



European Union

Linking Estonia and Latvia

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## **“Through Youth Cooperation Towards More Sustainable Societies”**

Jaan Tõnisson Institute in cooperation with Latvian organisation “Radošas Iniciatīvas Centrs” (<http://www.ric.org.lv/index.php?lang=en>) implements in 2014 a project “Through Youth Cooperation Towards More Sustainable Societies”. During the project work 24 students from Käina school (Hiiumaa, Estonia - <http://www.kaina.edu.ee/>) and 24 students from Riga will visit each-other in their communities. They will get acquainted with the local life issues and youth activities that better the awareness about the neighbouring country. In this rather simple frame the students will do a project work on mutually important environmental issues. The students will work out recommendations for improving the present environmental situation and raising sustainability using internationally well-known special project work method “Project Citizen”. The project will be carried out in the form of several working meetings – local and international. At the final stage of the project the students will present their specialised portfolios to the audience and expert assessment.

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## ***The First Three Months of the Project***

The project passed from January to March the implementation phase. Teams of the project partners from Jaan Tõnisson Institute and Radošas iniciativas centrs met on the project management level and also nationally, forming teams of 24 students to develop portfolios about sustainable development by the end of 2014. The first international project management meeting was held on 20<sup>th</sup> of January in Riga. The period after that was dedicated to careful preparation of the first international student kick-off meeting in Riga that was held on 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> of March. During the three days in March the student teams got acquainted with each-other, visited the highest Latvian legislator Saeima and Riga as a local municipality. Visiting Riga's waste plant in Getlini was the event to lead into the project topic of sustainable development, as everybody was excited to see how energy derived from the city's waste was used for growing ecological tomatoes. In Laimite youth centre the participants started the project work of creating the portfolios about sustainable development. During the following months the student teams in Riga and Käina will be busy with research and brainstorming on how to give second life to used items.





### ***Next Three Months of the Project***

In April and May the project leaders from the Jaan Tõnisson Institute and Radošas Initsiativas Centrs met several times with the students in Riga and Käina assisting them in the Portfolio development. National planning meetings with project coordinators from Käina Gymnasium in Hiiumaa and youth centre “Laimite” in Riga as beneficiaries were arranged for preparation of the second international student workshop in Hiiumaa.



On April 15.-16. 2014 an international planning meeting with the participation of P1 and P2 representatives took place in Hiiumaa. During the two-day meeting the agenda for the second student meeting was agreed and the sites of the meeting in Käina and Kärđla were observed.

The highlight of the project period from April to June was the second international student meeting in Käina. During the three days Estonian and Latvian students had many joint events like visits to the places having importance for the sustainability, for example Kärđla, Tahkuna peninsula, Käina commune and village, Sääre Tirp, where the participants learned how human activity is affecting the nature.



Explanations about the ways of supporting sustainability were given to the students during their visit to Käina local government. Very important parts of the meeting were three different thematical student workshops arranged in Palade Nature Education Centre.

At Käina Gymnasium both teams – Estonian and Latvian – presented in what stage their portfolios are, and were provided with tips and instructions for the further working on the portfolios by the project leaders.



## *The last six months of the project*

During the summer the students had school vacation, so the project activities started again in September. Both teams – Estonian and Latvian – continued working on their portfolios.

The final project meeting took place in Riga on December 04<sup>th</sup> – 06<sup>th</sup>. The highlight of the event was the showcase of students' portfolios in “Laimite” youth centre. Käina and Riga teams were both divided into four focus groups. The presentation of each group took up to ten minutes, so the whole procedure took almost two hours. The presentations were made in English and there was a three-member jury to listen and assess the students' achievements. The students had been researching how people are dealing with the old things and made several proposals how to give them a new life or recycle the materials. Jury were very satisfied with what they saw and heard. There was also a thematic exhibition opened in Riga Dome presenting the handicraft and art of the students.

There were several events to get to know each other and the town in the program of Riga meeting. Riga as municipality was made more familiar by visiting the Pharmacy Museum, new



Latvian National Library, “Cinevilla” park of attractions. All those visits gave added value to the topic how to use the old things better. As the guide in the museum said, if there were no old things in use, we could have no museums!



Jaan Tõnisson Institute wishes to thank the project partners Käina Gymnasium and “Radošas Iniciatīvs Centrs”, Käina local government and Est-Lat Program for the wonderful project!