




MY LEARNING JOURNEY

IN LATVIA



A TRIP OF _____ DAYS

DATE FROM: _____ TO: _____ YEAR _____



... AS A PART OF MY LIFE-LONG
LEARNING JOURNEY...

WELCOME TO LATVIA!

Add a picture
of your arrival

Congratulations, your European Solidarity Corps (ESC) volunteering journey starts here! You made a brave step to arrive to a different country to carry out your solidarity activities that will create a change in your life as well as lives of people around you!

To help you make the best out of it we created a Learning journal with useful tips and space for reflection on your learning. Some pages have general information and methods, but some are invitations to print them out and fill in regularly. If you wish – add additional pages here! Follow the sign!



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My motivation to be here is...

My expectations from volunteering are...



My passions are...

I am good at...



We all face some difficulties in our lives,
but sometimes first we need
to overcome a difficulty, so a new
opportunity may arise.



WE IMAGINE THAT THINGS WILL
HAPPEN LIKE THIS



BUT REALITY IS LIKE THIS

What helps you to overcome difficulties?



“Every story has a beginning and an end. What lies
between those two points is the journey.”

ABOUT THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS PROGRAMME

The programme is an inspiring and empowering experience to help others and meanwhile to learn new skills and open new horizons.

Take a look at who is involved in making your volunteering activity and who supports you! Add names and contacts of people to whom you can reach out during your volunteering.

YOU

☺ Name:
E-mail:
Tel:

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

☺ Name:
E-mail:
Tel:

☺ Name:
E-mail:
Tel:

LATVIAN NATIONAL AGENCY - AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH

☺ Name:
E-mail: *brivpratigais@jaunatne.gov.lv*
Tel:

MENTOR

☺ Name:
E-mail:
Tel:

☺ Name:
E-mail:
Tel:

HOST ORGANIZATION

☺ Name:
E-mail:
Tel:

☺ Name:
E-mail:
Tel:

LEAD ORGANIZATION

☺ Name:
E-mail:
Tel:

YOUR WORK SUPERVISOR

☺ Name:
E-mail:
Tel:

☺ Name:
E-mail:
Tel:

PROJECT COORDINATOR

☺ Name:
E-mail:
Tel:

COLLEAGUE

☺ Name:
E-mail:
Tel:

☺ Name:
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COLLEAGUE

☺ Name:
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Tel:

SENDING ORGANIZATION

☺ Name:
E-mail:
Tel:

☺ Name:
E-mail:
Tel:

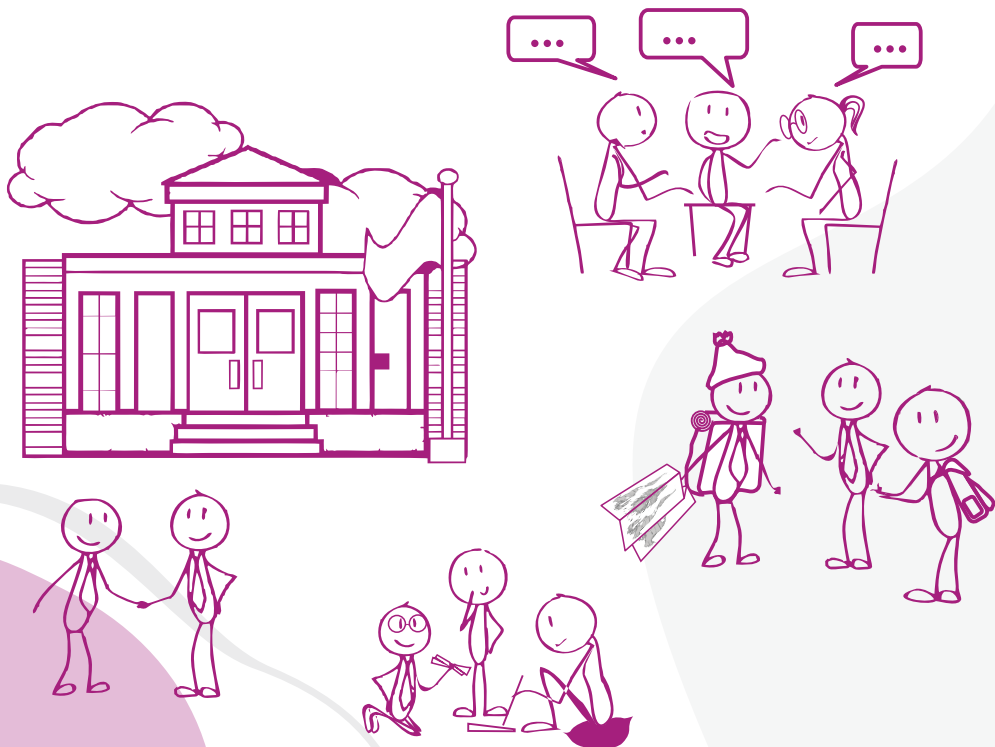
☺ Name:
E-mail:
Tel:

THE JOURNEY IN A WORLD WITH FORMAL, NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING

You do things, gain experience, reflect, talk to others, You might think you understand at that point, yet you get new points of view, you continue by reading a book, listening to your teacher and you do things better—you are learning! But is it enough?

In formal education, you usually don't have to ask this question because others will tell you. Informal learning happens without your intention simply while being in your environment with your friends and family, but in non-formal education everything you do and aim for is **YOUR LEARNING** and your responsibility to learn what you feel is the most relevant to you.

This means that you are also the one who identifies and reflects on what you've learnt. This doesn't mean that it's an easy job, but the good news is that with regular practice, you will be more empowered to take ownership of your own learning and development.





Card game
"Learning out of the box" -
take a look!

example:
the meaning of road
signs for driving exam

example:
a formula to use
in a math test

memorizing
some facts

Learning is
about growing and
about change
and it can also be...

altering behavior in
a certain way

example:
being polite on the bus,
how to judge about
giving up your seat

example:
being able to decide
which topic to concentrate
on at the moment

example:
new facts about
ancient Egypt

gaining more knowledge
on certain topic

example:
background information
about intercultural
learning in Italy

becoming more skillful
on doing something

example:
making a budget for
a project

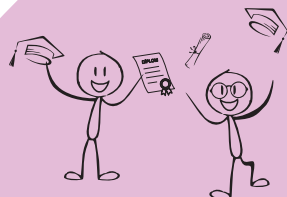
cooperating with others

example:
repairing a machine

example:
getting to know each
other in a group

example:
getting feedback
from others

Did you know that after “finishing” your project you will receive an ESC certificate and aside from that you can get a “diploma” that describes your competencies? It has a special name—**YOUTHPASS**.



YOUTHPASS IS 2 IN 1

1) It is a **certificate** that proves that you were part of an ESC project.



2) It allows you to give yourself „marks”. It is a tool to self-reflect in 8 areas. Yes! You yourself! Not the project coordinator, not mentor, or any other person evaluate what was your growth and development in these 8 key competencies. You do it yourself.



While you work on your self-evaluation, think about who will read it. Your next employer, university admissions committee, or maybe you want it to be like your diary? Therefore, use language appropriately to your needs.



Find out
more about
competences
here!

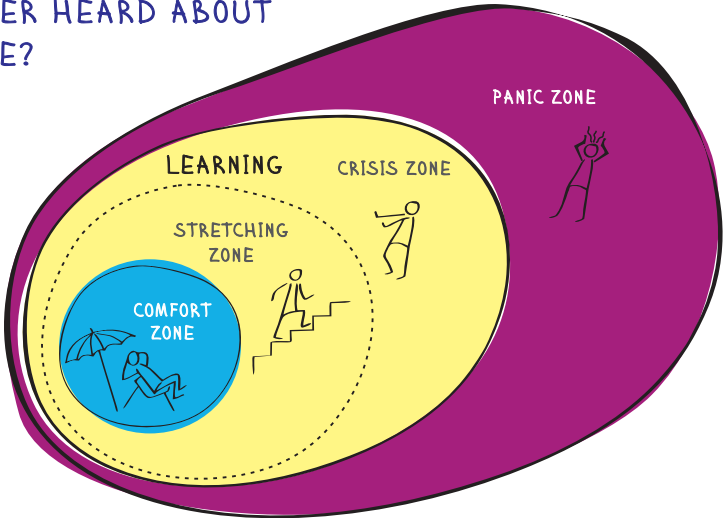
1. Multilingual competence
2. Personal, social, and learning to learn competence
3. Citizenship competence
4. Entrepreneurship competence
5. Competence in cultural awareness and expression
6. Digital competence
7. Mathematical competence and competence in science, technology, and engineering (STEM)
8. Literacy Competence



Take a look at a short video about Youthpass and ask for access to it from your project coordinator.



HAVE YOU EVER HEARD ABOUT COMFORT ZONE?



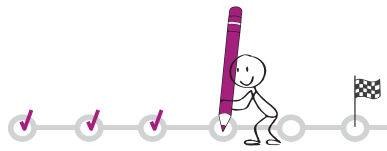
Magic happens when we step out of our comfort zone and so does learning, especially if we want not only to get some new knowledge, but also to change personal perceptions, values, and attitudes.

THINK OF THE TASKS YOU NEED TO DO AS A VOLUNTEER:

Which of them are in Comfort, Stretching, Crisis, and Panic zone?

COMFORT	STRETCHING	CRISIS	PANIC

THINK ABOUT YOUR NEXT MONTH



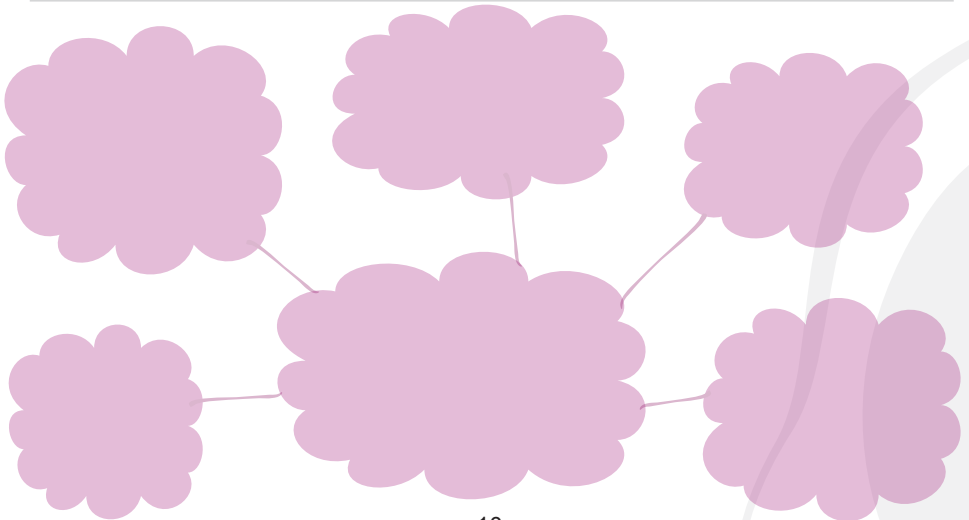
What do you want to accomplish this month?

What will be your goal this month?

What specific steps will bring you there?

How will you know you have reached it?

What can help you to succeed?



Imagine that your month or even the whole ESC activity looks like a road. What would it look like? What is the final goal you are aiming for? What smaller milestones, halfway victories you could celebrate on the way there?



Be creative – draw, write, create.

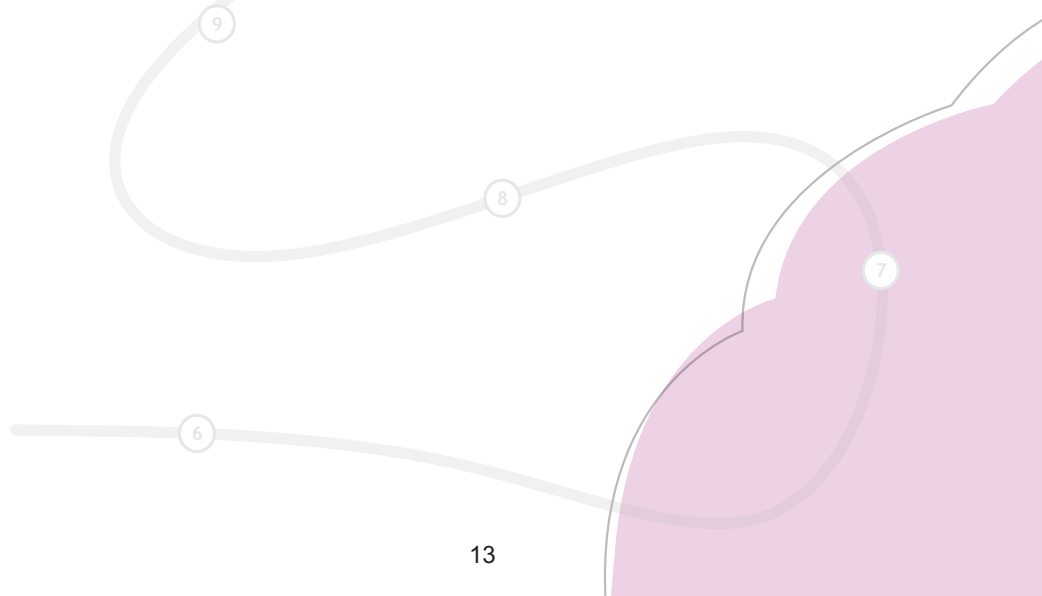
MARK WHICH CHALLENGES YOU HAVE ENCOUNTERED
AND THINK WHAT YOU CAN DO TO FEEL BETTER,
THEN TALK TO YOUR MENTOR

ADAPTATION CHALLENGES

<input type="checkbox"/> Food	<input type="checkbox"/> Flat mates	<input type="checkbox"/> Missing family
<input type="checkbox"/> New environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/> Language barrier
<input type="checkbox"/> Making new friends	<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural differences	

VOLUNTEERING CHALLENGES

<input type="checkbox"/> Overworking	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of self-confidence	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagreements with host organization
<input type="checkbox"/> Periods of stress	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of needed skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Disorganization
<input type="checkbox"/> Routine	<input type="checkbox"/> Not enough support	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychological difficulties
<input type="checkbox"/> Not having enough motivation	<input type="checkbox"/> Dealing with a limited budget	



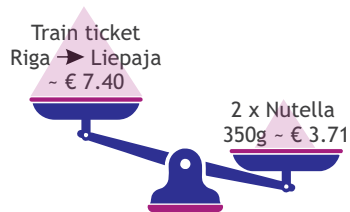
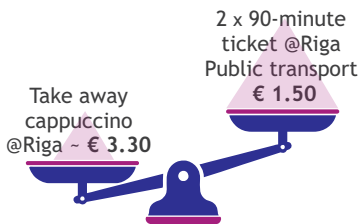
MY MONEY TRACKER

Track your expenses for one week. Then compare with the next week. Try all months.

Where and how can I save to travel and do more? _____

How much EUR _____ do I need to save every month to reach my target _____ ?

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO LIVE IN LATVIA?



A kilogram of apples ~ € 0.60

1l milk ~ € 1.20

200 g butter ~ € 2.5

Soft drinks 1l ~ € 1.80

Pasta 1kg ~ € 1.15

LIST YOUR SOURCES AND AMOUNT OF INCOME IN THE TABLE.
LIST WHAT YOUR EXPENSES ARE? WHAT IS THE CONCLUSION?

Month _____

Income		Expenses	
Pocket money	_____ euro	_____ (item)	_____ euro
Food money	_____ euro	_____ (item)	_____ euro
			_____ euro
	Sum _____		Sum _____

HOW TO SAVE MONEY?

1. Keep a record of your income and expenses
2. Cooperate with other volunteers
3. Buy products in large packages
4. Compare prices in shops
5. Buy seasonal products
6. Prepare meals by yourself
7. Walk, cycle, hitchhike
8. Avoid impulsive purchases and plan spending ahead
9. _____
10. _____



Take a look at
the ESC Guide!

Q&A ABOUT THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS



How many hours a week am I expected to work as a volunteer? And how many hours a day?

According to the guidelines, 30-38h per week. The given time includes your work time, preparation, language learning, meeting with your mentor to reflect on learning, and time for your initiative.



How many holidays per week am I entitled to as a volunteer?

2 days in a row. It doesn't always have to be Saturday and Sunday. The volunteer and the organization jointly agree.



How many vacation days does a volunteer get?

2 vacation days for each month. Spend them as you choose – use them every two months or add up and spend more days in a row.



How much does the organization pay for my accommodation?

Each city has different prices for accommodations. Feel free to ask your organization, if you want to know.



How many euros should I receive as a volunteer for food per month?

Each organization adjusts the amount of food expenses according to the possibilities depending on the other costs of the project.



How much pocket money am I supposed to receive as a volunteer?

Pocket money may vary. It depends on the year when your project is granted. Find out the amount in the ESC guidelines. The amount is calculated per day you take part in the project (including holidays and vacation days).



How many euros can the organization give me for my arrival and departure tickets?

Your travel expenses from your hometown to Latvia (round trip) should be covered according to the EU distance calculator and ESC guidelines.





What is the ESC team volunteering? Can I participate in it and when?

Any young person (18-30 years old) can participate in ESC volunteering team activity for 2 weeks-2 months multiple times. When your activity finishes – look up for volunteering activity that meets your solidarity interests and your learning goals and apply! You can apply through the European Youth Portal, the same platform you applied for this project, or reach out to your local organization that is involved in ESC.



Can I participate in an Erasmus+ Youth exchange or training while I am on a volunteering project?

You have committed yourself to a long-term activity, therefore we encourage using most of it! It is allowed, only if it provides value to your activity here and your absence does not have a negative impact on your volunteering activity. The funding must not "overlap", therefore your organization must contact the National Agency prior and inform about it. After receiving approval, your volunteer activity must be paused for a given time period.



Is the ESC long-term volunteering activity a “once in a lifetime” opportunity?

Yes, it is! Enjoy!



What should I do with my mentor?

Your mentor will help you reflect on your experience and set learning goals, as well as discuss possible solutions, if you encounter some difficulties and conflicts during your activity. The mentor will be there for you to tell you about the local environment, so have a cup of coffee or explore local opportunities together (go to a museum, visit a cultural event...). Sometimes organizations are willing to pay for the expenses incurred at your meetings. Feel free to discuss this possibility with your organization.



What about insurance?

Before your arrival, you should receive an email about insurance while you take part in the activity. If you haven't received it – ask your organization to ensure it as soon as possible.



How can I contact the Latvian National Agency?

If there are problems that you can't solve with the help of your host organization, mentor, and your support organization – reach out: <https://jaunatne.gov.lv/kontakti/>.



Did you know that within your ESC project, you can come up with your **personal project**? It is your initiative that does not need to be connected with your volunteering topic, but should have a goal and you will need to find time and resources. Ask for support from your host organization. For example:

- * Your daily tasks are in kindergarten. Your personal project is a photo exhibition in a library.
- * Your volunteering activity is in the senior house. Your personal project is a book club at a local school.



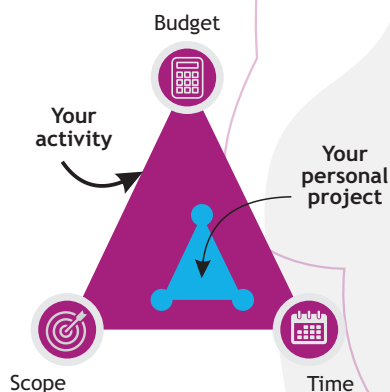
Paco's (France) personal project
"Sport Dynamic"



Hannah's (Austria) personal project
"Mindfulness hike"



Sophie (Italy) personal project
videos "Learning languages"



ADD SOME IDEAS YOU WOULD LIKE TO IMPLEMENT:

- * _____
- * _____
- * _____
- * _____
- * _____
- * _____
- * _____

MY PERSONAL PROJECT...

Needs of local community ...

Tasks to reach goal...





Resources I need...

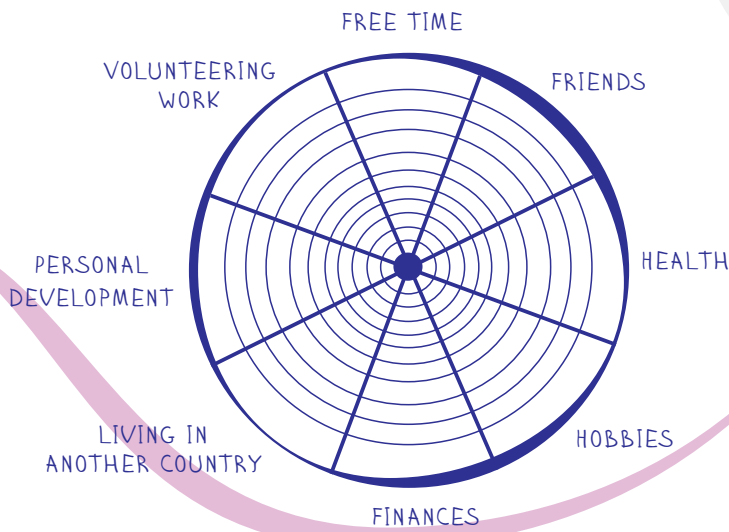
How does my plan look
timewise...





THE WHEEL OF LIFE

The Wheel of Life provides a snapshot of your well-being and the level of satisfaction in your current circumstances. It helps you consider different areas of your life and assess what is off balance. As such, it helps to identify areas that need more attention. Please assess each area of the Wheel of Life.



- 1. Evaluate all areas — assign each category a mark on a scale of 0 (lowest attention) to 10 (highest attention).
- 2. Connect each mark around the circle and color it. By connecting the dots, you can see just how each area compares and decide whether your Wheel appears to be balanced.

What do you see in your Wheel?

What is the weakest part?

What is the strongest? Why?

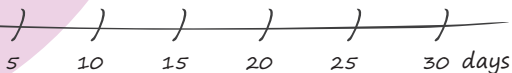
What areas you would like to improve? What steps will you take?



HOW DOES YOUR "PROJECT CARDIOGRAM"
LOOK FOR THIS MONTH? DRAW IT HERE!

EXCITEMENT

DEPRESSION



TAKE A BIT OF TIME AND THINK OF THE FOLLOWING



The most difficult task of the month...

The highlight of the month...



I'm especially proud of...

I thank myself for...



The biggest challenge in this month was...

My favorite mistake I cherish...



I enjoyed the most in this month ...

This month I discovered about myself ...



One thing that I could do differently ...

One thing that I would like to take with me...



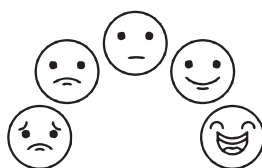
COLOR YOUR RESULTS

ENERGY LEVEL

0%



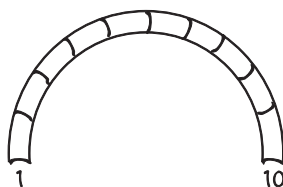
100%



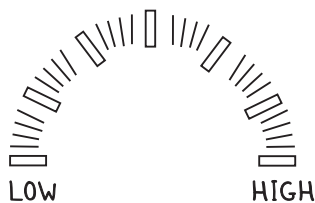
BAD

GOOD

WELL-BEING
THIS MONTH



EVALUATION OF THE
WORK DONE



LOW

HIGH

WORKLOAD

QUOTE OF THE MONTH





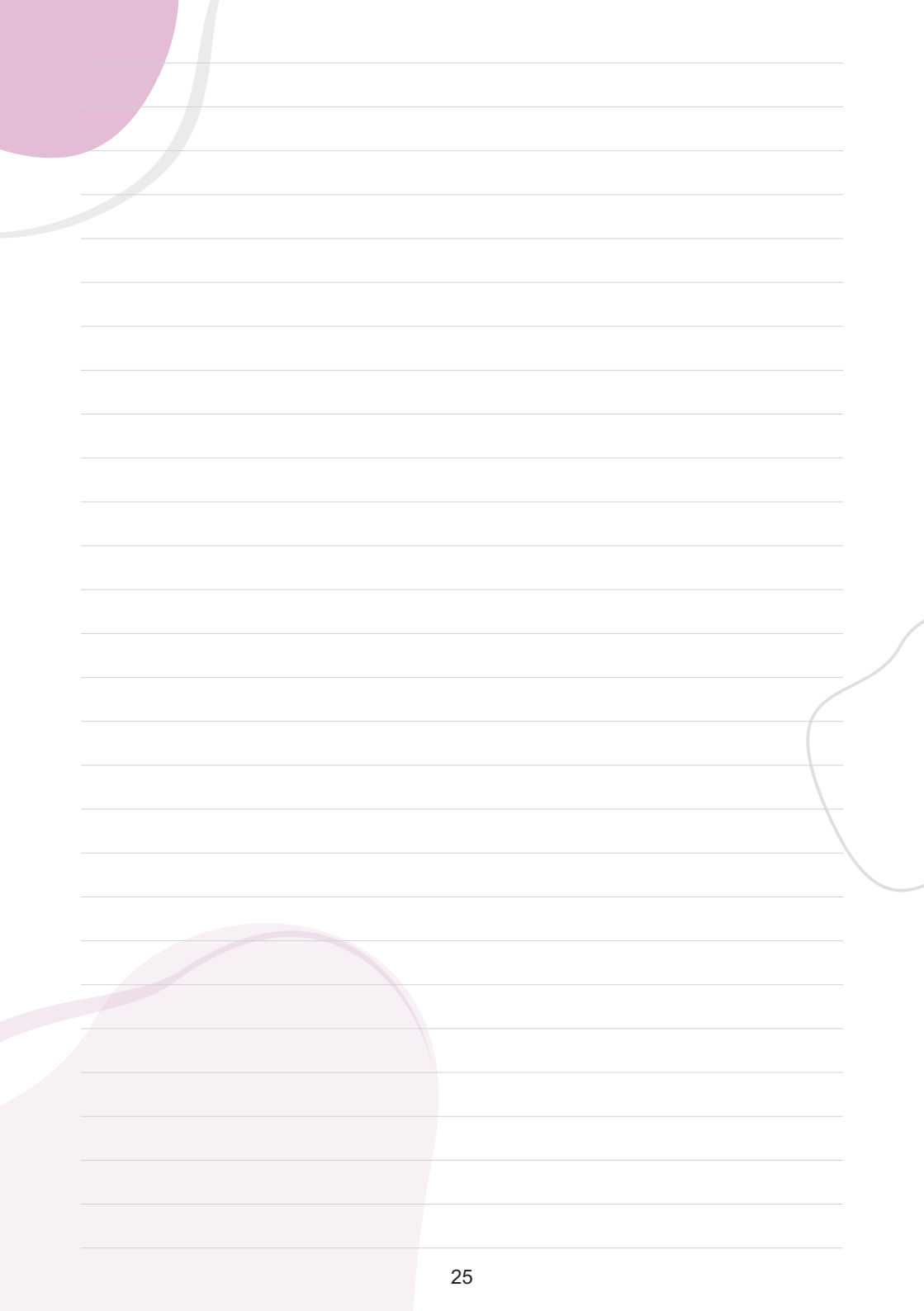
TO-DO...

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
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- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

AND DON'T FORGET...

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

..blank canvas... use me...



A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO THE LATVIAN LANGUAGE

Learning Latvian will help you navigate in local culture better and it's the secret to winning the hearts of locals! Give it a try!

SVEIKI

ČAU

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1.Čau | 1.Hi! |
| 2.Sveiki | 2.Hi! |
| 3.Labdien | 3.Hello/ Good day |
| 4.Mani sauc... | 4.My name is... |
| 5.Es esmu brīvprātīgais | 5.I am a volunteer |
| 6.Lai Tev laba diena | 6.Have a good day |
| 7.Paldies | 7.Thank you |
| 8.Lūdzu | 8.Please / You are welcome (depends on context) |
| 9.Kā Tev iet? | 9.How are you? |
| 10.Labi/slikti/normāli | 10.Ok/ good/bad/ normal |
| 11.Jā/nē | 11.Yes/no |
| 12.Cik maksā kartupeļi? | 12.How much costs potatoes? |
| 13.Iedod velnam mazo
pirkstiņu paņems visu roku | 13.Give the devil a little finger and he
will take the hand |
| 14.Veca mīla nerūsē | 14.Old love doesn't rust |
| 15.Mūžu dzīvo – mūžu mācies! | 15.As long as you live – you learn! |

Source: www.proverbicals.com/latvian-proverbs

ADD USEFUL PHRASES AND TRANSLATION BELOW:



Learn Latvian
by yourself online

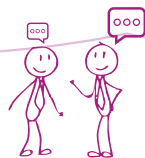


Other materials created by the
Latvian Language Agency
for learning Latvian

TIPS FOR LIVING IN LATVIA

*Most of the sellers in the store will not greet you, will not talk to you, will not smile. That's how it goes here.

-Valters (Latvia)



*WINTER—everyone has at least 2 layers of clothes to function. Icy and snowy roads take more time to reach destination. Seem logical but in real life you will be surprised.

-Hannah (Austria)



*Loneliness will come at one point. Keep making connections. Latvians need more time to open up. They will do it, even if they look sad most of the time. Don't give up. AND don't take it personally. It's just northern people.

-Paco (France)



*Latvia is a beautiful country with a very distinct culture closely connected to its nature. Go out there, explore and experience. Latvians love to share their customs and traditions, which also makes for an easy way to connect with them. :)

-Viktor (Czech Republic)



ADD TIPS THAT HAVE HELPED YOU:

BUCKET LIST OF 4 SEASONS @LATVIA

SPRING

- ☐ Drink birch and maple juice straight from the tree trunk
- ☐ Try Easter egg traditional coloring & fights
- ☐ Photo shooting in a blossoming apple orchard

SUMMER

- ☐ Try Summer solstice Ligo night rituals
- ☐ Making cheese
- ☐ Making a flower wreath
- ☐ Jump over bonfire
- ☐ Looking for a fern flower... :)
- ☐ Wait for a sun rise
- ☐ Collect herbal tea in nature
- ☐ Find amber on the seashore
- ☐ Watch meteor shower on August
- ☐ Pick up berries in forest and do jam from them (consult locals!)

AUTUMN

- ☐ Do mushrooming
- ☐ Light a candle on November 11 @Riga
- ☐ See the Latvian president live
- ☐ Try dancing Latvian folk-dances

WINTER

- ☐ Do winter swimming
- ☐ Try traditional Latvian bathhouse ritual
- ☐ Ice-skating on well frozen lake
- ☐ Watch a hockey match in Arena Riga

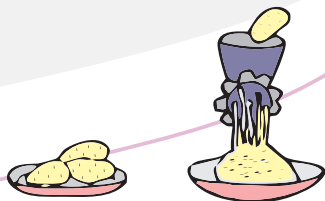
WHAT I LOVE ABOUT LATVIA AND LATVIANS





CRISPY POTATO PANCAKES

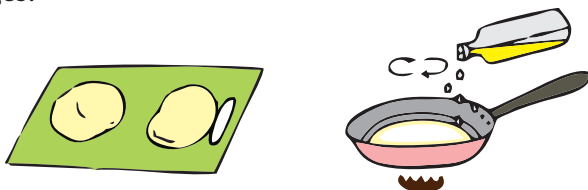
1. Peel and coarsely grate the potatoes. If you fancy, add peeled and grated garlic.



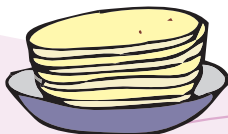
2. Rub the grated potatoes into a bowl, add salt and mix. If you want the potato mass not to turn dark, add a pinch of potato starch, a teaspoon of lemon juice or vinegar. Or don't worry and save money. :)



3. Heat the oil in a pan (do not spare the oil, use a good amount, it will be crispier), spoon the potato wedges into the pan, flatten them into a pancake shape and fry them on both sides until the pancakes have beautiful golden and crispy edges.



4. Serve with sour cream, dill or lingonberry jam.



MUST TRY FOOD BUCKET LIST:

- ☐ Cold beetroot soup for summer
- ☐ Dill chips
- ☐ Kvass (non-alcoholic grain drink)
- ☐ Garlic and dill sauces
- ☐ Latvian sklandrausis (potato and carrot pie)
- ☐ Birch and maple juices
- ☐ Fried garlic rye bread
- ☐ Kombucha (tea mushroom drink)
- ☐ Latvian sprats
- ☐ Ligo cheese
- ☐ Hemp butter
- ☐ Black bread
- ☐ Rye bread soup
- ☐ Grey peas with/without bacon



BONUS

Stories of ex-volunteers in Latvia



Paco from France did his volunteering activity in Riga – take a look!



Lila and Javier created an insightful vlog about solidarity activities here in Latvia visiting different organizations and asking volunteers to share their own experiences. Take a look!

How about Latvians who also have been ESC volunteers?

*Meet Paula Šulca – she was volunteer in Youth center in Slovenia and now she supports volunteers in Latvia – reach her out by Instagram @paula_sulca

*Meet Deniss who was showing his solidarity in Italy, but now he is back in Latvia and is open to your questions – reach him out by Instagram @lagzdenis

APPS & RESOURCES FOR BETTER LIFE IN LATVIA



Public transport in Latvia
www.1188.lv/en/transport



“Bolt” is a popular app to order food, taxi, rent a scooter etc.



“Mobilly” app you can buy public transport tickets
www.mobilly.lv

Join the website: academy.europa.eu Latvian language learning community and find useful tips for your living experience in Latvia. **eu|academy**



Join the website: www.dodies.lv – it shows places to go for walks in nature. Hiking trails, picnic areas, tent sites, bird towers and bike routes. Free objects accessible to all.

Download the “Nature Tourism” app:
More than 500 different nature tourism destinations – both nature trails and viewpoints, towers, throughout the territory of Latvia.



Find out what to see and do in Riga: www.liveriga.com/en

Emergency

In a case of emergency (fire, medical assistance, rescue) call **112**

Add here a phone number _____ of your project coordinator

Henner insurance number +34917895722



Jaunatnes starptautisko
programmu aģentūra



**EIROPAS
SOLIDARITĀTES
KORPUSS**

KOPĀ MĒS VARAM.



Learning Journey journal is created as inspiration from Iceland Learning journal and Baltic Regional Fund “Bring love journal” where you can find even more activities for self-reflection. Take a look!