



Sillamäe Lastekaitse Ühing

~SILLAMÄE SOCIETY FOR CHILD WELFARE~



**Nordic Council
of Ministers**

Towards Sustainable Food Systems: The Nordic-Baltic Civil Society Approach



Introduction



The international project "Towards Sustainable Food Systems – the Nordic-Baltic Civil Society Approach" successfully brought together civil society organisations, youth representatives, educators, experts and community leaders from across the Nordic and Baltic region to strengthen awareness about sustainable food systems, healthy lifestyles, and responsible consumption.

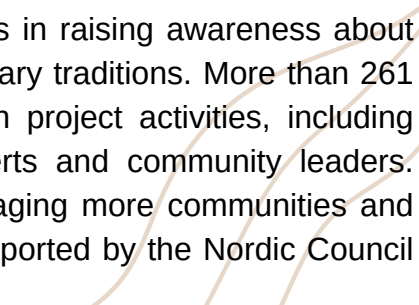
The project was implemented by Sillamäe Society for Child Welfare (Estonia) in cooperation with Green Habito RY (Finland), UngOrg (Norway), Compass (Denmark), Möllans Basement (Sweden), PEPP (Iceland) and Talent City (Latvia) with support from the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The project uses resources and insights from food.sscw.ee and Nordic-Baltic Food Culture to develop a comprehensive approach to food sustainability. It focused on environmental, social and economic sustainability, promoting sustainable food production, reduction of food waste, circular economy principles, healthy nutrition and community-based green initiatives. By combining traditional Nordic and Baltic recipes with modern sustainable cooking techniques, the project aims to inspire individuals and communities to adopt greener habits. We focused on empowering young people and civil society organisations to promote sustainable lifestyles and the green transition in their communities.

The educational outreach component disseminates knowledge about sustainable food practices through workshops, online resources and community events. It demonstrates how traditional Nordic and Baltic culinary practices can be adapted to address contemporary sustainability challenges - and how CSOs and young people can act as multipliers of sustainable change in their own communities.

The programme comprised a series of international trainings, study visits, expert meetings, workshops, conferences and practical cooking activities across Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Estonia. These practical sessions taught participants the skills required to prepare traditional Nordic and Baltic dishes using sustainable ingredients and methods, while building capacity in CSO leadership and green transition thinking.

Since its inception, the project has made significant progress in raising awareness about sustainable food practices and celebrating Nordic-Baltic culinary traditions. More than 261 participants from 7 Nordic and Baltic countries took part in project activities, including youth, educators, NGO representatives, sustainability experts and community leaders. Moving forward, the network aims to expand its reach, engaging more communities and fostering a broader movement towards sustainable living supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers.



Partners

The project was implemented by seven civil society organisations from across the Nordic and Baltic region, united by a shared commitment to sustainable development, youth empowerment and green transition.

Sillamäe Society for Child Welfare (Estonia) Lead Partner

Sillamäe Society for Child Welfare (SSCW) is an Estonian civil society organisation dedicated to the well-being of children, youth and families. The organisation implements educational, social and community-based programmes focused on sustainable development, youth participation and civic engagement. As the lead partner of the project, SSCW coordinated all international activities, organised the Nordic-Baltic Sustainability Conference and the Young Chef Competition-Award in Estonia, and led the development of the project's digital guidebook. SSCW brings extensive experience in international cooperation, youth work and community-based sustainability initiatives across the Nordic-Baltic region.

Green Habito RY (Finland)

Green Habito RY is a Finnish civil society organisation focused on sustainable living, environmental education and community-based green initiatives. The organisation promotes eco-friendly practices, sustainability awareness and responsible consumption among youth and local communities. As a key project partner, Green Habito RY led the first international training and kickoff meeting in Helsinki and Vantaa, contributed expertise on Nordic food culture and sustainable food systems, and played an active role in developing the project's educational materials and digital guidebook. Green Habito RY also initiated the Nordic-Baltic Young Chef Award as a practical tool for promoting sustainable food culture among young people.

UngOrg (Norway)

UngOrg is a Norwegian umbrella organisation representing youth civil society organisations in Oslo. It supports young people's participation in civic life, community development and sustainable initiatives. Within the project, UngOrg contributed Norwegian perspectives on youth engagement, healthy lifestyles and sustainable consumption, sharing best practices and expertise on involving young people as active agents of green transition. UngOrg participated in international trainings, expert meetings and the Nordic-Baltic Sustainability Conference, strengthening the network of Nordic-Baltic youth civil society organisations.

Compass Denmark (Denmark)

Compass Denmark is a Danish organisation with expertise in sustainable gardening, eco-friendly consumption habits and environmental education. The organisation brings practical knowledge of sustainable food systems, community-based green initiatives and responsible consumption practices. Within the project, Compass Denmark contributed to international trainings and expert meetings, sharing Danish best practices in sustainable food culture, school nutrition and environmental awareness. The organisation also actively participated in panel discussions at the Nordic-Baltic Sustainability Conference, contributing to the development of joint recommendations for sustainable food policy.

Möllans Basement (Sweden)

Möllans Basement is a Swedish civil society organisation working with youth development, creative education and community engagement. The organisation contributed Swedish expertise on sustainable lifestyles, youth participation and green transition to the project. As a partner, Möllans Basement played an active role in the second international training and study visit in Malmö and Lund, helping to connect project participants with local sustainable food initiatives, universities and agroecology farms. The organisation also contributed to the development of educational materials and participated in the Young Chef Competition-Award as a jury member.

PEPP — Grasróttarstarfi Fólks í Fátækt (Iceland)

PEPP is an Icelandic grassroots organisation working with social services, community support and youth empowerment, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups. The organisation brings Icelandic perspectives on sustainable food culture, community resilience and youth engagement in green transition processes. Within the project, PEPP contributed expertise on food waste reduction, community-based solutions and sustainable consumption habits. PEPP representatives actively participated in international trainings, the expert meeting in Copenhagen and the Nordic-Baltic Sustainability Conference, sharing Icelandic experiences and contributing to joint recommendations for sustainable food systems.

Talent City (Latvia)

Talent City is a Latvian civil society organisation engaged in youth development, civic participation and community empowerment. The organisation brings Baltic perspectives on sustainable development, youth leadership and community-based initiatives to the project. Within the project, Talent City contributed Latvian experiences in sustainable food culture and youth engagement, participated in international trainings and expert meetings, and represented Latvia in the Nordic-Baltic Young Chef Competition-Award as a jury member. Talent City played an important role in strengthening the Baltic dimension of the Nordic-Baltic cooperation network.

The project was supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers the official body for formal inter-governmental co-operation between the Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, as well as the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland. The Nordic Council of Ministers promotes sustainable development, green transition, social cohesion and democratic participation across the Nordic and Baltic region. Support from the Nordic Council of Ministers enabled the project to implement a comprehensive programme of international activities, develop educational materials and build a lasting Nordic-Baltic civil society cooperation network on sustainable food systems.

Project Timeline

25 MAY 2025 Virtual Kick-off Meeting

ONLINE Virtual Kick-off Meeting SDGs, Nordic Vision 2030, human rights approach to food systems, 30 participants



6–9 JUNE 2025 I Training & Kickoff Meeting

HELSINKI, FINLAND 🇫🇮 I Training & Kickoff Meeting Nordic food culture, sustainable food systems, healthy lifestyles, Start of Digital Guidebook development – 15 participants



28–31 AUGUST 2025 II Training & Study Visit

MALMÖ & LUND, SWEDEN 🇸🇪 II Training & Study Visit – Plant-based food, agroecology farm visits, green consumption, Malmö University, Lund University, Alnarp farm – 22 participants



6–9 NOVEMBER 2025 Partners & Experts Meeting

COPENHAGEN, DENMARK 🇩🇰 Partners & Experts Meeting – Final editing meeting of Digital Guidebook – 21 participants



1–2 DECEMBER 2025 Nordic-Baltic Sustainability Conference

TALLINN, ESTONIA 🇪🇪 Nordic-Baltic Sustainability Conference "Transforming Nordic Sustainable Food Systems through Policy Change" Keynotes, Panel discussions, Networking – 143 participants



3–4 DECEMBER 2025 Nordic-Baltic Young Chef Award 2025 🏆

NARVA, ESTONIA Innovation on Tradition. Four international teams from Estonia, Latvia and the Nordic countries competed preparing sustainable 3-course menus using local seasonal ingredients. 🇪🇺 Estonia · 🇪🇺 Nordic joint team · 🇪🇺 Latvia 30 participants.



I Training in Helsinki: Embracing Nordic Food Culture

HELSINKI, FINLAND · 6–9 JUNE 2025



The first international training took place in Helsinki, Finland, on 6-9th June 2025 and focused on sustainable food systems, healthy lifestyles, Nordic food culture and environmentally responsible consumption. Experts from Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Estonia and Latvia shared experiences related to school nutrition, sustainable gardening, food waste reduction and community awareness. During the training, partners also started developing the practical international guidebook **"Towards Sustainable Food Systems: A Guidebook for CSOs, Youth and Educators"**.

The training brought together young people, educators, civil society organisation representatives and experts to develop knowledge of sustainable food systems, healthy lifestyles, environmentally responsible consumption and Nordic and Baltic food culture. The goal of the training was to strengthen international cooperation and to shape young people and community representatives into promoters of sustainable thinking within their communities.

The training programme was opened by Laura Maria Rajala (Green Habito, Finland) with an introductory session on sustainable food systems. Vassili Golikov (SSCW, Estonia) presented on the affordability and community awareness of sustainable food. Experts from the Finnish Food Authority addressed the links between nutrition habits, health and the environment. Ivan Vasilevskikh (Compass Denmark) shared experiences in sustainable gardening and eco-friendly consumption. Susanne Kallanvaara (Burgården Gymnasium, Sweden) introduced practices for developing sustainable thinking among youth in schools. Stefán Olsen (PEPP, Iceland) addressed food waste reduction and community solutions. Mathias Nikolai Berg (Norway) presented on developing healthy nutrition habits through school catering.

The training included expert presentations, practical workshops, discussions and international working groups. Participants analysed sustainable food production and food security challenges, compared Nordic and Baltic food cultures, and discussed the role of innovative agriculture and New Nordic Cuisine in sustainable development. Special attention was given to youth engagement, school catering, healthy eating habits and reducing environmental impact.



II Training & Study Visit: Green Consumption and Climate-Smart Food



MALMÖ & LUND, SWEDEN · 28–31 AUGUST 2025

Participants gathered in Malmö and Lund, Sweden, for a training and study visit dedicated to sustainable food systems, green consumption and climate-smart food policies. Participants visited universities, sustainable food initiatives and agroecology farms while learning about responsible consumption, plant-based food transition, food waste reduction and environmentally friendly event organisation.

The programme focused on sustainable food systems, green and healthy food, responsible consumption and youth engagement. Participants developed practical skills and a deeper understanding of the links between food consumption, health, climate change and community responsibility. Special attention was given to reducing environmental impact, waste sorting, sustainable packaging and the role of plant-based food in building a sustainable society.

During the study visit, participants explored Malmö and Lund city policies for sustainable development and food, and visited local initiatives, universities and learning environments. The training programme was opened by Maria Gratschew (Nordic Council of Ministers Estonian Office), who also participated in a panel discussion on sustainable food systems and a just green transition. Expert sessions were delivered by Gunilla Andersson (City of Malmö), Anna Bruun Mansson (Malmö University), Claes Nilén (Lund University) and Professor Michael Søgaard Jørgensen (Aalborg University) on plant-based food transition. Vassili Golikov (SSCW) led a practical workshop on sustainable event organisation. Participants also visited Botildenborg and Alnarp Agroecology Farm, exploring sustainable agriculture and community models. Best practices and materials were collected for the Digital Guidebook.





Partners & Experts Meeting: Sustainable Food Transition



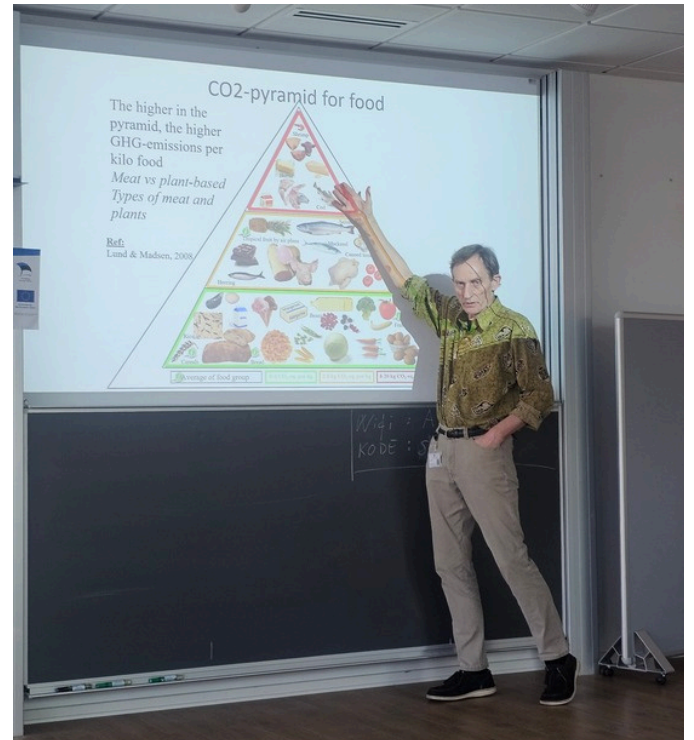
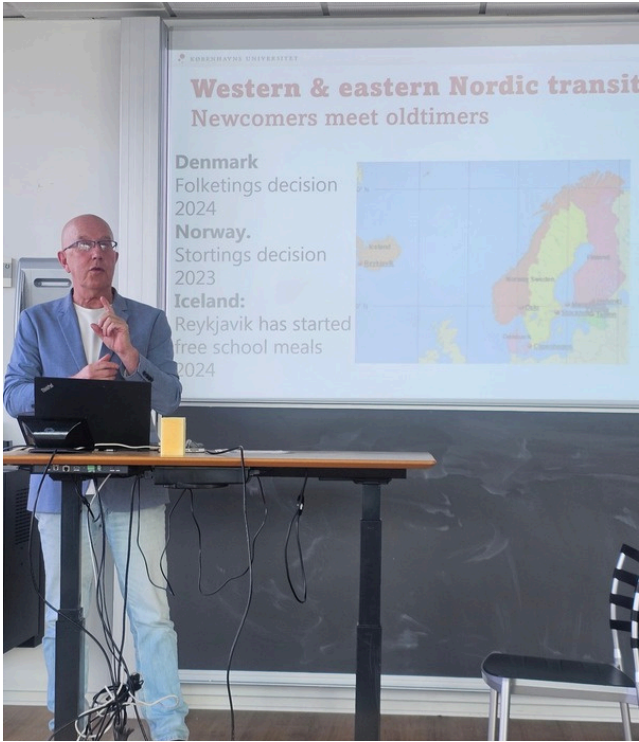
COPENHAGEN, DENMARK · 6–9 NOVEMBER 2025

The international expert meeting "Sustainable Food Transition" was organised at Aalborg University and Folkevirke in Copenhagen, Denmark. International experts discussed sustainable food policies, healthy school food systems, youth engagement and community participation in green transition processes. The meeting also focused on developing the Digital Guidebook on Sustainable Food Transition and planning future Nordic-Baltic cooperation initiatives.

The main keynote presentations were delivered by Professor Michael Søgaard Jørgensen (Aalborg University) on experiences with the transition towards production and consumption of plant-based food; Assistant Professor Beatriz de Oliveira Teixeira (University of Porto) on healthier and more sustainable eating at school — education, engagement and empowerment; and Professor Bent Mikkelsen (Lund University) on the Climate Smart Nordic School Food Revolution and the role of pupils.

Panel discussions and practical sessions involved experts from all partner countries: Stefan Olsen (PEPP, Iceland), Mathias Berg (Norway), Susanne Kallanvaara (Sweden), Laura Rajala (Finland), Ivan Vasilevskikh (Denmark), Rita Leipina (Latvia) and German Morris (Estonia). Topics covered included the role of CSOs in food system innovation, sustainable food accessibility, school food programmes, changing consumption habits and Nordic-Baltic cooperation opportunities.

The second day focused on the final editorial meeting of the Digital Guidebook on Sustainable Food Transition — reviewing chapters, case studies and educational materials, and planning translation into Nordic and Baltic languages. Future cooperation initiatives for 2026 were also planned.

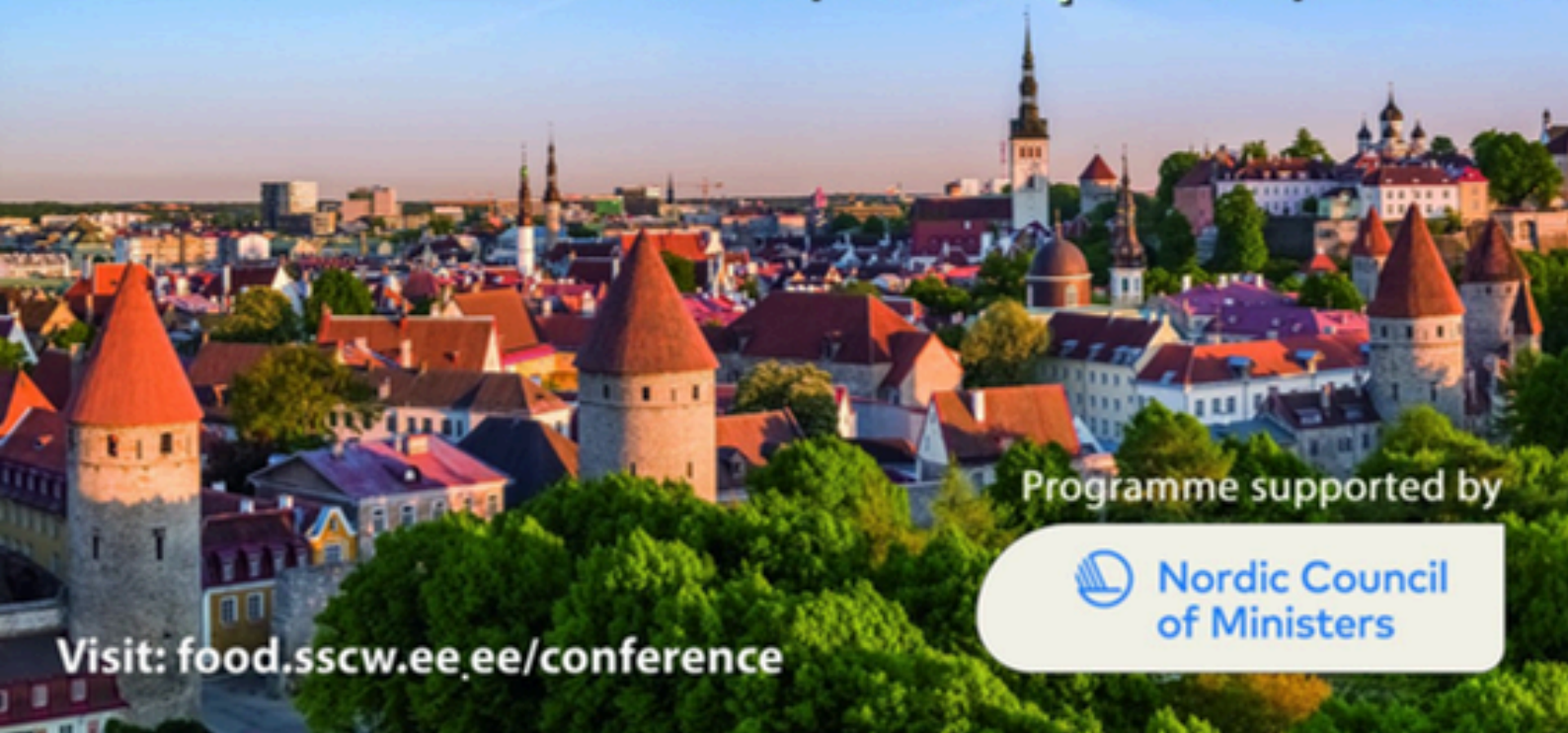




In the frame of the project
“Towards sustainable food systems –
the Nordic-Baltic civil society approach”
SSCW and its partners present the conference

“Transforming Nordic Sustainable Food Systems through policy change and cooperation”

**December 1-2nd, 2025
Tallinn, Tallink Spa Hotell, Estonia**



Programme supported by



**Nordic Council
of Ministers**

Visit: food.sscw.ee.ee/conference

Nordic-Baltic Sustainability Conference: Transforming Food Systems through Policy Change

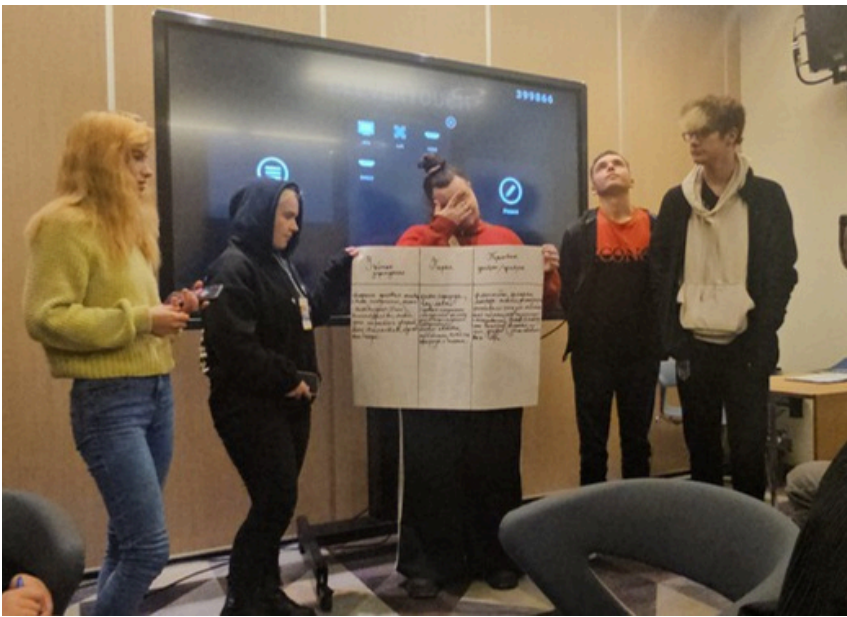
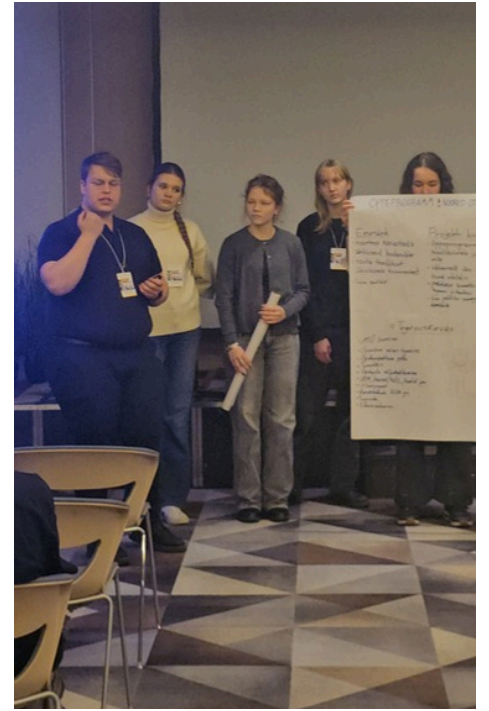
TALLINN, ESTONIA · 1–2 DECEMBER 2025

One of the major final events of the programme, the Nordic-Baltic Sustainability Conference 2025 "Transforming Nordic Sustainable Food Systems through Policy Change and Cooperation" was organised jointly with the annual Estonian National Youth Forum. The conference brought together young people, experts, educators, civil society organisations and partner institutions from across the Nordic-Baltic region.

The programme included keynote speeches, panel discussions, workshops, training sessions and presentation of project outcomes. Discussions focused on factors influencing environmental and social sustainability, including sustainable food system development, responsible consumption, climate adaptation, food waste reduction, environmental education and community engagement. Special attention was given to school-based nutrition education as a Nordic tradition with global relevance, and to the role of CSOs in driving green transition.

Key speakers included Vassili Golikov (SSCW, Estonia) on the role of CSOs and youth in food system transformation, and Professor Michael Søgaard Jørgensen (Aalborg University) on plant-based food transition. Panel discussions involved experts from Finland, Iceland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Estonia. Working groups produced a joint CSO Position Statement with proposals for future action on sustainable food systems.

143 participants, including 24 international participants from Finland 🇫🇮, Sweden 🇸🇪, Denmark 🇩🇰, Norway 🇳🇴, Iceland 🇮🇸 and Latvia 🇱🇻 ·





Nordic-Baltic Young Chef 2025

December 3rd, 2025
Narva Estonian Gymnasium, Estonia



Programme supported by



Nordic Council
of Ministers

food.sscw.ee/competition

Nordic-Baltic Young Chef Award 2025: Roots & Shoots




Dedicated to the Synergy of Culinary Heritage
and Green Innovation

NARVA, ESTONIA · 3–4 DECEMBER 2025

As an additional final activity of the programme, the Nordic-Baltic Young Chef Competition-Award took place in Narva, Estonia. The competition promoted sustainable food culture, responsible consumption and the use of local and seasonal ingredients among young people. International teams from Estonia, Latvia and the Nordic countries prepared sustainable three-course menus while sharing experiences related to environmentally friendly cooking and food culture.

Four international teams competed the Estonian team, the Latvian team and two Nordic joint teams. Participants worked in an international and multicultural environment, sharing experiences in sustainable food production, cooking and eco-friendly solutions. The jury evaluated dishes on taste and presentation as well as the application of sustainability principles: use of local ingredients, food waste reduction and environmental impact.

Results:

-  1st Place — Estonian team (Narva Estonian Gymnasium and Estonian youth)
-  2nd Place — Nordic joint team
-  3rd Place — Latvian team

Alongside the competition, participants engaged in discussions, experience exchange and networking that strengthened the Nordic-Baltic youth cooperation network. All participants received certificates of participation.





The overall format of the event



9.2 out of 10

Pre-event information and communications



8.8 out of 10

The overall organization during the event



9.1 out of 10

The general conference experience



9.35 out of 10

YOUTH STATEMENT 2025

Towards Sustainable Food Systems – The Nordic-Baltic Civil Society Approach

On behalf of participants from Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Estonia and Latvia

We, the youth, civil society representatives, educators and community members of the Nordic-Baltic region, reaffirm our commitment to building more sustainable, healthy and resilient food systems. We believe that food is not only a basic necessity but also an important part of cultural identity, environmental responsibility and community well-being.

We recognize that unsustainable consumption, food waste, climate change and the loss of biodiversity present significant challenges for our societies. Therefore, we encourage stronger cooperation between young people, civil society organisations, educational institutions, local communities and decision-makers in promoting sustainable food systems and responsible consumption habits.

With regard to education, we encourage the development of educational programmes, workshops and community initiatives that increase awareness of sustainable food practices, healthy nutrition, food culture and environmental responsibility. We believe that education plays a key role in helping young people understand the environmental, social and economic impacts of their consumption choices.

We believe that fostering critical thinking and responsible consumption habits among young people is essential for creating sustainable communities. Young people should be empowered to make informed choices regarding food, health, sustainability and environmental protection. It would be remiss of us not to consider the historical and cultural perspective. Nordic and Baltic food traditions reflect generations of knowledge, local resources and sustainable practices. By learning from our cultural heritage and traditional food systems, we can develop innovative solutions that respect both nature and local communities.

YOUTH STATEMENT 2025

Towards Sustainable Food Systems – The Nordic-Baltic Civil Society Approach

We encourage the promotion of local, seasonal and sustainably produced food. Supporting local farmers, producers and community markets can strengthen regional economies, reduce the environmental footprint of food transportation and contribute to healthier and more sustainable lifestyles.

We call for stronger efforts to reduce food waste across society. We support initiatives that promote responsible consumption, food redistribution, composting, recycling and circular economy approaches. By reducing waste and improving resource efficiency, we can contribute to more sustainable and resilient food systems.

We recognize the important role of civil society organisations, schools, universities, researchers and experts in advancing sustainable food system transformation. Their knowledge, practical experience and innovation are essential for supporting communities and empowering young people to become active agents of change.

We also emphasize the importance of international cooperation within the Nordic-Baltic region. By sharing experiences, good practices and innovative solutions, we can strengthen regional cooperation and contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the Nordic Vision 2030.

By focusing on these priorities, we aim to empower young people and communities to become advocates for sustainable food culture, responsible consumption and environmental stewardship. Together, we can contribute to a healthier, greener and more sustainable future for all.

Done in Tallinn on December 2nd 2025



