2027 will travel to the next ECoC.

##### MARK ROTHKO CONTEMPORARY MUSIC COMPETITION FOR YOUNG PERFORMERS

This international children's and youth contemporary musicians' competition is being held for the first time in 2021 and has generated great interest among young musicians not only in Europe but around the world. In 2027 young musicians' concerts will also be held in other cities and villages around Latgale. The competition's organisers will cooperate with Latgale's art schools and create children's and youth art exhibitions in the grounds of the Fortress. An international conference organised by Daugavpils University will also take place entitled "Music and Art in Daugavpils".

##### ROTHKO IN JAZZ

Daugavpils is a city that loves jazz music. It is often played and listened to here. Rothko Jazz is an extensive programme of jazz music programme, which is a cooperation between *Jazz Joy Spring*, a festival that has taken place for many years in Daugavpils and is renowned among the world's jazz musicians, and the Head of the Latvian Radio Recording Studio and Contemporary Music Centre Māris Briežkalns. As a result of their cooperation, a unique contemporary dance and jazz production *Rothko in Jazz 2* will take place, for which 10 young composers create jazz themes inspired by specific Rothko paintings, which form the multimedia stage design for the performances.

The project's other participants will include members of the new music organisation *Wise Music Riga*, who, with the involvement of Latvian and Portuguese jazz musicians and video artists, will produce a special concert programme and film. The concert programme will use jazz music and video art to reflect on Europe's western and eastern borders. Among the artists

involved from Latvia will be *Jazzatomy*, Aleksandra Line (poetry, spoken word), Vadims Kožins (VFX visual effect artist), video artists, and artists in the relevant creative fields from Portugal.

The Baltic jazz festival *Škiuņa džezs* takes place in August at Lūznava Manor in the District of Rēzekne. It is a meeting place for young and experienced jazz artists. As in other years, in 2027 the main festival programme is planned for the summer, while as part of the thematic line *Create for Rothko* Lūznava will host concerts given by pupils from the Jazz Department at the Jānis Ivanovs Rēzekne Music Secondary School.

##### COMMON SPACE, COMMON TIME. Dance Days.

The Latgale Embassy GORS offers a programme created in cooperation with choreographers for Latvian and European contemporary dance artists. Dance performances and productions will be held for audiences of all ages, along with masterclasses teaching the language of dance, lectures and films. Senior citizens, kids and teenagers will be invited to attend conversations about the meaning of movement nowadays. Dance artists will work with people with impaired mobility. The whole of GORS' premises will be turned over to dance including the halls, foyer, art galleries, underground stage and roof terrace. The exhibition will showcase works by Latvian and Portuguese artists that are dedicated to the study of the body and movement. In turn, the square outside GORS will welcome representatives of street dance culture, who will produce an outdoor show about Rēzekne in cooperation with other dancers from Latgale.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils Unity House, *Jazz Joy Spring* Festival in cooperation with Māris Briežkalns, Jazz Quintet, Contemporary Music Centre, *Riga Jazz Stage* Festival, New Music NGO *Wise Music Riga*, Kaunas Jazz Festival, Vilnius Jazz Festival, Tallinn Jazz Kaar, Europe Jazz Network, *Jazzatomy*, Lūznava Manor and Rēzekne and Daugavpils music and art schools. Latgale Embassy GORS, Latvian Dance Information Centre and contemporary dance companies, Latvian Academy of Culture, independent theatres, the Rēzekne dance studio *Stop Time Dance* and *Dynamic Hit*, Exhodus Company (Slovenia), FineFive Dance Theatre (Estonia), Gruppen Fyra Contemporary Dance Company (Finland), Skopje Dance Theatre (North Macedonia), etc.

##### CREATE FOR NATURE

Creating and speaking  
a common language  
with nature.



##### A contemporary art programme in a natural environment

People are created by nature. This means that nature is greater, that nature is an asset in itself and exists not only to meet human needs. The ecosphere, where all the Earth's ecosystems, air water and dry land function in a uniform rhythm, is the source of the preservation of life. We – human beings – are part of this infinite, self-regulating system that is in a state of perpetual development. We are one of the species that

### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

calls the Earth its home and natural resources as the foundation for the preservation of our life and well-being. We are mutually connected to other species, and with our conduct can influence local and global processes in nature of which the depletion of natural resources, diversity of species and climate changes are the most concerning.

With the help of contemporary art, we want to promote eco-philosophical thinking and care for the natural resources of Latgale, integrating art into the natural landscape without overpowering or damaging it.

Latgale is known as the Land of Blue Lakes because it is home to 1,200 lakes. Moreover, Latvia's two biggest lakes – Lake Rāzna, which is known as the Latgale Sea and Lake Lubāns are in Latgale. The Daugava Rings Nature Park is located near Daugavpils and is made up of eight of Latvia's most picturesque rivers - the Daugava rings or meanders, which are considered to be the oldest formations of the Daugava valley in Latvia. Here the river has retained its natural flow and wild natural landscape characteristic of ancient times. It has been recognised as a NATURA 2000 territory and included in the UNESCO World Heritage Latvian National Register.

The unifying experience of the Soviet Occupation with its destructive management of nature, along with the anthropocentric view characteristic of Western civilization have resulted in the depletion of natural resources in Latgale. In this project, we want to invite international artists to create works of art in various genres in a natural environment that highlight and tend to the uniqueness of nature, and to create art and events with civic involvement that would draw attention to the renewal of nature's diversity and the preservation of natural landscapes. The inclusion of art in a natural landscape, using nature friendly materials and solutions, is this project's main objective.

#### Examples of events

##### FERRIES

In early spring when snow and ice are melting, the Dviete flood-land on the other side of the Daugava turns into a huge tide of water, which is shared by migrating flocks of birds, wild animals and people. Local residents keep boats safe in sheds, and call hillocks islands. They refer to this time of the year as the fifth season – the cascade. Artists will cooperate with local residents to jointly produce a musical choreographic event that audiences will be able to experience by venturing across the fields by boat accompanied by local people. This will be an ecological musical composed by Lithuanian composer and sound artist Lina Lapelyte, winner of the Golden Lion award at the 2019 Venice Biennale, and a choreographer from Portugal, with the participation of Latvian artists.

Since the cascade is dictated by the Daugava's flood waters, but they in turn are influenced by the climate; if there are no floods, the production will be created, emphasising and reminding the audience about what no longer exists and what we have lost as a result of man-made climate changes.

##### HOMO NOVUS VENTURES INTO NATURE

The international contemporary theatre festival *Homo Novus* residency programme *Create for Nature*. From 2023–2025, artists of two different generations from Latvia and abroad will work with communities, in creating performative events, which will centre on the relations between people and nature in the Daugava rings, alongside one of Latgale's lakes or forests. During 2025–2026, the residency series will continue, with the involvement of six theatre artists of different generations, who will create their works in a natural environment.

##### NATURE CONCERTHALL

The *Nature Concerthall* is an event synthesising nature, music, science, video, art and dramaturgy. Every year, viewers gather into two, hitherto undiscovered or little known natural locations to listen to and study a relatively unknown representative of flora or fauna. Musicians from the *Nature Concerthall* will work together with Latvia's scientists to create new compositions dedicated to that year's star. Workshops led by scientists are an integral element of communication for that year's star. In 2027 the *Nature Concerthall* will take place in Latgale (at Ilgas, Červonka or Lielborne Manor), and its star will be one of Latgale's lesser known natural representatives – the natterjack toad, European pond turtle or another species that has been newly discovered.

##### ICE GLASS ON THE DAUGAVA

Awaiting and observing moving ice and glass making are two events synonymous with the town of Līvāni. Every year, anticipation of spring is an unconscious but inevitable aspect of life in the town. It comes with the melting of the snow and the moving of the ice. The moving event on the Daugava near Līvāni will be a light art and music project, which will illuminate the frozen Daugava near the Līvāni Glass and Craft Centre, awaiting the moment when the ice begins to move. Visitors to the shores of the Daugava will be provided with wireless headphone or files to be downloaded onto their personal phones with music in various genres by Latgale artists and composers. As they listen to it, they will be able to watch the interaction of ice and light. Nearby, the Līvāni Glass and Craft Centre has a glassblowing workshop with a broad window facing the Daugava. Through this window it will be possible to observe the creation of glass products. Other windows in the centre, which also face the Daugava, will be used as screens to generate atmosphere. The windows will provide the backdrop for various projections, illuminated exhibitions, installations and performances.

##### SANSUSĪ

Every year the Sansusī Chamber Music Festival attracts contemporary art lovers from all over the world and, taking them into the forest, gifts them the most wonderful and exquisite music, theatre, circus and contemporary dance experience of the moment. Sansusī also offers a welfare residency programme for artists, who work with the patents at Aknīste Psychoneurological Hospital. In 2027, it is planned that artists will collaborate with Daugavpils Psychoneurological Hospital.



### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

#### LATGALE LAKE SYMPHONY

Among the project's visions is to create a *Lake* programme for the Latvian Radio Choir with new compositions by Latvian, Finnish and Portuguese composers. The programme will be performed late in the evening on Latgale's lakes, when the surface of the water helps the choir's voices to resonate far, far away. During the summer, the choir will give several lake concerts in cooperation with various Latgale municipalities.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils City Culture Department, NGO Green Freedom, UNESCO Latvian National Commission, Art Academy of Latvia, Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre, Līvāni Glass and Craft Centre, Centre for Contemporary Art, Latvian Radio Choir, Sansusī Society, NGO Nature Concert Hall, New Theatre Institute, Latvian Academy of Culture, Lūzna Manor, Latgale regional music and art schools, Daugavpils University Natural Research and Environmental Education Centre, Latvijas Dabas fonds, Pasaules Dabas fonds, Nature Conservation Agency of Latvia, HomoEcos, Daugavpils Psychoneurological Hospital, Kvadrifons Independent Theatre Troupe, Rēzekne Theatre, British Council in Latvia, Metropolis (Denmark), Voronja galeri (Estonia), Kaunas Biennial, Savonlinna 2026, etc.

#### CREATE FOR THE CITY



Creating a common language between different urban communities to humanize the living environment and build a European urban consciousness

#### An urban location-centric creative, environmental art and design programme

A humane urban environment encouraging cooperation and green-thinking is one of the preconditions for 21st century society. Within the framework of this project, we want to promote urban localization, cultural history research and community cooperation by supporting and promoting neighbourhood initiatives in cooperation with artists, who want to collaborate creatively in an urban environment. Urban location-centric creative programmes will be implemented in Daugavpils, Rēzekne and other cities in Latgale.

The challenge for Daugavpils is to transform post-socialist notions that everything should be provided centrally and "from above", into taking initiative and responsibility for one's own built environment and community. This programme is planned in close cooperation with the city's neighbourhoods to create balance between neighbourhood and city development.

In Daugavpils special attention will be paid to altering the relationship between the city and the River Daugava, developing the Fortress as a friendly suburb for inhabitants (1,500 people live within an area of around 2 square kilometres encompassed by the fortress's fortifications), in order to foster the creative study of Soviet architectural heritage and to make this public space more people friendly.

#### Project examples

#### THE RIVER – THE START OF THE CITY

Water in the city is not only an element of the natural landscape, but also an inexhaustible resource in the cultural life of the city. City rivers will be the focus of more widespread public attention, with the development of public spaces near the river in Daugavpils, Rēzekne, and other cities in Latgale and Portugal. This project involving co-creation of public spaces near the river will be implemented with the involvement of inhabitants – through stories and legends, clean-up events and landscaping, boat concerts and celebrations.

#### THE UNBUILT DAUGAVPILS HES OPERA

One of the most significant events signifying Latvia's opposition to Soviet policies was the widespread people's protests against the building of the Daugavpils HES, which entailed the flooding of the ancient Daugava river valley. These protests were the starting point for the Latvian Awakening Movement, without which the regaining of Latvia's independence would be unimaginable. The idea of Latvia's political freedom started with the need to protect nature, however the aforementioned event is slowly fading from people's memories, which is why Daugavpils will host the production of the unbuilt Daugavpils HES opera. This will take place in the location that was marked for destruction. The opera's creative team will be made of leading representatives of contemporary art.

#### DAUGAVPILS FESTIVAL

The Daugavpils City Festival will acquire a completely new form and sound, expanding throughout the city, celebrating the balance of nature and the urban environment, transferring the centre of events to the Daugava shore promenade and offering a wide cultural programme in suburban courtyards. The festival theme will be the Daugava. The festival will last for a week and start with the international people's art festival *Augšdaugava* in the Daugava Rings Nature Park, which in 2004 was included in the European Union's list of NATURA 2000 territories.

#### HOMO NOVUS LIVES IN THE CITY

The renowned European contemporary theatre festival *Homo Novus* was born in 1995 in Daugavpils. It marked the beginning of the significant development of contemporary theatre in Latvia, which has mainly focused on events in Riga for the past twenty years. In Latgale, to date the presence of contemporary theatre and its attendant ideas has been very minimal and has not been discovered in this region. In order to involve Latgale in the field of European contemporary theatrical play and to introduce its inhabitants to the involving, inclusive and socially active concept of contemporary theatre, it is planned that the programme will include a series of residencies for theatrical artists and two *Homo Novus Festival* production programmes (2025, 2027). The festival will work on the theme of the relationships between people, nature and the city, creating socially inclusive, site-specific works centred on the themes of inclusion and involvement, and relations between people with special needs and the city.

### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

#### LOST DAUGAVPILS

The *Lost Daugavpils* is a research and educational digital project that will tell the story of the city's lost architectural assets. Residents will be invited to study their family photo archives to discover the face of the lost Daugavpils and to send in photographs to create a common field of memory. The second part of the project envisages restoration masterclasses during which various historical items will undergo restoration.

#### WETLANDS ARE ALSO A PLACE TO LIVE

Latgale Zoo in Daugavpils uses modern educational and art methods to draw attention to a unique ecosystem that is characteristic of this city and the endangered species of animals residing here. The project focuses on unique wetlands with extremely diverse flora and fauna. In cooperation with artists, the zoo will create unique walking trails whose goal is to introduce people to examples of the varied species residing in the city.

#### NOCTURNAL WALKS WITH BATS

Audiences will be given a unique opportunity to meet creatures of the night in the form of artists and bats. Daugavpils Fortress is a place where one of Europe's largest bat colonies hibernates in winter. As we know, bats are nocturnal creatures just like artists, whose profession requires them to work during late evening hours. Latgale's inhabitants and visitors will be invited to set off on individual nocturnal walks lasting about an hour around the Fortress and Daugavpils in the company of Latgale artists, musicians and actors of different generations, in order to see these places from their perspective and those of the bats. Night is the time when we have the opportunity to see creatures that hide during daylight.

#### ABOUT THE EYES OF THE CITY WINDOWS – WINDOWS

Inspired by the experience of Kuldīga, Daugavpils Construction Board and restorers will offer the residents of Daugavpils historical houses the opportunity to learn how to restore old wooden windows themselves. To draw attention to windows in historical houses, photographic exhibitions will be organised in them.

#### INSTALLATION OF A COMMUNITY GARDEN IN THE FORTRESS

In this project the Fortress's community of residents will join landscape architects to install a garden. The idea was developed during the preparation of the Future City Game project bid.

#### HAY RACKS IN RĒZEKNE

The sight of hay racks has almost disappeared from the Latvian rural landscape. The Latgale Embassy GORS wants to remind audiences of this through various initiatives including building traditional hay racks by Rēzekne's river and concert halls and doing so in the form of installations with a contemporary interpretation. The hay rack is like a house or a stage, where various activities can take place – performances of live or recorded music, and possibly thematic racks or thematic evenings (poetry, different languages, different countries, and different atmospheres), hay rack building masterclasses, work bees and creation of a common space. They can also serve as a hotel for young people.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils City Culture Department, NGO Green Freedom, Mežciems NGO and other neighbourhood organisations, Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre, Unity House, Latgale Embassy GORS, Art Academy of Latvia, Centre for Contemporary Art, Daugavpils Professional Design and Art School *Saules skola*, New Theatre Institute of Latvia, Kvadrifrons, *Pilsēta cilvēkiem* (A City for People), Latvian Association of Creative Quarters, IN SITU Public Art Cooperation Network, Rēzekne and Preiļi municipalities and organisations, Rēzekne Academy of Technologies, Nature Education Centre *Rāzna*, Daugavpils Bat Centre, Latgale Zoo, Daugavpils Theatre, *Ciência Viva* (Portugal), Kaunas ECoC 2022, Coimbra Municipality, Danish Cultural Institute, Goethe Institut, etc.

#### CREATE FOR LATGALE

Finding and speaking a common language means appreciating the unique sound of Latgalians.



#### An interdisciplinary programme, dedicated to Latgale's contemporary art and culture in Latgalian

The unique culture and identity of the region is based on the Latgalian language, which belongs to the Indo-European family of languages and to the Baltic group of languages as a special form of the Latvian language. At present, about 9% of the population in Latvia speaks Latgalian on a daily basis. However, its status remains in a state of flux. Although Latgalian is used not only in traditional but also in contemporary cultural processes – theatre performances, books, radio, popular music, etc., it does not have the status of an official state language and its users can still feel some discrimination and stigma attached to it by others.

Concern for the preservation of cultural diversity means bringing the languages and cultures of Europe's linguistic minorities to life in important contemporary cultural processes, and this is both a challenge for the future Europe and the objective of this programme.

The programme is centred on Latgalian as the foundation for the most eclectic range of traditional and contemporary art processes in Latgale. Projects will be devised in cooperation with other European linguistic minorities and will take place throughout the year.

#### Project examples

##### WORLD LATGALIAN SONG AND DANCE FESTIVAL

The Latgale Song Festival holds a very significant place in Latvian history and in the tradition of Song and Dance Festivals, which is included in the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The Latgale Song Festival was the last people's festival to be held in the first Latvian Free State and took place in Daugavpils on 16 June 1940, while the Latvian border was being crossed by the Soviet Army's tanks and armed forces, beginning the occupation of Latvia.



### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

The 2027 World Latgalian Song and Dance Festival will be the central and largest event in the *Create for Latgale* programme and will attract Latgalians from all over the world to Daugavpils. The festival programme will offer the most diverse range of participatory opportunities for people of all ages and artistic interests, who tend to Latgalian culture and language everyday including as part of choir and dance ensembles, orchestras, folklore ensemble concerts, amateur theatre groups, folk costume showcases and artisans' exhibitions, etc. Latgale folk metal and ethno music groups, folk ensemble and dancers will be involved in a performance of Jānis Ivanovs' symphony *Latgale*. Concerts linked to the festival performed by ensembles of all ages will take place in Daugavpils, Rēzekne and the whole of Latgale. The festival will also provide the backdrop for the unveiling of the Latgale Cultural Canon and the World Latgalian Business Week.

The large Latgalian Market will take place before the traditional Latvian Midsummer celebration *Jāņi* on Castle Hill in Ludza and will attract Latgale's artisans and homemade product makers. Other events taking place during the market will include environmental workshops and educational lectures, as well as cooking masterclasses. Visitors will be offered the chance to discover Latgalian flavours at gastronomy-themed events including events celebrating *šmakovka* [Latgalian vodka], *buļbas* (potatoes), honey and cheese.

A special programme will be dedicated to guest collectives of other European minority linguistic groups, parallel to which a conference will be held focusing on the situation of linguistic minorities in Europe.

#### LITERATURE IN LATGALIAN

A very diverse programme will be dedicated to literature in Latgalian.

**International literary festival Žvyrs** – reading of contemporary literature in Latgalian and other European minority languages. *Žvyrs* means *zvirgzdi*, i.e. gravel, which is why the festival will be held in the amphitheatre of a gravel quarry. Readings will be accompanied by a concert programme. This project will foster a sense of affinity to one's place and self-awareness, seeing, listening to and reading other kindred writers and singers expressing themselves in Europe's small languages.

**European regional language anthology *Swixtis (Clay Pot)***. In ancient Prussian *Swixtis* means a clay pot. The anthology will also be published in digital and Braille versions.

**Translation Summer School *Roksti! (Write!)*** at Lūznava Manor – course participants will translate Latgalian texts into Latvian, English and other European languages.

**The “Zvaigžņu ceļš” (*Star Trek*) Night of Feelings** will invite its audience to venture forth into Latgale's mown hay fields to observe the Perseid meteor shower and to listen to the words and

music of Latgalian artists rendered through wireless headphones. It will be possible to download and listen to this event anywhere, thus symbolically enabling falling stars to illuminate the Latgalian language and its users all over the world.

Publications and articles in Latgalian will regularly appear in the leading national cultural media. Prose and poetry in Latgalian will be published on the **Satori** and **Punctum** websites.

The Latgalian language will also take over public space in Latgale's cities – poems or prose quotations will appear as visual objects on house walls and on the sides of public transport.

**Daugavpils Theatre** and **Rēzekne Theatre** will continue to produce contemporary theatrical works in Latgalian, including creating productions for children in Latgalian.

#### LATGALE – THE CENTRE OF EUROPEAN POTTERY

An important element of traditional Latgalian culture is linked to Latgale clay. The region is famed for its potters, whose skills and special mastery of their craft is included in Latvia's cultural canon. In 2027 Latgale will become the centre of European pottery with an extensive programme involving participants of all ages, which will offer the opportunity to discover clay as an ecological and sustainable material, as well as the chance to learn how to work with it. The pottery programme will focus on preservation of traditional crafts skills and ensuring that they pass on to present and future generations by introducing and teaching them to Latgalians and visitors from further afield.

The **Latgale Potters' Days** will offer visitors the chance to attend open masterclasses conducted by Latgale's potters, the firing and opening of Latgale's potters' shared kiln, the judging of works, exhibitions, readings and masterclasses.

#### THE VARYING SOUNDS OF LATGALIAN MUSIC

Daugavpils will host a major **concert entitled *Born in Latgale***, which will showcase the voices of academic music performers, while ***A Night of Music*** will be dedicated to contemporary Latgalian music at GORS Concert Hall in Rēzekne. In order to encourage the writing and performance of Latgalian poetry and song, young poets and musical groups will be encouraged to perform at the ***Upītes Uobeļduorzs Festival*** which is traditionally held in Viļaka.

A special part of Latgale's intangible sound heritage is formed by the **May Singing Services** at Dagda, Baltinava, Rugāji and elsewhere, when local inhabitants meet at crossroads and at roadsides next to Latgale's characteristic crucifixes to jointly sing and pray in honour of the Virgin Mary. To document this tradition, the May singing services will be digitalised in professional sound recordings and video format. The Crucifix Route will be mapped and digitally published with a unique offering during the month of May so that anybody who wants to experience or take part in these singing services knows where and when they will take place.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils City Culture Department, Latvian National Centre for Culture,

### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

Daugavpils Unity House, Daugavpils Sinfonietta Orchestra, folk metal band *Varang Nord*, Rēzekne Cultural and Tourism Centre, Latgale Embassy GORS, Latvian Centre for Contemporary Ceramics, Martinsons' House (Mark Rothko Art Centre), Daugavpils Local History and Art Museum, Latgale Culture and History Museum, Latvian National Centre for Culture, UNESCO, World Federation of Free Latvian, European Latvian Association, Aglona, Baltinava, Balvi, Cibla, Dagda, Kārsava, Krāslava, Līvāni, Ludza, Preiļi, Riebiņi, Rugāji, Vārkava, Viļaka, Viļāni, Zilupe, Rēzekne, Ilūkste and Daugavpils (Augšdaugava) municipalities, Latgale's potters, Vytautas Valiušis Ceramics Museum in Leliunai (Lithuania), Centre of Contemporary Ceramics of La Borne (France), Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre "Upīte", Latgale Culinary Heritage Centre, NGO "Latgales tematiskie ciemi" (Latgale's Thematic Villages), Savonlinna 2026 etc.

#### CREATE FOR GROWTH



Creating a common language between different generations.

#### An interdisciplinary art, education and social programme to promote cooperation between young people and senior citizens

In this project, we want to give a voice to the young people of Daugavpils and Europe, so that they can talk about important topics at a wide-ranging festival in an urban environment, involving different subcultures and providing stages for various artistic expressions and dialogues.

Street culture will be the focus of this project. However, unlike other youth festivals, which focus solely on youth themes and subculture, we want to consciously pay attention to conversations with people of other generations. The programme will not distinguish between different experiences, but create an opportunity for them to meet and combine.

In August and September, the programme will include various projects and events.

**Artišoks** – the traditional Daugavpils youth festival that aims to promote interest-based education and to encourage young people to spend time in a useful and creative way.

Conversation project **LAVKA** – evenings of conversation with the participation of people of different generations.

**Media Lab** – practical seminar/hackathon which connects representatives of the private sector, IT field, educational institutions, media and youth, and seeks to improve the knowledge of people from different age groups about media usage.

The Latgale Library and Science Centre will host the **Young Inventors' Ideas Market**.

The art project **Are you Hungry?** will invite artists and musicians from both the younger and generation to

engage in joint creative endeavours in the form of street installations, performances and productions.

The international **break dance festival Skill Deal** will include masterclasses for people of all ages.

**NextStationDaugavpils** is a trip-concert along the route from Vilnius – Daugavpils, Krāslava – Daugavpils and Riga – Daugavpils. Along the entire length of the route, three trains will host three concerts and stories about the relationship between Daugavpils and Europe. The **Baltic Drummers' Summit** will be held in cooperation with the *Playground Festival*, a **3D drawing** on asphalt competition, **Street Theatre Festival** productions and **puppet art** exhibitions, as well as the premier of a **folk metal opera** by the globally renowned folk metal band **Varang Nord**.

At the **New Eastern City Forum**, young people will host a debate about urban development possibilities and needs to which they will invite city departmental officials, representatives of specialised non-governmental organisation, architects, urbanists, philosophers and entrepreneurs from Latgale, Latvia, the Baltic States, the post-Soviet region and other EU states.

A **European youth summit** will be held, where young people from the EU and neighbouring countries will meet to discuss the *Lingua Franca* programme's themes.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils City Youth Department, NGO New East, National Youth Council of Latvia, NGO D-JUNO, Club *Mājas*, NGO *Apelsīns*, Factory Kingz, Stop Time Dance Studio, festival *Skill Deal*, Latgale region and Latvian city youth associations, Daugavpils senior citizens' organisations, cooperation partners in Kaunas, Tartu (Postmarket Street Festival), European Youth Forum, British Council in Latvia, Nordic Council of Ministers, etc.

#### CREATE FOR THE FUTURE

A common language between science and art to build a common nature- and human-friendly future.



#### Contemporary art, science and cutting edge technology cooperation programme

The focus of this project is the synthesis of art, science and the latest technologies to build a future in which they all work together to create a bio-diverse and a human-friendly ecosystem. Under the auspices of the programme, artists and scientists will work together to tackle issues regarding the place of human beings within the ecosystem, the balance between human beings and the ecosystem, and the use of cutting edge technologies in creating this balance.

The programme will place a major emphasis on involving viewers of various generations in creative laboratories and education programmes. The objective is to foster understanding about the role of science in everyday life, the interaction of culture with various branches of science, and the engagement

### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

of kids, adolescents, students and schoolchildren in contemporary media art, science and research. Under the auspices of the programme, it will be possible to study quantum art, gravitational aesthetics, the challenges of artificial intelligence, the possibility of expanded and virtual reality, the balance between human and ecosystem problems, macro nature photo art and other subjects.

Starting from 2023, as part of their annual international **scientific conferences**, Daugavpils University's lecturers and researchers will cooperate with teams of scientists and artists from Belarus, Russia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Germany, Denmark, Belgium and Portugal. As a result of this cooperation, conference programmes will be expanded with art activities for a wide international public. Parallel to each conference **a residency for one Latvian artist and one foreign artist will be arranged at science research centres in Latgale**. This will provide the opportunity for close cooperation between the artists and scientists from Daugavpils University and Rēzekne Academy of Technologies, who are interested in opening up their studies for the interaction with the processes of art. Daugavpils ECoC programme will invite Latvian and European artists **to create work of art** in connection with the studies conducted by scientists in Daugavpils and its surrounding area. For example, they could focus on the discoveries of the notable mathematician Andris Ambainis in the field of quantum computing, biologist Arvīds Barševskis' contribution to the discovery of a new species of ground beetle family, researcher Uldis Valainis' work in the realm of biological diversity, chemist Nikodems Bajārs' research work in the field of astronomy, or Zinaīda Jermoļejeva's contribution to the use of penicillin, etc.

In 2027 Daugavpils urban environment will be home to a specially designed **container – art and science laboratory** in which artists and scientists from Latvia and Portugal will cooperate in interdisciplinary projects, enabling the public to learn about the work of robots, 3D hologram creation, virtual reality space, depiction of nature in micro imageings, discovery and use of types of luminescent colours and other science communication projects.

A special **cycle of involvement initiatives** will take place during the autumn (ranging from the European Researchers' Night in September to the end of November) in different parts of the city of Daugavpils, including in undeveloped industrial territories and green nature zones by the River Daugava. The biggest event in the programme of art and science projects will be the **international digital and media art exhibition** with creative workshops and educational events for visitors of all ages.

Using the possibilities available on digital platforms and online, audiences all over the world with access to a smartphone or computer will have the opportunity to visit the **digital exhibition In Silico**, which accent the large volume of information and the colourful nature of the images that we increasingly see on our screens and process with our brains every day. In the **electronic music festival concluding the programme**, artists and musicians will reflect on the subject of the

planet's ecosystem and possibilities to find a balance between the different life forms that live here.

In international **scientific conferences**, starting from 2023, Daugavpils University will cooperate with teams of scientists and artists from Belarus, Russia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Germany, Denmark, Belgium and Portugal. As a result of this cooperation, the conference programmes will be expanded with art activities for the wider international public. Parallel to each conference, **artist residencies will be arranged for one artist from Latvia and one from abroad at science research centres in Latgale**, strengthening the role of Daugavpils and Latgale on the national European science stage. These residencies will provide the opportunity for close cooperation between the artists and scientists at Daugavpils University and Rēzekne Academy of Technologies, who are interested in opening up their studies to interaction with the processes of art, thus facilitating science communication.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils Innovation Centre, Daugavpils University, Rēzekne Academy of Technologies, University of Latvia, Visionary Culture Foundation, RIXC Centre for New Media Culture, Daugavpils Science and Innovation Centre, CERN Art Residency Centre (Zurich, Switzerland), Gluon Art Research Centre (Belgium), La Becque Art Residency Centre (Switzerland), House of Electronic Arts (Basel, Switzerland), Danish Cultural Institute, etc.

#### CREATE FOR PEOPLE

The search for a common language to share experience, expression and understanding.



#### A programme of involvement in storytelling and different artistic genres

To promote empathy and understanding at the individual level, this programme will include events and processes that draw attention to people's life experiences and, on the basis of these, create involving and inclusive works of art in different forms and genres.

The programme's main subject focuses on individual experiences and stories of acceptance and non-acceptance, inclusion or non-inclusion, with a special focus on groups at risk of social exclusion.

The programme will entail the production of various performative events with community involvement, collection, archiving, analysis of life stories and ensuring the digital accessibility of materials. After the stories are compiled, they will be offered to poets and composers from Latvia and other countries to create new works, which will become the basis for a special performance to mark the end of the ECoC year.

This project will make it possible to compare stories from Europe's West and East. Attention will also be paid to the need for foster understanding in Daugavpils between people, who live in different linguistic information spaces (Daugavpils is home

### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

to large number of Russian speakers to consume Russia's media information on a daily basis), and therefore have a completely diametrically opposed understanding of the values that matter to Europe.

#### Project examples

##### ArtDocFest in LATGALE

Documentary film director Vitālijs Manskis has won numerous major European prizes. The European documentary film festival he founded, ArtDocFest started out in Russia, but it's acerbic and politically active nature proved unacceptable to the Russian authorities. As a result, the festival was banned in Russia and its founder Manskis relocated to Latvia. The home of the festival is now Riga. ArtDocFest showcases films by directors from former Soviet states or films dedicated to processes taking place within the territory of the former Soviet Union. The Latgale festival programmes will be devised to inspire honest debates of importance to both filmmakers and viewers about topical subjects including equality, inclusiveness and political freedom, etc.

In 2027 the festival will also offer a retrospective of the films of Herz Frank, the outstanding Latvian documentary filmmaker born in Ludza and founder of the direction of Baltic poetic cinema. Herz Frank's film *Ten Minutes Older* (1978) has been included in Latvia's cultural canon and is still *compulsory viewing* for students of film art in many film schools around the world.

##### LATGALE'S DOWNHOLE WELL

In this interdisciplinary art project, Latvian artists from various branches of art (sound, video, directors, scenographers, new circus and contemporary dance) will choose foreign artists familiar to them and set off on an anthropological field study, as a result of which an art event will occur. The project's goal is to demolish existing myths and prejudices and to create space for a discussion about socially relevant, but often marginalised subjects; establishing a safe and respectful discussion space with the help of art. Artists will cooperate with representatives of various socially vulnerable groups from sexual minorities, groups of Russian speakers who do not speak Latvian, Latgale inhabitants who live below the poverty line, and residents of lonely farms and dying villages.

##### WITNESSES

The 2020–2021 pandemic crisis exacerbated the problem of violence in many families. Home ought to be the safest place in the world, but is often dangerous for many women and children. A conversation between artists, social centre workers, psychologists, architects and other experts will invite the audience to imagine homes that are safe for those who are powerless. Under the auspices of this project, attention will be focused on the subject of violence in the family. In the process, artists will cooperate with the Daugavpils probation service and architects.

The project will include a performative event/audio broadcast *Violence Radio*, a photo/audio exhibition *Witnesses* and a discussion "What Would a Home Look Like that is a Safe Place for Women and Children?"

In the course of her life, one woman in every four in Europe has experienced violence in the family. This is a problem that affects all ages and social strata in both Latvia and Europe, but stigmatization and prejudices cause society to keep silent about it. *Violence Radio* will be a continual 24 hour marathon of readings of stories documenting the experience of violence in which the authors and participants will not only be women, who have suffered from violence in the family, but also their mothers, sisters, friends and supporters. This will be a public event and an action of solidarity in which voices will stand opposed to keeping silent. All the stories are real, and they will be specially collected by the authors for this project, listening to women from Latgale and Portugal.

The photographic and audio exhibition *Witnesses* will be based on Laura Stašāne and Jana Jacuka's documentary art project *Physical Evidence Museum*, whose collection comprises everyday objects that have borne witness to violence in the family and which were sent into the museum by women from all over Latvia. These items, which would not be recognised as credible evidence by either courts or the police reveal harrowing life stories. In the exhibition, items from the museum's collection will be documented in large photographs, presenting them as neutral primary heroes in the drama that is played out between people. The photographs will be accompanied by audio recordings, revealing a brief concentrated story of the experience of violence and creating a multi-vocal choir in the exhibition space.

##### WRITING AND CORRESPONDENCE, STORYTELLING AND LISTENING

This project was devised by libraries and creative writing professionals, which will combine various writing and correspondence, storytelling and listening practices. It entails writing letters and postcards and an art practice, creative writing and storytelling workshops, as well as active listening activities for people in various socially vulnerable groups in social care centres, prisons and hospitals, etc.

##### COMMUNITY THEATRE PRODUCTIONS

The basic task of community theatre is to work with specific communities, telling and highlighting subjects of relevance to them – traditions, stories and problematic issues, etc. In producing contemporary and topical productions, attention will be drawn to issues related to the environment, equality and democracy. At the same time, in the course of the working process, a dialogue will take place between the community, non-governmental, state and private sector, affording relevance to specific issues to all levels.

Five contemporary post-dramatic productions will be created centred on the stories of local people, places, issues and history, today topicalities and local community values. The team of community theatre researchers (anthropologists, folklore experts, etc.) will cooperate with the artists engaged in the project (directors, playwrights, choreographers, visual artists and composers) and producers, make research trips and start work with various communities in 2023. With the help of masterclasses, using specific community theatre methods, the interests, topicalities and

### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

potential stories of specific social groups and the artists involved will be ascertained.

In August 2024, the first of five productions will take place – a youth contemporary dance performance within the grounds of the Daugavpils Fortress as part of the international project *People Power Partnership*. These performances will be produced with the participation of Latvian and foreign artists working with community theatre methods including director and community expert Kristina Werner (Germany/Lithuania), director Jan Willem van den Bos (Netherlands/Great Britain) and playwright and writer Luke Welch (Latvia/Great Britain).

#### PROGRAMME FINALE – MUSICAL PRODUCTIONS I SPEAK LINGUA FRANCA

People in Latgale and Portuguese regions will be invited by local libraries to tell and write their experiences of situations involving acceptance and non-acceptance, inclusion and non-inclusion and about how they have sought a joint language with others. The stories will be digitally collated in written, audio, photographic and video versions.

Poets and composers from Latgale and Portugal will select the stories that appeal to them from this database and write new solo and choir songs, which will be transformed into two musical productions in both countries at the conclusion of the year of the European Capital of Culture.

Cooperating organisers: Latgale Central Library, Daugavpils Local History and Art Museum, Latgale district, city and village libraries and district museums, National Library of Latvia, UNESCO Latvia, Latvian Association of Storytellers, New Theatre Institute of Latvia, NGO INITIUM, British Council in Latvia, Rēzekne Theatre, Baltic Applied Theatre School, Aktionstheater Pan.Optikum GMBH (Germany), Pädagogische Hochschule Freiburg (Germany), Alytaus Miesto Teatras (Lithuania), Kultūros Centras Loftas (Lithuania), Camara Municipal De Lisboa (Portugal), Municipio de Loule (Portugal), Teatrul National Radu Stanca Sibiu (Romania), Magna Vitae (UK), Centrum Choreografickeho Rozvoje SE.S.TA (Czech Republic), State Probation Service Latgale Region Territorial Structural Unity, Daugavpils City Psychological Help Centre, NGO *Dardedze*, Riga Stradiņš University, IDFF, ArtDocfest/Riga, Baltic Sea Docs, etc.

#### CREATE FOR A LINGUA FRANCA



Creating and speaking a common language to build respect and trust.

#### A conversation and debating programme

The objective of *Create for a Lingua Franca* is to reduce stereotypes and prejudices, reveal new perspectives, and to nurture critical thinking and debating culture skills. *Lingua Franca* conversations will be integrated into each of the ECoC programme projects, fostering the development of debating culture and critical thinking.

Daugavpils and Latgale are home to a distinctive society made up of two communities that speak different languages. This is the reason why in Latgale one can observe not only positive differences from the rest of Latvia. We want to foster the development of a critically thinking society in which people are able to justify their judgments with facts, analyse what they hear, speak respectfully, listen and hear, value and evaluate.

**Conversations, debates and conferences about socially important subjects** with specialists, activists and artists from various fields in Daugavpils, Latgale, Latvia, Europe and globally will be organised in accordance with the subject of each project.

Debating events hosted by **LAVKA** (a debating club organised by Daugavpilians) are already taking place during the preparatory period, engaging Daugavpilians living in other countries around the world and foreigners living in Daugavpils in debates about the future of the city. In turn, historians, political experts and journalists will take part in discussions concerning Latgale's geopolitical role *Fortress, Bridge or Balcony*.

The ECoC's **public information centre**, which will be based in the newly formed Saules Street creative quarter in Daugavpils city centre will serve as a public meeting place and debating venue for local communities. Debates initiated by interesting lecturers about subjects of relevance to contemporary society will be accessible for **digital viewing on the ECoC information channel**.

In order to find a common language, in each of Latgale's municipalities, which are involved in the ECoC programme, **conversation benches** will be installed in a wide range of places. In Daugavpils these will be found all over the city. The bench design will be created during summer schools attended by international architects and designers in previous years, but we will ask Latvia's foremost artists to come up with their visual interpretation on the subject *Conversation in a Common Language*.

Special attention will be devoted to a subject of great importance to Europe, which is related to the discussion of European identity and values. Debates will take place between various social groups, nationalities and denominations, seeking, creating and speaking a common language. At the end of the year, a **European philosophers' conference** will be held focusing on European values and the future.

Cooperating organisers: NGO *D-Junio*, NGO *New East*, SATORI, LU Faculty of History and Philosophy, Faculty of Social Sciences, Daugavpils University, regional and national media, Latvian Association of Sociologists, Latvian Association of Anthropologists, Tartu University, Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Berlin), Department of Theoretical and Practical Philosophy at the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Vilnius University Faculty of Philosophy, European Network of Houses for Debate, etc.

### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

# STORIES

STUOSTI HISTÓRIAS GESCHICHTEN ISTORIJA SŁUGUSID STORIES

This thematic line includes projects that are based on stories about Latgale's personalities or events, highlighting the problematic nature of the search for and a creation of a common language in the past, present and future. These are medium-sized or large cooperation projects, which will be organised through the cooperation of Latgale organisations and artists with Latvia's leading artists, national cultural organisations and foreign partners. Calls for national projects are planned to expand the range of projects in this thematic line.

#### Project examples

##### THE STORY OF THE DAUGAVPILS FORTRESS

Daugavpils is home to the last bastion type of fortress built in the world, whose construction was begun by the Russian Empire in 1810 in preparation for the war with Napoleon. The fortress is star-shaped so that any attacker ends up caught in crossfire. Its goal has always been to defend, but the question is – what? Its walls have been home to the Russian, Latvian and Soviet armies, it has been used a Jewish ghetto and Soviet prisoner of war camp, and it is home to Europe's largest population of hibernating bats with five different species of bats, the Mark Rothko Art Centre and the residents of Daugavpils, because the fortress is a city suburb.

The story of the fortress includes four mutually closely linked lines and a body of extremely diverse events.

The **History** line will be devised by the newly established Fortress Foundation, installing interactive exhibitions indoors and within the fortress's grounds, as well as offering audiences the opportunity to enjoy various events in digital format. Pupils from Daugavpils' schools will also be involved in compiling the digital content. Once a year, the fortress will host a re-enactment of the 1812 battle with Napoleon's army, thus offering visitors the opportunity to learn about aspects of this early 19th century war, experiencing history through "live images".

The **Nature** line will be devised in cooperation with the Bat Centre and Daugavpils University's nature researchers, developing specially designed digitally accessible mapping and informative materials about the fortress's flora and fauna, which would make it possible for visitors to discover the fortress's special ecosystem.

The **Art** line will be devised by the Mark Rothko Centre which will expand its exhibition within the grounds of the fortress. In turn, in 2027 community theatres will cooperate with the inhabitants of Daugavpils Fortress, creating a play about people – fortresses. The play will also be performed in Riga at Daugavgrīva Fortress, which is Latvia's second bastion-type fortress by the Daugava.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils Fortress Culture and Information Centre, Daugavpils Local History and Art Museum, Mežciems NGO, Daugavpils City Department of Education, NGO INITIUM, Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre, The Bat Centre, Daugavpils City Tourism Development and Information Agency, NGO *Atmiņu lāde*, Daugavpils Fortress Society, history reconstruction clubs, LU Faculty of History and Philosophy, etc.

##### A STORY ABOUT THE SURREAL ROTHKO

In 2013 Mark Rothko's children Kate and Christopher Rothko presented six outstanding original works by the artist to Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre in the hope that it would become a driving force for cultural changes in the broad Eastern European region. The collection of original works by Mark Rothko is not only one of Daugavpils' but also Latvia's greatest cultural jewels. The "Surreal Rothko" will reveal less familiar creative aspects of Rothko's the artist, augmenting Rothko's surreal story with the stories of other outstanding European artists, depicting the world surreally: Marc Chagall, René Magritte and Paul Delvaux will be at the centre of our attention in 2027. Exhibitions organised by international curators in Daugavpils and Riga will be accompanied by international conferences and educational programmes.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre, Latvian National Museum of Art, National Museum of Art *Rīgas Birža*, Art Academy of Latvia, Daugavpils University, international partners: Christopher Rothko, Kate Rothko Prizel, Wallonie Bruxelles International, partner museums in Belgium and France, the Marc Chagall Museum (Vitebsk, Belarus), U.S. Embassy in Latvia, etc.

##### THE STORY OF JEWS IN LATGALE

Historically, Latgale has been part of a region where Jews reside, which is why up to the start of the Second World War and the Holocaust at least half the population of many towns in Latgale was Jewish. In Daugavpils, Rēzekne, Ludza, Krāslava, Preiļi and other Latgale towns, members of the Jewish community were not only the most active entrepreneurs, but also the initiators or creators of major cultural processes. Latgale was home to the outstanding theatre director Solomon Mikhoels, film director Fridrih Ermler, writer Yury Tynyanov, the originator of and driving force behind the advent of contemporary Ivrit Lāzars Perelmans, tango king Oskars Stroks, painter Mark Rothko and many other European and globally renowned artists, thinkers, Hasidic commentators and researchers.

The Holocaust put an end to this active and very creative life, and after the end of the Second World War, it never regained its original power. The project provides for the highlighting of the Latgale's incredibly rich Jewish cultural heritage, organising a Jewish cultural festival with events in various towns in Latgale. The festival will include klezmer music concerts, workshops showcasing traditional culture, performative events, exhibitions and plays about various outstanding personalities, whose works will be celebrated in retrospectives, as well as international conferences.



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A special event in the festival will be composer Edgars Raginskis' new composition *Songs of the Lost*, which is dedicated to the city of Rēzekne's Jewish community that lost their lives in the Holocaust. The cycle of songs will be created with verses by the Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai for a female voice, cello, saxophone and percussion.

Parallel to this, Daugavpils Theatre will produce a special **showcase of international productions entitled *Impossible Encounters***. It will include new productions by Daugavpils Theatre and performative projects about the personalities of Mark Rothko and Solomon Mikhoels, guest performances by foreign theatre companies, as well as productions in digital format (broadcasts and recording of productions), which will be produced in cooperation with European theatre partners, using virtual and technological solutions of expanded reality.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils City Culture Department, Daugavpils Local History and Art Museum, Daugavpils University, Daugavpils Theatre, Rēzekne Green Synagogue, Daugavpils Jewish Society, Žanis Lipke Memorial, Latvian Jewish Society, Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization SEFER (Moscow, Russia), Nacionalinės bibliotekos Judaikos tyrimų centras (Vilnius, Lithuania), Center for Jewish Art, Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Jerusalem, Israel), Slavic Department, University of Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis, Museum of the History of the Polish Jews (Warsaw, Poland), Beit Bella Synagogue (Tallinn, Estonia).

#### **A STORY ABOUT A TRIP FROM ST. PETERSBURG TO WARSAW**

In 1836 the old St. Petersburg to Warsaw postal route was built through Latgale. It is 1,200 km long and it is the longest postal route in Europe. The subsequently built railway, but now long closed St. Petersburg-Warsaw Railway also played a significant role in Latgale's development. Although neither of these routes are functioning any longer, evidence of them remains in the form of unique postal and railway stations. These were the places where a new 1,200 km long international art project – cooperation platform was founded by St. Petersburg, Latgale and Warsaw musicians and artists, creating events around these old postal and railway stations. An important role in the festival will be played by historians and architects.

Cooperating organisers: Latgale Embassy GORS, Daugavpils Unity House, Latvian Railway History Museum, Annvil Agency, Daugavpils Local History and Art Museum, Daugavpils Region Artists' Association, Klajūnu klubas (Lithuania), St. Petersburg Municipality Culture Department, Warsaw Municipality Culture Department.

#### **A STORY ABOUT PREIĻI CONCEPTUALISTS**

Innovative art can also be created outside the biggest cultural centres. Testimony to this is manifested in the conceptualism of Preiļi – a literary practice that reflects on a unique period for contemporary society, when regional characteristics tend to disappear under the influence of globalism. Part of the project envisages a location-centric project mythologizing Preiļi in a search for manifestations of localization:

happenings, performances, discussions, engaging the local audience; grandiose beautification of the birthplace of the alphabet, conceptual mapping of Preiļi District, a study of Riebiņi District and publication of an anthology of conceptual poetry in Latvian, Russian and English; and international conference at Rainis Museum at "Jasmuiža".

Cooperating organisers: Preiļi Main Library, Rainis' Museum *Jasmuiža*, Daugavpils University, LU Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art, Latvijas Centre for Contemporary Art, Latvian Academy of Culture, publishing house *Orbīta*, publishing house *Literature Without Borders*, Estonian publishing house *Paranoia*, European Poetry Festival, Poetry Moon festival in Finland, Literature Without Frontiers.

Preiļi conceptualist group poets: Kārlis Vērdiņš, Raimonds Ķirķis, Elvīra Bloma, Anna Auziņa, Aivars Madris, Artis Ostups and Einārs Pelšs, etc.

#### **A STORY ABOUT RAUDIVE, PESSOA AND VOICES FROM BEYOND**

This project was inspired by two outstanding writers and thinkers – Latvian Konstantīns Raudive and Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa, who strived to find a common language with the metaphysical world. These outstanding Latvian and Portuguese thinkers were very interested in a possible link with other invisible worlds. Konstantīns Raudive Centre is in Dagda, and visitors to it today can listen to *voices from beyond the grave* recorded in the past. In turn, Pessoa's voice in literature resounds through 70 creative pseudonyms, which are the names of imaginary personalities, who were conduits for his creative self-expression. The story of both of these personalities will inspire the literature and choir music festival *Voices*, whose programme will include performances, readings, choir music recordings and discussions.

Cooperating organisers: Latgale Central Library, Konstantīns Raudive's Cultural Historical Heritage Centre, Literature and Music Museum, Riga Technical University, Latvian Radio Choir, Casa Fernando Pessoa (Portugal).

#### **A STORY ABOUT US AND JĀNIS STREIČS**

Attention will be centred on the works of the great Latvian film director Jānis Streičs, who was born in the Parish of Preiļi, and the Latgale and scenes from life in Latgale depicted in his films. The films of Jānis Streičs make up the golden foundation of Latvian cinema and are familiar to almost everyone. The programme will present an outdoor retrospective of the director's films in Daugavpils, Preiļi, Rēzekne, along with film music concerts and meetings with actors, along with the works of great Portuguese filmmakers who were Jānis Streičs's contemporaries, and who depicted and offered audiences the chance to discover life in Portuguese society during the second half of the 20th century.

Cooperating organisers: Preiļi District Culture Centre, Daugavpils Unity House, National Film Centre, Portuguese Film Agency.

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#### THE STORY OF LATGALE'S PARISIENNE VALENTĪNA ZEILE

This project will tell the story of the great Latgale sculptor Valentīna Zeile, her successful and memorable work as an artist in France, where she became the pupil of Europe's greatest medal artist Raymond Corbin and the only successor to his tradition of medal art. It is planned that the project's programme of events will take place over a four year period and will include travelling exhibitions, outdoor productions and virtual stories about this ambassador of Latvian artistic values in the French art world and the interaction of these two worlds.

Cooperating organisers: Naujene Local History Museum, Augšdaugava District Culture Department, Mark Rothko Art Centre, French Institute.

#### A STORY ABOUT RAINIS AND YOUTH

Latgale and Sēlija are the places where Latvia's foremost poet Rainis spent his childhood and youth, while he initially went to school in Daugavpils. We want to understand whether Latgale, its environment, people and landscape influenced Rainis' world view, and how, in turn, Rainis can influence the understanding of the younger generation about Latgale and the world today. The project will be implemented as a series of post-study works by young theatre artists in various Latvian theatres and will subsequently be shown as a programme of guest performances all over Latvia.

Cooperating organisers: Rēzekne Theatre, Ģertrūdes Street Theatre, Dirty Deal teatro, Daugavpils Theatre, National Theatre.

#### A STORY ABOUT LATVIA'S FUTURE

This project will tell the story of two very important events in the history of the Latvian State: on 26-27 April 1917 Rēzekne hosted the First Latgale Latvian Congress at which it was decided that the Latvians of Latgale, Vidzeme and Kurzeme were one people and that Latgale should merge with the other regions of the future Latvian State in one land. In turn, on 4 May 1990, the declaration was made in Latvia about the renewal of national independence and its withdrawal from the USSR. In order to emphasise both of these important historical dates and prompt them to think about Latvia's future, from 27 April onwards the inhabitants of Latgale and the whole of Latvia will be invited to plant trees in their home courtyards, city parks, along roadsides and elsewhere. A special tree planting campaign will take place, delineating the borders of Latgale and the rest of Latvia. After the trees have been planted in courtyards and other public places, a white tablecloth celebration will be held in joint celebration with neighbours.

Cooperating organisers: Latgale municipal culture centres, NGO Green Freedom, neighbourhood and national organisations in Latgale cities, nurseries in Latgale.

#### A STORY ABOUT COMMON LIGHT

This is one of the concluding events of the programme. At the end of 2027, 27 European states will each tell their story of a common language. 27 EU artists will create twenty-seven *Lingua Franca* light stories – projections and light art installations in Daugavpils' urban environment.

Organised: Daugavpils Unity House, Staro Rīga, Skopjes, Aveiro and Oulu light festivals.

## S N T SENTENCES E I C

TEIKUMI SENTENCĒS AKINIAI FRASES LAUSED SENTEN

Under the auspices of the projects included in this thematic line, the answer will be sought to the question of what it means to be a person in Europe and a European person. In this search, values such as respect, freedom, responsibility, lawfulness will be studied, along with how these are manifested in a democratic society.

These are small- and medium-sized cooperation projects, whose subjects are formulated in sentences which we use every day to create civilised communities. In implementing these projects, with the help of project competitions, it is planned to involve inhabitants from a broad region.

#### Project examples

##### I AM FREE

This project will study the concept of freedom as it was manifested during various ages in the farms of Latgale and Portugal's Central region.

The attention of photographers will focus on testimonies to the enduring footprints of various political regimes and governmental bodies on people's living environment and destinies. The project is due to include photographers' residencies, an exhibition and a concluding project conference in Daugavpils dedicated to Ludza photographer Vulfs Franks.

Cooperating organisers: NGO *K-Opā!*, Ludza Local History Museum, Latvian Museum of Photography, interdisciplinary NGO *Serde*, NGO *Rīga Photomonth*, Internet Photo Platform ARCHIVO, Riga Stradiņš University Faculty of Communication, Coimbra Municipality, Portuguese Centre of Photography, professional photographers from Latvijas and abroad.

##### CULTURE FOR ALL

The project will ensure that even in Latgale's most remote villages, kids and adolescents have access to professional theatre and music.

### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

In rural parts of Latgale, the most urgently required food products are delivered by mobile shop vans, while the most urgently needed theatre productions and concerts will be brought to children and teenagers by the mobile theatre and music festival CULTBUSS, which will travel around Latgale in a cultural “mobile store” bus. Its shelves will be lined with small-scale productions and concert art performed by professional theatres and orchestras. In 2027 the festival theme will be dedicated to the interaction of ecosystems. During March, the whole set of plays and concerts will be held in Rēzekne.

Cooperating organisers: Rēzekne Theatre, LNSO, Latgale Embassy GORS, Daugavpils Theatre, ASSITEJ, Children’s Foundation of Latvia.

#### I LIKE CARING FOR NATURE

In this project, a team of international artists will create objects using a combination of waste collected during the Great Work Bee and recycled materials.

The Great Work Bee is a tradition that unites Latvia’s population in spring clean-up work – people of all ages converge to clean-up the public living space. In turn, artists, using the materials found in the environment and recycled materials will create WASTE ART environmental installations for cleaned up territories and will invite people to come together after work for discussions about the circular economy. By 2027 a competition will be held to find a visual design for new waste bins and dustcarts. The artists’ goal, in using these media, will be to remind audiences about individual responsibility in caring for one’s environment and the joy derived from caring for nature.

Cooperating organisers: NGO Green Freedom, Unity House, Daugavpils Professional Design and Art School *Saules skola*, Rēzekne Children’s and Youth Centre *Zeimuļš*, Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre, Art Academy of Latvia Rēzekne Branch, waste processing companies.

#### I WANT TO BE HEALTHY

Activities in this project will focus on the interaction between an active sporting lifestyle, architecture and various art genres.

European Sports Week in Daugavpils is traditionally well-attended with an extensive programme of events. Its conclusion is usually crowned with a cultural programme. However, from 2023 onwards, the organisers want to integrate both fields to a much greater extent. Being healthy means not only training one’s physical but also creative abilities. Therefore orienteering competitions will offer participants the chance to discover the city’s architectural monuments, running routes will be devised to pass buildings built in certain architectural styles, a night swim will be held accompanied by live music, and poems will line rambling routes, piecing together fragments of text by Latgalian poets at control points. The format of sports week events will be adapted to cater for all social groups, offering active creative activities for senior citizens, families with small children and people with impaired mobility.

Cooperating organisers: Latvian Sports Federations Council, Daugavpils City Sports Department in cooperation with Daugavpils City Cultural Department, Unity House, Mothers’ club, NGOs representing people with disabilities and other sports organisations.

#### MY MOVEMENT HEALS

This project will draw attention to mobility that heals the environment.

At the newly established Daugavpils Technical Design Centre “Inženierarsenāls”, which is part of the transformation of Daugavpils Fortress into an important European cultural centre, an exhibition will be organised on transport eco-design, showcasing various ecological solutions in connection with mobility that heals the environment. The exhibition will include the reflections of artists, designers and scientists on the latest discoveries and products that demonstrate ecological thinking in the field of transport. Educational programmes related to mobility in the urban environment will be implemented on the city’s public transport with the help of the Daugavpils cycling community as part of European Mobility Week.

Cooperating organisers: Machinery and Industrial Design Centre *Inženierarsenāls*, Daugavpils Innovation Centre, Riga Motor Museum, Art Academy of Latvia, Ecodesign Competence Centre, NGO *Pilsēta cilvēkiem* (A City for People), Design Forum Finland.

#### OUR VOICES HAVE POWER

In this project, human voices resounding across the Daugava will connect inhabitants who live near the Latvian and Belarusian border.

In Piedruja Latvia’s largest river the Daugava flows directly across the border with Belarus. At present it divides two different systems of governing countries – democratic and authoritarian. People living on both banks of the Daugava want to live in free and legally trustworthy countries in which every person’s voice has rights and power. We hope that by 2027 the Belarusian people will have succeeded in securing democratic and lawful public administration in which people’s voices are not violently suppressed. In any case, the support of neighbours is important and therefore will come together to call out to one another – both individually and in groups. Various performative events and sound installations will simultaneously take place on both banks of the Daugava, where inhabitants of both countries will have the opportunity to call out to one another, in order to support one another in expressing their freedom of voice.

Cooperating organisers: Krāslava House of Culture, Verkhkhnyadzvinsk Culture Department, Euroregion *Country of Lakes*, Belarusian Culture Centre.

### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

# WORDS

W R D 2  
O B O T

VUORDISŌNADPALAVRASWORDSŽODŽIAIMOTSWŌRTERSŁOWA

The project themes included in this thematic line can be formulated in one word, and their goal is to study various interpretations and readings of the relevant words, to compare different views of the world, to reveal differences and common attributes, and to discover where differences arise and what their consequences are. The project will involve different social/interest/age and gender groups, in order to study what people and these groups have in common and what sets them apart in as eclectic ways as possible.

Project ideas will be created and implemented with the involvement of inhabitants from a broad region. It is planned that project competitions will be announced to which applications can be submitted by active NGOs, artists and cultural organisations in Latgale region.

#### Project examples

##### CERAMICS

In this project, clay, a material synonymous with Latgale, will find its way into the hands of contemporary artists.

Audiences will have the opportunity to observe clay being kneaded, shaped and burned. The programme includes the Latvian International Ceramics Biennial and an international competition, whose award honours the outstanding Latvian ceramic artist Pēteris Martinsons, and which attracts professional ceramic artists of different age groups from all over Europe. As a contemporary art material, clay is their life's challenge. The resultant works will be installed in the urban environment, while during the course of the biennial new environmental installations and performances will be produced that will be presented in Daugavpils, as well as Riga, Sigulda, Ogre, Rēzekne, Lūznava and Panevėžys (Lithuania). The programme will also include creative workshops for a wide range of audience, social studies and an international conference. The Portuguese artists' showcase will be organised in cooperation with the International Biennial of Artistic Ceramics of Aveiro.

Cooperating organisers: Latvian Centre for Contemporary *Ceramics*, Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre, *Ceramics Pavilion of Panevėžys Municipal Art Gallery*, International Biennial of Artistic Ceramics of Aveiro, partners from Romania, Netherlands, Belgium, etc.

##### ORGANISMS

This project will combine organ music and natural science.

Rēzekne's organ music festival *ORGANisms* will showcase the unlimited possibilities of the organ in combination with other instruments, works of art and natural science. The festival's *ORGANisms* not only celebrates the organ, but also the most diverse living beings. From 2023 onwards, each festival will host an activity linked to science- or natural science related to subjects. A new composition will be written for each festival on topical subjects related to nature such as icebergs or forest felling, etc. The festival will include special interdisciplinary education programmes for kids and teenagers jointly conducted by musicians and scientists. The Artistic Director of the Festival will be the internationally renowned Elbe Philharmonic Hall organist Iveta Apkalna.

Cooperating organisers: Latgale Embassy GORS, Daugavpils University, JVLMA, Latvian Concerts,

Pēteris Vasks Foundation, Coimbra Municipality, Bragas Organ Music Festival (Portugal).

##### PORTA

This project will focus on Portuguese musicians and music in Portuguese.

Daugavpils and Rēzekne will host the 26th World Music Festival *PORTA*, whose programme will study the sound of different cultures, experience and eras. The festival will celebrate the diversity of European music and highlight quests for a common musical language. In 2027, a special representative office will function for Portuguese and Latgalian performing artists and new riffs will be performed by world musicians.

Cooperating organisers: NGO *World Music Festival PORTA*, Latgale Embassy GORS, Daugavpils Palace of Culture, *FEST(im)* and Festival *FMM Sines* festivals in Portugal.

##### SLAVS

This project will celebrate the presence of Slavic people's contemporary culture in Latgale.

Daugavpils and Latgale are home to active multi-national Russian, Belarusian, Ukrainian and Polish cultural organisations, which regularly organise their traditional festivals and introduce audiences to their nation's cultural traditions. During Slavic Month, these organisations will compile a joint programme to introduce audiences to their people's contemporary cultural works and representatives, who reflect on the meaning of traditions. Among the planned events will be film screenings, guest theatre productions, performances by bards, contemporary literature readings and folk costume *de file*, etc.

The focal point of Slavic Month in 2026 will be the traditions of the Balkan peoples and their contemporary interpretations in music, theatre and visual art. The Balkan Month programme will be devised in cooperation with candidates for the title of *ECOC Novi Sad 2022*, *Skopje 2028*, *Timisoara 2023* and *Nova Gorica 2025*.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils City Culture Department, Daugavpils Belarusian, Russian and Polish cultural centres and the Ukrainian Society in cooperation with Belarusian, Russian, Polish and Ukrainian cultural organisations in Daugavpils sister cities, European Capitals of Culture in the Balkan States.

##### STATION

In this project, music will encounter history, architecture and theatre.

### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

Under the auspices of this project, a musical and dramatic triptych *Station – Dinaburg, Dvinsk, Daugavpils. Arrivals, Departees, Passers-Through*. The venue will be Daugavpils Station, which for centuries has been the departure point for many famous Daugavpilians venturing forth into the world, as well as a meeting point and a place to say goodbye. Daugavpils' music and art festival ReStArt will put together three programmes of music and drama, which will tell the story of Daugavpils Station during the three different eras: the late 19th century, mid-20th century and early 21st century. Project is inspired by the world-famous novel *City N* (1935) by Daugavpilian Leonid Dobichin.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils Unity House, Daugavpils Professional Music School of Staņislavs Broks, Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, Daugavpils Theatre and Latvia's theatre artists, AS *Latvijas dzelzceļš* (Latvian Railway) and AS *Pasažieru vilciens* (Passenger Railway), European concert organisations, performing artists and composers.

#### GLASS

This project will focus on research conducted in the Nordic countries and Baltic States into the sustainability of glass as an artistic material.

The Līvāni Glass Factory is not only renowned in Europe, but the output of its artists is visible in almost every home in Latvia. These are dishes that are notable for their special quality. Although the factory is now closed, glass art in Līvāni lives on. Glass blowing workshops and masterclasses attract a lot of visitors. In this project, special attention will be devoted to the aspect of sustainability – artistic recycling of glass such as dishes and other interior objects made from old window panes. Among the events planned in the project programme is a Nordic and Baltic glass art exhibition in Līvāni and at Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre, and masterclasses conducted by glass artists.

Cooperating organisers: Līvāni Glass and Craft Centre, Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre, Daugavpils Professional Design and Art School *Saules skola*, Museum of Decorative Art and Design, SIA *Stikla māja*, Finnish Glass Museum.

#### TANGO

This project will focus on tango not only as a dance, but also as a means of preventing and treating serious illnesses.

During the interwar year period Daugavpils tango king Oskars Stroks' melodies were popular from France to China. The concert hall named in honour of Stroks, which is due to be built in Daugavpils during the next few years will host a tango festival. As usual it will attract dancers of all ages, who will take part in masterclasses, a dance competition and milongas in the urban environment. In 2027, the festival will expand its boundaries, attracting tango therapy researchers and lecturers, who work with Latvia's social centre employees and rehabilitation specialists, because there is increasing scientific evidence of the therapeutic power of tango in preventing diseases like Parkinson's and Alzheimer's and in the slowing the course of such illnesses. To prepare the city for all-encompassing dance, by 2027 tango lessons will be offered at Daugavpils' schools, Daugavpils University and cultural centres.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils Unity House, Daugavpils Professional Music School of Staņislavs Broks, Agnese Vanaga (Latvia/Argentina) and *Time to Dance* programme, Tangostudio, Latvian Modern Dance Association, contemporary choreographers from the Latvian Academy of Culture, JVLMA Choreography Department, Riga Mikhail Chekhov Russian Theatre, ensemble *Tango sin quinto*, Kremerata Baltica, European national tango clubs, Tango na Rua (Lisbon).

#### SHMAKOVKA

This project will study the relationship between alcohol and art.

Shmakovka is Latgale's traditional strong alcoholic beverage. It can be considered to be an idiosyncratic cultural phenomenon in which different aspects of history and manufacturing, the biodiversity of the distilled product are studied in an engaging and modern way at the Shmakovka Museum. In 2027 the story will be more extensive – a major exhibition will be organised, in which the media of design and artistic genres will be used to present the connection between alcohol and the various realms of our life both at individual level (creativity, cooperation), as well as in society and the economy. The project will be accompanied by *slow food* masterclasses, discussions and performances.

Cooperating organisers: Shmakovka Museum, Daugavpils Local History and Art Museum, Daugavpils University, University of Latvia, Variant Studio and designer Arturs Analts (LV/UK), Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity, Slow Food movement in Latvia, Slow Food Portugal, Latvian Association of Anthropologists, Hotel and Restaurant Museum Helsinki, Pauls Stradins Museum of the History of Medicine and German Hygiene Museum (Dresden).

#### BETLES

In this project natural science will meet fashion and folklore.

On an expedition to the Philippines, scientists from Daugavpils University discovered a new species of beetle, which was named after Daugavpils: *Doliops daugavpilsis*. It is the smallest in the world of Daugavpils – black with colourful yellow rhombi. Pupils from Daugavpils Professional Design and Arts School will study how the patterns drawn by nature on insects' wings and backs influence contemporary fashion designs.

Vabole Parish (in Latvian the noun "vabole" means beetle) is not far from Daugavpils and is home to a senior citizens' folklore ensemble *Vabaļis*, which draws attention to the subject of beetles in Latvian folklore. These three groups of beetle researchers from different generations will gather for a BEETLE EVENING, when they will share their discoveries, new fashion designs and folklore heritage. This evening event will have other participants online in the persons of beetle researchers from the Philippines and he Bogobo Tabagawa tribal community.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils University Coleopterological Research Centre, Daugavpils Professional Design and Art School *Saules skola*, Mindanao University (Indonesia) and the Bogobo Tabagawa tribal community in the Philippines.

### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

# LETTERS AND SYLLABLES

BURTIIZILBISLETTERS

The goal of the projects included in this thematic line is to highlight the idiosyncratic and unique traits of life in Daugavpils and Latgale, highlighting the interests and beliefs of a particular social/interest/linguistic or age group or the uniqueness of an artistic genre. The projects will be organised by small creative groups, individual artists and little organisations.

They will be implemented with the involvement of a wide range of inhabitants. It is planned that project competitions will be announced, which will attract proposals from active Latgale region organisations, artists and cultural organisations.

#### Project examples

##### A – ACCORDION CHORD

This project will celebrate the sounds and melodies of musical instruments synonymous with Latgale and Portugal.

Harmonies/accordions are traditional Latgale musical instruments, which a lot of people still play and learn to play, and their emotionally rich sound is an integral element of festivals and daily life in Latgale. The accordion is also a notable musical instrument in Portugal without which *fado* melodies would be unimaginable. Daugavpils' traditional international accordionists' competition and festival will expand its format, giving people from various socially vulnerable groups the chance to hear the distinctive accordion melodies of Latgale and Portugal. It is planned that concerts will take place in social care facilities, as well as in a prison and hospital.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils Unity House, Daugavpils Professional Music School of Staņislavs Broks, Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music, Rimsky-Korsikov St. Petersburg Conservatory and Music Secondary School, Ukrainian Association of Bayanists and Accordionists, international bayanists-accordionists competition *Perpetuum Mobile* and *Uzori Prikarpatja*, Latvian and Lithuanian Accordionists' associations, Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes, Coimbra Municipality.

##### A – AGLONA HOME OF MY SPIRIT

This project will centre on Aglona and its Roman Catholic Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary to which Pope John Paul II awarded the title of "basilica minoris". Every year in August, pilgrims from Latvia and abroad head to Aglona for the celebration of the Ascension of the Most Holy Virgin Mary. About 300,000 pilgrims typically make this annual pilgrimage. The sacred music festival *Aglyuna – muna gora sāta* will invite them to spend some more time in Aglona in the hope that music and nature will strengthen their spiritual attributes: belief, love, mutual understanding and empathy.

A floating stage by the shore of Lake Ciriši will host concerts at sunrise and sunset, while the sacred square of Aglona Basilica will provide the backdrop for a daytime concert featuring new musical compositions and an evening concert with light installations. Art walking trails will introduce local legends, while Aglona's housewives will showcase Latgale's culinary heritage in the form of *griušļi*, *kļockas* and *buļbu bļinas*.

Cooperating organisers: Aglona Basilica and Aglona Basilica Choir School, Aglona Bread Museum, Latgale Culinary Heritage Centre, Latgale region tourism association *Ezerzeme*.

##### D – DAUGAVPILS FLORA ATLAS

In this project, the active study of nature will encounter an active lifestyle.

Researchers from Daugavpils University have conducted detailed research into the composition of Daugavpils' flora. Over a 12 year period, 1,088 species of the 2,005 species of plants on Latvia's list of flora were discovered within the territory of Daugavpils. Moreover, new species uncharacteristic of the Baltic States were also discovered. 78 rare and protected vascular plant species were discovered within the city's territory, which make up 24% of the plants recorded in Latvia's Red Book (this is more than in many protected nature territories). The unveiling of the DAUGAVPILS FLORA ATLAS, which will be the first publication of its type in Latvia, will take place together with a rally celebrating Daugavpils' plant species, during which teams will be presented with maps and a list of plants to track down. An orienteering competition for kids entitled *Spot the Tree* will also be held.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils University Institute of Life Sciences and Technologies, Daugavpils University Botanical Laboratory in cooperation with the Latvian Botanical Society.

##### H – HOW'S THURSDAY FEELING?

In this project, music will encounter psychology in the search for answers to the question "How's Thursday Feeling?"

On four Thursdays in August, open air stages will provide the backdrop for performances by musicians from four different genres, who will express four different emotions: love, joy, anger and longing. These concerts are mostly intended for families with kids, allowing them to experience the emotions that are the basis for human relations, as well as their colourful multinational musical interpretation.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils Unity House, Daugavpils University, Latgale Embassy GORS, LNSO, Balvi Culture and Leisure Centre, Latvian Concerts, Lūznava Manor in cooperation with European concert organisations and performing artists.

##### R – READ TO ME

Under the auspices of this project, a public reading project will take place during the summer months in the courtyards of Daugavpils and Rēzekne.

### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

People of all ages, nationalities, professions and social groups will gather throughout the summer and read to one another while sitting on courtyard benches, beside flower beds, lawns or sand pits. Every reader will wear a project badge indicating that anybody who wants to can sit down and listen to a reading from the book brought along by the project participant. Participation in this project will be open to any resident of Daugavpils and Rēzekne, who enjoys reading and who would like to share their chosen literature. Readings are planned in various languages.

Cooperating organisers: Latgale Central Library, Rēzekne Library in cooperation with the Latvian Literature Centre, Writers' Union, National Library of Latvia, publishing houses, EuropeReads (EURead) and Daugavpils and the Latvian Society of the Blind, Latvian Library for the Blind Rēzekne Branch.

#### T- THE STORIES OF RĪGAS STREET

In this project, works of art created in Daugavpils and the artists responsible for them will turn the city's central pedestrian thoroughfare – Rīgas Street into Latvia's largest gallery.

Works of art will arrive, integrate and be created on Rīgas Street in non-traditional ways, inviting passers-by to engage in discussions in the language of art. They will communicate, transform themselves through synthesis with other art forms: music, cinema, multimedia, dance, fashion and theatre. Audiences will be able to learn about the art history of Daugavpils through elements shaping the urban environment: nature, architecture, sculpture, texture, sound, water, light and shadow. Conversations will touch upon what forms Daugavpils' visual look and how, what a modern city should be like and the role played by visual art in creating this city.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils Regional Artists' Association, Latvian Artists' Union, artists from Latgale region and Riga with cooperation partners in Lithuania.

#### R – RED BRICK

In this project architecture will encounter urban planning, urban design and history.

Among the edifices of Daugavpils, one can see an unusually large number of red brick houses. In contrast to other cities, they serve an eclectic range of purposes: a fortress, churches, schools, residential houses, shot factory, the city council house and others. The visual look of the city was formed at the end of the 19th century, thanks to the red brickworks, which was built in Daugavpils for the purpose of building the fortress. Masterpieces of red brick architecture were designed by architects renowned throughout Northern Europe, Russia and Germany including Max Paul Berchi, Reinhold Schmeling, Wilhelm Bockslaff and Wilhelm Neumann. Daugavpils will be a distinctive stop along the route of the *Red Brick* project as it winds its way from Tartu, Estonia through to Lithuania, Poland and onwards to Germany.

In 2027 *Red Brick* will host a forum of young urbanists and an urban planning game for youngsters. The forum will be organised to find answers to the question

*What is 21st Century Daugavpils' Red Brick?* This newly devised urban planning game for schoolchildren will foster their understanding of contemporary urban planning principles and materials. Players in the game will have access to Daugavpils' architecture firms, where professional architects will welcome these children and teenagers and speak about the science of urban planning.

Cooperating organisers: Daugavpils Profession Design and Art School *Saules skola*, NGO *Pupil, Researcher, Urbanite*, National Cultural Heritage Authority, RTU Faculty of Architecture, Design Studio H2E, National Archives of Latvia, National Digital Archives of Poland, Latvian Architects' Union, NGO *Pilsēta cilvēkiem* (A City for People), Nordic Council of Ministers.

Project descriptions mention potential partners with whom discussions about cooperation have started. The list of partners will be revised during the second stage of the competition.

#### 12. Combining local cultural heritage and traditional art forms with new, innovative and experimental cultural expressions

The conceptual basis for the cultural programme of seeking, creating and using a common language envisages that the authors and organisers of art and cultural events will single-mindedly work to develop new and unheard of forms of cooperation, as well as seek new and non-traditional cooperation partners. This means that projects included in the thematic lines *Letters and Syllables*, *Words, Sentences and Stories* are interdisciplinary and inter-genre, and that unique creative relationships will be formed in them, whose result will often be experimental and innovative.

The ten programmes in the thematic line *Punctuation* encompass great diversity and offer both traditional and experimental works and their synthesis. Each of the ten programmes places a different emphasis on traditional and contemporary works of art.

*Create for Silence* combines traditional and contemporary contemplative art practices.

*Create for the Sun and the World* accents traditional culture and its heritage, but the programme's goal is to compare the seasonal celebration experiences of people of different nationalities living in Latgale. This comparison and joint celebration of festivities will, of course, entail the need to look at tradition from a new perspective.

*Create for Rothko* the emphasis is on various new works of contemporary art and on how classical art genres in different forms manifest themselves in the urban environment, in the process encountering new viewers.

*Create for the City, Create for Nature and Create for People* include contemporary and interdisciplinary art events of the most diverse genres, whose goal is to address socially significant issues. They are mainly dominated by inclusive, participatory work specially created for a specific environment in cooperation with diverse communities.

*Create for Latgale* includes works, whose goal is to directly connect Latgale's traditional cultural heritage in Latgalian with its contemporary interpretations.

### III CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

*Create for Growth* challenges youngsters to create experimental events in which senior citizens could get involved.

*Create for the Future* is dedicated to experimental works of art created through the synthesis of art and technology.

#### 13. Involvement of local artists and cultural organisations in the conception and implementation of the cultural programme

The European Capital of Culture's programme was devised with the extensive and all-encompassing involvement of cultural and arts representatives and organisations from Daugavpils, Rēzekne and Latgale as a whole. Seminars and joint creative workshops took place during which we ascertained existing resources, analysed the current situation and planned future development perspectives. Conversations and joint work with local artists and cultural organisations resulted in the formulation of the programme concept of searching for, creating and speaking a common language, which organically also includes a dimension of European and international cooperation.

Representatives of Daugavpils and Latgale's cultural institutions, creative industry enterprises and non-governmental organisations were invited to submit their **European Capital of Culture idea proposals**. We were delighted with the response, because we received over **150 ideas**, which were subsequently included in a joint ideas database to facilitate work on project development in accordance with the proposed programme concept.

Cultural organisations were invited to participate in several **online coworking workshops** (with a total of 200 participants) in which we discussed possible ideas for ECoC projects. Many of the resultant ideas are included in our bid as examples of specific projects.

In all projects that are described in our bid, the project organisers and cooperation partners are cultural organisations and artists from Daugavpils, Rēzekne and other parts of Latgale. Although, to date, the region's cultural organisations have mainly cooperated with the countries immediately neighbouring them by organising artists' exchanges with Lithuania, Belarus and Poland, preparations to become a European Capital of Culture have broadened their perspective. In creative workshops, representatives of cultural institutions learned about various subjects of relevance to contemporary European society and were invited to think in-depth about how to expand the subject matter of their creative activities, to present them in contemporary forms and actively cooperate with contemporary artists. As a result, local artists and organisations have succeeded in finding new cooperation partners in many European Union countries and in particular in Portugal in which the second European Capital of Culture's programme will be implemented.

In 2021 Daugavpils City Culture Department has started to implement the **capacity-building programme *Create for Culture***, which will play a key role during the preparatory period right through to the implementation of the programme in 2027. Its goal is to strengthen the regional cultural sector in order for it to be able to implement a quality and

broad international European Capital of Culture's programme.

The ***Create for Culture teaching and mentoring programme*** is being devised based on the professional development requirements of cultural sector workers. A survey was conducted among Daugavpils cultural workers about what type of knowledge and skills primarily need to be developed. Further education requirements are essentially related to international cooperation and learning foreign languages, audio-visual and other technology usage skills, audience development and digital marketing skills, use of innovative approaches in creating cultural content, skills securing external financing, etc. We will not only dispense theoretical knowledge regarding these subjects, but actual teaching in the form of practical work on specific cases, mutual discussions and coworking workshops, which will make it possible to put newly-acquired insights to use immediately. Nor will we forget the local creative industries sector for which it is vital to adopt the experience of European colleagues and cooperation networks, thinking about the development of cultural exports.

The strategic partner for the capacity-building programme ***Create for Culture*** is the association of European national cultural institutes **EUNIC-Latvia**, which will provide the opportunity to assimilate the cultural management experience of various European countries, including learning from previous European Capitals of Culture. The programme will facilitate the inclusion of the region's creative professionals in international cooperation networks including *Arts Management Network*, *Cultural Managers' Network*, *Artists at Risk*, *IN SITU (European Platform for Creation in Public Space)* and *ENCC (European Network of Cultural Centres)* and other associations cooperating in various fields of culture. Major partners in the implementation of this programme are Daugavpils University and the Latvian Academy of Culture, which offer further education programmes in cultural management.

To foster the mutual exchange of ideas within the cultural sector, a ***Create for Culture discussion platform*** has been created, which is taking place online during the pandemic, but will later also take place via conversations and meetings in person. **Daugavpils Cultural Advisory Council**, whose participants include representatives of non-governmental cultural organisations, will be an important partner to the Daugavpils City Culture Department working on the further development of the ECoC programme.

During the next preparatory stages, an **open and inclusive ECoC programme development process** will be of great importance to us. Calls for the submission of ideas will be organised along with coworking events, where we will make a special effort to invite and secure the involvement of young artists and students from cultural education institutions and universities. We also plan to foster cooperation between students from art and technological universities, in order to create interdisciplinary projects, combining the fields of art and technology. In the event that Daugavpils is awarded the title of ECoC, **project co-financing competitions** will be organised in which precedence will be given to those projects, whose ideas were proposed during the initial preparatory stages of the cultural programme.



# 4

## EUROPEAN DIMENSION

### 14. Activities planned for:

- promoting the cultural diversity of Europe, intercultural dialogue and greater mutual understanding between European citizens;
- highlighting the common aspects of European cultures, heritage and history, as well as European integration and current European themes;
- featuring European artists, cooperation with operators and cities in different countries, and transnational partnerships.

Daugavpils' European Capital of Culture programme vividly embodies the European Union's motto "United in diversity", which was devised to highlight the undertaking of Europe's inhabitants to jointly work toward peace and welfare, while at the same time being enriched by different cultures, languages and traditions.

In considering the ECoC concept, it was vital for us to choose a theme which is equally relevant in Daugavpils, Latgale and Europe as a whole. We believe that the ability to search for, create and use a common language is particularly important in the face of clashes between various extreme opinions. These can be observed in European public and state discourses, as well as in the Latgale borderland, when part of the Russian speaking society follows the mass media of neighbouring countries: Russia and Belarus which disseminate information that is deliberately manipulative, provocative and anti-European Union. We believe that our special experience can help us to assume a role through which we can participate in the European Union's common conversational discourse, and in particular in the implementation of European Union policies in relation to countries neighbouring the EU. It is every possible that in six years' time, when the ECoC programme is implemented, this subject concerning the need for debate will be even more relevant, therefore **our message about the creation of a common language is relevant to a broad European public** at both state and individual level.

We believe that all over Europe there will be a growing need to strengthen the development of an inclusive, united society founded on equal rights, as well as people's ability to oppose manipulative and authoritarian discourses. Daugavpils and Latgale are akin to a micromodel of Europe in which one observes the vulnerability and fragility of democracy. With *Lingua Franca* or the power of culture, we want **to help people appreciate the value of democracy** in their lives, to reclaim their meaning and purpose and allow them to be revealed anew through action.

The thematic strands *Stories, Sentences, Words, Letters and Syllables* include projects, whose authors study **relations between Latgale and Europe** within their respective areas of interest, form new international cooperation models and single-mindedly focus attention on questions of **what it means to be a person in Europe and a European person**. For example, the project *I am Free* studies the concept of freedom in various ages amidst the farms of Latgale and Portugal's Central region, while the project *Our Voices Have Power* uses audio performative events to emphasise that every person's voice has right and power.

All our planned *Punctuation* programmes are **international and related to subjects of importance and relevant to the EU**. Their implementation will take place at the most diverse levels, with the cooperation of Daugavpils, Latgale and European artists, curators and cultural organisations. Therefore, in preparing Daugavpils' ECoC programme, we have engaged with institutions representing international organisations in Latvia (UNESCO Latvian National Commission, Latvian affiliate to the World Wide Fund for Nature, etc.), foreign cultural institutions (British Council, the French Centre Institute, Goethe Institut, etc.), leading national cultural institutions (National Library of Latvia, Latvian National Museum of Art, etc.) and powerful players in the realm of culture with international renown (New Theatre Institute, RIXC, Centre for Contemporary Art, etc.).

*Create for Silence* pays attention **to the public's mental health** and welfare issues in the conditions of the pandemic and post-pandemic, with a view to nurturing harmonious, respectful and creative relations with oneself and one surroundings, analyses the **co-existence of various opposing value systems** and inter-confessional cooperation **in building a tolerant society**.

*Create for the Sun and the World* invites us **to return to nature's cycles and to create closer ties to various national communities** in an age dominated by urban lifestyles.

*Create for Nature* invites us to peer through the prism of art to understand the interaction between people and the surrounding environment, promoting the practice of ecocentric thinking and **concern for the preservation of nature**.

*Create for the City* invites us **to undertake responsibility for the sustainable development of our neighbourhoods**, studying the historical past of a place and implementing urban locale-based creative initiatives in cooperation with local inhabitants. The programme's basic values resonate with New Europe's "Bauhaus" core values – sustainability, aesthetics and inclusion.

*Create for People* fosters **empathy and acceptance of one's fellow citizens** by taking an in-depth look at the individual experiences of people from different cultures, forming a better understanding through inclusive works of art of the living conditions of social groups at risk of social disenfranchisement.

*Create for Growth* pays attention to **the active civic conduct of future generations**, giving the stage to young people from Daugavpils, Latgale and Europe, at the same time focusing on **intergenerational cooperation and the handing down of the knowledge and skills of the older generation**.

*Create for Rothko* highlights the role of creativity and **creative self-expression** in everyday life, discovering various artistic genres **through different European cultural traditions**.

*Create for Latgale* pays attention to **the preservation of the languages of Europe's linguistic minorities and cultural diversity** nowadays.

*Create for the Future* draws on the help of art to discover the possibilities provided by the **sciences and technologies** of today and the future **in creating nature and people friendly future scenarios**.

*Create for a Lingua Franca* **reduces stereotypes and prejudices**, revealing new perspectives and developing critical thinking and discussion cultural skills **in mutual dialogues between EU citizens**.

## IV EUROPEAN DIMENSION

The joint dialogue between the communities of Daugavpils, Latgale region and other European Capitals of Culture will be implemented through projects related to the contemplation of various traditions and shared history (e.g. ceramics, choir singing and traditional music-making traditions, culinary heritage, military and industrial cultural, heritage, etc.), **studying and discovering the traditions of other European peoples** and jointly seeking **innovative ways of bringing cultural heritage to life** nowadays.

**Personalities, who were born or lived in Daugavpils and Latgale** (Mark Rothko, Solomon Mikhoels, Oskars Stroks, Stanislav Kerbedz, Rainis, Herz Frank, Valentīna Zeile, etc.) have had **a significant impact on European culture and art history**, which will be studied and depicted as part of the ECoC programme, searching for parallels with the oeuvres of creative personalities from other European countries.

Likewise principles of good governance based on the European Union's policy agenda are a crucially important aspect of the ECoC programme's inherent priorities. When it comes to organising events, it is compulsory **for environmentally friendly management principles** to be observed. Our objective of ensuring that events are accessible to various social groups will be fulfilled through **implementation of an inclusive educational programme**, as well as through **the creation of multilingual digital content**.

Although the subject of the programme places a greater accent on the social and political cornerstones of the EU agenda, implementation of the ECoC programme will have **a positive impact on the development of the digital and sustainable economy**. Technological and digital content development will play a great role in the formation of the ECoC programme, developing the exportability of creative businesses and creating new jobs in the realms of cultural industries and the creative economy, including ensuring the transfer of cultural and creative effects to other realms of entrepreneurship.

The majority of the programme's projects are being planned in cooperation with international partners, in particular by developing cooperation with other ECoCs (a list of international partners accompanies the project descriptions in the second part of the bid). While the experience of Daugavpils' cultural organisations to date is largely related to organising artist exchanges in the form of guest concerts and guest productions, under the auspices of the ECoC programme we are striving to establish **cooperation at the next level**, creating various **joint productions** between international artists, working together on event ideas, artistic concepts and content creation, including using the organisational skills developed during the pandemic in the form of remote **work and hybrid events** (events in person with participants connected digitally). Daugavpils' particular interest would be in nurturing cooperation between Western European and Eastern European artists, as well as facilitating **cultural exchanges with the European Union's external eastern neighbours**.

At the conclusion of the European Capital of Culture year we want to organise a **conference of European philosophers focusing on European values and the future**. A musical production jointly created by Latvian and Portuguese artists *We Speak a Lingua Franca*, whose dramatic material will be made up of the life stories of the inhabitants of Latgale and Portugal, will mark the conclusion of our study of this subject throughout the course of the year. For a symbolic conclusion to the year, **to highlight the cooperation between the European Union's member states**, artists from 27 EU states will create twenty-seven *Lingua Franca* light stories – light installations operated using green energy which will be installed in Daugavpils' urban environment.

### 15. The strategy to attract the interest of a broad European and international public

Given its location at the European Union's far eastern border, it is possible that Europeans may perceive Daugavpils as an unusual cultural epicentre and cultural tourism destination. However, for this very reason, it could also strike them as providing a new and intriguing offering, presenting a different type of cultural experience.

In order to attract the attention of the broader European and international public, we will observe the following main principles in devising the programme:

#### 1. Interesting cultural content for a European audience

Cultural and art project themes and creative solutions will be **relevant to the contemporary European public**, offering the chance to reflect on subjects that also affect each of us individually. The *Lingua Franca* discussion programme will consist of discussions with specialists and artists from various fields and audiences will also have the chance to actively participate remotely throughout the year in connection with the questions posed by each project.

In implementing projects, we will involve artists and **artistic collectives of European renown**, who through their works of art invite audiences to step outside their usual comfort zone and see other perspectives. Artists' works will be created in conformity with Daugavpils' and the ECoC programme concept. Specific artists will be selected during the second selection round of the ECoC competition. Daugavpils already hosts the Mark Rothko Art Centre's residency programme, and during the preparation period we will augment the residency programme with additional genres (stage artists, writers and composers, etc.), and geographically, including Latgale's manors and other new residency venues.

The programme will include **authors well-known in Europe**. For example, a large proportion of the programme's projects are linked to the name of the world famous artist Mark Rothko, drawing parallels with other European creative personalities.

#### 2. Digital availability of the programme in several languages

We will create the programme's digital content as the ECoC information channel online, where information

## IV EUROPEAN DIMENSION

will be available online in various languages and formats.

Content regarding events taking place in person will be accompanied by *Lingua Franca* conversations online, digital exhibitions (e.g. the digital art exhibition *In Silico*) and story archives and event recordings in audio and video versions.

### 3. Inclusion in the European cultural route and tourism route offering

We will augment existing and create new **creative tourism and ecotourism routes in Latgale**, which will offer unique individual experiences based on Latgale's cultural heritage to various target groups including families with children, young people and senior citizens. We will create a special Latgale culinary heritage route *Latgales Garša (The Taste of Latgale)*, becoming part of the *Regional Culinary Heritage Europe* cooperation network. We have become participants in *TraCEs – Cultour Is Capital*, a project focusing on tourism innovations in cooperation with the cultural and creative industry sector in European capitals of culture. We will unveil the Latvian white and black sauna traditions, initiating the development of an *International Sauna Route*, connecting Scandinavia, the Baltics and the CIS countries.

To develop creative tourism we will cooperate with Coimbra University's Social Studies Centre, which has implemented the major **CreaTour** project to develop tourism in Portuguese municipalities. The creative and nature tourism offering will augment the ECoC event offering, creating an attractive leisure destination for Europeans.

The Daugavpils Shot Factory is already included on the **European Route of Industrial Heritage**. We want to include other important places in Daugavpils and Latgale on European cultural routes.

As the birthplace of Mark Rothko and the place where the originator of contemporary Ivrit Lāzars Perelmans and other major Jewish personalities worked creatively (around 1914 80.000 jews lived in Latgale), Daugavpils should be included on the *European Route of Jewish Heritage*. Daugavpils Fortress, whose history began with resistance to Napoleon's army should be included on the *Destination Napoleon* route. As a notable regional destination for pilgrims, Aglona Basilica should be included together with other sacred places in Latgale on the *Santiago de Compostela* pilgrim route.

### 4. Cooperation with other European Capitals of Culture

We plan to cooperate with other European Capitals of Culture throughout the preparatory phase, thus mutually promoting ECoC destinations, organising artist exchanges, participating in ECoC programme events and working to promote information in the media of other countries.

For example, as part of Daugavpils Slavic Culture Month, we plan to arrange the participation of artists from the Balkan ECoC – Novi Sad, Timișoara and Nova Gorica, while in 2022 artists from Latgale will participate in the revitalization of the old Daugavpils–Kaunas Postal Station route, taking part in art and music events, and forming a link to Kaunas' capital of culture programme.

### 5. Organisation of pan-European conferences and forums in collaboration with European cooperation networks

Daugavpils University currently cooperates extensively with European universities in various research fields. As part of the ECoC programme it will organise several international conferences in Daugavpils, attracting scientists and researchers from various European countries.

As Daugavpils' cultural institutions become more actively involved in international circles, we will seek opportunities to host the annual forums of various European cultural cooperation networks in Latgale, augmenting the ECoC programme. We will implement this cooperation direction together with our ECoC project partners – Latvia's national cultural institutions, which have already established cooperation with European cultural cooperation networks.

### 6. ECoC ambassador programme – activation of Latgale's diaspora in other European countries

Parallel to official communication channels, and with the support of Latvia's embassies and representations abroad, we will activate cooperation with organisations like the European Latvian Association, creating a network of Daugavpils European Capital of Culture ambassadors in Europe. An initial database of contacts has already been compiled of Daugavpilians, who would be willing to be involved in the development and promotion of the ECoC programme in the country where they live.

### 7. Strengthening hospitality capacity and investment in international marketing

Strengthening the capacity of the hospitality sector and developing quality service in foreign languages are important tasks for us during the ECoC programme preparation period. We believe that these days the best referrals for Daugavpils and Latgale as a tourism destination are still delivered via word-of-mouth, therefore it is vital that we do our best to ensure that the experience of every visitor to Daugavpils is positive. We want service personnel to not only be knowledgeable about the planned ECoC programme but also to offer their suggestions in regard to it.

Our target audience will be not only European Union residents, but also the inhabitants of neighbouring eastern countries, with which Latgale has intensive economic cooperation, who through their participation in the ECoC programme could acquire a better understanding of European values. We are planning extensive visits by foreign journalists, bloggers and podcasters to Latgale, presenting our offering through personalised stories.

We have identified a special target audience in the form of younger generation digital nomads, who could respond to Daugavpils' status as a ECoC and it offer to reside in the city for a while, using the coworking spaces on offer as a place to work, and becoming part of Daugavpils' growing IT and creative community.

The international marketing strategy is set out in more detail in part six.

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### 16. Links between the cultural programme and the cultural programme of other cities holding the European Capital of Culture title

It is very important for us **to draw on the experience of other European Capitals of Culture**. We have concluded that the best project ideas with a distinctive European dimension arise in the course of mutual discussions with other ECoCs and ECoC candidates. Accordingly Daugavpils has joined the candidate city cooperation network *Culture Next*, which ensures a good exchange of information between cities, helping them to find cooperation partners for cultural projects in various fields.

We have carefully studied the bids of other European Capitals of Culture and are keeping track of their activities. For example, Galway's challenge as a European Capital of Culture in 2020 to devise a large part of the programme in digital format, in light of pandemic-related circumstances dictating restricted mobility and contact, has inspired us to seek ways to expand the virtual accessibility of our programme. Tartu's *green approach* has helped us to introduce basic principles of ecological thinking into event organisation, we have also learned from Tartu's experience in managing stakeholder capacity building programs within a region, while we are learning from Aarhus how to work with the involvement of many volunteers.

Currently we have organised online talks with the following **European Capitals of Culture and candidate cities** – Novi Sad, Kaunas, Timișoara, Veszprém, Nova Gorica, Oulu, Coimbra, Aveiro, Broumov, Skopje and others, identifying mutually interesting realms of cooperation.

During the next few years, we want to develop our cooperation concepts in areas such environmentally friendly public art in nature, a professional art offering for kids, contemporary Slavic culture in Europe, Rothko-inspired surrealist exhibitions, photographic research and collation of stories documenting the experiences of rural inhabitants, contemplative art and light festivals, etc., including planning joint projects with the support of the EU programmes Creative Europe and Erasmus+. We have started actively communicating with other future European Capitals of Culture and plan to hold meetings in the next few months.

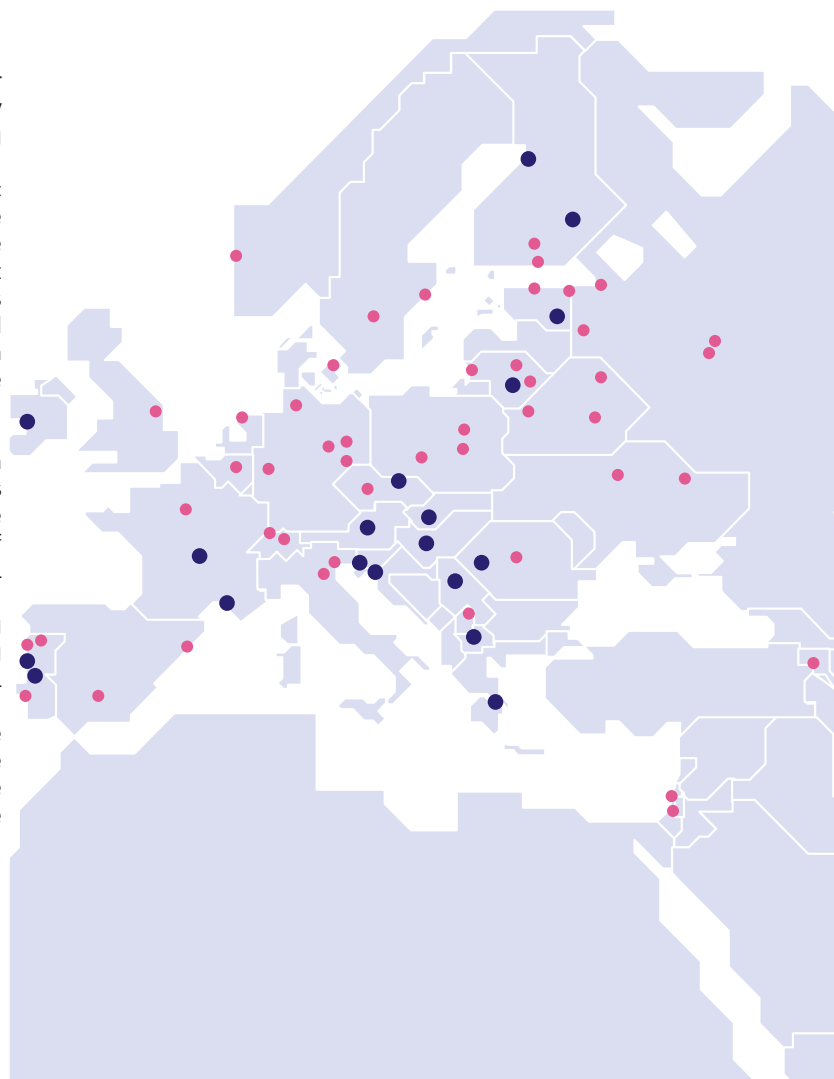
We are planning to cooperate more closely with the European Capitals of Culture nearest to us geographically – **Kaunas 2022** and **Tartu 2024**. We have identified subjects for cultural projects of mutual interest – for example, lost Jewish cultural heritage is important to both Kaunas and Daugavpils, Tartu is interested in a contemporary art offering in surrounding regions just as we are planning an extensive art programme in Latgale's natural environment. Curators representing Kaunas and Tartu will be involved in devising Daugavpils' programme *Create for Nature* and *Create for the City*. Moreover, we hope to mutually assist one another in promoting the ECoC programme by informing inhabitants about the ECoC programme offering in neighbouring countries.

We are planning extensive cooperation in 2027 with **Portugal**. We participated in the Latvia-Portugal ECoC candidate city networking seminar held in January 2021, identifying the interests of various cities in cooperation. We plan to cooperate with **Coimbra and Aveiro** regardless of the competition results. For example, next year Coimbra's cathedrals could host broadcasts from Daugavpils Spiritual Music Festival, in turn, organising live broadcasts of concerts from Coimbra in the Daugavpils' urban environment. Cooperation is planned between the Aveiro and Daugavpils contemporary ceramics biennales.

We want to develop joint projects to draw on the experience of European Capitals of Culture in relation to community involvement, strengthening the capacity of the cultural sector and implementing international marketing. In the event that we are awarded the title of European Capital of Cultures, we plan to organise **a European Capitals of Culture Forum** in Daugavpils, in order to foster international cooperation on the part of local cultural organisations and to learn from examples of best practice and mistakes in organising sustainable ECoC programmes and projects.

Together with the Latvian Academy of Culture and Daugavpils University, we plan to cooperate with the **University Network of the European Capitals of Culture**, in order to be able to draw on its experience evaluating the results and impact of ECoC programmes.

## OUR PARTNERS



# 5

## OUTREACH

### 17. The involvement of the local population and civil society in the preparation of the application and will participate in the implementation of the year

It was our good fortune that the reality of the Covid pandemic did not come as a sudden surprise. Of course, only one who has made many mistakes can emerge from this situation as someone who is wiser, so we took decisive action. We did not entertain the illusion that we would be able to hold face-to-face consultations and meetings with residents and stakeholders to prepare our application, nor were we daunted by the physical and elusive boundaries that had now materialised into thick walls. We understood and accepted that digital communication is our best tool in discussions regarding the future of our city, both with youth and the non-governmental sector, as well as with businesses and seniors, and with international partners – in short, with everyone.

In the course of drafting our application for the competition, there were countless telephone conversations, more than 160 meetings, online co-production events and seminars. We addressed and invited participation from creative, enterprising, young, old, near and distant people from Daugavpils, Rēzekne and the entire Latgale region. A comprehensive response was given by the **Daugavpils Residents Forum, the Latgale Region Cultural Creators Forum, the Youth Opportunities Forum, as well as thematic**

**co-creation workshops and seminars, and the Future City Games**, which is based on the methodology of the British Council. We listened to the individual proposals of more than 200 people and spent more than 330 hours in group talks.

Events were attended by participants of different nationalities and ages, from young people to seniors. Also actively participating were **representatives of the creative and non-governmental sector, representatives of educational institutions and businesspersons**. The application includes a significant portion of content collected from activities with public participation. The ideas reveal not only the creative potential of the residents of Daugavpils and the Latgale region, but also the efforts made for the preservation of diversity in nature, a sustainable view of cultural processes, local development, the importance of the Latgalian language, but especially a change in thinking and approach from a standpoint of centralisation to one of decentralisation, from consumption to participation and personal enrichment through experience, from evaluative to stimulating, from conflict-avoidance to conflict-resolution. Online conversations and co-creative events that took place in the shadow of strict Covid restrictions revealed ever more the nature of people as social beings – the need to speak and be heard, the important role of seeking out, creating and speaking a common language in the future – one in which the creative community can provide strong support.

We created *Lingua Franca* conversations through our website and Facebook. Daugavpils residents and those of Latgale happily shared their thoughts on what the term “common language” means to each of them, and we spread these thoughts both in social network recordings and by recording videos including the most poignant stories.

A survey of Daugavpils residents in February 2021 confirmed that 88% of respondents support Daugavpils’ candidacy for the title of European Capital of Culture 2027, and almost half of residents are ready to actively participate – both as volunteers in events, as well as by implementing their ideas and organising events. The majority of residents are convinced that implementation of the European Capital of Culture program will promote the development of tourism (74%), improve the image of Daugavpils among the Latvian population (64%), promote international recognition of the city (59%), and promote cultural development (54%).

We have initiated the **Daugavpils – ECoC 2027 ambassador movement**, promoting the idea of the European Capital of Culture to search for and find a common language, involving representatives of various professions who care about the future of Daugavpils and currently work in Daugavpils, Riga, Brussels and other European cities. This support movement is very important in involving the public and providing information on opportunities for participation and support in a direct manner, without intermediaries.

We will use the power of *Lingua Franca* to create a platform for a broad **volunteer movement** that is attractive and able to **unite people of different ages**,

## ECoC Cities and Candidate Cities

France, **Marseilles** 2013  
Croatia, **Rijeka** 2020  
Ireland, **Galway** 2020  
Serbia, **Novi Sad** 2021  
Romania, **Timisoara** 2021  
Lithuania, **Kaunas** 2022  
Hungary, **Vezprém** 2023  
Greece, **Elevisis** 2023  
Estonia, **Tartu** 2024

Austria, **Bad Ischl** 2024  
Slovenia, **Nova Gorica** 2025  
Finland, **Oulu** 2026, **Savonlinna** 2026  
Slovakia, **Nitra** 2026  
Portugal, **Aveiro** 2027, **Coimbra** 2027  
Czech Republic, **Broumov** 2028  
Northern Macedonia, **Skopje** 2028  
France, **Clermont-Ferrand** 2028

## Other partner cities

Armenia - **Wagarsapata**  
Belarus - **Vitebsk, Bobruisk, Lida**  
Belgium - **Brussels**  
Czech Republic - **Prague**  
Denmark - **Copenhagen**  
Estonia - **Narva, Tallinn**  
Finland - **Helsinki, Riihimäki**  
France - **Paris**  
Germany - **Berlin, Bonn, Freiburg, Dresden, Magdeburg**  
Italy - **Venice, Frara**  
Israel - **Jerusalem, Ramala**  
Kosovo - **Pristina**  
Lithuania - **Klaipeda, Vilnius, Panevezys**  
Netherlands - **Leeuwarden**  
Norway - **Bergen**  
People's Republic of China - **Harbin**  
Poland - **Warsaw, Wroclaw, Radom**  
Portugal - **Porto, Lisbon, Braga**  
Romania - **Sibiu**  
Russia - **Moscow, St. Petersburg, Pskov, Narofominsk**  
Spain - **Barcelona, Cordoba**  
Sweden - **Stockholm, Mutala**  
Switzerland - **Zurich, Basel**  
Ukraine - **Kiev, Kharkiv**  
United Kingdom - **Louth**

**The municipalities of Latgale region have more than 100 twin cities all over the world**

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**ethnicities and interests from all of Latgale.** We will encourage taxi drivers, bartenders, waitstaff and country store cashiers to become local culture guides and announcers. We will encourage neighbours to provide support to individuals with mobility challenges, so that they, too, can attend events. We will encourage car-sharing to conserve resources and enable people from more distant locations to get to events. We will approach sports organisations, active tourism clubs, youth and senior organisations, people with special needs, as well as organisations with extensive experience in the implementation of social volunteering to join forces and create an inclusive and inspiring volunteer movement.

By means of the **Learn-Share-Do program**, we will train at least 500-1000 volunteers from the entire region to act as social network activists, local guides, and storytellers, and provide technical and organisational support for cultural events and participate in field research. We will invite them to act as ambassadors of Daugavpils and to promote the yearlong benefits of the ECoC provided by participation in the ambassador program.

Contacts **have already been identified** for natives of Daugavpils and Latgalians in Europe and around the world who would like to get involved in promoting the ECoC program in their home country, and **under the auspices of Daugavpils Creates**, a **detailed database of volunteers and ambassadors** will be created, gathering participants' special skills, knowledge and experience, as well as the needs of the program, so that the volunteer program coordinator can monitor implementation of the program.

In the next stage of the competition and in preparation for 2027, we will continue the **Lingua Franca talks** on current topics of our program in Europe and Daugavpils with residents, both in person together in the **newly opened ECoC public information centre in the co-production premises of the creative quarter of Saules Street**, specially created for associations in Daugavpils, as well as **virtually**, promoting achievement of the aims of creative action application. With the support of Latgale regional coordinators, we will create a **Lingua Franca** negotiation network for all cities in the region.

### 18. Opportunities for participation of marginalised and disadvantaged groups

In developing our **Lingua Franca** program, we have considered a wide range of opportunities for those segments of the population for whom participation in cultural life on a daily basis is beset with various obstacles. The volunteer training program will enable the experience of cultural participation for people of different ages and ethnicities, especially in working **with youth, seniors and socially marginalised groups**. **Representatives of these groups** will be involved in the **advisory board**, who will work together with the ECoC team, ensuring close cooperation with NGOs and compliance of the program with the interests of various groups in society.

We will improve the **accessibility of cultural destinations** by upgrading cultural infrastructure and

creating new cultural venues closer to where people live, in order to provide opportunities for physical participation for people with reduced mobility. We will reassess the arrangement of our cultural institutions in accordance with **principles of universal design**, so that their use would be convenient for everyone. In displaying and transmitting information, we will take into account potential **sensory barriers**, also taking into consideration the ability to perceive information among people with visual or hearing impairments.

We want to overcome the **language barrier** for participation by communicating the planned cultural content in **different languages**, including, where necessary, providing news in simplified language and using sign language.

We will overcome **social and economic barriers** by ensuring a sufficient number of events that are free of charge, as well as create targeted events for the involvement of special groups in society. For example, **lowering the centrifugal barrier** is one of the key elements of the *Create for People* program. It envisages projects for the involvement in cultural processes of various social groups who live far from Daugavpils and the usual major cultural centres of the region.

We will also strive to overcome **visible and invisible barriers** within the programme by creating creative writing classes for Daugavpils Prison inmates, including the experience of these people in compiling life stories about acceptance and non-acceptance, which will be further interpreted in literary and musical works. Artists from the *Sansusī* music festival will work with patients from the neurological hospital, and artists from the *Homo Novus* festival will be working together with persons with disabilities. Similarly, various engaging events are planned in our other programs, making for topical themes of interest for people to talk about in the language of culture. A special program is planned for cooperation with non-citizens – people who have difficulty or a lack of desire to acquire Latvian citizenship by passing the required language and history exam.

We hope that additional interest and encouragement to participate will be provided by digitally available free **Lingua Franca discussions and talks**, which will be organised on the various topics covered in our program that affect each individual, and will offer engaging views from professionals, artists and participants.

**Emotional barriers** – we will try to overcome possible stereotypes related to cultural events for those groups of society with minimal cultural experience with the **support of ECoC cultural ambassadors**, involving people who have a renewed interest in opportunities for cultural participation by taking part in special projects.

In the most unusual and unexpected ways, art will enter educational institutions and businesses with the **Art Break** project, which will emphasise the acquisition of initial cultural experiences, the importance of giving items a second life, as well as the interaction of different economic fields and

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art in unusual circumstances. The program places special emphasis on **community art projects**, in which resident artists will work with people with little experience in cultural participation, offering a variety of creative classes and master classes, creating initial experiences by engaging in the creation of works of art. We are convinced that community art projects are the most appropriate format for dialogue and giving a voice to those groups who may be at a disadvantage.

### 19. Strategy for audience development and the link with education and the participation of schools

This year we have conducted initial research on the needs of the Daugavpils audience, which provides a foundation for our further strategy in working with our audience. Survey data show that the segments of Daugavpils society that lack an adequate cultural offering are young people, families with children and seniors. In turn, a recent study in Latvia on the impact of the Covid pandemic on culture indicates that the pandemic has caused widespread anxiety, fear and restrictions on cultural consumption, widening the gap between regular cultural consumers and those who are difficult to engage in cultural activities. Those people who were active in cultural consumption will, as far as possible, continue to attend cultural events in person, but their actions will be affected by both a change in purchasing power and the increase in the intensity of cultural offerings after the pandemic. Therefore, we will offer smart and integrated action models so that, as the cultural offering expands, we do not lose the former audience and are able to activate people who are not active in culture.

For our strategy activities to be successful, we have identified the main barriers and identified concrete actions. In the next stage of the competition, we will supplement the existing programs with well-thought-out and specific, goal-oriented projects. We will regularly monitor changes and adjust our activities through annual research on audience habits and cultural consumption.

### Barriers to audience outreach, engagement strategy

Group	Characterisation	Barriers	Engagement strategy	Programs/projects
Children Age 0-15  15.1% of population of Daugavpils	A group that is easy to reach, direct and engage.  Regular access to a variety of free artistic and cultural content as part of the basic offering of cultural education and culture of the municipality, in the Latvian state program <i>Latvian school bag</i> .  Relatively low mobility, tied to their place of residence.	Limited attention span.  Insufficient original content for audience among children and teens.  Mostly a participatory rather than co-participatory format.	Close cooperation with kindergartens, schools, cultural education and interest education organisations.  Original content based on the <i>Lingua Franca</i> concept.  Uniquely and thematically targeted events promoting responsibility and co-creation.  Empowerment of children to create a multiplier effect of positive change.	<b>Create for the City</b> <b>Create for Nature</b> <b>Create for the Future</b> <b>Create for Latgale</b> <b>Sentences</b> (Cultbuss – culture is for everybody, Tomorrow starts today) <b>Letters and syllables</b> (R – Red brick) <b>Stories</b> (Story of the Daugavpils fortress) Art Break H!Story, etc.

### We have developed a strategy for the involvement of Daugavpils and Latgale society with the following goals:

- to develop a thinking, educated, cohesive society with a strong sense of belonging;
- to involve residents in an active dialogue on urban development, modern societal habits, local and European identity, cultural heritage;
- ensure equal opportunities and reduce potential barriers to the involvement of all groups in society in cultural and artistic processes;
- reduce the segregation of various groups in society, in particular certain linguistic groups and socially vulnerable members of society;
- to unite different groups in society into a single community, thus creating new impetus for the growth and development of the city;
- reduce the impact of the pandemic and similar external risks on cultural accessibility and participation.

### In our strategy for audience involvement, we will observe the following principles:

- openness to diversity as a resource, not a constraint;
- predominance of long-term involvement over one-off, episodic contacts;
- empowering the audience to become active co-creators of events rather than passive observers;
- launching interdisciplinary and cross-border cooperation between different communities and cultural operators;
- deepening relations, emphasising cognition, education and mutual synergy;
- building an understandable and humane face-to-face dialogue, as well as meaningful digital and hybrid solutions that enrich the cultural experience.

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			Event formats appropriate to the perspective and attention span of children and adolescents.	
			Stimuli fostering participation among teachers and parents.	
<p>Youth Age 16-25</p> <p>10% of population of Daugavpils</p>	<p>Only highly motivated young people are easy to reach (thanks to student governments, vocational schools, NGOs, amateur art groups)</p> <p>Most are difficult to reach.</p> <p>There are a lack of contemporary, engaging cultural activities.</p> <p>Increased interest in cinema, popular music, festivals, digital cultural formats.</p> <p>Low interest in theatre, art, museums.</p> <p>Sufficient free time and motivation to spend on culture and recreation</p>	<p>Mostly irregular and passive cultural experience.</p> <p>Strong effect of Covid-19 on cultural consumption habits and mental health.</p> <p>Possibly negative experience with "compulsory cultural visits".</p> <p>Attention divided among various interests.</p> <p>Closed off in specific "bubbles" of interests and friends.</p> <p>Irregular availability of funds for culture and entertainment.</p>	<p>Creating unique, surprising and participatory cultural content.</p> <p>Increasing the proportion of events that provide opportunities for co-operation and self-expression with recognised cultural and artistic professionals.</p> <p>Application of scientific and technological achievements relevant to the age group to enable relating to traditional cultural values.</p> <p>Mandate for independent action to create a multiplication effect of positive change.</p> <p>Creating conditions for youth to feel comfortable without judging themselves and others.</p> <p>Close cooperation with schools and interest education organisations, youth self-governments and NGOs.</p> <p>Involvement of age-appropriate, multidisciplinary opinion leaders and mentors who share authentic cultural experiences and are able to address young people with different interests and motivate them to participate in cultural and artistic processes.</p>	<p><b>Create for growing up</b> (Artichoke, Are you Hungry?, Lavka, Forum for the New East and European Youth Summit)</p> <p><b>Create for the City</b> (The Lost Daugavpils)</p> <p><b>Create for Silence</b> (community theatre projects)</p> <p><b>Create for Latgale</b> (Contemporary new artworks)</p> <p><b>Create for Rothko</b> (A common space, a common time)</p> <p><b>Create for the Future Letters and syllables</b> (H - How does Thursday feel?, A - Atlas of flora of Daugavpils) H!Story Art Break etc.</p>
<p>Economically active individuals Age 26-64</p> <p>49.2% of population of Daugavpils</p>	<p>Those without children spend more on culture and recreation. Among those with children, spending is planned.</p> <p>While at school, some attended art and music schools, amateur activities.</p> <p>A small number are actively involved in amateur groups.</p> <p>Motivated to improve life in their city/region, but this potential has not been utilised.</p>	<p>Careful, motivated choice of events.</p> <p>Attending events in the city centre / cultural and sports centres.</p> <p>If they have children, the focus is on activities for the whole family.</p> <p>Untapped potential for participation and co-creation.</p> <p>Negative individual and joint (with friends) culture experiences influence future choices.</p>	<p>To help assess individual knowledge, to motivate its use for the benefit of the community.</p> <p>To create conditions for listening to opinions, to support ideas that improve the urban environment, promote creativity and well-being.</p> <p>Involve unique and thematically targeted events that promote responsibility and co-creation.</p> <p>Highlighting European values and differing experiences in shaping cultural experiences.</p>	<p><b>Create for the City</b></p> <p><b>Create for Nature</b></p> <p><b>Create for the World and the Sun</b></p> <p><b>Create for People</b></p> <p><b>Create for Latgale</b></p> <p><b>Create for Rothko</b></p> <p><b>Create for the Future Sentences</b> (Our voices have power, I am free, I want to be healthy, I like to care for nature)</p> <p><b>Words</b> (Moonshine, Station, etc.)</p>



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	<p>Focused on personal goals, less on community ones.</p> <p>Those who do not see opportunities for growth, dynamic change, leave the city/region.</p> <p>The main focus is on studies, work, professional development or family.</p> <p>Open to contemporary culture.</p> <p>High mobility.</p>	<p>Live in linguistically separated (Latvian/Russian) information "bubbles".</p> <p>A lack of increased incentives for cultural participation, especially for single men without higher education.</p> <p>A specific life routine.</p> <p>Limited free time.</p>	<p>Use the example of Latvian- and Russian-speaking community leaders to present opportunities for participation in various neighbourhoods and to motivate participation in cultural and artistic processes.</p> <p>Activated cooperation with businesses and professional organisations.</p>	<p><b>Letters and Syllables</b> (R – Read to me, S – Stories from the streets of Riga) H!Story Art Break etc.</p>
<p>Seniors 65 +</p> <p>25.7% of population of Daugavpils</p>	<p>A great deal of free time.</p> <p>Some actively involved in amateur art collectives.</p> <p>Great interest in exhibits, theatre, concerts, and traditional culture.</p> <p>Less interested in expressions of contemporary culture, cinema, festivals, discussions.</p> <p>Strong attachment to location and cultural space.</p> <p>Culture as an integral part of daily life.</p> <p>Carefully plan spending on culture.</p>	<p>Seclusion, loneliness.</p> <p>Limited financial ability.</p> <p>Limited mobility.</p> <p>Fear of traveling great distances. alone to attend evening events.</p> <p>Barrier to intergenerational communication.</p> <p>Sensory barriers associated with visual, hearing, perceptual impairment.</p> <p>Barrier with regard to official language, especially among those 55+.</p> <p>Technological barriers or limited access to information.</p> <p>There is a lack of incentives to participate in the existing cultural offering.</p>	<p>Activate social contact opportunities, especially for single individuals.</p> <p>Promote intergenerational cooperation and the exchange of experiences and transfer of skills.</p> <p>Involve communities in art-creation activities and support an active lifestyle.</p> <p>Encourage storytelling, record historical memories.</p> <p>Ensure access to culture closer to the place of residence / place of care.</p> <p>Close cooperation with senior organisations, interest clubs, nursing homes, national associations.</p> <p>Promoting support for active seniors with mobility and sensory barriers.</p>	<p><b>Create for the World and the Sun</b> (Smart Table, Tomorrow starts today, etc.) <b>Create for Growing up</b> (Are you Hungry?, Skill Deal, Lavka) <b>Create for Latgale</b> <b>Create for People</b> H!Story etc.</p>
<p>Groups at risk of social exclusion, all ages</p>	<p>Limited or no contact with culture and art, passive experience with regard to cultural consumption.</p>	<p>Marginalised, stigmatised image.</p> <p>Seclusion, barriers to social integration.</p>	<p>Perceive as a group with diverse opportunities for cooperation, not one with problems.</p> <p>Ensure the availability of culture in the place of residence or care.</p>	<p><b>Create for Silence</b> <b>Create for People</b> (Latgale borehole, ArtDocFest, Witnesses, Writing and correspondence,</p>

## V OUTREACH

Barriers to diverse cultural participation.	Limited financial possibilities.	Help them to realise that achievements in some aspect of life do not determine a person's value.	storytelling and listening, Community theatre performances, I speak the <i>Lingua Franca</i> )
Heterogeneous groups with differing expectations and needs.	Sensory and perceptual barriers.	Promote contact with professional artists and inclusion in community art activities and art co-creation.	<b>Lingua Franca</b> (Lavka)
Limited contact with other groups in society.	Language barriers (sign language, linguistic barriers of Russian- and Latvian-speaking communities).	Cultural and artistic processes as an important aspect of therapy.	<b>Words</b> (Slavs)
Social and economic dependence, attachment to the place of residence.	Barrier to accessing technology and information.	New, regular events that give one the courage to participate.	<b>Letters and Syllables</b> (A – Accordion accord) etc.
	Mobility barrier.	Activated cooperation with social care institutions, hospitals, prisons, NGOs, etc.	
	Covid 19-enhanced integration restrictions.		

To attract a wide range of residents, first of all, we intend to create an **educational program on audience development and involvement of Latgalian cultural organisations** to change the thinking and planning of cultural organisations, putting audience interests at the centre of organisational development, testing new opportunities to work with audiences in various interactive workshops. In the preparatory stage, we plan a comprehensive exchange of experience with other European cultural organisations, providing, as far as possible, short-term internship opportunities for representatives of Daugavpils and Latgalian cultural organisations.

To involve a wider audience, a **School of Cultural Activism** will be organised, which will be attended by both seniors and schoolchildren, participating in organising cultural events as volunteers and learning together with artists about opportunities to express socially active positions on various social issues through creative means, becoming acquainted with the role and manifestations of socially active art.

**Pupils in Latgale** will have broad and diverse opportunities to participate in the ECoC program. Art will enter kindergartens, schools and universities in the most unusual and unexpected ways, like a flash mob, in line with the **Art Break** project. There will be a special opportunity for professional development for pupils from all 25 music and art schools in Latgale. They will be able to learn from professional artists, with a view to developing their own creative careers. International artists participating in residency programs in Daugavpils and Latgale, creating new works of art, will also provide **master classes** and organise **workshops**, diversifying the experience of young, future artists. Vocational secondary schools in Daugavpils will be visited by guest lecturers from Portugal, who will be teaching the art of fado music, *azulejo* (tile painting) and traditional confectionery skills. An equal amount of attention will be paid to the involvement of children who have not been active in cultural participation thus far, with the creation

of camps and creative activities in cooperation with schools in Latgale.

Pupils will be able to participate in projects that are part of the *Create for the City* and *Create for Nature* programs, **along with the creation of public artworks and the acquisition of knowledge of urban environment design**. A constructed environment affects everyone every day, even driving people's behaviour. Only a well-informed society can create a harmonious environment. Professional architects and urban planners will help instil issues of creative design and architectural education from an early age in the curriculum *Pupil, Researcher, Urbanite*.

Projects exploring the history of one's own city, Latgale and all of Europe will be integrated into the school curriculum, resulting in self-implemented interactive technological solutions in cooperation with peers in Portugal and other EU countries. The *Hi!Story* project will examine the history of yesterday, today and the future, allowing a variety of professions – firefighters, flower sellers or factory managers – to act as city guides. For example, an experience tour of a factory will allow children and, by extension, parents to learn what is produced in the city, the sources of raw materials and the ultimate destinations of the goods produced, thus gaining a new notion of the city's role in the European economy.

The Daugavpils Innovation Centre, which creates STEAM educational programs, will team up with the *Create for the Future* program, inviting students to explore natural processes in a creative manner. Pupils will also take part in **creative business accelerators**, setting up training companies and gaining their first business experience. Within the ECoC program, we will offer **internships, shadowing opportunities and volunteer work experience** in various cultural organisations in Latgale.

# 6

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### 20. City budget for culture



The table shows the city's annual cultural budget for events, cultural institutions and the renewal of cultural infrastructure over the last five years.

Year	Annual budget for culture in the city (EUR)	Annual budget for culture in the city (in % of the total annual budget for the city)
2017	6 362 605	7.25 %
2018	6 904 121	6.39 %
2019	8 716 384	6.95 %
2020	10 090 743	8.46 %
2021	13 642 608	11.02 %

### 21. Funds from annual city budget to finance the European Capital of Culture project

The city of Daugavpils plans to use part of the annual cultural budget funds for preparatory activities for the European Capital of Culture program and the planned events in 2027 (a total of 1.7 million EUR).

2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
55 000 EUR	105 000 EUR	150 000 EUR	150 000 EUR	240 000 EUR	300 000 EUR	700 000 EUR

### 22. City budget for culture after 2027

After implementation of the annual program of the European Capital of Culture, the city of Daugavpils plans to allocate 9-10% of the total city budget to culture. With an increase in the city's total budget by an average of 5% per year, in 2028 the culture budget could reach 16 million EUR per year.

### 23. Income to cover operating expenditure

#### ECoC program budget 2023 – 2028

Total income to cover operating expenditure (EUR)	From the public sector (EUR)	From the public sector (%)	From the private sector (EUR)	From the private sector (%)
20 000 000	19 500 000	97.5 %	500 000	2.5 %

### 24. Income from the public sector

Income from the public sector to cover operating expenditure	EUR	%
National Government	10 000 000	51.3 %
City	5 500 000	28.2 %
Region	2 000 000	10 %
EU (with exception of the <i>Melina Mercouri</i> prize)	2 000 000	10 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>19 500 000</b>	<b>100 %</b>

### 25. Decisions of local governments and state institutions on co-financing of the program

The Daugavpils City Council has unanimously decided on the preparation and submission of the application for the European Capital of Culture competition, planning funds for the application preparation stage. Funding for implementation of the program is included in the draft investment plan for the next planning period, which the Daugavpils City Council will be authorised to approve in the summer of 2021, together with the Daugavpils City and Upper Daugava Region Joint Development Program 2021–2027, following the administrative-territorial reform and the municipal

elections in June of this year.

At the regional level, the submission of the European Capital of Culture application, in cooperation with all Latgale region municipalities, is unanimously supported at the Latgale Planning Region Development Council meeting. Municipalities will be able to decide on the amount of co-financing after the administrative-territorial reform in June 2021.

The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia has informed candidate cities that it is planning to request the necessary state co-financing within the framework of preparation of the state medium-term budget. State co-financing would comprise up to 50% of the total budget of the ECoC program for the city awarded

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the title of European Capital of Culture and would not exceed 10 million euros for the period covered by the program, including the start-up measures from 2025 or 2026.

### 26. Income from the private sector

We wish to use the potential of *Lingua Franca* to develop cooperation and expand the practice of attracting private funding in Daugavpils and the Latgale region with regard to the **Create Together** support program. Both traditional business models and initiatives that promote change and social responsibility are equally important in the fundraising strategy. In the support program, we will combine the traditional brand partnership-based model with the opportunity to implement direct, unique participation in the processes of change in our city and region.

*Create Together* is a **multi-level cooperation program** implemented by the management organisation *Daugavpils Creates*, together with **entrepreneurs and individual donors**, which embodies the goals of the *Lingua Franca* program. Funding will focus on themes, programs and projects that support concrete, measurable change, such as bringing different communities closer together and integrated into cultural processes, fostering cooperation between business and the creative sector, significant urban change, cultural accessibility for outlying areas, climate change mitigation, critical thinking, cultivation of dialogue skills, etc.

### We will involve supporters in a five-level program:

Level of support	Amount of support (EUR)	Number of supporters	Desired funding goal (EUR)
1. Main partners	27 000 +	5	135 000 -150 000
2. Businesspersons' Club 27	7 202	27	194 454
3. Product and brand partners	2 700	100	270 000
4. Logo partners	2 027	100	202 700
5. Individuals	7-27-270	100	27 000

#### 1. Main partners – MAJOR ONES #CreateTogether

Five major and important companies at national or regional level with values and goals similar to those of the program that are ready to implement long-term cooperation and ambitious plans in several programs and events, in exchange for comprehensive coverage in ECoC marketing and communications.

#### 2. Co-creation partners – CLUB 27 #CreateTogether

Twenty-seven highly motivated companies from the fast-growing ICT sector or other fields that have the exclusive opportunity to form the so-called co-creation partners club and support the business's own chosen priorities. Businesspersons have the opportunity to develop their ECoC project to meet the significant urban growth needs and their company's goals, such as reaching specific customer groups or providing the company's employees with unprecedented experiences. This cooperation includes support for individual programs or sets of projects, in return for detailed coverage of the marketing and communication of specific ECoC programs or projects.

#### 3. Brand and product partners – BRAND PARTNERS #CreateTogether

Opportunities to create unique products and services using the Daugavpils 2027 trademark. The circle of partners includes companies whose products and services have relevant and high-quality content and quality. The right to use the trademark is determined by the availability of products and services both remotely and in the entire geographical area of Daugavpils 2027 and during project implementation.

#### 4. Logo partners – LOGO PARTNERS #CreateTogether

The opportunity to increase the company's visibility by participating in certain Daugavpils 2027 events or by participating in Daugavpils 2027 marketing and PR packages. Use of the Daugavpils 2027 logo provides an opportunity to stand out in general communications, as well as in communication channels and events related to this specific project.

#### 5. Individual partners – ANYONE #CreateTogether

An opportunity for local residents, diaspora representatives and interested parties to provide individual support for the creation of a symbolic urban object in Daugavpils, in exchange for having their names engraved on a wall or plaque of gratitude next to the public work of art.

As the practice of cultural sponsorship and donation by the private sector is not widely developed in Daugavpils at present, we have cautiously planned a smaller amount of private funding (EUR 500,000) in the budget revenue than the total target funding indicated in the table (more than EUR 800,000).

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### 27. Operating expenditure

Expenditure	EUR	%
Program expenditure	13 050 000	65.25 %
Promotion and marketing	3 500 000	17.50 %
Wages, overhead and administration	3 050 000	15.25 %
Other (capacity building, evaluation, etc.)	400 000	2 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>20 000 000</b>	<b>100 %</b>

### 28. Budget for capital expenditure

Income from the public sector to cover capital expenditure	EUR	%
National Government	2 750 847	7 %
City	14 128 673	37 %
Region	1 320 000	3 %
EU (with exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize)	19 633 480	52 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>37 833 000</b>	<b>100 %</b>

### 29. Decisions of municipalities and public authorities on capital expenditure

The Daugavpils City Council has included cultural infrastructure projects in the draft municipal investment plan for 2021-2027, which will be officially approved after the administrative-territorial reform and municipal elections in June 2021.

Construction projects are already being developed for certain sites (Daugavpils Local History and Art Museum, Stroks Concert Hall).

The Ministry of Culture has planned funding for renovation of the Stanislavs Broks Daugavpils Secondary School of Music.

### 30. EU funds to cover capital expenditure

Daugavpils municipality has positive experience in implementing projects with ERDF and EU cross-border program funding. In the previous fund planning period, 17 million EUR from EU funds and programs were secured for the preservation of cultural and historical heritage and the renewal of cultural infrastructure in Daugavpils.

With the help of EU funds, several historical buildings on the fortress grounds have been restored, the Daugavpils Secondary Sun School of Design and Art has been renovated, the Moonshine Museum has been created, as has the Museum of Technology and Industrial Design, among others.

Also in 2021-2027, by opening programs during this planning period, Daugavpils will complete suitable project applications for obtaining ERDF and cross-border cooperation program funding.

### 31. Expenditure for development of cultural infrastructure

Development of cultural infrastructure	EUR
• Oskars Stroks summer concert hall in Daugavpils	3,568,200
• Reconstruction of the Stropi open-air stage and development of the adjacent territory	1,200,000
• Renovation of Daugavpils museum buildings and improvement of exhibits	8,623,240
• Regeneration of the Daugavpils Fortress for preservation of cultural heritage (including establishment of Museum Crafts and Creative Industries Centre)	8,500,000
• Establishment of an art repository for the Daugavpils Mark Rothko Art Centre	3,035,000
• Modernisation of the Palace of Culture and improvement of the surrounding area	500,000
• Modernisation and improvement of the Unity House and Daugavpils Theatre	2,621,000
• Establishment of a Centre for Creative Industries at the Daugavpils Professional School of Design and Art <i>Saules skola</i> (workshops, hotel)	2,993,000
• Improvement and modernisation of the Stanislavs Broks Daugavpils Secondary School of Music	1,886,100
• Improvement and modernisation of the Latgale Central Library and its branches	282,000
• Renovation of the <i>Forstate</i> Cultural House	600,000

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• Reconstruction of the Centre for Russian Culture	73,000
• Improvement of the Daugavpils Clay Art Centre	30,000
• Modernisation of the Museum of Moonshine	130,000
• Improvement of the Latgale Zoo and development of its infrastructure	709,300
• New public artworks in the urban environment	1,462,160
• Development of the co-creation centre creative quarter at Saules 1/3 (Daugavpils University)	250,000
• Development of digital platforms for Daugavpils cultural and tourism content	50,000
• Restoration of Rēzekne castle mound and construction of an open-air stage	1,000,000
• Establishment of a Latgale craftsmen village in Rēzekne	50,000
• Renovation of the Latgale Museum of Cultural History in Rēzekne	220,000
• Placement of artworks on the banks of the Rēzekne River to popularise Latgale pottery traditions	50,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>37,833,000</b>

### 32. Please give an outline of the intended governance and delivery structure for the implementation of the European Capital of Culture year

The choice of the Daugavpils European Capital of Culture governance model is based on **four main principles of good governance:**

1. **the principle of political and financial independence** - the ECoC organisation must be politically independent in its implementation of the artistic program, implementing the goals set by the municipality within the planned allocated funding with the possibility of attracting additional external funding and generating its own income;
2. **the principle of cooperation and public participation** in establishing the representation of interested parties – Latgale planning region and Latgale municipalities, the cultural sector, businesspersons, youth, Daugavpils University, national cultural and state institutions in the supervision of program implementation;
3. **the principle of openness and transparency** at all levels of management, including in selection of the people and service providers involved in open tenders, so as to enable selection of the strongest and most suitable candidates;
4. **the principle of sustainability** – institutional memory with regard to the practices and experience gained by the organisation, providing an opportunity for the established management organisation to continue its work after the ECoC year, working with interdisciplinary international projects.

In 2023, the Daugavpils City Council, upon obtaining the title of European Capital of Culture, will establish the **Daugavpils Creates** Foundation.

In order to ensure monitoring of implementation of the European Capital of Culture program in accordance with the objectives and results to be achieved, the **Daugavpils Creates Supervisory Council** will be established. The following will be invited to participate in the Supervisory Council: Representatives of Latgale Planning Region, Latgale municipalities, Daugavpils University, the Ministry of Culture, the Latvian Investment and Development Agency, as well

as several representatives of the public, who will be invited to apply to participate.

The governing body of the foundation will be the **board**, which according to the law must have at least three board members. **The Chairman of the Board – the head of the foundation** will be selected in an open competition and will be responsible for effective implementation of the foundation's goals. One of the **board members** will be the **artistic director of the program**, the other will be the **financial manager**, thus providing all the key competencies needed to manage the foundation.

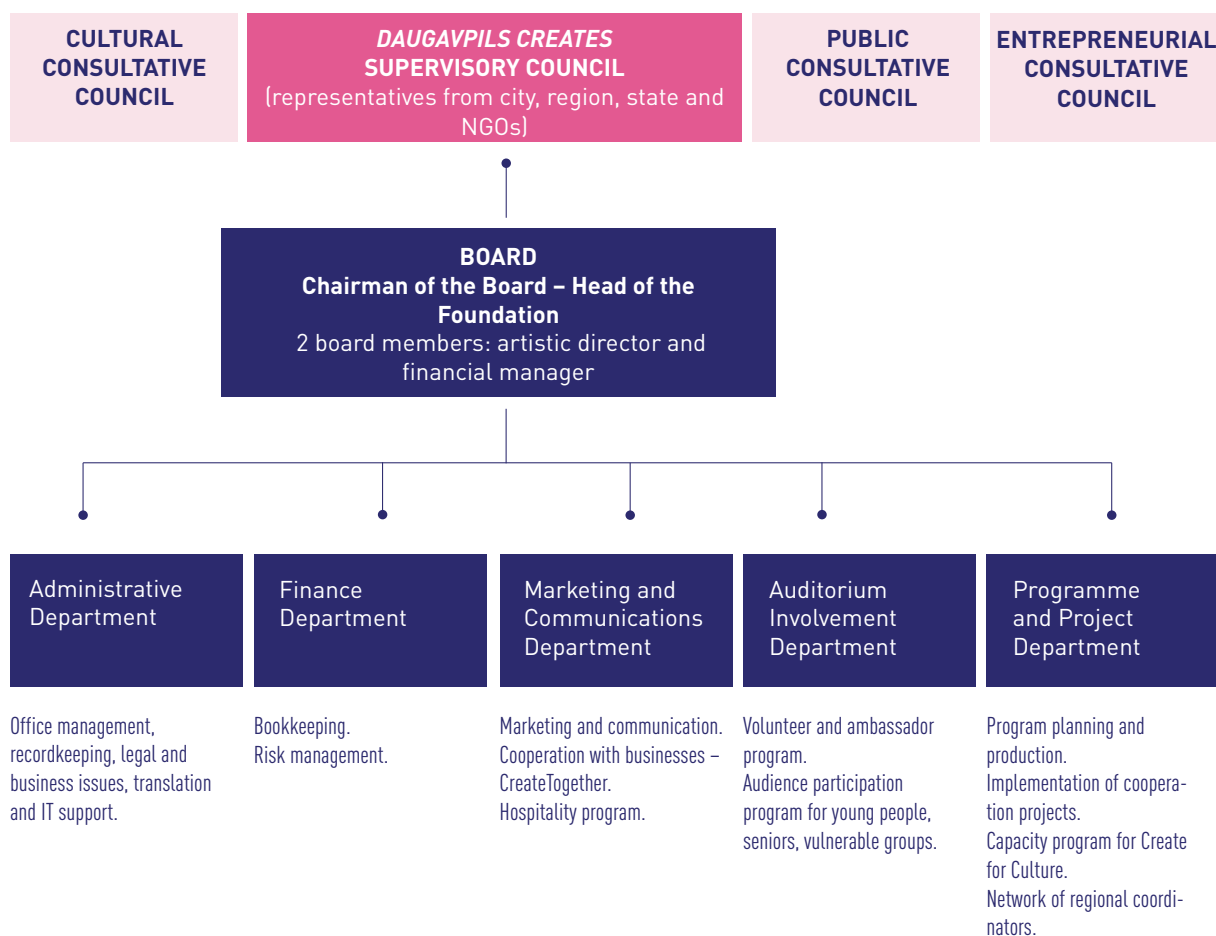
The foundation will need highly professional staff with excellent communication skills and experience in international cultural cooperation to achieve the goals of the *Lingua Franca* program. The chairman of the board must have excellent management and leadership skills. The financial manager must be equally familiar with the specifics of municipal, private and non-governmental sector financial planning, and have experience in international projects. In turn, the artistic director must be able to manage and implement a large-scale cultural program produced by a wide range of cultural operators and partners.

The Board will cooperate with the following **advisory councils:**

1. an Entrepreneurship Advisory Board, composed of representatives of the companies supporting implementation of the program,
2. a Cultural Advisory Council composed of representatives of the non-governmental cultural sector,
3. a Public Advisory Council, which represents young people, seniors and socially vulnerable groups, to ensure that the program meets the interests of priority target audiences.

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### Organisational scheme of the *Daugavpils Creates* foundation



The *Daugavpils Creates* organisation will have **five main departments**:

- 1. program and project department:** program curators, project managers, including educational and discussion program managers and regional coordinators,
- 2. audience engagement department:** volunteer and ambassador program coordinators and facilitators of community engagement and development,
- 3. marketing and public relations department:** marketing and communication specialists, sponsorship and brand project managers, hospitality sector capacity project managers,
- 4. administrative department,** which will ensure the work of the office, personnel management, recordkeeping, economic activities, translation and management of IT systems,
- 5. finance department,** which will perform financial accounting and bookkeeping, as well as risk management.

From 2023, the foundation will gradually add **staff, volunteers and trainees**. The number of employees and professionals to be taken on and the nature of their involvement in the preparation period will be planned in accordance with the requirements of the intensity of ECoC program implementation.

A **network of regional coordinators** has already been established in Daugavpils ECoC program partner city Rēzekne and in counties of Latgale. The network will continue work in the development and implementation of ECoC projects.

### 33. Risk analyses to overcome identified weaknesses

Daugavpils and Rēzekne have experience in organising extensive international festivals, but we are aware that the scope of the ECoC program requires long-term work with maximum concentration of resources, extensive networking and open communication. This is a new challenge for us, for which we are purposefully preparing, identifying potential risks and planning solutions to eliminate them. The experience of other European Capitals of Culture is a valuable source of knowledge so that we can be prepared for the challenges of implementing the program.

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### Internal assets and challenges

#### Internal assets

**A strong artistic concept and topicality of the program** are rooted in the local context and linked to the future challenges of European society, authentic, and comprising a powerful message to the people of Daugavpils, Latgale and Europe.

#### A broad and diverse cultural program

The cultural program is designed to represent all art genres and a diverse cultural heritage, and it is appealing to a wide audience.

#### Extensive involvement of local and regional cultural organisations in program implementation

Program projects are based on ideas created in the region, which are developed together with national and international partners.

#### Program implementation in Latgale region – a wide geographical area

Latgale region with its diverse cultural and natural resources allows for the creation of a colourful cultural program, revealing the cultural and historical uniqueness of this European region.

#### Implementation of environmentally friendly program events in a natural environment

Natural landscapes and sites loved by Latvians and attracting foreign visitors will strengthen the connection of the cultural program with the themes of nature and the environment and the promotion of ecological thinking.

#### Risks and challenges

**Artistic risk** is associated with the challenge of implementing all planned cultural projects in accordance with the concept of the program, maintaining the main message and at the same time creating an open program with the broad involvement of cultural organisations and artists, allowing them to implement their ideas.

The artistic management of the project and the curators of the programs will ensure that optimal balance in the context of this challenge is achieved.

**Program management risk** is related to the participation of refined, extensive networks of cultural operators, thus governance will require an efficient and inclusive multi-level governance system as well as the deployment of ICT solutions. *The Daugavpils Creates* foundation will provide integrated information management and communication with organisers and the audience.

#### Risk regarding reception of guests in terms of quality and capacity

The flow of tourism in Latgale (slightly less so in Daugavpils) is highly seasonal, and the overall impact on tourism infrastructure is low. As the number of visitors increases, there are risks to quality and capacity. The *Daugavpils Creates* foundation, in cooperation with partners and businesspersons in the tourism industry, will implement a **hospitality-capacity-building program** in the preparatory phase, promoting the quality of services and the development of new tourism infrastructure and services in the region.

#### International project implementation capacity

Local artists and organisations that have been widely involved in development of the programme's projects have had limited experience in implementing large-scale international projects with multiple partnerships.

Project development together with national organisations and targeted exchange of experience in international networks will strengthen organisational capacity.

People in the region who work in culture will be able to participate in a **long-term training and mentoring program** entitled *Create for Culture*, which has a particular focus on the development of international cooperation skills.

**Communication and management risks are associated with** program implementation over a **wide geographical area**. The impact will be mitigated by developing the already established network of regional cultural coordinators, involving regional representatives in the organising team and implementing a targeted mentoring and capacity building program for the cultural sector in the region.

Political representation of the region's municipalities will be ensured through participation in the **ECoC Program Monitoring Board**.

#### Insufficient visibility of Daugavpils ECoC2027

To prevent this risk, Daugavpils will work together with national partners responsible for promoting Latvia as a tourist destination abroad and will strengthen partnerships with the international media, news agencies and diaspora opinion leaders.

At the national level, the visibility of the ECoC will be achieved through partnerships with national media and the development of digital media campaigns.

**Negative ECoC publicity** could be related to the information space influenced by Russia, therefore it is important that the Ambassador Program involve recognised opinion leaders in the Russian-speaking environment.



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### Professional program management

Recognised and respected professionals in the realm of culture are involved in program development and implementation.

**Mitigating the risk of political influence** planned by establishing close ties with an organisation for the implementation of the ECoC program: *Daugavpils Creates*, in which decision-making is handled by professionals, who take care to achieve the goals initially set.

**Budgetary risk** is related to an increase in costs and changes in decisions regarding the allocated local government or state budget. The **amount of private funding** secured plays a relatively small role in the program and the estimated figures **have been set modestly**.

In order to ensure timely decisions on necessary changes in implementation of the program for unforeseen cases, a **Supervisory Council** has been established, which will oversee attainment of the set objectives.

### Involvement and participation of a broad segment of the public

The program is designed in accordance with the broad interests of the general public, with extensive educational and participatory activities for the involvement of less active groups in society.

In order to match the interests of the priority target groups, a **Public Advisory Council** is being formed, which will consist of representatives of seniors, youth, people with limited mobility and other socially vulnerable groups.

**Involvement and educational events** are planned for special target groups: school-aged youth, families with children, single seniors, persons with mobility restrictions, non-citizens of Latvia, socially vulnerable groups.

**Digital accessibility** of the program in various languages and the possibility to adapt the information to different levels of perception will be important.

### External threats and precautions

#### Threats

#### Precautions

#### Unfavourable geopolitical situation

We are ready to play an active role in bringing **European neighbourhood policy issues** to the fore, while being aware of the unstable political situation in the context of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, which may affect our ability to pursue cultural exchanges with these countries, as well as limit planned cultural tourism flows from them. In this case, we will use hybrid cooperation formats and reorient our program to bring forth the attention and participation of the diaspora from Russia, Belarus and Ukraine within the EU.

#### Restrictions caused by pandemics and climate crises

The Covid-19 pandemic has taught us to find **alternative solutions** in very difficult situations, the ability to create hybrid-format events, and to learn the possibilities offered by technology. In conditions of limited communication, we will look for surprising but understandable digital communications and alternative experiences.

#### Global financial, economic crisis

An economic crisis may cause us to reduce the planned budget and the scope of the program. As the cultural program consists of a diverse range of different activities for diverse audiences, even a reduction in the size of the program will allow us to **maintain the overall quality of the program**.

#### The demographic situation in Latgale – an aging population and an outflow of young people

In Daugavpils's development policy, as well as the ECoC program, a central role has been assigned to increasing the **creative expressions** of the new generation and **business opportunities for young professionals**, which would reduce emigration. In addition, we promote intergenerational cooperation, including great efforts toward the older generation, seeking to create possibilities for **creative aging in Latgale**.

#### The impact of technological progress

At a time when technological development is very rapid, there is a risk that integrated technological solutions implemented on the program will be outdated. Therefore, we will form **partnerships with** companies in the rapidly growing **ICT sector** in Daugavpils, which could contribute both to enrichment of the cultural experience with augmented reality solutions, as well as to analysing program-impact indicators and improving management and communication with artificial intelligence and big data solutions.

### 34. Marketing and communication strategy

Our media strategy is based on a close partnership with local, national and international media and news agencies, for whose interest we will create authentic and easily accessible news content. Local and national media are our most important partners in achieving visibility in Latvia. In order to reach a European audience, we will create an effective, international communication and marketing team that is able to utilise the advantages of a multilingual Latgale and expand existing cooperation networks with new digital and face-to-face partnerships.

The marketing and communication of the application are integrated into the *Lingua Franca* offering itself – each program and event includes an element of educational content, participation and conversation. Our communication will be mindful – authentic, empathetic, flexible and proactive in responding to urgency.

**Authenticity** in communication characterises our conversation with the world through openness, acceptance and the courage to be ourselves. The humour, joy, humanity, simplicity that permeates the inhabitants of Daugavpils and Latgale, as well as the ability not to artificially beautify the natural and sterilise that which is unique, is an advantage that allows us to demonstrate this authenticity to the whole of Europe and the world.

**Empathy**, acceptance and solidarity are rooted in the search for a common language and dialog for the multinational society of Daugavpils. The well-integrated Daugavpils residents, tired of the contradictions caused by politicians, long to be listened to and involved. By listening to and taking into account different opinions, we will lessen the amount of judging and the search for culprits. We will provide everyone with the opportunity to have their say, especially by supporting and empowering children, youth and socially excluded groups to express their views.

We will implement **flexible and intuitive**, yet goal-oriented communication. Following the mood of the society, we will select marketing and communication activities and channels that provide the greatest effect. Our communications will be characterised by an interdisciplinary approach to the message, hybrid formats and a selection of diverse news channels.

**Urgency** in our communication strategy means not hesitating to raise issues important to society and its sustainability, to be connected to local, regional and global processes, to proactively propose an agenda, instead of merely reacting passively – being ready to use every conflict as an opportunity for a conversation. Creating a sense of urgency as a method of communication and marketing will give the public the desire to be present during processes, to express an opinion, to become a co-facilitator of events and an active communicator.

We will create a safe and open environment for conversations, and foster competence and understanding that will motivate the fearful, angry and indifferent to participate, as well as help the voiceless

to be heard. Just as we are structuring the program in terms of scales of cooperation along thematic lines of *Punctuation, Stories, Sentences, Words and Syllables*, we are also using this same principle to scale our communication. This will allow for both the existing and the new target audience of each program to be clearly defined, as well as enable us to choose appropriate communication channels and approaches. We will use the snowball principle to communicate all thematic lines, creating a communication framework for each topic, making it freely available for activities to involve the international and local community. We will provide people the opportunity to multiply events in any location, in person or digitally, thus becoming a part and co-creator of a joint *Lingua Franca* conversation.

The Covid pandemic has prompted us to re-evaluate and realise the strong role of urban solutions and arts media in marketing, as well as the power of word-of-mouth communication. The pandemic has also allowed us to assess the effectiveness of digital tools and to flexibly introduce new digital solutions, so we will create meaningful digital content and use digital communication tools to engage not only with existing but also attract new audiences with little or no experience with cultural participation. We will create a multifunctional digital platform that will offer useful content for city residents, players in the cultural and creative sector, travellers, entrepreneurs and the media. The new digital platform will also offer an open *Lingua Franca* online meeting room, which will complement the face-to-face meeting room at the ECoC information point. It will offer a stimulating program for talks and discussions that will create a safe and stimulating environment for finding, creating and speaking a common language in and towards 2027. Simultaneously with educational and analytical discussions, using a digital website, we will promote Daugavpils to its residents, returnees and leisure-time residents as an attractive living, working and leisure environment.

#### H!Story

The most valuable currency of our communication consists of authentic and unpolished stories - stories told by the people of Daugavpils and Latgale about their future, present and past, where each individual is important and helps form our individual and common vision of history. Even before the start of the year of culture, *H!Story* will be the first invitation and greeting for our international audience to get acquainted with Daugavpils on our social network platforms. We will use these authentic human stories to promote Daugavpils, as well as increase knowledge of and pride in our city and region.

#### Children and youth #TALK

Children and young people are endowed with the greatest initiative. They are the ones most active in sharing their newly acquired knowledge, experiences and reflections with their peers, parents and grandparents. Content targeted toward and generated by this audience will play an important role in our communication strategy. In addition to creative self-expression, they will take on the role of advisors, educators, guides, reporters, critics and communicators. The *Lingua Franca* discussion program will include youth debates, including a cycle of talks created by children and young people, as well

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as intergenerational and cross-sectoral talks entitled *Lavka*. They will promote educational programs such as *Pupil*, *Researcher*, *Urbanite* and *Art Break*, and take full responsibility for communication of international events such as the *New Eastern Cities Forum*, the *European Youth Summit* and the *Are You Hungry?* festival. As an important part of the volunteer and ambassador movement, young people will join the European ECoC Volunteer Coordinators Network (EVCN) and will be the voice and content creators of *Lingua Franca* on the global online platforms relevant to them: Snapchat, Tiktok, Clubhouse and others that are yet to develop and become popular. Young people will also be active promoters of Daugavpils's creative environment and co-creation/co-working opportunities and the ICT and CCI (culture and creative industries) sectors, in order to motivate young professionals to start working in Daugavpils, for those who have left to return, and to attract the world's digital nomads.

### Everyday experts #TALK

Along with media partners, we will involve service providers as active communicators. Who else can claim to have the ears of people if not hairdressers, salesmen, librarians or taxi drivers? The attendant at a rural petrol station or dentist are the kinds of everyday experts whom the public trust, so we will make sure that they are informed of the program and become active ambassadors and communicators of *Lingua Franca*. Hundreds of foreign and local artists, entrepreneurs, scientists, teachers, ERASMUS + exchange students and international volunteers will also play an invaluable role as communicators, as they all are residents of Daugavpils for either a short or long time and can share their impressions of Daugavpils, Latgale, Latvia, and vice versa. We will highlight the stories of their experiences, without letting them get lost in individual social network bubbles. We will create a flow of digital messages for the inhabitants of the two European Capitals of Culture with the hashtags #meanwhileinPortugal / #meanwhileinLatvia, so as to strengthen the links between the communities in Daugavpils and the Portuguese city nominated for the ECoC title. We will actively use open digital platforms and communication tools that provide an opportunity not only to get involved in events, but also to transfer them across Europe to one's own country, environment, place and community.

### Latgale #TALKS

Latgalian-language portals and newspapers will play an invaluable role in engaging with the region's audience, as well as cooperation with TV and radio editors who prepare programs in the Latgalian language. In 2027, the Latgalian language will appear in national cultural media columns with documentary stories, reviews, poetry and prose texts and will purposefully take over the public space – bus stops, public transport, walls of buildings, shop windows and street signs. The Latgalian language will, wherever possible, become the second main language of communication, with increased usage in contemporary contexts.

Latgale is already being advertised as a unified tourist destination, distinct from the rest of Europe and worthy of visiting in its own right. We will strengthen the creative image of Latgale and in cooperation with the Latvian Investment and Development Agency

responsible for international marketing of tourism and investment opportunities and the Latgale Tourism Association we will create a new-level destination brand strategy and international marketing promoting an authentic cultural experience, including natural wealth, Latgalian hospitality, culinary heritage and traditions in new, unusual contexts with the aim of lessening the seasonality of tourism. We will multiply the visits of international media and tour operators to Latgale and promote its inclusion in international tourism route networks in order to increase the region's recognition among international tourism professionals and travellers.

On the official communication platform of Daugavpils 2027, we will offer travellers the chance to book an authentic experience with a Latgalian family. The potato harvest, mushroom picking or a boat trip on the lakes of Latgale, as well as night walks and watching the largest bat colony in the Baltics in Daugavpils Fortress, exciting spectating at motorcycle speedway races or spending the night in an authentically furnished Soviet-era apartment from the 1960s or 70s are only a few of the opportunities available to expand one's cultural experience in Latgale.

### Daugavpils #TALKS

Considering that only 21% of the city's population are Latvians, with the majority being of other nationalities, we will highlight the stories and heroes of our multinational community, offering compelling local news content that increases pride in Daugavpils and a sense of belonging to the city.

A partnership with Latvian Public Media TV, radio and digital channels is a common practice at national and international events. We will put *Lingua Franca* on the agenda in Latvian Public Media both on the path to 2027 as well as throughout the year of culture, providing live broadcasts, special editions, thematic programs and engaging campaigns in all media platforms and languages. More than 60% of the multinational Daugavpils society are Russian-speaking and are influenced by pro-Kremlin news content in the Russian language from both within Latvia and in neighbouring countries. Therefore, by means of the independent Russian media Meduza, whose editorial office operates from Latvia, as well as on the digital platform Telegram, we will address both local and international Russian-speaking target audiences and strive to create a common language of European values with our Eastern neighbours.

A dedicated international communication and marketing team from the city will coordinate the production of international publications and media visits, as well as visits from internationally influential social network bloggers and experts from various fields. We will transform the image of Daugavpils as a post-Soviet city without surrendering the scars of the city's history, but by making it attractive to tourists from the Baltics, Poland, Germany, Scandinavia and other European countries. The city's excellent geographical location, alongside Lithuania, Poland, Belarus and Russia, blesses it with a high capacity for exporting international events and news content. Therefore, we will invite to Daugavpils prominent and internationally renowned influencers, strong media personalities, culture and tourism experts who has

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influence also in the information space of Lithuania, Poland and Russia to provide them with an authentic cultural experience that would resonate both in the multimillion-large audiences of these countries as well as in the multinational communities of Daugavpils and Latgale. We will invite the international media to participate in the opening and closing ceremonies of 2027, as well as in other significant events.

### 35. How does the city plan to highlight that the European Capital of Culture is an action of the European Union?

We pay close attention to the visibility of the European Union and the ECoC brand in all marketing and communication materials. We are already promoting the ECoC brand to our audience by disseminating and reflecting the experiences of existing ECoC cities and EU-funded programmes on our online conversation platform *Create for Culture*. We will continue to share this experience and the stories of ECoC cities by developing the [Daugavpils2027.eu](http://Daugavpils2027.eu) website and social network accounts.

We will ensure the visibility of the ECoC brand and the EU flag by including them in Daugavpils 2027 publicity and marketing materials, websites, social media and graphic materials. We will prepare visual identity guidelines to ensure the correct use of the EU flag and the ECoC logo. The ECoC brand is already visible in the Daugavpils urban environment - on the facade of the Unity House, at public transportation stops and at information stands, but in 2027 we will make sure that every cafe's shop window, each construction site fence and the social network account of every person who calls Daugavpils home speaks the visual language of *Lingua Franca*.

We have prepared guidelines for everyone who wants to support the candidacy of Daugavpils and become a promoter of the idea of the ECoC in social networks. We will also continue close cooperation with national and Daugavpils non-governmental organisations, which explain the role of the EU and promote civic participation, as well as by using Europe Direct information points in Daugavpils and Rēzekne, whereby we will implement a series of online seminars and discussions on European topics. Together, we plan to create a collection of information materials on European and ECoC topics for pupils, students and seniors, and to carry out visits to schools, senior homes and social homes as one of the activities of the volunteer and ambassador program. We will make sure that European values and the ECoC identity are present at every Daugavpils 2027 event.

Let us share our joy and celebrate the European Year of Culture and the Melina Mercouri Prize together with key representatives from EU institutions, in particular the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture. We will invite former, the current and future ECoCs to be present at the opening and closing events of Daugavpils 2027, as well as at the most important events throughout the year. With the help of online broadcasts, these events will connect Daugavpils with every city in the Latgale region and with cities elsewhere in Europe.

With the Daugavpils 2027 *Lingua Franca* brand design and specific events, we wish to highlight Europe's cultural and linguistic diversity, create a basis for a language of common values, create a tireless dialogue among a wide range of communities and fields, international partners and like-minded individuals in order to develop an open and responsive society, which is of the utmost importance for the strengthening of our affiliation with Daugavpils, Latgale, Latvia and Europe.



# 7 CAPACITY TO DELIVER

## 36. Strong political support and commitment

In October 2020 the Daugavpils City Council unanimously decided to enter the running for ECoC, with all political groupings supporting the city's ambition to become the European Capital of Culture in 2027.

In February 2021, the Development Council of the Latgale Planning Region decided that Daugavpils's candidacy for the title of European Capital of Culture 2027 is a strategically important project for the region, in which Daugavpils will cooperate with its main partner, Rēzekne, and 19 Latgale counties (after implementation of the administrative-territorial reform in June 2021, the counties will be consolidated into nine municipalities).

In March 2021, in a remote ceremony, a memorandum of cooperation was signed by the mayors of Daugavpils city, Rēzekne city, and the counties of Aglona, Baltinava, Balvi, Cibla, Dagda, Daugavpils, Ilūkste, Kārsava, Krāslava, Līvāni, Ludza, Preiļi, Rēzekne, Riebiņi, Rugāji, Vārkava, Viļaka, Viļāni and Zilupe. By choosing to compete for the title of European Capital of Culture 2027 together with Rēzekne and the whole Latgale region, Daugavpils has established the largest geographical cooperation network in Latvia.

In the memorandum of cooperation, Daugavpils, Rēzekne and the Latgale counties agreed on the following directions of cooperation:

- to create a cultural and creative tourism offering based on the cultural heritage and traditions of Daugavpils and Latgale region, promoting Daugavpils and Latgale as an internationally recognised destination;
- to create an international cultural program based on European values in the Latgale region, promoting professional growth for those working in the cultural and creative industries, the creation of new sustainable cultural products and the availability of diverse art genres for the residents of Latgale;
- to promote lifelong learning among inhabitants in the field of culture and civic engagement through their implementation of the ECoC program.

## 37. Appropriate infrastructure to host the title

### Cultural infrastructure

The following main infrastructure is available for cultural events in Daugavpils:

- Mark Rothko Art Centre with spacious, modern exhibit halls (2000 m<sup>2</sup>), artists' residences and a chamber hall (100 seats),
- Daugavpils Theatre Great Hall (530 seats),
- Palace of Culture Great Hall (1068 seats) and Small Hall (210 seats),
- Unity House Concert Hall (400 seats),
- Stanislavs Broks Daugavpils Secondary School of Music Concert Hall (312 seats),
- Stropi open-air stage (5000 seats),

and various other smaller venues for events and exhibits in cultural centres, libraries, museums, schools and other public places.

Choir and organ music concerts can be held in Daugavpils churches and cathedrals. City squares and parks are suitable for outdoor events, as are the unique grounds of Daugavpils Fortress, which won the Council of Europe Landscape Award in 2017. A unique environment for events can be found in industrial heritage sites (former Lead Shot Factory, Train Factory, etc.).

By 2027, a modern summer concert hall named after composer Oskars Stroks (1,500 - 2,000 seats) will be built in the city centre, and the Stropi open-air stage will be renovated.

There is an objective to create a Creative Industries Centre at the Daugavpils Secondary Sun School of Design and Art with workshops and hostels, as well as to renovate the Daugavpils Local History and Art Museum, providing it with well-equipped exhibition rooms and exhibition halls. A Centre for Crafts and Creative Industries, a Fortress Museum, and an expanded Museum of Technical Design will all be established in the territory of the fortress. The establishment of a co-creation centre has already begun in the Saules Street quarter.

The GORS regional concert hall, located in Rēzekne, boasts a Great Hall (1000 seats) with excellent acoustics and is suitable for symphonic music concerts, as well as a Small Hall (220 seats). It is anticipated to restore the Rēzekne castle mound by 2027 by building an open-air stage.

Various outdoor event venues, cultural centres, manors, museums and churches await visitors in all regions of Latgale.

### Accessibility

Daugavpils is located at the crossroads of an active railway and land transport corridor, making it accessible from the north, west and east of Europe. The transport corridor covers connections from Scandinavia via St. Petersburg to Warsaw, and from Riga to Moscow. The city hopes to renovate the regional airport by 2027, developing passenger traffic to destinations in Russia, Belarus and Poland (see Accessibility image folded into front cover).

Rail transport is the backbone of public transport in the region. There is a railway line from Riga to Daugavpils (4 trips per day) and an extension to Krāslava (2 trips per day). In 2026, there are plans to complete the ambitious construction of the European Union-supported railway RailBaltic, which will integrate the Baltic States and Latvia with the European railway network, opening new opportunities for mutual exchange of freight and passengers – it is estimated that the railway will transport five million passengers per year. Within the framework of the construction of the new railway transport line, there are also plans to develop and improve the local transport infrastructure by creating more convenient connections between Daugavpils and the Lithuanian cities of Panevėžys (164 km) and Vilnius (174 km), where there is an airport with 59 destinations across 26 countries.

## VII CAPACITY TO DELIVER

Buses provide transport to Latgalian in rural areas and connect them to railway stations. Public transport services are available and able to meet the mobility needs of the Latgale region. There are eight regional and intercity transport service providers in Latgale, which provide convenient connections to the following destinations:

- the capital, Riga (200 km, 9 times a day), close to Riga International Airport with 92 connections in 35 countries;
- close cross-border destinations in neighbouring countries – Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Belarus;
- cities of national and regional significance in Latvia;
- cities in Latgale region – Rēzekne (90 km, 6 trips per day), Krāslava (55 km, 11 trips per day), Preiļi (66 km, 5 trips per day), Līvāni (63 km, 10 trips per day), Ludza (127 km, connecting travel), Aglona (65 km, connecting travel), Balvi (182 km, connecting travel);
- other remote locations in Latgale region;
- nearby counties and parish centres;
- Daugavpils area.

Daugavpils is developing environmentally friendly public transport service infrastructure in the city, and most public transport is provided by modern trams and compressed-natural-gas buses.

For the visibility and accessibility of the ECoC program, public transport will be used as an important channel for disseminating information and even as a platform for individual events. On more distant trips, passengers will have the opportunity to learn basic phrases and jokes in the Latgalian language, making the trip to/from Daugavpils part of a cultural adventure.

The city has a fast 4G and 5G internet network with almost 100 free access Wi-Fi points.

### Tourism infrastructure

About 5% of all foreign travellers to Latvia currently visit Daugavpils. A total of 609,937 visitor visits were registered in 2019 (the number of overnight guests is 71,067), which decreased in 2021 due to the pandemic, with the number of domestic tourists proportionally increasing.

Daugavpils currently has 11 hotels, 10 guest houses, 8 hostels, 1 campsite and 30 Airbnb apartments. In addition to apartments, the city has 30 accommodations and 1,288 beds. There are 360 hotels, guest houses and hostels with 6955 beds in the entire region. If conditions prove favourable, it is planned to establish new tourism accommodation infrastructure and lessen the seasonality of tourism. It is also planned to expand the offering within various categories of accommodation and make tourism offerings more complete and inclusive, as well as improve service quality.

There are 62 dining businesses with a total seating capacity of 2445 in Daugavpils. In the entire region the figure is 273 restaurants and cafes with 9405 seats. The Daugavpils City Municipality Tourism Development and Information Agency handles tourism coordination at the local level. At the regional level this task is carried out by the Latgale Tourism Association

and Latgale Region Development Agency. Tourism information is currently available in six languages (Latvian, Russian, English, German, Lithuanian, Polish), and it is planned to further develop interactive applications for accessing various types of tourism and event information.

### 38. Planned cultural, urban and tourism infrastructure development projects until 2027

#### Daugavpils Airport

The city intends to develop Daugavpils Airport and adjacent territories by creating Altop Industrial Park that will include Smart Technology Park, Science Park and Daugavpils Airport with an aviation centre. Aviation is the most mobile type of air traffic, which can ensure a fast connection between Daugavpils and other Latvian and European cities. Reconstruction of Daugavpils Airport is stipulated in Latvia's National Development Plan 2021–2027.

The plans include building and certifying a civil aviation airfield to enable regular passenger air flights with C-type aircraft (under 200 passenger seats). The passenger terminal will be able to seat up to 340 people, meaning that the airfield will be able to service two aircraft simultaneously.

The Science Park will house a Business Incubator, a Lifelong Education Centre and Experimental Laboratories where Latvian higher education institutions will do cooperative research and provide internships for students and young professionals.

This regional airport can become a vital business and logistics hub for Eastern Europe and a tourist centre with a high mobility flow on regional, national and transnational levels. The city plans to attract funding for the first round of the project that entails developing the territory adjacent to the airport from EU structural funds, the European Recovery and Resilience Facility and the state budget.

#### Daugavpils promenades

Fixing and improving the banks of the Daugava River on the city's territory, sustainable use of inland water resources in the urban environment and improving their accessibility in public outdoor spaces through new recreation areas for locals and city guests.

#### Regeneration of Daugavpils parks

Regeneration of historical public park infrastructure, making it available and safe for all residents and improving the parks with new environmental elements fit to use for all age groups across all seasons, thereby providing excellent and diverse recreation facilities on the city territory and meeting community demand for a sustainable, healthy and accessible ecosystem in the urban setting.

#### Tourist signs and small architectural elements in the urban environment

Refining the design of public outdoor spaces by creating new tourist signs and small architectural elements that improve perceptibility, orientation and mobility on the city territory. Integration of tactile and sensory solutions into information boards and signs. Creating a multimedia tourist app for Daugavpils city that would integrate tourist signs.

## VII CAPACITY TO DELIVER

### **Bike lanes**

Lengthening existing bike lanes and pedestrian lanes into an interconnected bike lane network for safe and comfortable mobility within the city that would boost the popularity of environmentally friendly and economical transport.

### **Trams**

In its progression towards a sustainable, environmentally friendly and effective public transport system and transferring the passenger flow from automotive transport to trams, the city will continue to plan and build new tramlines to connect two neighbourhoods, Stropi and the Chemical District, and the city centre with one of the most densely populated neighbourhoods – the New Vorstadt.

### **Campsite in Daugavpils Fortress**

Creating a campsite in Daugavpils Fortress will accommodate individual travellers. The campsite will have electricity, running water and sewage networks, tent pitches and camper sites.

### **Zoo and urban wetlands**

Improving the territory of the city zoo will offer a tantalizing glimpse into the world of living nature, raising visitor awareness about natural processes and teaching them to treat nature and its creatures with care. The zoo is adjacent to Europe's largest urban wetland. The city plans to create an educational path across wetland territory, which will help preserve natural values and educate residents about environmental issues. Daugavpils highly values the preservation of its urban wetland ecosystem, decreasing environmental hazards and improving the management of natural values within an urban setting.

### **The territory of the Mežciems Sanatorium**

A favourable location near the bank of the Daugava River has the potential to transform the building complex into an aquatic recreation site with a promenade for leisurely walks, thereby fostering more sustainable management of water resources and improving the green infrastructure of the neighbourhood. The planning and configuration of this historical building complex make it adjustable into a medical facility, a public space or a tourist site.

### **Oskars Stroks Summer Concert Hall**

Building a concert hall in Central Park, blending it in with the park and the cityscape. The main building will have an amphitheatre shape. Architecturally, the structure will recreate the initials of Oskars Stroks, whilst the leitmotif of the building will resemble a musical score. The stage will be transformable to adjust to diverse scenarios – a central stage, a field; a<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> stage, an alternative stage for musical performance. The capacity of the concert hall will be up to 1500-2000 seats.

### **Regeneration of Stropi Bandstand and improving the territory**

Transforming Stropi open-air bandstand and its territory into a modern infrastructure for large-scale events such as the Latgale Song and Dance Festival. Located near the city's largest water reservoir, the Great Stropi Lake, the bandstand is in the same area with a Blue Flag beach, several walking paths and an active recreation zone. In the summer season, the neighbourhood attracts large crowds of holidaymakers.

### **Reconstruction of Daugavpils Local History and Art Museum**

Reconstruction of the historical building and its expansion with new, contemporary, well-equipped exhibition halls. Creating a new cultural and historical exhibition, *Road. Home. Prayer*, in several languages, giving an interactive representation of how far the city has come in its development since its foundation. The museum complex will become an attractive venue for international events and exhibitions.

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## **Daugavpils – European Capital of Culture 2027 Candidate**

1st round application

[www.daugavpils2027.eu](http://www.daugavpils2027.eu)

### **Applicant: Daugavpils City Council**

in cooperation with the Authority of Latgale Planning Region, Rēzekne City and Aglona, Baltinava, Balvi, Cibla, Dagda, Daugavpils, Ilūkste, Kārsava, Krāslava, Līvāni, Ludza, Preiļi, Rēzekne, Riebiņi, Rugāji, Vārkava, Viļaka, Viļāni and Zilupe municipalities  
Daugavpils, 2021

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