

Practical information

2nd Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM2)

5th ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting (ASEMME5) "ASEM Education Collaboration for Results"

26 - 28 April 2015

National Library of Latvia, 3 Mūkusalas St., Riga, Latvia

Host Ministry

Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia is the host ministry for the 5th ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting (ASEMME5) and the 2nd Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM2). The Ministry is responsible for all matters relating to all levels of education, youth, sport, science and state language policy.

ASEMME5 and the accompanying SOM2 is organised within the framework of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Contact persons responsible for the ASEMME5 and SOM2:

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Bilateral meetings and Working group meetings

In order to encourage networking among the ASEM member states, the organizers will provide an opportunity to meet bilaterally. In addition, the ASEM Working groups are invited to take the opportunity to organize brief meetings to discuss the progress made to date as well as further cooperation.

Bilateral meeting rooms (for the ASEMME5 participants) will be available at the following times:

27 April, 10:00 - 12:30

28 April, 14:30 – 17:00

An additional room for the ASEM Working group meetings and networking on topics of common interest (for the SOM2 participants) will be available at the following times:

26 April, 10:00 - 12:30

27 April, 10:00 – 12:30

28 April, 14:30 – 17:00

The Minister/Head of Delegation List and Contact Person List will be made available from 9 April 2015.

Participants are kindly invited to make a reservation request by filling in the meeting room request form (see ANNEX 1). The Ministry would highly appreciate receiving completed registration forms at your earliest convenience or latest **by 15 April 2015** at asem@izm.gov.lv to enable us to facilitate the meeting arrangements.

Hospitality

All Ministers/heads of delegations and delegates are cordially invited to join:

- Welcome Dinner at the Radisson Blu Daugava Hotel on 26 April 2015.
- Concert and Formal Dinner at the National Opera House on 27 April 2015. Transportation will be provided.
- Visit to Rundale Palace in Zemgale region (*18th century*), a pearl of Baroque and Rococo art in Latvia on 28 April 2015. Rundale Palace is situated 80 km from Riga. Transportation will be provided.

Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia cordially invites the Ministers and Vice-ministers, education heads of the European Commission and ASEAN Secretariat and heads of delegations (if delegated by Ministers to replace their own participation) to the joint Working Breakfast on 28 April to discuss the future perspectives of the ASEM Education collaboration, the main challenges, opportunities and expected outcomes from a political point of view.

Spouses' programme: Organizers will provide a separate programme for accompanying spouses of the Ministers and Vice-Ministers attending the ASEMME5. In order to ensure that, please fill the online registration and under section "Position within the delegation" choose "Spouses".

Side event "Information Day on Erasmus+"

According to the Fourth Asia-Europe Meeting of Ministers for Education (ASEMME4) Chair's Conclusions (paragraph 29), the European Commission will organize a seminar for the ASEM members on the international dimension of Erasmus+, the new EU education programme (2014-2020) with a focus on funding opportunities for Asia-Europe mobility and cooperation. The seminar will take place in Riga on 29 April 2015.

Registration for this seminar will be open in a separate registration system. Delegations of the ASEM members are expected to send Senior Officials and other interested parties to the seminar: it is particularly recommended that practitioners from universities or university associations, student

associations, quality assurance or accreditation bodies are included in the delegations as they will be directly involved in the future cooperation efforts and application procedures.

You will receive an agenda, registration information and practical information for the “Information Day on Erasmus+” from the European Commission shortly.

Registration and visa application

Online registration for the event will be open from 11 February until **8 April 2015** at <http://delegation.eu2015.lv>. Delegations are encouraged to register as soon as possible to make sure there is enough time for all the necessary travel arrangements to be made. Participants requiring a visa are kindly requested to complete their registration **by 26 March 2015** the latest and send filled in form (see ANNEX 2).

The name of the delegation’s contact person should be sent to asem@izm.gov.lv. The contact person will receive an e-mail with the registration link, username and password and then will be able to proceed with online registration of your delegation. Size of the delegation for the SOM2: two delegates; for the ASEMME5: Minister and two delegates.

Participants will be able to collect their identification badges from the registration desk at the venue in the National Library of Latvia.

Accommodation

The following accommodation options are available:

		Price per room/per night, including VAT and breakfast
Radisson Blu Daugava, 4**** Address: Kuģu iela 24, Rīga, LV-1048, Phone: +371 67061111 <i>(B on the map in ANNEX 3, 500 m from the venue).</i> <i>Venue of a Welcome Dinner on 26 April 2015</i>	SGL, Standard	99.00 EUR
	SGL, Business	139.00 EUR
Bellevue Park Hotel, 4**** Address: Slokas iela 1, Rīga, LV-1048, Phone: +371 67069000 <i>(C on the map in ANNEX 3, 1.1 km to the venue).</i>	SGL, Standard	39.00 EUR
	SGL, Business	60.00 EUR
Grand Palace Hotel, 5***** Address: Pils street 12, Rīga, LV-1050, Phone: +371 6704 4000 <i>(D on the map in ANNEX 3, 1.4 km to the venue).</i>	DBL, Business Class	269.00 EUR
	DBL, Junior Suite	335.00 EUR

The Latvian Presidency has made a block reservation of 150 rooms at the **Radisson Blu Daugava Hotel Riga (500m from the venue place)**. Delegates can book a hotel by following the official travel agency’s link under the section “Accommodation” of the online registration system. Booking a hotel

requires a credit card as a guarantee. If you choose another accommodation option, then for organisational purposes you are kindly requested to indicate the accommodation selected or hotel name in the remarks.

Should you have queries related to accommodation, please do not hesitate to contact Latvian Presidency official travel agency "Baltic Travel Group" by email: presidency2015@btgroup.lv or telephone: +371 67228428.

Travel and getting around

By air

Riga International Airport (RIX) is located just 10 km from the city centre and is easily accessible by public transport or taxi. It offers routes to 83 destinations, including most European capitals and transfer hubs.

Riga International Airport

RIGA Airport 10/1

Mārupes novads

Riga, LV-1053, Latvia

www.riga-airport.com/en

Airport inquiries service: +371 29311817

From the airport to the city

Getting to the city centre from the airport takes ~25-30 minutes by public transport or taxi.

Please note that Ministers and Vice-Ministers will be met at the Airports' VIP lounge and taken to the hotels by liaison officers.

Taxi services are available at Riga airport 24 hours a day and are located outside the arrivals area. The average fare from the airport to the city centre (Old Town) is € 15-20. Green *AirBaltic* and red *Riga Cab* taxi services are available and recommended.

Public bus No 22 connects the airport with the city centre. The bus stop is located behind the car park P1 opposite Arrival E. The service operates up to every 15 minutes from Mondays to Fridays and up to every 20 minutes on Saturdays and Sundays. It can take up to 30 minutes to reach the city centre. Single journey tickets can be bought from the driver and cost € 2.00 (cash only).

More information and the schedule for bus No 22 can be found here:

<http://saraksti.rigassatiksme.lv/index.html#bus/22/b-a/en>



Bus and taxi stops at the airport

Transportation around Riga

Riga has a frequent and extensive public transport network of buses, trams and trolleybuses which run around the Old Town and across the bridge, with a stop close to the conference venue.

Single journey tickets can be bought from the driver and cost € 2.00 (cash only).

It is also possible to buy a transport card (*e-talons*) for one or more journeys, with each journey costing € 1.15, or a ticket for 24 hours (€ 5.00), 3 days (€ 10.00) and 5 days (€ 15.00). You have to validate the ticket each time you board a vehicle. The tickets can be bought at *Narvesen* kiosks (mini-shops) or from vending machines at a number of public transport stops, including at the airport.

For more information about public transport in Riga, please visit: www.rigassatiksm.lv/en/

The meeting venue is easily accessible from the centre by public transport, by taxi or on foot. The stop near the conference venue is called *Nacionālā bibliotēka*.

Travel documents

Latvia is a European Union Member State and a signatory of the Schengen Agreement. Accordingly, those arriving in Latvia from the Schengen Area are not subject to border controls. EU, EEA and Swiss citizens can travel with their national ID card or passport. Nationals of other countries are required to have a valid passport. For **visa** information please see ANNEX 2.

Conference venue facilities and services

IT services and support

Wireless internet access (WiFi) is available throughout the conference venue. Staff at the venue will be available to provide technical and IT support.

Green printing

All participants are invited to think carefully about whether they need to print documents, and to use their electronic devices instead. Printing facilities will be available at the venue, but participants are encouraged to use them as little as possible.

Interpretation

The working language for the ASEMME5 and SOM2 is English and no official translation will be provided, however, private interpreters are welcome to accompany the delegation.

Medical care

Medical services will be provided at the venue in cases of emergency and medical needs. The medical service point is located on the 2nd floor, close to the *Rīga* meeting hall. These services include emergency medical care during the working sessions and transportation, if necessary, to designated hospitals.

Please fill in the health section at the online registration system and include a list of dietary and other restrictions where indicated during registration.

Delegates are strongly recommended to check the expiration date of their European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

In cases of emergency, call 112 or 113.

Prayer room

A prayer room will be available at the conference venue and hotel Radisson Blu Daugava.

About Riga

Riga is the capital of Latvia. Officially founded in 1201, the city presents a mix of cultures and architectural styles developed throughout different historical periods. The Daugava, also referred to as the River of Destiny by Latvians, flows through Riga into the Gulf of Riga about 10 kilometres from the city centre. Because of its location and harbour, which rarely freezes, Riga has developed into a significant transportation hub. Riga has always been a dynamic and innovative centre, and remains to this day a vibrant and lively city with a host of creative quarters to explore. It is therefore with good reason that Riga has been called the 'city of inspiration'. Enjoy a leisurely walk around the Old Town – the historic centre of Riga, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site – and its surroundings.

Useful information about Riga can be found on www.liveriga.com/en

About Latvia

Weather: Spring in Latvia is sunny, but unpredictable (including the possibility both of late snow and temperatures of +20°C). Average temperature in April is above 0 °C. For the latest forecast, please visit: www.meteo.lv/en/laiks/

Language: Latvian is the official language of Latvia. English is widely spoken.

Local time: Latvia Time is GMT+2 (from late March until late October Latvia participates in the Western European summer time scheme: GMT+3).

Currency: Latvia's currency is the euro (€). Other currencies can be exchanged for euros at most banks and exchange offices located in the city centre and at the airport.

ATMs and credit cards: There are many automatic teller machines (ATMs) in the city and all major credit cards are accepted almost everywhere.

Power supply: The power supply in Latvia is 220V AC at 50 Hz. An adaptor for the (European standard) round two-pin sockets may be required.



Useful information

Dial code for Latvia: +371

Emergency: call 112

Useful information about Latvia: www.tava.gov.lv/en and www.latvia.eu.

Mobile phone application to learn more about Latvia: "Latvia.Travel".