

Seven universities of Central and Eastern Europe sign a Memorandum of Cooperation in the field of culture

On 29 May 2024, gathered in Riga (Latvia) seven European universities signed a Memorandum of Cooperation in the field of culture. The signing ceremony took place at the University of Latvia in the framework of the international project “Twenty years of cultural enrichment in reunified Europe” (the CAMINO Project).

The Memorandum was signed by the University of Latvia, Vilnius University (Lithuania), the University of Tartu (Estonia), the University of Opole (Poland), J. E. Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem (the Czech Republic), Comenius University Bratislava (Slovakia) and Ludovika University of Public Service (Hungary). The goal of this Memorandum is to create and develop a Network of European Universities, their culture institutions, and students, and to strengthen the presence of culture within universities and local communities.

“We are agreeing not just to cooperate closely in the field of culture, organise conferences, artistic events and educational programmes. By committing to fostering cultural expression in our universities, we are saying “yes” to a more humane and peaceful world. [...] Culture helps people understand each other better. When we know our neighbours, we are less likely to be afraid, hostile or lonely, and we can start doing great things together. I wish that signing of this Memorandum becomes a powerful kick-off for an active and fruitful friendship among the students and academics of our universities for many years to come, attracting more partners to this network,” in his address to the partners of the Network and other invited guests said the host of the event, **Professor Gundars Bērziņš, Rector of the University of Latvia.**

The Network will serve as a platform for promoting European culture and its integration into educational activities, a platform to share experiences in culture, arts, and educational spheres through innovative technologies. Currently, the Network is formed by seven universities, but it will be open to new members to widen culture mobility possibilities. In June 2024, an online platform “Universities4.culture.eu” will be launched to serve as a practical tool for collaboration.

About the CAMINO Project

To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the 2004 European Union (EU) enlargement, seven universities from Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia have joined forces to implement the CAMINO Project. Its aim is to explore the impact of the 2004 EU enlargement on various cultural aspects and values of the new member states, as well as to create stronger cultural and academic bonds within CEE. It also lays a foundation for a long-term cultural cooperation network. The list of partners in the CAMINO Project also includes King Danylo University in Ukraine as the Associated Partner, and a Latvian film studio "VERY films" that is producing a documentary film about cultural life in the Project partner countries. The CAMINO Project is financed by the EU CERV programme.