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About the project

Project starts September 1st 2017, ends August 26th 2018.

The mission of the project - with support of European volunteers open the world full of opportunities for local youth in Vecpiebalga county.

The main objectives of the project:

- to promote local youth involvement in different non-formal activities and workshops;
- to promote initiatives of local youth;
- to promote cultural diversity and interaction with youth from different countries;
- to develop use and understanding of non-formal education activities, programme "ERASMUS+" and European values in Vecpiebalga region by visiting local schools;
- to promote volunteers self-development, to provide voluntary work and both side learning process.

The project will have positive impact to local society, and specially to youth, by creating different activities and workshops, sharing experiences, opening minds for different cultures, languages, traditions and views, breaking stereotypes and experience differences and similarities between different countries, as well as, give positive alternative for youngsters instead of using alcohol and drugs, being involved in criminal cases. It will be opportunity for volunteers and youth from Vecpiebalga region share their views about Europe, European Union, European citizenship and European values.

With EVS project "Be Here To Dare 2", which we are implementing at the moment, we started the process of coming closer to our goal. The situation is becoming better, people becoming more opened and more knowing about mission of Youth Centre and the importance of youth work and international dimension within it. The local youth are interested in communication with volunteers, spending their free time with them and organizing common activities.



About the venue

Latvia



Latvia is a Baltic state in Northern Europe. Latvia is bordered by Estonia to the north, Lithuania to the south, Russia to the east, Belarus on the south east, and the Baltic Sea on the west. Population is 1.96 million. Capital city is Riga. Currency: Euro. Country code: +371.

Working location: Vecpiebalga (www.vecpiebalga.lv)



Vecpiebalga county is located in the heart of Latvia, on the scenic Vidzeme upland, close to biggest hill of Latvia - Gaiziņš. Vecpiebalga county is rich with lots of lakes, woods, and hills but, most of all, the region characterizes water lilies, spinning-wheel, its cultural and historical heritage and also porcelain. Vecpiebalga region – place you need to see, experience and enjoy!

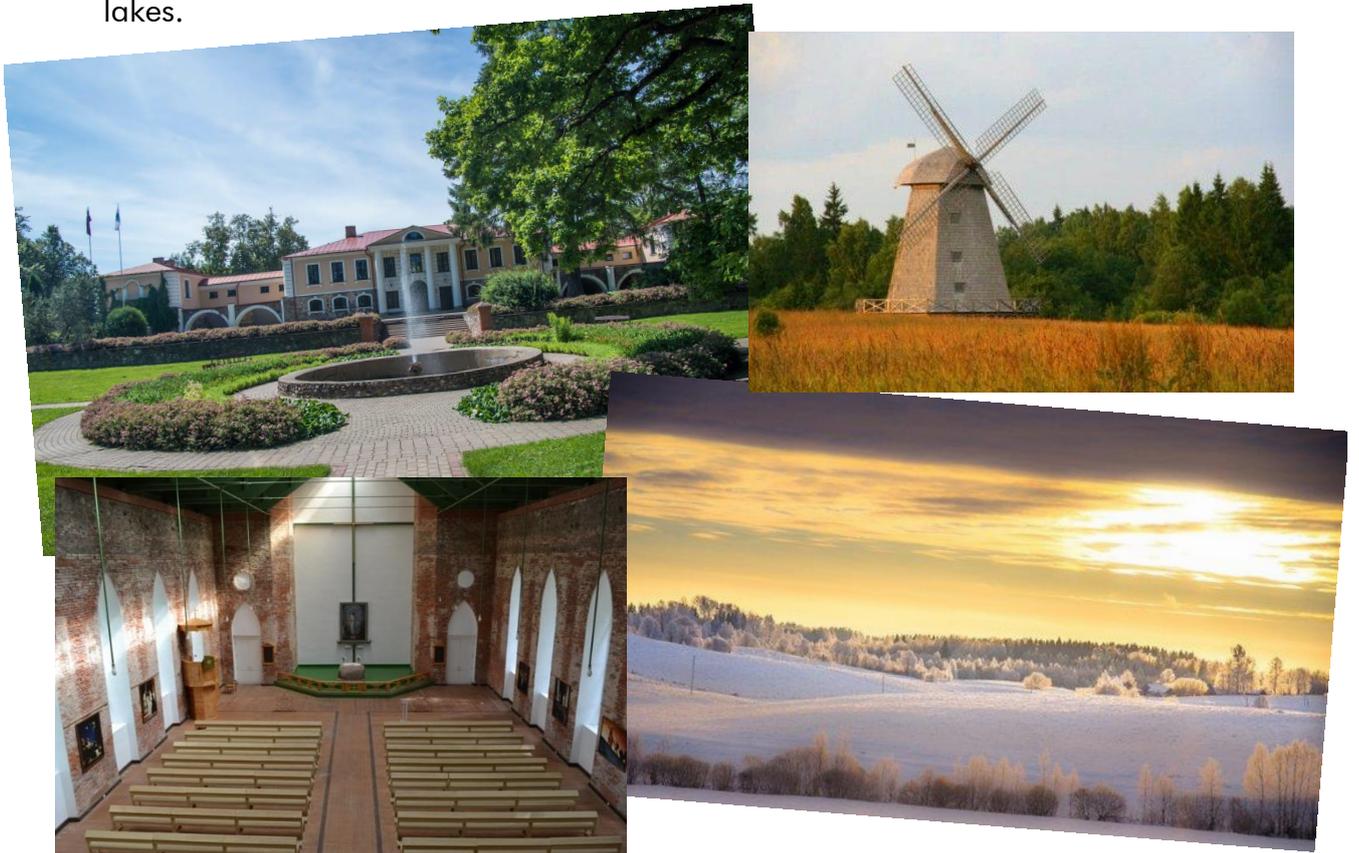
The territory of Vecpiebalga county is 542,5 km² large. In the county there are five villages: Vecpiebalga – the centre of the region -, Inesi, Kaive, Taurene and Dzerbene. Vecpiebalga county is located in rural area of Latvia, about 120 km from Riga – the capital city of Latvia. The nearest cities are Madona, about 40 km from Vecpiebalga, and Cesis, about 50 km far.

Vecpiebalga county has 4745 inhabitants, 93% of them are Latvians. The county is dealing with problems of migration – lots of inhabitants are going to live and work to big cities or other counties because of unemployment. That's the reason why number of inhabitants of the county are becoming more less.

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The climate of the Vecpiebalga county is rough; we have long and cold winters, but at the same time very beautiful springs and autumns. Summer here is only three month long, when we can enjoy showers, rainbows and sunny mornings with beautiful sunrises, and calm evenings with bright sunsets going down in the lakes.



Vecpiebalga county is famous with its cultural heritage. From Vecpiebalga county are coming famous Latvian writers - Reinis and Matiss Kaudzites, Karlis Skalbe and Antons Austrīņš -, dramatist Pauls Putniņš, it is summer home for composer Imants Kalniņš. In Vecpiebalga county it is possible to visit three estates built some centuries ago, the oldest threshing barn in Europe, church built from the wood, rural exposition of ethnographic open-air museum of Latvia, three museums of writers and museum of very famous Latvian composer Emīls Dārziņš. It is also possible to see Water lilies' ponds, feed fishes from your hand and visit Piebalga Porcelain Company which is the only one in Latvia.

In all five villages of Vecpiebalga county there is kindergarten, school, library, culture centre, place for youth activities, at least one shop, there is possibility to buy medicine and have medical help. Vecpiebalga village, where is located the youth centre "Balgas Strops", has also 2 cafes.

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Working place: Youth Centre “Balgas strops”

(www.facebook.com/balgasstrops)

Vecpiebalga Youth Centre „Balgas Strops” is one of the main tools of Vecpiebalga Local Municipality’s work with young people. The goal of the centre is to promote Vecpiebalga county’s youth initiatives, their participation in decision making and social life. The main activities are youth free time, youth awareness and participation, non-formal education, intercultural communication and volunteering. Youth participate in break-dance lessons, graffiti, decoupage and other workshops, have discussions about questions they are interested in, organize movie nights and tournaments of table games and brain games, make movies by themselves, organize and participate in local cultural and sport events, participate in international youth camps and youth exchanges. Youth Centre works with children aged 8 – 12 and young people aged 13 – 25 who live in rural area, have fewer opportunities and are in view of police, who go to school unwillingly and unemployed young people. To achieve the goal and develop its activities, Youth Centre takes part in various projects, organizes and takes part in different activities.



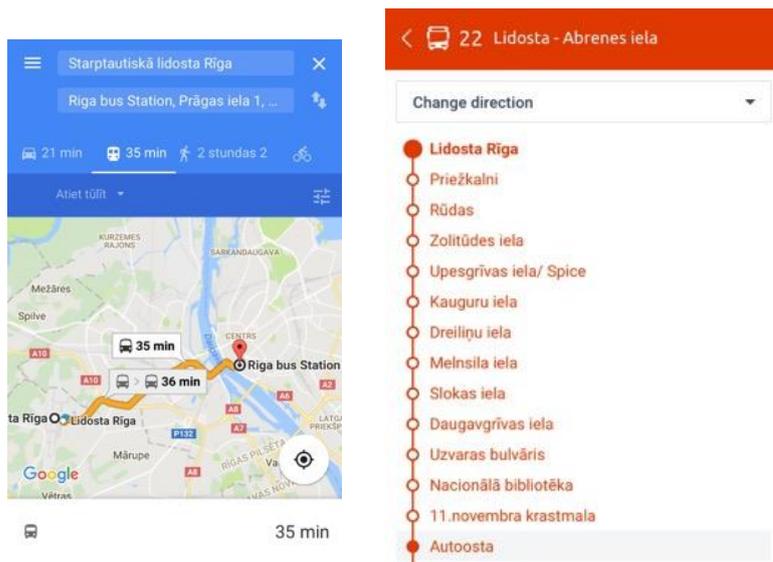
In youth centre there are working one professional specialist on youth affairs, who is responsible for running the centre, planning and implementing different projects, supervising everyday’s activities and etc. Also there are local volunteers, who help to look after youth centre, organize practicalities and organize some activities for children and youth.

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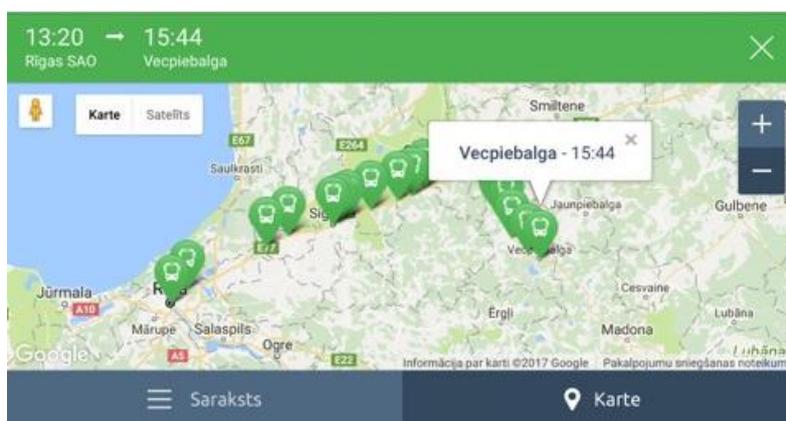
How to get to Vecpiebalga?

When you arrive in Riga Airport (Lidosta Rīga), go outside the airport and search for the bus stop (about 50 m from the airport) and wait for the bus **22**. It takes about 35 min to go to the Riga Centre. You have to go till **Riga Bus Station (Autoosta) Prāgas street 1**, where you will take the bus to Vecpiebalga.



Check out for bus schedule from Riga to Vecpiebalga on:

<http://www.1188.lv/en/transport/buses>



NB! Don't forget to save all your traveling tickets (plane, bus tickets, etc)!

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Additional information

In the Youth centre there are computers with internet and wifi. There is also TV, projector, home theatre, small kitchen and place for having a rest and have a break. Volunteers will be provided with their own working place and all necessary tools for working – including stationery, a computer, speakers, a desk, etc. Of course, for more comfortable use, we advise you to bring your own laptop.

Living conditions of EVS volunteers

The volunteer will live in high school hostel. The hostel is located in the centre of Vecpiebalga village. The hostel is located in the same building where is Vecpiebalga Youth Centre. There will be two separate bedrooms for each volunteer. There will be bed sheets, pillow and blanket sheets provided. We advise you to bring your own towel.

Local weather

Latvia is located in the temperate climate zone and therefore has four pronounced seasons. When you come to Latvia, you can enjoy a real winter with subzero temperatures and snow, spring floods, warm summers, and colourful autumns. Be prepared with warm clothes, warm boots for winter season.



EVS activities

Workshops and fun activities with local children.

Each day in the youth centre there are coming lots of local children who is interested to participate in different workshops (crafts and arts, etc.) and activities (common table and sports games, team building activities, etc.) and have fun.

Work with local youth.

Each day in the youth centre there are coming lots of youngster who is interested to participate in activities like table and sport games' tournaments, movie and culture nights, different hobby groups like cooking, arts, crafts, languages etc.

Media.

In the Youth centre there are photo and video cameras and computers with licensed design programmes. There is an option to help the youth centre to make their webpage or blog and facebook.com page; to lead design or movie making hobby clubs; to do little jobs depending on organization needs, for example posters, etc.

Spreading of information.

To foster young people's sense of European citizenship, to raise Volunteering awareness among Latvian youngsters with fewer opportunities and less-privileged backgrounds. Volunteers can tell or make presentations, culture days about their countries, European Union, European citizenship, European common values, programme "ERASMUS+", Human Rights, promote EVS, raise European awareness, etc. Volunteers will present the information in non-formal way as well as organise non-formal games and quizzes about chosen topic and short games to fight prejudice against minorities or people anyhow different. To spread this information in whole Vecpiebalga region, volunteers can visit local schools and youth centres in other villages.

Place for your own initiatives.

The Youth centre "Balgas Strops" will be always happy to see some new ideas and initiatives from volunteers.

Youth Pass

Youthpass is a European recognition tool for non-formal and informal learning in youth work. Youthpass is for projects funded by Erasmus + Youth in Action and Youth in Action programmes. With Youthpass the participants of these projects can describe what they have done and show what they have learnt. You will fill it during your project with the help of your mentor which means that you can evaluate from inside and outside, your skills and competences what you learnt during the programme.

Relevant documents and links about EVS

Home page: <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/>

Erasmus + Youth: <https://ec.europa.eu/youth/>

Erasmus + Programme Guide: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources_en

Youthpass Page: <https://www.youthpass.eu/en/youthpass/for/evs/subpage/>

Contact persons

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To understand better the place and activities we already have, it is possible to check in Facebook pages:

/EVS in Vecpiebalga

/Balgas strops

/Vecpiebalgas novada jaunatnes lietu nodaļa

