

EMPLOYMENT, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN LATVIA

*Seminar organised by the Ministry of Economics and the OECD (LEED Programme),
in co-operation with the European Commission,
Riga, 18 January 2005*

Throughout OECD countries, new forms of governance are emerging as government, business and civil society seek ways jointly to develop and pursue economic development strategies and solve social and employment problems. Each with a specific function, these new models complement each other to foster endogenous development and draw on every opportunity to apply local assets, skills and knowledge to promote competitiveness.

First designed as a response to crisis situations related to economic restructuring, plant closures and socio-economic deficits in deprived urban areas, "local partnerships" have evolved over the years into a more proactive way of development. Today regional strategic platforms, area-based partnerships, participatory local governments and other agents of change help release the potential of their area thanks to better co-ordination, and adaptation to local conditions. They address a broad range of issues, including economic development, employment, social cohesion and quality of life, pursuing strategies consistent with shared long-term priorities.

From government to governance: the new forms of governance imply a radical shift in ways of working. Many important lessons have been learned from the recent work of the LEED Programme: *Local Partnerships for Better Governance* (2001), *Managing Decentralisation* (2003) and *New Forms of Governance for Economic Development* (2004). Yet, more remains to be learned through the exchange of experiences between policy makers, practitioners and other relevant actors, faced with similar situations in different contexts and countries.

This seminar will be a unique opportunity to debate the results of recent local governance developments in Latvia in the light of experience from other countries, analyse the main obstacles met and identify ways to progress further. In particular it will compare the results obtained by new forms of governance experimented with in various parts of the Baltic Rim and address some critical issues related to their effectiveness in generating better economic and social outcomes.

The outcomes of the seminar will feed into the broader activity on local governance and employment of the LEED Programme and its Centre for Local Development in Central and Eastern Europe, based in Trento, Italy, where a major conference on these issues will be held on 1-2 June 2005. The results of work in Riga will be published in an OECD publication.

General information

Participants

75 participants from Latvia, the other Baltic states and countries of the Baltic Rim. Representatives of the following groups will be participating in the conference:

- government departments in economic and employment/social policy fields, regional governments and municipalities;

- non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations and other organisations of civil society;
- private enterprises and trade unions;
- academics, experts and practitioners.

Languages

Latvian and English.

Date and location

18 January 2005, from 9:30 to 18:00

Radisson SAS Daugava
24 Kugu Street, LV-1048
Riga, Latvia

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Hotel

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We have agreed reduced room rates: standard single room - 109€; double room - 119€ (including taxes).
To book your room, please contact the hotel directly.

To register please contact:

International participants:

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Monday, 17 January

19:00 *Welcome reception on behalf of the Latvian Ministry of Economics
Hotel Radisson SAS Daugava, 24 Kugu Street, Riga*

AGENDA

Tuesday, 18 January

8:30 - 9:30 *Registration*

Chair: *Sylvain Giguère, Deputy Head of the
LEED Programme, OECD*

Rapporteur: *Mike Geddes, Warwick Business
School, United Kingdom*

9:30 - 10:00 **Opening remarks** *Andris Liepins, Acting State Secretary,
Ministry of Economics of Latvia*

*Sylvain Giguère, Deputy Head of the
LEED Programme, OECD*

10:00 - 12:30 **Local Governance in Latvia**

10:00 - 10:20 Economic development at local and regional levels in Latvia: structures, policy tools and main challenges *Andris Kuznieks, Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of Regional Development and Local Government, Latvia*

10:20 - 10:40 Priorities for employment and social policy in Latvia and local implementation issues *Ingus Alliks, Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of Welfare, Latvia*

10:40 - 11:00 Coffee break

11:00 - 11:45 Panel discussion on local governance in Latvia: obstacles and promises *Alf Vanags, Director, Baltic International Centre for Economic Policy Studies*

*Rita Bagdzevičienė, President,
Lithuanian Regional Research Institute
(tbc)*

Edvins Vanags, Professor, University of Latvia

11:45 - 12:00	Question/answers and general discussion	
12:00 – 12:20	Local Governance in the Baltic states: comparison with Estonia	<i>Jussi S. Jauhiainen, University of Oulu, Finland</i>
12:20 – 12:30	Remarks by the rapporteur	
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch	
13:30 - 18:00	Sharing the experience	
	Chair:	<i>Michael Förschner, Chairman of the OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Governance</i>
13:30 – 14:30	<i>Lessons from other countries: case studies</i>	
	Regional strategic platforms for economic development: the Swedish experience	<i>Svenerik Sahlin, Department Manager, Industry and Commerce Department, County Administration of Västerbotten, Sweden</i>
	Area-based partnerships: an example from Finland	<i>Erja Lundberg, Manager of the Central Uusimaa Partnership Association, Finland</i>
	The pros and cons of area-based partnerships led by local community-based organisations and the networking issue: Irish lessons	<i>Marion Byrne, Area Development Management, Ireland</i>
14:30 – 15:30	<i>Comments by a panel of officers and regional/local actors from the Baltic states, followed by a discussion</i>	<i>Andris Ravins, Chairman, Association of Latvian Cities(tbc)</i> <i>Mindaugas Danys, Director, Social and Economic Development Centre, Lithuania</i>
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee Break	
16:00 – 17:00	<i>Key issues for local governance</i>	
	The impact of EU accession on local and regional development: initiatives and partnerships	<i>Ligita Začesta, Assistant Professor at the Vidzeme University College</i> <i>Maris Pukis, University of Latvia</i>

	How to enhance cross-border co-operation on local development and governance	<i>Sarunas Radvilavicius, Project Manager, Nordic Council of Ministers</i>
17:00 - 17:30	General discussion and concluding remarks by the rapporteur	
17:30 - 17:45	Closing remarks by the OECD, the EC and the Latvian government	<i>Sylvain Giguère, Deputy Head of the LEED Programme, OECD</i> <i>Andrew Chapman, Deputy Head of Unit, DG Employment and Social Affairs, Unit A/4, European Commission</i> <i>Ilga Preimate, Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of Economics, Latvia</i>