The Latvian War Museum, in collaboration with the National Library of Latvia and the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO, announces:

5th annual international scientific conference

THE BATTLE FOR PEOPLE'S MINDS. INFORMATION, INTELLIGENCE AND PROPAGANDA THROUGHOUT THE CONFLICTS OF THE 20TH CENTURY AND TODAY

14–15 October 2026
Ziedonis Hall of the National Library of Latvia, Riga

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Wednesday, October 14

09:00 – 09:30	Registration
09:30 – 10:10	Conference opening **Kristīne Skrīvere**, Director of the Latvian War Museum **Dagnija Baltiņa**, Director of the National Library of Latvia **Baiba Braže**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, Vice President of the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO **Raivis Melnis**, Minister of Defense of the Republic of Latvia
10:10 – 11:00	**Thomas Wegener Friis** (University of Southern Denmark, Denmark) *Let's learn the lesson. The tricky world of disinformation and intelligence*
11:00 – 12:30	Discussion "Cultural Ramparts for Social Resilience." This discussion is dedicated to marking the 35th anniversary of Latvia joining the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Moderated by: **Dace Melbārde**, Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, former Secretary General of the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO (1999-2004) Participants: **Stefanie Grüssinger**, Project Officer for Culture at UNESCO's Antenna in Ukraine **Ināra Bula**, Director of the National Cultural Heritage Administration **Liene Jakobsone**, Director of the Valmiera County Cultural Administration **Ieva Puzo**, Dean of Riga Stradiņš University, Director of the Social Sciences Research Center
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch break

13:30 – 15:00 Session 1

The diplomatic service and its functions in gathering and analyzing information

Moderated by: **Daniela Rihtere**

Marika Selga (National Library of Latvia, Latvia)
Public Diplomacy to Facilitate the Recognition de jure of Latvia by the USA

Adrian Vițalaru (Faculty of History, „Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași, Romania)
Looking Eastward: The Romanian Legation in Warsaw and the Polish-Bolshevik War (1920–1921)

Bogdan-Alexandru Schipor (Romanian Academy, "A.D. Xenopol" History Institute in Iași, Romania)
Diplomats in the Information War. Selected Case Studies from Interwar Romanian Diplomacy

Kristīne Beķere (Latvian War Museum, Latvia)
Latvian Diplomats in Exile and the US Cold War Strategies: Example of ACEN (1954-1958)

15:00 – 15:30 Coffee break

15:30 – 17:00 Session 2

The activities of intelligence services

Moderated by: **Jānis Tomaševskis**

Aiga Bērziņa-Kite (Institute of Latvian History, Faculty of Humanities, University of Latvia, Latvia)
Unrecognized Heroism: Zelma Sirsone, a Free-Contract Intelligence Officer in the Latvian Army

Andrejs Gusačenko (Institute of Latvian History, Faculty of Humanities, University of Latvia, Latvia)
The Role of Latvian Russian Anti-Bolsheviks in the "Zinoviev Letters" Affair of 1924

Kārlis Dambītis (Centre for Security Research and Innovation, National Defense Academy of Latvia, Latvia)
Germany from the Perspective of Latvian Military Intelligence: An Analysis of Intelligence Reports from the Second Half of the 1930s

Thursday, October 15

09:00 – 09:30 Registration

09:30 – 11:00 **Session 3**

Information manipulation in the Baltic States during the renewal of independence and today

Moderated by: **Kārlis Dambītis**

Vilma Losytė (Centre for Statehood Studies, Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania, Lithuania)
Fighting for International Opinion: Lithuania's Information Networks in Norway, 1990–1991

Anastasija Chafizova (Centre for Statehood Studies, Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania, Lithuania)
From Eyewitness Testimony to Public Resilience: The "January 13 in the Nation's Memory" Digital Archive as a Tool Against Historical Manipulation

Igor Kopõtin (Estonian Military Academy, Estonia)
History as a Weapon: The Representation of the Baltic States in Vladimir Medinsky's School Textbooks and Russia's Memory Politics

Rasa Čepaitienė (Lithuanian Institute of History, Lithuania)
History as Disinformation: The Putinist History of Lithuania (2025) and Lithuania's Response in the Context of Russia's War against Ukraine

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break

11:30 – 13:00 **Session 4**

Soviet propaganda

Moderated by: **Kristīne Beķere**

Kristiāna Beļska (Latvian War Museum, Latvia)
Death and the Instrumentalization of Its Meaning in Soviet Latvian (1919–1920) Propaganda

Juris Ciganovs (Latvian War Museum, Latvia)
The Unestablished "Ministry of Defense of the Latvian SSR" and Latvian Units in the Soviet Army After World War II (1945–1956) — An Ideological Maneuver by the Soviet Occupation Authorities

Jana Dreimane (National Library of Latvia, Latvia)
Teodors Līventāls' Manuscript "The Role of Krišjānis Valdemārs in the Development of Latvian Libraries": a Significant Evidence of the Information War in the Collection of the National Library of Latvia

Daniela Rihtere (Latvian War Museum, Latvia)
Interethnic Love as a Cold War Weapon: How Mixed Marriages were Weaponised in (Counter)propaganda in Soviet-Occupied Latvia

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch break

14:00 – 15:30	Session 5 Propaganda in periodicals and posters Moderated by: **Marika Selga** **Dana Stuce** (National Heritage Board / Art Academy of Latvia, Latvia) *Propaganda Posters in Latvia During the First Period of Soviet Occupation (1940–1941)* **Monika Napora** (Institute of History, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Poland) *From Propaganda to Communication Regime: Reinterpreting the Polish-language Press of the General Government* **Kaspars Līcītis** (Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Latvia, Latvia) *National Partisan Publications in Southern Kurzeme After World War II* **Ginta Ieva Bikše** (Faculty of Humanities, University of Latvia, Latvia) *Articles in the Newspapers "Brīvā Zeme," "Jaunākās Ziņas," and "Rīts" on the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939)*
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 – 17:30	Discussion "What Will We Believe Tomorrow? Memory Institutions for Social Resilience" Moderated by: **Kristīne Skrīvere**, Director of the Latvian War Museum Participants: **Dace Resele**, Secretary-General of the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO **Dagnija Baltiņa**, Director of the National Library of Latvia **Zane Grīnvalde**, Chair of the Board of the Latvian Museum Association **Gatis Karlsons**, Deputy Director of the National Archives of Latvia

Conference languages: Latvian and English. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided at the conference.

Throughout the conference, visitors are invited to view the political poster exhibition **"The Language of Power – Agitation, Propaganda, Art"** in the atrium on the -1 floor of the LNB. Posters have always served not only as a medium for information but also as a vehicle for ideas, with the aim of persuading, mobilizing, or influencing public opinion. The posters on display were created during various historical periods, and through their messages, artists and designers have both praised and criticized regimes, as well as offered ironic commentary on political developments.