

## **Joint declaration on strategic cooperation between the universities of Latvia, Tartu and Vilnius**

The rectors of the universities of Latvia, Tartu and Vilnius, on the occasion of their meeting in Tartu on 21 April 2011, sign this joint declaration for reinforced co-operation between their institutions.

Building on the achievements of the existing cooperation agreements between the three universities and drawing upon the recognition of their leading role in the national academic and educational life of their respective countries, the signing parties commit themselves to developing a comprehensive trilateral strategic partnership.

The close relationship between the three institutions has already led to growing cooperation in research and substantial expansion of engagement in multiple fields. However, the signing parties acknowledge the potential for greater collaboration in all main areas of their activity. In view of this, they are committed to reducing obstacles to enhanced cooperation by improving communication, expanding information exchange, and developing detailed work programs. The parties to the declaration will initiate more regular discussions at the university leadership level, and consultations between officials for building trilateral relationships in the most promising areas of cooperation.

In view of the above the parties have agreed in the following:

### **RESEARCH**

The parties see considerable potential for growth in research collaboration. They share the vision for further strengthening their partnership through new and existing initiatives and agree to widen discussion to all research funding bodies in their respective countries.

Underlining the importance for further developing R & D cooperation, a coordinated effort will be made to facilitate the development of joint research projects in various fields of cooperation.

The parties also note the importance of facilitating movement of academics across a broad range of fields of interest to all sides. The parties will take steps for the establishment of an academic exchange program and make available funds for enhanced staff exchange.

### **STUDIES**

The three signing universities agree to establish a start-up fund for developing joint degree programmes and doctoral schools and to develop further student and faculty exchange programs.

The parties shall enable the teaching of their respective languages at both partner universities and shall grant scholarships for lecturers. They will seek additional government funding for sending their lecturers to two other partner institutions.

## UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING

The parties to the declaration will initiate regular consultations for exchanging information, experiences and best practices in the fields of internationalization of higher education, marketing, regional cooperation, national higher education and research funding models.

The three universities will join forces in exploring new emerging markets, especially in regions where all, or some, of the undersigned parties presently lack diplomatic representation. They will also explore the possible benefits, costs and implications of joint marketing activities, setting up a joint offshore campus, college or representation.

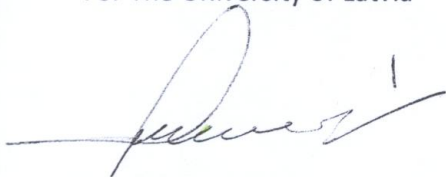
## GENERAL

In the future, such university leadership level meetings will become regular with Vilnius, Riga and Tartu taking turns in hosting them. The parties establish a three-member task-force – consisting of one member from each undersigned university appointed by the Rector – which has the goal of taking all necessary measures for implementing the principles agreed upon in this Declaration.

The parties convey this joint declaration to their respective national education ministries, relevant government agencies and all other potentially interested parties for their attention.

Signed on 21 April 2011 in Tartu.

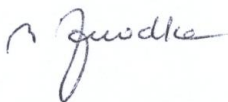
For The University of Latvia



Prof. Mārcis Auziņš

Rector

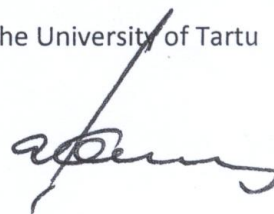
For Vilnius University



Prof. Benediktas Juodka

Rector

For The University of Tartu



Prof. Alar Karis

Rector



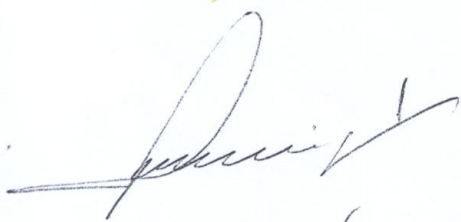
## CALL UPON THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS OF ESTONIA, LATVIA AND LITHUANIA

Based on the considerations reflected in the joint declaration, signed on the occasion of their meeting in Tartu on 21 April 2011, the rectors of the universities of Latvia, Tartu and Vilnius call upon their respective national governments to:

1. Recognize that it is in the national and strategic interests of all three Baltic countries to develop and maintain at least one internationally recognized research university in each country;
2. Recognize the unique role played by the undersigned universities in training the next generations of scientists and thereby maintaining sustainable research-based higher education in their respective countries;
3. Recognize the additional responsibility and financial burden incurred by the undersigned universities owing to their mission of preserving and making publicly accessible historic buildings, as well as artistic and scientific collections in their possession;
4. Recognize the crucial role of basic research in building up of competitive economy;
5. Consider the above mentioned aspects in developing national legislation and financial strategy;
6. Introduce special financing to promote high impact Open Access publishing.

Signed on 21 April 2011 in Tartu.

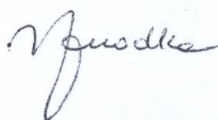
For The University of Latvia



Prof. Mārcis Auziņš

Rector

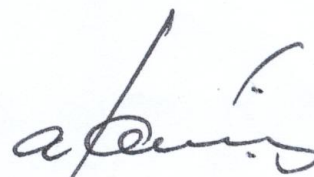
For Vilnius University



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For The University of Tartu



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