



Estonia-Latvia Programme Project
«Go Cycling through Vidzeme and Southern Estonia»

October 22, 2010
Valga, Estonia



A Conference on the Development of Bicycle Tourism

The Vidzeme Tourism Association has cooperated with regional municipalities and the Valga County government for more than the past year to implement a project aimed at developing cycling tourism in the cross-border area between northern Latvia and southern Estonia.

A joint cycling route, «**Tour de LatEst**», which is more than 1,200 km long, has been developed. During a two-week cycling marathon in July of this year, the route was taken by more than 100 cycling enthusiasts from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Germany, Ukraine, Belarus, Turkey and the United Kingdom. During the summer season of 2010, there were major **infrastructural** activities related to the project – more than 40 resting places for cyclists and holidaymakers, 1,160 signs along the route, 222 bike stands and 58 information stands have been installed on both sides of the border. Marketing activities have been pursued to promote southern Estonia and northern Latvia as a joint tourism destination, particularly for cyclists. Tourism professionals from both regions – **Vidzeme** in Latvia and **Lõuna-Eesti** in Estonia – worked together on these activities, exchanging experiences and learning from each other about how to develop bicycling tourism.

We are delighted to invite you to take part in a project conference, «**The Development of Bicycle Tourism**», which will take place in **Valga** (Estonia) on **October 22, 2010**. More than 100 tourism professionals, municipal planning experts and entrepreneurs have been invited to take part in the event, which will be held in the town's Cultural Centre. Participants will review project results and, most importantly, provide an overview of trends in all of Europe when it comes to the **development of cycling tourism** as one of the latest "hot" issues in Europe. Our partners from **Finland, Germany** and **the Netherlands** will talk about the latest developments in cycling. A representative from the European Cycling Federation will also be on hand. The federation has members in Latvia and Estonia, and they will offer an insight into European cycling trends.

We hope that the conference will allow you to establish new contacts with respect to cycling and to refresh and strengthen co-operation at the international level. Cycling is one of the fastest-growing products in the tourism industry, and only careful and target-oriented planning can provide you with fruitful results in terms of improving your country, municipality and business.

Raitis Sijāts, Vidzeme Tourism Association, Chairman of the Board

Margus Lepik, Valga County Governor



See you in Valga!



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Programma

Venue Valga Cultural Centre, Kesk Str. 1, Valga, Estonia
Date October 22, 2010
Time 10:00 AM
Language English, with simultaneous translation into Estonian and Latvian

- 9.30-10.00 AM Registration, morning coffee
10.00 AM Opening of the conference | Margus Lepik, Valga County Governor
10.05 AM Welcoming addresses
10.20 AM **The ESTLAT project “Go Cycling Through Vidzeme and Southern Estonia”:**
Results and future challenges | Raitis Sijāts, chairman, Vidzeme Tourism Association
10.50 AM **Developing the “Tour de LatEst” cycling route and lessons learned**
Rein Lepik, Cycling Club “Vānta Aga”
11.20 AM **Joint marketing: A challenge in attracting tourists to the cross-border area**
Andris Klepers, Vidzeme University College
11.50 AM **Bicycle roads planning on national roads network in Estonia**
Reigo Ude, Estonian Road Administration
12.10 PM Discussion and questions
12.30 PM Lunch
1.30 PM **Cycling in Europe: Trends in tourism, infrastructure development, mobility**
European Cycling Federation
2.00 PM **Experience in Finland: Urban initiatives toward developing bike-friendly infrastructure and cycling tourism as a new tourism product in Finland**
Matti Hirvonen, Network of Finnish Cycling Municipalities
2.30 PM **Bicycle tourism in Germany: From the “Bett & Bike” project to satellite navigation**
Thomas Froitzheim, ADFC-steering group bicycle tourism
3.00 PM **Experience in the Netherlands: Create your own cycling experience**
Jurgen Hillaert, Veluwe Region Tourism Office
3.30 PM Discussions, questions, closing remarks, refreshments

Please visit www.vidzeme.com/tourdelatest to register for the conference.
The deadline for registration is October 15, 2010.