

## PRESENTATION

# DIASPORA INVOLVEMENT IN DEVELOPMENT: COOPERATION BETWEEN LATVIAN DIASPORA PROFESSIONALS AND LATVIA

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As international migration increases, many countries are actively developing links with their diasporas and are not looking at migrants as 'lost human resources' but as 'diaspora capital' and focusing on the potential of the diaspora. One such area of intervention is diaspora diplomacy, as diplomacy and international policy-making are now predominantly a 'game of skill and mastery', and in this context the diaspora network can play an important role in strategically and purposefully expanding policy-makers with limited financial and human resources, increasing their international influence and better defending their interests. Many countries, including France, Denmark, Estonia, Israel and Canada, recognise this potential and actively work with diaspora professionals in international organisations to promote their home country's strategic, diplomatic and international policy objectives. Latvia is also interested in involving diaspora professionals more strongly and more specifically in the representation of its political interests abroad, in public diplomacy and in the creation and dissemination of a specific state image abroad. The study examined the willingness of Latvian diaspora professionals working in international organisations to engage in diaspora diplomacy, existing cooperation practices and the benefits of such cooperation from the perspective of the professionals.



### ABOUT THE SPEAKER:

**Dr. Baiba Bela** is a senior researcher and associate professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Latvia. Her research interests include issues of social sustainability and migration. The study "Involving Latvian Professionals in Diaspora Diplomacy and the Potential of Network Diplomacy" was carried out in 2022 with the financial support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A more comprehensive study of talent migration, diaspora integration, and re-migration is currently under way under the project "New Solutions for Demographic and Migration Research in the Field of Latvian and European Knowledge for the Development of Society" of the national research program "Latvia for the Development of Latvian and European Society".



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