

THE INFORMATION CENTRE OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE WORLD BANK

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In February 2006, the Latvian Academic Library, the representatives of the World Bank in Latvia and the representatives of the United Nations Development Programme in Latvia agreed on forming a new structural unit of the Latvian Academic Library – the Information Centre of the United Nations and the World Bank. It is situated in the just redecorated room in the Latvian Academic Library. Financial resources came from the representatives of the World Bank and the representatives of the United Nations Development Programme in Latvia.

In 2005 the United Nations Development Programme finished its activities in Latvia. All the materials (books, publications, reports, periodicals etc.) that used to be in the UN Information centre in the UN house in Old Riga were delivered to the Latvian Academic Library.

I would like to introduce you to the history of the United Nations, the structure of the organization and its goals.

The United Nations (UN) is an international organization. It was established on the 24th of October 1945 in San Francisco by 51 countries that met at the UN Conference to draw up the United Nations Charter. Today nearly every nation in the world belongs to the UN: membership totals 191 countries that have joined of their own free will to keep peace and security, as well as to aid the consideration of the human rights and to further the development around the world.

The United Nations consists of six main institutions:

- The General Assembly;
- The Security Council;
- The Economic and Social Council;
- The Trusteeship Council;
- The International Court of Justice;
- The Secretariat.

There are 15 other organizations, specialized agencies that cover such spheres as health, environment, telecommunications, agriculture etc. Every agency and programme works in its own established field of work but they all have eight common Millennium Development Goals:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
2. Achieve universal primary education;
3. Promote gender equality and empower women;
4. Reduce child mortality;
5. Improve maternal health;
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
7. Ensure environmental sustainability;
8. Develop a global partnership for development.

The following materials are accessible to the readers in the Information Centre of the United Nations and the World Bank:

- The publications, reports, periodicals, studies, statistics and reference books of the UN agencies, as well as governmental and nongovernmental organizations of Latvia about themes in Latvia and the world that are connected to social integration, democratisation, social and economic development, social health, poverty, gender equality, human rights, environment etc.

- The handouts of different themes and format

You can find additional information at www.un.org

As the World Bank has closed its representatives in the Republic of Latvia, the Latvian Academic Library receives also the materials from the World Bank.

I would like to introduce you to the World Bank. The World Bank is an independent organization and as a “specialized agency” is linked to the United Nations through cooperative agreement. The World Bank is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. It is not a bank in the common sense. It is made

up of two unique development institutions owned by 184 member countries – the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA). Both the institutions are the members of the World Bank group. The other 3 members of the group are the International Finance Corporation (*IFC*), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (*MIGA*) and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (*ICSID*). Each institution plays a distinct role in the mission to fight poverty and improve living standards for people in the developing world.

The World Bank is a leading organization that collects and summarizes the data, as well as makes research in the social and economic growth. Its aim is to spread the information and the accumulated knowledge further to the other users. There are information centres in many of the World Bank's member countries. They are accessible to every interested person, and every year they are replenished with the 200 newest publications of the World Bank.

There are 13 libraries in the main building of the World Bank in Washington where it is possible to find information about different spheres. Ten of these libraries offer electronic access to their information resources. By means of Internet it is possible to get wide material about such themes as:

- Economics and Finance;
- Jobs;
- Leadership;
- Branch politics;
- Private Sector Development;
- Technologies;
- Knowledge Economics;
- Legal Science
- Career Development;
- Environment;
- Health.

You can find additional information at www.worldbank.org

The Information centre offers the materials that are published after 2000. There is only one copy of each material in the information centre and the readers can read them only in the reading room. The documents published before 2000 are separated and delivered to the reposi-

tories of other departments of the library or to the exchange fund. The literature accessible in the Information centre is mostly in English, but there are also materials in Latvian, Russian and French.

The aim of the Information Centre of the United Nations and the World Bank is to inform the readers about the themes they are interested in, offering them the newest and the most topical publications. It is planned to collaborate with World Health Organization, UNICEF and other organizations to carry out common projects and to organize exhibitions for informing the community.