

## **EUTO Conference in Latvia in year 2007**

From September 23 until September 30, Latvia hosted the EUTO (*European Union of Tourist Officers*) (LATTŪRINFO is also a member of this association) international scientifically practical conference and experience exchange "Sustainable development of tourist destinations". Approximately 80 tourism specialists from ~ 10 European countries had applied to participate in the conference.

At the same time, University of Latvia hosted the scientific conference initiated by the Leeds Metropolitan University (Great Britain) CTCC (*Centre for Tourism and Cultural Change*), thus additionally attracting tourism industry researchers and lecturers.

During the event, European tourism professionals shared their experience in a form of seminars, as well as visited various Latvian tourism destinations, spending one day in Vidzeme and getting acquainted with the options for active tourism in Sigulda and recreation opportunities in the district of Valmiera, as well as visiting the districts of Talsi and Tukums in Kurzeme, where they learned about the culture and natural tourism offer, and enjoyed the treats of fishing village cuisines.

## **English Language Terminology in Tourism Sector**

In year 2007, the association LATTŪRINFO participated as a partner in the project financed by the European Social Fund "Mastering English Language Professional Lexicon in Tourism Sector – Elaboration and Implementation in Continuing Education Programmes for Tourism Specialists". 10 employees from tourism information centres had the opportunity to study or improve English language, along with hotel managers, administrators, employees of catering companies, and entrepreneurs-to-be.

## **Latvians in Malta**

In October 22-23, 2006, employees of 6 Latvian tourism information centres participated in the EUTO annual conference "Development of sustainable tourism: past envisage in future – good practice exchange" in Malta. The key topic of the conference was obtainment of additional knowledge and experience in training organization in tourism. Participation at the event was possible, owing thanks to the *Leonardo da Vinci* programme.

## **Experience Exchange Trip - Participation in EUTO Conference in Estonia in Year 2005**

In September 2005, 11 employees of Latvian tourism information centres, thanks to the activity of LATTŪRINFO and support by the *Leonardo da Vinci* programme, participated at the annual EUTO event and conference in Estonia. It was the first time, when such event was held in an Eastern European country. Parallel to the working seminars, all participants of the event got acquainted with the diverse options of Estonian tourism, as well as evaluated the quality, thus giving a reciprocal benefit for Estonian colleagues in evaluation of their operations and for improving the quality.

## **Continuation of the Project "Bauska – Southern Gate to Latvia Via Baltica, 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase"**

The purpose of the Bauska City Council Phare 2003 CBC project "Bauska - Southern Gate to Latvia Via Baltica, 2<sup>nd</sup> phase", considering the experience of Hemme region (Finland), which has already been a multiple-time cooperation partner, is to promote and strengthen the existing network of cooperation between the Bauska city and *Via Baltica* zone countries, particularly accentuating cooperation between Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. The main purpose of the project is sustainable tourism development in Bauska city in connection with the closest cooperation cities in the neighbouring countries, which would promote increase in the number of tourists and travellers in Bauska and cooperation cities, which in turn would beneficially influence the economic growth and employment in the respective territories. The

target groups are local and district municipal authorities, tourism business associations, tourists, and travellers.

The main planned priorities are:

- International cooperation in project management and promotion of partnership in the *Via Baltica* foreign territory;
- Elaboration of the tourism development and marketing strategies of Bauska city;
- Training of business entrepreneurs employed in the tourist business for improvement of servicing quality;
- Experience exchange in the *Via Baltica* tourist corridor;
- Tourist flow research along *Via Baltica* in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia;
- Tourism information and marketing activities – *Via Baltica* Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian tourism map in 36 thousand copies in English, German, Russian, and Finnish languages. Publication of Bauska city tourism map in English, German, Russian, and Finnish languages.
- Small-scale investments in improvement of infrastructure, in order to ensure a more successful approach to tourism information and to create a tourism-friendly environment in Latvia – setting up an interactive stand in Bauska, as well as arranging street and service object signposts in the city of Bauska, etc.

LATTŪRINFO is participating in this project in a capacity of a partner, having an extensive experience in coordination of tourism marketing and information. LATTŪRINFO has vast opportunities to coordinate and represent the interests of those tourism regions, which currently are not included as cooperation partners to the *Via Baltica*. This association will be responsible for coordination on Latvia's part of *Via Baltica* territory, in order to successfully implement all of the planned activities.

### **"Bauska – Southern Gate to *Via Baltica Nordica*, phase I" year 2003**

LATTŪRINFO in a capacity of a cooperation partner of the Bauska City Council in year 2003-2004 participated in implementation of the project "Bauska - Southern Gate to *Via Baltica Nordica*, Phase I". The project was implemented with support of the Ministry for Finance of the Republic of Latvia within framework of the small project fund "Cooperation programmes in the Baltic Sea Region 2001".

The total cost-estimate of the project - 62.5 thousand euros. The project coordinator was the Bauska City Council, however in addition to LATTŪRINFO, partnering were Hemme Regional Council from Finland, and the Tourism Association of Bauska district.

The Bauska City Council, being the general partner from Latvia, participated in meetings of work groups for management and monitoring of *Via Baltica Nordica*, as well as in tourism work groups, and forums. Within framework of tourism industry development, information has been gathered about tourism activities, accommodation options, museums etc. in connection with *Via Baltica Latvia*, tourism flow research and surveying has been implemented in Bauska and Salacgrīva. Within agenda of tourism information and marketing activities, a practical information brochure was published "Bauska – the heart of *Via Baltica*" in English, German, French, and Finnish languages; a brochure "Bauska and vicinity" was published in German and English languages, containing walking routes around Bauska city. A tourism website was established [www.tourism.bauska.lv](http://www.tourism.bauska.lv). International tourism exhibits ITB in Germany and VIVATTOUR in Vilnius were attended.

In the sphere of small-scale infrastructure development, implementing a system of street signs in Bauska, 25 street signs with directions of streets and tourism objects were set up, moreover 20 signposts (in English and Latvian) were set up on buildings of cultural and historical importance.