

UBC Education Conference**FuturEd: Shaping the future of education, Riga, Latvia****23.-24.10.2024**

UBC Learning Cities Commission will arrange an Education Conference and Study Visit in Riga 23rd and 24th of October 2024. The themes of the conference and study visit focuses on school attendance, sustainable education, education technologies, A.I., STEAM, effective support for students, pathways to academic success, and the attractiveness of teaching profession.

The conference program includes keynote presentations, panel discussions and workshops. The objective of the conference as well as the study visits is to bring together education experts and decision-makers from different countries to share best practices and knowledge on current educational themes.

Wednesday 23.10.

VEF Culture Palace

Ropažu iela 2, Rīga

8:30 Registration

9:00 Opening words

Linda Ozola, Deputy Chair of Riga City Council, Member of UBC Executive Board

Matti Mäkelä, Chairman, Learning Cities Commission (UBC)

Part One: Education Is the Future

During the first half of the day, the keynote presentations, panel discussion and workshops will focus on how education is shaping our future and helps us to find solutions to different global and societal challenges.

9:30 Panel discussions

Ilona Donina, Head of International and Investment Projects Division in Education, Culture and Sports Department, Riga City Council (facilitator)

Anu Parantainen, Director of Children and Youth Services, City of Turku

Kristine Niedre-Lathere, Deputy State Secretary for General Education, Ministry of Education and Science of Latvia

Lemmit Kapliski, Deputy Mayor of Tartu, City of Tartu

Laima Geikina, Chairman of Education, Culture and Sport Committee of Riga City Council

Grzegorz Kryger, Pomeranian Education Superintendent, Education Office in Gdańsk

During the first panel the participants of the conference are invited to take part in discussion

10:30 Break

10:45 Workshops

The participants have multiple workshops to choose from. All workshops start with a presentation of a good practices/ innovative project and proceed to find solutions to the challenges presented during keynotes and panel discussions. Another aim of the workshops is to share knowledge and create new ideas for joint development opportunities and/or new projects. Each participant will choose one workshop to attend.

The themes and leaders of the workshops are:

1. Addressing youth violence and misbehavior: effective tools for change

Lead: Anu Parantainen, Director of Children and Youth Services, City of Turku and Līga Bērziņa, Head of Uzvediba.lv and the Latvian Autism Association, City of Liepaja

2. Integrating and Implementing Sustainable Development in basic education with urban context and corporate collaboration

Lead: Minna Kukkonen, Pedagogical ICT-Expert, City of Espoo and Tuukka Kallio, Class Teacher and Learning Technology Development Teacher, City of Espoo

3. Brain power: Unlocking Potential - Breaking Limiting Beliefs and Building Self-Confidence for Meaningful Goal Setting

Lead: Dace Briede-Zālīte, Business Consultant, Founder of Youth Career Guidance NGO, Personal growth Coach, Member of Latvian Career Development Support Association

4. Empowering educators: bridging the gap

Lead: Ieva Siliņa, Deputy Chairman of Education, Culture and Sport Committee of Riga City Council and Ihor Stashkevych, Secretary of Kramatorsk City Council, Kramatorsk City Council

12:00 Lunch

Part Two: Future of Education

During the second half of the day, the keynote presentations, panel discussion and workshops will focus on the future tools, challenges, possibilities, and solutions of education systems in the Baltic Sea Region and throughout the world.

13:00 Panel discussions

Katri Lehtinen, Project Manager, City of Turku (facilitator)

Niina Salonen, Project Manager, City of Turku

Maija Gredzena, Chief Educational Project Manager of Education Board Education,
Culture and Sport Department of Riga Local Government

Gunnar Anderzon, Project Manager, Federation of Swedish Municipalities and Regions

Susan Tuulosniemi, Planning Officer, City of Espoo

During the second panel the participants of the conference are invited to take part in discussion

14:00 Workshops

Each participant will choose one workshop to attend.

The themes and leaders of the workshops are:

1. Addressing school attendance with a multi-level governance approach

Lead: Anna Liljeström, Process Manager, Federation of Swedish Municipalities and Regions

2. The role of AI in shaping tomorrow's education

Lead: Evija Mirķe, PhD, AI Trainer for Latvian Educators, Lecturer and Researcher in Riga Technical University (Social Sciences), Teacher in Robotics, City of Riga and Niina Salonen, Project Manager, City of Turku

3. Unleashing creativity and innovation: the power of STEAM education

Lead: Katri Lehtinen, Project Manager, City of Turku and Pavels Pestovs, Principal of Riga Secondary School No. 72 and researcher of the Interdisciplinary Education Innovation Center of the University of Latvia

4. How to navigate in an ever-changing multicultural world – perspectives of pedagogical and structural means in early childhood education and basic education

Lead: Aino Pietarinen, Project Coordinator, City of Espoo, Mirkku Häggman, Early Childhood Education Specialist, City of Espoo and Saara Salmi-Rautiainen, Early Childhood Education Specialist, City of Espoo

- 15:15 Break
- 15:30 Workshop results and discussions
- 16:15 Closing Remarks
Matti Mäkelä, Chairman, Learning Cities Commission (UBC)
- 16:30 End of the day
- 19:00 Reception, Riga Art Space,
Kungu Street 3
- 20:30 End of the Reception

Thursday 24.10.

*Pick up point for the study visits is at the Archers Monument
Kaļķu iela 1, Old Town*

8:30 Pick up for the study visits

9:00 Study visits

- Riga State Classical Gymnasium (address: Purvciema iela 38)
- 182nd preschool of Riga (address: Dzelzavas iela 17a)
- Riga Technical College (address: Braslas iela 16)

During the study visits, we will explore these educational facilities and gain a deeper understanding of Latvia's education system.

16:00 End of the day

KEYNOTES AND FACILITATORS

Linda Ozola

Deputy Mayor of Riga Linda Ozola – a Latvian philologist, interpreter, and politician. Her political career started in 2017 as a representative of the Riga City Council and continued as a Member of the Latvian Parliament Saeima. After municipal elections in 2020, she left Saeima for the position of Deputy Mayor of Riga. Her responsibilities are international relations, security and public order, civil defence, corruption prevention and issues of good governance and transparency. In 2023 she was elected as a Member of UBC Executive Board.

Matti Mäkelä

Matti Mäkelä works as a Head of the Project Management Office in the city of Turku. Matti is also a chairman of the UBC's Learning Cities Commission. Matti has years of experience in project management and development work, and he has also worked as a trainer and speaker both in Finland and elsewhere in the EU on project management, dissemination of the best practices, implementation of the youth guarantee and multi-professional cooperation. He has also been a writer and/or editor of several books dealing with these issues. By education, Matti has a master's degree in history.

Ilona Doniņa

The head of International and Investment Projects Division in Education, Culture, and Sport department of Riga Local Government. For many years Ilona is managing various projects and in addition are involved in work of Latvian National Project Management Association promoting development of the project management in Latvia and ensuring the competitiveness of project management specialists in the local environment. Vice Chair of Learning Cities Commission in Union of Baltic Cities.

Anu Parantainen

Anu Parantainen works as the Director of Children and Youth Services in the city of Turku, with responsibility of developing new service and leadership model for children and youth services. In addition, Anu has years of experience in guiding young people and managing various projects. Anu has also worked as a trainer and speaker both in Finland and elsewhere in the EU on special education, youth guidance, implementation of the youth guarantee and multi-professional cooperation. By education, Anu has a master's degree in educational sciences, a special education teacher and a study counsellor.

Kristine Niedre-Lathere

Ph.D Kristine Niedre - Lathere: a professional in the field of education, Deputy State Secretary for General Education and State Language policy at the Ministry of Education and Science, a lecturer at the Riga Technical University Liepāja Academy (Educational management and economy), and the former Head of the Liepāja Municipal Education Department. She developed the concept of an educational ecosystem for improving education management at the municipal level, which she also defended in her doctoral thesis "CONCEPTUAL GUIDELINES of ECOSystem operation in educational administration improvement in municipality.

Lemmit Kaplinski

Lemmit Kaplinski is the deputy mayor of Tartu, whose responsibilities are culture and education. He has a diploma in semiotics from the University of Tartu and during his previous career, has built up a bespoke award-winning private museum. When not in his office, you can meet him on hiking trails across Estonia or conquering another mountain peak.

Laima Geikina

Laima Geikina is the Chair of the Education, Culture, and Sports Committee of the Riga City Council, a deputy of the Riga City Council, a professor at the University of Latvia, a politician, and an author. Laima has more than 25 years of experience in the field of religious education and pedagogy. She has worked for 12 years in a general education school in Riga and has been an expert for the "School2030" project.

Grzegorz Kryger

Grzegorz Kryger, Pomeranian Education Superintendent in the Education Office in Gdańsk. He is also an education specialist with twenty years of working experience in the field of education. A historian by education, a graduate of postgraduate studies in Labor Law and Education Management. A certified teacher with several years of experience in schools, a school principal, and until December 2023, an official in charge of the Department of Education in one of the largest metropolitan cities in Poland - Gdańsk. He has been a Pomeranian Education Superintendent since December 2023. He was involved in the implementation of numerous innovative activities undertaken in Gdańsk as part of the idea of the "School and Kindergarten of Cooperation". Privately, a husband and father of two teenagers. His passions are reading, film music, musical concerts and planning family trips.

Katri Lehtinen

Ms. Katri Lehtinen (M.Soc.Sc.) has worked as a project coordinator and manager in international and national STEAM projects for four years. In her current role as a project manager, she's coordinating a BSR project G-STEAM and the city of Turku's STEAM project which covers all of the educational levels from early childhood education to secondary level education – building pathways also to higher education.

Niina Salonen

Ms. Niina Salonen (M. Soc. Sci.) works as the program manager of Skills & Competences in Business and Development Department City of Turku, dealing with phenomena from segregation and lack of basic skills to higher education, innovation platforms and availability of skilled work force. Salonen has experience in working with EU funded international and national development projects as project manager for more than ten years. Her background is in administrative sciences and public policy management.

Maija Gredzena

Maija Gredzena is Chief education project manager in the Education, Culture and Sport Department of Riga Local Government. Passionate about data-driven decisions and large-scale project implementation. Fifteen years of experience managing education, culture, and integration projects.

Gunnar Anderzon

Senior advisor and expert in European social fund at The Swedish association of Local Authorities and Regions. Also, the leader of the flagship School to work.

Susan Tuulosniemi

Susan Tuulosniemi brings extensive knowledge and deep insight into General Upper Secondary educational system and its communal development. The well-being, inclusion, equality, and equity of students are important topics for her. As part of the Growth and Learning Sector in the city of Espoo, she offers multidisciplinary and creative perspective to the leadership team. Her academic credentials include a Master of Science from the University of Helsinki and a Master of Culture and Arts in Educational/Instructional Media Design from Lahti University of Applied Sciences.

WORKSHOPS

Addressing youth violence and misbehavior: effective tools for change

Younger and younger young people are feeling unwell, and it shows in increased disruptive behavior and even violence. Ultimately, this can even threaten social peace and, more broadly, the sense of security. The aim of the workshop is to share good practices and models that are used and developed to tackle this challenge.

Integrating and implementing sustainable development in basic education within urban context and corporate collaboration

In this engaging workshop, Espoo will showcase how to integrate and implement sustainable development in basic education within an urban context and through corporate collaboration. During the session, participants will gain insights into the entire journey from the initial concept to innovative solutions. They will learn how teachers' skills, students' participation, and digital competencies are integrated into the process. The workshop emphasizes collaboration with companies and city-level stakeholders. Most importantly, all attendees will actively contribute by co-creating and planning concrete solutions and ideas. These collaborative efforts aim to inspire and empower participants to implement similar projects in their own cities.

Brain power: Unlocking Potential - Breaking Limiting Beliefs and Building Self-Confidence for Meaningful Goal Setting

In this dynamic and interactive workshop, participants will explore how self-confidence, limiting beliefs, and generalizations shape their ability to set and achieve meaningful goals. Drawing on 15 years of career guidance experience, including work with youth aged 11-29 and the NEET sector, this session will challenge participants to identify and overcome mental barriers that hinder progress. Using practical examples and tools, we will assess self-confidence, examine the difference between listening and hearing in decision-making, and learn techniques to challenge limiting beliefs that hold back personal and professional growth.

Empowering educators: bridging the gap

This workshop will focus on equipping policy planners and decision makers with ideas and solutions for critical issue of teacher recruitment and how to attract and retain high-quality educators in our schools. Participants will explore strategies to overcome challenges such as teacher shortages, competition with other professions, and the need for a more diverse teaching workforce. Through collaborative discussions and best practice examples, the session will focus on creating supportive recruitment policies, improving teacher incentives, and fostering a positive work environment to empower educators. This workshop is ideal for education leaders seeking to bridge the gap between demand and supply of qualified teachers, ensuring strong, sustainable staffing for our schools.

Addressing School Attendance with a Multi-Level Governance Approach

Since 2011 SALAR has run a series of initiatives to reduce early school leaving and contribute to the integration of young people in the labour market and social inclusion. The workshop includes local examples from schools and municipalities which have worked to develop a comprehensive strategy to improve attendance.

The role of AI in shaping tomorrow's education

Unleashing creativity and innovation: the power of STEAM education

Welcome to the workshop "Unleashing Creativity and Innovation: The Power of STEAM Education." In this session, we will explore how STEAM education can drive creativity and innovation within our communities. We'll discuss emerging tools and technologies that can be linked with STEAM, study innovative STEAM projects, and explore actionable strategies for integrating them into local curricula. By the end of the workshop, you'll understand how STEAM education can impact municipal landscape and be equipped with ideas to implement these solutions effectively. Let's work together to shape the future of our municipalities through STEAM.

How to navigate in an ever-changing multicultural world – perspectives of pedagogical and structural means in early childhood education and basic education

This workshop provides an insight in experiences concerning multicultural aspects of early childhood education and basic education in City of Espoo. Different languages, cultures and worldviews bring a lot of enrichment into the everyday life in daycare and schools, but there are also some questions that need to be addressed. Workshop participants will hear examples of pedagogical and structural means that we use in Espoo to a.) prevent segregation, and b.) to make sure that every child and family feel that they have equal opportunities and each one of them is an important part of our joint community. In this workshop we share and create new ideas, solutions and means in this ever-changing multicultural world.

More information

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