Academy on the integration of migrants and refugees in the Baltic countries 2025-2026

Launch event | 12 March 2025 | Riga, Latvia

Academy on the integration of migrants and refugees in the Baltic countries is an interagency initiative which offers a series of training courses to assist city administrations, preparing them to work with newcomers and addressing the challenges they might encounter while welcoming them.

Building on their expertise and inspired by the success of the Academy in Poland, the Council of Europe Intercultural Cities (ICC) Programme, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have designed a training programme for staff from a range of local authorities to address numerous aspects of migrant and refugee integration in cities.

Partners of the Academy are inviting you to the launch event, which will take place in Riga, Latvia. Agenda, location, and registration form are below.

→ *Working language is English*

→ *To register for the launch event, click* here. *Registration is available until 21 February. Number of places is limited.*

→ *In order to enter Riga City Council, please bring your ID*

Contact information:

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Launch event of Academy on the integration of migrants and refugees in the Baltic countries 2025-2026

12 March 2025 │ 12:00-17:30 │ Riga City Council │ Rātslaukums 1, Riga, LV-1050	
12:00-13:00	Lunch and registration
13:00-13:30	**Welcoming speeches**. Moderator: Dārta Pelse, Policy analyst in migration and integration, Providus - *Linda Ozola, Deputy Chairman of the Riga City Council* - *Agnese Lāce, Minister of Culture of Latvia* - *Julia Gebhard, Deputy Head of Democratization Department, The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)* - *Thorsten Afflerbach, Head of Inclusion and Anti-discrimination Programmes Division, Anti-discrimination Department, Council of Europe* - *Dace Meilija, Government Liaison Officer, UNHCR*
13:30-14:00	**Keynote speech: 'Cities at the heart of inclusion: leading the way in refugee and migrant Integration'.** Angélique Petrits, Policy Officer, DG Migration and Home Affairs, European Commission.
14:00-15:00	**1ˢᵗ session: newest institutional and legislative developments in integration area: where do we stand?** Moderator: Dace Meilija, UNHCR - *Keit Spiegel, Head of Cultural Diversity Department, Ministry of Culture, Estonia* - *Signe Grūbe, Advisor to the Minister of Culture, Latvia* - *Laura Perevičiūtė, Head of Foreigners integration unit at Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania*
15:00-15:30	Coffee and networking break
15:30-17:00	**2ⁿᵈ session: changing roles of towns and cities in refugee and migrant integration.** Moderator: Dace Meilija, UNHCR - *Janika Hango, Head of Adaptation and Integration, Municipality of Tartu, Estonia* - *Inga Vismantienė, Vice mayor of Akmenė District Municipality, Lithuania* - *Iryna Hubarchuk, Coordinator of Ukrainian refugees in Ventspils Municipality, Latvia* - *Dārta Pelse, Policy analyst in migration and integration, Providus* - *Małgorzata Zmysłowska, Inspector for Equal Treatment, Office of Public Participation, City of Lublin, Poland (Polish Academy alumni)* - *Albert Miściorak, Intercultural Dialogue team of the Wroclaw Center for Social Development, Poland (Polish Academy alumni)*
17:00-17:30	- *Presentation of timeline and framework of the Academy, Alice Szczepanikova, ODIHR* - *Final plenary discussion and closing, Alice Szczepanikova, ODIHR*

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