

Til**Kopi****Fra****Emne**

Framework for cooperation between the Nordic Council of Ministers for Gender Equality and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

Framework for cooperation between the Nordic Council of Ministers for Gender Equality and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

Purpose

This document provides a framework for the cooperation between the Nordic Council of Ministers for Gender Equality and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

The Nordic Council of Ministers' guidelines for co-operation with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

The cooperation shall be based on the Nordic Council of Ministers' general guidelines for co-operation with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (2013) which articulates that co-operation between the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM) and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are based on common values regarding human rights, tolerance, gender equality and good governance (Appendix 1).

The aim of the Nordic Council of Ministers' cooperation with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania is to help establish networks and enable countries to share experiences to further develop the Nordic-Baltic affiliation and mutual understanding.

The Nordic Council of Ministers' co-operation with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania intends to supplement bilateral cooperation between the Nordic countries and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in areas where cooperation generates added value.

The Nordic Council of Ministers' cooperation with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania should not overlap existing regional cooperation forums, rather, it should help facilitate broader cooperation in the region by supplementing and extending existing networks.

Aim

The aim is to provide a framework for developing future joint initiatives and cooperation in the area of gender equality.

Time frame

This framework applies until further notice, and will be updated as necessary through decisions by the Nordic Council of Ministers for Gender Equality or by the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Gender Equality and according to the relevant decisions made jointly by the responsible Ministers in the Nordic countries and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.



Themes

The cooperation is primarily based on the outcomes of joint ministerial meetings and based on the Nordic Council of Ministers' cooperation programme for gender equality.

Organisation

The Nordic Council of Ministers for Gender Equality and the Ministers for Gender Equality in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania will aim to hold regular meetings to create a political platform for joint discussions, experiences and initiatives pertaining to gender equality. The aim is to hold the ministerial meetings every four years following the programmatic period of the Nordic cooperation programme for gender equality. Thus, the meetings will be held in conjunction with the establishment of each new Nordic cooperation programme for gender equality. Subsequent joint activities and projects should be carried out based on the outcomes of the ministerial meetings such as political recommendations and declarations.

The ministerial meetings are prepared by a group comprising the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Gender Equality and senior officials from gender equality departments in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The group of senior officials meets each year in November or as necessary to discuss, plan and follow-up on joint activities. The Secretariat to the Nordic Council of Ministers comprises the secretariat for the group, and the Nordic Council of Ministers' offices in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania participate in the meetings as observers.

Responsibility for the ministerial meetings rotates between the Nordic countries in accordance with the Presidency in the Nordic Council of Ministers. Each meeting is prepared and arranged in collaboration with one Baltic country, and the meetings can be held in either a Nordic or a Baltic country.

Activities

As follow-up of the ministerial meetings and/or in thematic prioritisations in the Nordic cooperation for gender equality, joint activities are carried out. The Nordic Council of Ministers' offices in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania play a key role in developing these activities in collaboration with Nordic Council of Ministers and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

The NCM offices Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, together with the NCM chair and Secretariat, play a key role in coordinating and administering joint projects as well as identifying relevant collaboration partners in close cooperation with the responsible senior officials.

The NCM country offices are also responsible for sharing information about the Nordic Council of Ministers' gender equality fund, administered by NIKK (Nordic Information on Gender) to interested applicants in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.



Funding

The Nordic Council of Ministers and the Committee of Senior Officials for Gender Equality annually allocate approximately DKK 150.000 for developing the cooperation between the NCM and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and for carrying out joint activities. As stated in the guidelines for the Nordic Council of Ministers' cooperation with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the cooperation focuses on areas of common interest and activities should therefore preferably be funded accordingly. As a rule, shared funding at 50/50 is the desirable standard for joint project funding. The 50/50 funding requirement may be waived in projects involving NGOs, where co-funding is considered an advantage but not an absolute requirement. The co-funding can comprise national funding by one or more countries (Nordic, or Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) or other sources. Activities may also be funded by other sources from the Nordic Council of Ministers such as the international funding sources of the Nordic Council of Ministers for Co-operation. Any joint projects concerning human trafficking may also receive funding from the Nordic Council of Ministers programme for human trafficking.