The Memorandum of Understanding among the Latvian Association of Castles and Manors, the Estonian Manor Association, and the Lithuanian Association of Castles and Manors on cooperation

The Latvian Association of Castles and Manors,
The Estonian Manor Association,
and
The Lithuanian Association of Castles and Manors,
hereinafter referred to as the "Parties",

recognising the importance of cultural and historical heritage and its contribution to economic, cultural and social life of the three Baltic States;

taking into account historical and cultural heritage, and similar cultural and tourism resources of their countries;

giving great importance to the promotion of cultural and historical identity and shared values in the areas of culture and cultural heritage;

willing to strengthen the positions of palaces, castles and manors in cultural, tourism, hospitality and related industries;

desiring to contribute to the cultural heritage conservation in the country of each Party, the Baltic States, the Baltic Sea Region, and the European Union;

recognizing that the Parties are facing similar opportunities and challenges in trying to adapt to the changing environment both within the international, European Union and national level;

considering that the promotion of mutual understanding among the Parties will benefit the interests of the each Party;

wishing to set forth the practical framework arrangements for the implementation of trilateral cooperation activities of like-minded Parties;

noting the Programme of Cultural Cooperation between the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Estonia, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania for the years 2012-2014 signed in Vilnius on 8 June 2012;
noting the Agreement among the Ministry of Culture and Education of the Republic of Estonia, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania on co-operation in the field of culture signed in Vilnius on 8 July 1994;

noting the Agreement among the Government of the Republic of Estonia, the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on co-operation in the field of tourism signed in Visaginas on 26 June 2002;

noting the long-term advantages of developing the mutual support of the Parties and its members for the future international development projects;

and

wishing to speak with one voice at all levels when possible and needed;

have reached the following understanding:

Article 1

1. The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to provide an overall and practical framework, terms and conditions for cooperation among the Parties.

2. The main objective is to enhance friendly ties among the Parties and its members by defining the scope of cooperation on issues of common interest [matters of mutual interest] with an international dimension and implementing such cooperation in accordance with the principles of equality, reciprocity and mutual benefit.

3. This Memorandum of Understanding is not intended to create legally enforceable rights or obligations.

4. This Memorandum of Understanding will be implemented within the framework of the respective laws and regulations of the Parties, the international and European Union laws, and international conventions and recommendations on cultural heritage.

Article 2

Cooperation among the Parties may take place in the following areas:

a) awareness of the unique cultural and historical value and environment of the castles and manors, and their conservation and restoration, maintenance and development;

b) promotion of the castles and manors as a valuable inheritance and tangible reminder of the cultural heritage of the Baltic States;
c) legal and institutional issues and frameworks;
d) culture, tourism and related policy development;
e) funding opportunities;
f) studies on cultural and historical heritage;
g) education and training of personnel;
h) use of information and communication technologies;
i) sustainability and corporate social responsibility;
j) cooperation with tourism, hospitality and related industries;
k) development of cultural and tourism infrastructure and products;
l) quality of cultural and tourism services; and
m) other areas of cooperation, as jointly decided by the Parties.

Article 3

Cooperation in the areas set forth in Article 1 may include the following:

a) exchange of related information, experience and events;
b) share the knowledge and best practices;
c) dissemination of publications and research materials;
d) mutual visits;
e) exchange of staff;
f) exchange of experts;
g) common expertise;
h) advice on appropriate methods of conservation and restoration;
i) research activities;
j) joint project applications;
k) organization of joint national and international meetings, seminars, workshops and conferences on cultural heritage and related issues;
l) common marketing activities;
m) promotion of the direct cooperation among the Parties’ members;
n) liaison with other bodies, including governmental and local authorities, non-governmental organizations and private sector;
o) joint participation in international tourism fairs and workshops, and
p) other forms of cooperation as mutually agreed upon among the Parties.

Article 4

1. Specific cooperative projects under this Memorandum of Understanding shall be carried out by the Parties and its members.

2. The Parties may also invite participation of other non-governmental organizations, governmental and public institutions, private organizations or natural persons.
Article 5

1. It is understood that the extent of the specific projects undertaken under this Memorandum of Understanding will be contingent upon the availability of financial resources of the Parties, and its members.

2. Unless otherwise agreed, each Party will cover its own expenses derived from cooperation activities and projects under the auspices of this Memorandum of Understanding.

3. The Parties shall have the right to refuse to participate in any cooperative project under this Memorandum of Understanding specify the reason.

Article 6

1. To ensure and monitor the implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding, the Parties may establish a Joint Steering Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Committee), which will meet at times to be jointly decided with a view to exchange information on matters of mutual interest.

2. Each Party may determine the quantitative and qualitative membership of the Committee on the basis of the principle of equality.

3. The Committee may meet once a year, alternately in the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Lithuania.

4. In order to implement this Memorandum of Understanding the Parties may decide to establish permanent Working Groups and ad hoc expert groups with representatives from each Party.

Article 7

All materials and documents produced as a result of this Memorandum of Understanding or as a result of any specific cooperative projects under this Memorandum of Understanding shall belong jointly to the Parties, and/or its members, who participate in specific projects, and will not be used, distributed or published without the written consent of the Parties.

Article 8

The working language within the framework of this Memorandum of Understanding will be English or as otherwise agreed.
Article 9

1. This Memorandum of Understanding will enter into force on the day of its signature.

2. This Memorandum of Understanding shall remain in force indefinitely, unless one of the Parties not later than three months prior to expiration of this Memorandum of Understanding notifies in writing the other Parties on its intention to terminate it.

3. This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended at any time, in writing, by the mutual consent of the Parties.

4. Any dispute concerning the interpretation or application of this Memorandum of Understanding will be resolved through negotiations between the Parties at the lowest possible level and will not be referred to any national or international institution or other third party for settlement.


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