



OGRE
EUROPEAN
CAPITAL
OF CULTURE
CANDIDATE
2027

SPARK THE CHANGE

APPLICATION FORM
OGRE, THE EUROPEAN
CAPITAL OF CULTURE
2027



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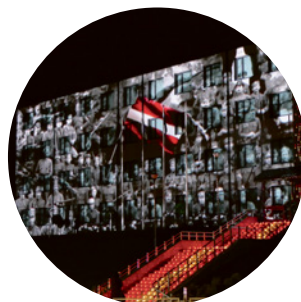
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Ogre Culture Centre

INTRODUCTION – GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Why does Ogre wish to take part in the competition for the title of the European Capital of Culture?

Ogre has long been a point of interest for many people. For centuries, visitors have felt the temptation to come here, at the confluence of two rivers, in a terrain uncharacteristic of Latvia – surrounded by steep hills and slopes – and breathe in deeply the air cleaned by pine trees. The first evidence of people hunting reindeer in this area dates back to 8500 BC. The oldest settlement on Ķentes Hill existed here around 1000 BC. Somewhere amidst objective archaeological evidence of prehistoric times there are stories – legends from the Archives of Latvian Folklore – about the terrible giant who smoked his pipe in the Blue Hills (*Zilie kalni*) until they turned blue from the smoke. And, of course, there is also the legend about the fact that the first Rīga was located right here but then sank underground.

Over the centuries, travellers to Rīga, Daugavpils, going further on to Moscow, stopped in Ogre to spend the night in pubs and post offices, to change their horses and rest after their long journey in stagecoaches. However, from a modern point of view, Ogre was born thanks to the technical progress – with the construction of the Rīga-Dinaburg railway line in 1861, when the beauty of the place became more easily accessible and a resort began to form here. It was facilitated by beautiful landscapes and the abundance of water and pine forests. The First World War ruined the resort but Ogre could no longer be stopped. As early as in 1928, it acquired town rights and became a famous resort. Ogre grew, expanded, suffered in the Second World War, developed industrially in the Soviet times becoming the centre of the district, then, in the turn of power, a municipality. The industrial era did not destroy the tradition – the concept of Ogre has always remained to be a green town, a town in the forest, so that its residents can breathe clean air. It is a town that, despite the proximity of the capital Rīga, is based on its own culture. We want to develop it, we want to attract new residents, whose motivation to move to Ogre is that it is nice to be here and that life is happening here. Ogre is a town that is changing rapidly, breaking out of the greyness and creating a quality environment for people. When we celebrate Christmas, thousands of people from distant parts of Latvia travel to our decorated town for their evening stroll. Our town is beautiful.

Why do we want to become the European Capital of Culture?

- We want to create a festive environment for ourselves and invite friends to visit.
- The newly established large municipality that Ogre will turn into after July 1, 2021, needs a new identity, forms of cooperation and a new common feeling of patriotism of the municipality. The European Capital of Culture status is an opportunity to unite territories that have lived their autonomous lives in the current territorial division.
- The status of the European Capital of Culture 2027 will serve as an introduction to Ogre's centenary celebrations in 2028.

Does your city plan to involve its surrounding area? Explain this choice.

We are aware that the territories added after the municipal reform of 2021 – Lielvārde, Ķegums, Ikšķile, Tome, Birzgale, Rembate, Jumprava, Lēdmane, Tīnūži – and their historical cultural centres are looking at Ogre unable to imagine their lives in a 'nothing ever happens here' mode. The European Capital of Culture year is an opportunity to combine the cultural traditions of the united municipalities and create a new identity together. This means that along with Ogre, the European Capitals of Culture will also be Ķegums, Lielvārde, Ikšķile, Tome, Birzgale, Rembate,

Jumprava, Lēdmāne, Tīnūži, Ciemupe, Ogresgals, Suntaži, Madliena, Mengele, Taurupe, Laubere, Krape, Ķeipene, Mazozoli with their cultural resources. A new library, a professional musical theatre, museums, nature trails and outdoor sports facilities are being built in Ogre. It is important that they are enjoyed by the residents of the whole municipality. We are an ancient place with an eternally new and prosperous town. Ogre municipality encircles significant places in Latvian and Livonian culture – Ikšķīle, Lielvārde, Ķegums, Suntaži. Ogre municipality forms the largest rural area in Latvia. Its people are used to enjoying, creating, and being in culture.

Explain briefly the overall cultural profile of your city.

In Ogre and its municipality before the regional territorial reform of Latvia (Mazozoli civil parish, Taurupe civil parish, Mengele civil parish, Ķeipene civil parish, Suntaži civil parish, Madliena civil parish, Laubere civil parish, Krape civil parish, Ogresgals civil parish) cultural life is organised by Ogre Culture Centre and 10 culture houses, Ogre Central Library with 10 libraries in civil parishes, Ogre Music and Art School, Madliena K Kažociņš Music and Art School, and Ogre History and Art Museum. Ogre History and Art Museum keeps evidence of the history of the region, offers art and history exhibitions, organises various events: lectures, creative workshops, educational programs for audiences of different ages and interests. The mission of the museum is to collect, study, and preserve the cultural and historical heritage of the region, highlight its uniqueness, and promote recognition.

There are 25 amateur art groups in the Ogre Culture Centre, which is located in the heart of the town, while there are a total of 69 amateur art groups in Ogre municipality. It is a possibility to get acquainted with the heritage of folk art for everyone – from children of 4 years of age to seniors. There are various folk art heritage preservation groups: folk dance studios/groups/ensembles, choirs, applied art studios, folklore groups, dance studios, vocal ensembles, gathering more than 2,200 residents of Ogre town and municipality. There are also modern interest groups, such as a photo club. The cultural life of Ogre is enriched by the Ogre Theatre, which was granted the status of a professional town theatre in 2020. Among the usual summer events – Ogre Town Festival and civil parish festivals – special events are also organised, i.e., evenings by the river gathering enthusiasts of choir singing, jazz evenings where one of the integral parts of the event is to get to the venue by bicycle, Emīls Dārziņš music festival in honour to the famous composer, Tweed Ride on May 4th. The intention of Ogre is not only to develop and improve the cultural life in the town, but also to facilitate such development in the civil parishes. Madliena civil parish celebrates summer solstice by gathering visitors from all over Latvia. An integral part of the Midsummer celebrations is the performance *Skorderdianas Silmačos*, which is performed in a different parish year after year by the Ogre Theatre.

Lielvārde is the source of the beginnings of many important symbols for the Latvian people. The Lielvārde belt, rich in ancient characters, got its name there; the poet Auseklis as well as Andrejs Pumpurs, the poet of the Latvian national romanticism era and the author of the epic story *Lāčplēsis* were active there. Such personalities as ornithologist Kārlis Grigulis, founder and long-term chairman of the collective farm *Lāčplēsis* Edgars Kauliņš, belt weavers Vera and Arveds Paegles, playwright Gunārs Priede, conductor Pauls Kvelde have worked in Lielvārde. The cultural and historical space of Lielvārde is characterized by types of handicrafts of the textile industry – knitting, crocheting, tulle embroidery, bobbin lacemaking, weaving, belt making and modern handicrafts – textile painting, beading, etc. Lielvārde Culture Centre is responsible for cultural developments in Lielvārde municipality. Its structural units are Jumprava Culture House, Lēdmāne Culture House, Andrejs Pumpurs Museum in Lielvārde, Lielvārde Town Library with its branch *Lāčplēsis* Library, Lēdmāne Civil Parish Library and Jumprava Civil Parish Library. The cultural centre is home to 22 amateur art groups with more than 600 participants. In Ķegums, the value that cannot be bought for money is the amateur groups and groups of enthusiasts – all those residents with the help of whom memories and records in the history of folk art have been collected in Ķegums since 1951 when the Ķegums Culture House was built. The residents

of Ķegums have long been song lovers. At first, many sang in the choirs of the neighbouring civil parishes, but when the Ķegums open air stage was opened in 1967, the Tome and Ķegums women's choir was created. Over the course of time, cultural life and amateur collectives have become richer. It is difficult to find available hours during the day in the cultural houses to organise an unplanned event. There are 4 culture houses and 19 different amateur groups in the municipality.

The biggest event that has been ongoing since 1967 is the Ķegums Festival. Every year, the municipality celebrates the traditional festival both in the town and civil parishes. There are also various other festivals and sports activities – *Surf Party* on Ķegums beach, *Potato Festival* in Rembate, *Mushrooming Championship* in Tome, Birzgale civil parish festival. For many years, the writer Regīna Ežera lived and created her works in Tome, her museum has been established in Tome.

Ikšķile, as another municipality to be added to Ogre, is an active town of artists with its traditions and rich cultural life in all seasons. Ikšķile presents one of the most important annual awards in Latvian literature, which bears the name of Dzintars Sodums, the Latvian translator of the world-famous James Joyce's novel *Ulysses*. There is a lot happening in the town, from the European Dance Festival to exclusive concerts on St. Meinard's Island in the Daugava where the oldest stone church in the territory of the Baltic States is located (built around 1185).

Explain the concept of the programme which would be launched if the city is designated as European Capital of Culture.

The concept of the program is based on two guiding themes:

The concept of the program is based on two guiding themes: **Water.** Ogre town and municipality are intricately connected with the so-called river of fate of Latvia – the Daugava. It flows through the Ogre municipality in the length of about 50 km, connecting Lielvārde, Tome, Ķegums, Ogre, Ikšķile. The presence of water is the common guiding theme for all activities. The Daugava stream in Ķegums hydroelectric power plant is transformed into electricity and light. In 2022, a lighthouse will be installed on the newly built pier at the point where the Ogre river flows into the Daugava. This will be the beginning of the theme parallel to the water theme – Light.

Light. We are proud that Ogre has undertaken a rapid course of development, which can be seen not only in the construction of infrastructure objects. Development takes place by creating a new way of thinking and promoting the openness of the city. The theme of light will be used in the broadest meaning possible, from lighting in the dark seasons of the year to intellectual light and cultural light, without which the modern world is unimaginable. Ogre is a popular Latvian destination during Christmas time when people enjoy the play of lights of the decorated town. In 2021, an object of spiritual light will be opened – Ogre Library, in 2022 followed by the new Ogre Gymnasium building, then the professional Ogre Musical Theatre. It will expand the range of spiritual values in the town with new force.

The two guiding themes, **Water** and **Light**, merged and in parallel will form the overall concept of the programme of the project *Ogre, the European Capital of Culture 2027*. Near the town of Ogre sits the geographical centre of Latvia, which makes Ogre a central place and a light carrier on a Latvian scale. Ogre municipality respects its spiritual and historical realities, which have laid the foundation for Latvia's identity. On the one hand, it is formed by ancient pagan values, which are symbolized by the Lielvārde belt and the epic story *Lāčplēsis*. On the other hand, here the beginnings of Christianity in Latvia can be found – the castle built by Bishop Meinard in the territory of Ikšķile, which is the oldest stone building in the Baltic States. History will serve as a springboard for creating a 21st century life in Europe.



Tweed Ride in Ogre



Video projections on the Ogre municipality local government building – November 11 (Lāčplēsis Day)



Ogre Town Festival



Ogre History and Art Museum



Protective pier (break-water) at the point where the Ogre river flows into the Daugava



Ogre Evangelical Lutheran Church and the environmental object Ogre's logo

1. CONTRIBUTION TO THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY

1.1. Describe the cultural strategy that is in place in your city at the time of the application, including the plans for sustaining the cultural activities beyond the year of the title?

CULTURAL STRATEGY FOR THE PROJECT - CONTRIBUTION TO THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY OF THE PROJECT OGRE, THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2027

INTRODUCTION

The strategy of the cultural program is formed with a long-term plan and vision – the activities are basically not planned for implementation only in 2027. The activities are planned so that the antecedent years gradually prepare the course of 2027, which in turn will help to start the centenary celebrations of Ogre in 2028, as well as leave a lasting value after the big celebrations of Ogre. As far as possible, all residents of the Ogre municipality, the state, local government and public organizations, visitors and friends will be involved in the implementation of the events of Ogre as the Capital of Culture – everyone will give a hand to keep the culture events going forward. The strategy of the project Ogre, the Capital of Culture 2027 is a component of the Ogre Municipality Culture Strategy for 2030.

The aim of the Culture Strategy is to create a wide and diverse cultural offer – it will not be based only on musical performances. The project offer will be multifaceted, interdimensional, one where the activities, according to the 21st century, will fit into one cultural genre – music, visual arts, etc. Activities will easily flow through different cultural genres.

MISSION, VISION, VALUES

MISSION. To create a unified, creative, artistically developed, technologically advanced and sustainable town and municipality of Ogre.

VISION. Ogre – a developed town full of diversity for the residents of Ogre municipality and a favourite destination for local and foreign tourists.

VALUES. The values of Ogre are its sustainable development, the diversity of its cultural offer, environmental friendliness, openness and cooperation, creativity, pride in its history and the contribution of Ogre municipality to the Latvian life wisdom.

PROJECT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, RESULTS, AND BENEFITS

GOALS

To implement the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027*, which will be both a successful set of introductory events starting the year of Ogre's centenary celebrations in 2028 and would make a long-term contribution to the implementation of various cultural activities.

OBJECTIVES

- To prepare a high-quality and sustainable set of cultural activities, the implementation of which would start already in 2024.
- To form a professional project management group, attracting, if necessary, the best professionals in the field, thus providing benefits for Ogre municipality in the long run so that it can implement large-scale projects in the future.
- To implement the project on a high-quality level.
- To carry out a fundraising plan in accordance with the set budget.
- To ensure the implementation of the project in close connection with local government, state and EU institutions.
- To work on cooperation within the municipality, developing the capacity of human resources.
- To create new cultural products that would accentuate and popularize the cultural and historical riches of Ogre municipality.
- To enhance patriotism about the state of one's municipality and EU-forming activities at the regional, national and EU level.

RESULTS AND BENEFITS

- Increased recognition of Ogre not only in Latvia, but also in Europe.
- Rapidly increased flow of tourists, Ogre has become a favourite tourist destination.
- Acquired and expanded cultural offer.
- Arranged cultural infrastructure.
- Promoted local patriotism towards the municipality.
- Promoted understanding of the history of the municipality.

HOW THE STRATEGY OF THE PROJECT "OGRE, THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2027" IS FORMED

The strategy is formed by the interaction of the following objectives, themes, European dimensions and activities:

- Themes of activities – those are set in order to implement a diverse and sustainable cultural offer, emphasizing the richness of the cultural and historical heritage of Ogre and Ogre municipality, the preservation of this heritage today and its development in the future.
- Activities – all cultural events planned to take place during the implementation of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture* (both introductory events in 2024-2026) and in the year of the project itself).

- European dimensions:
 - Ogre – a contemporary town.
 - Ogre – an environmentally friendly town,
 - Ogre – a technologically advanced town.
- Ways in which the residents of the municipality, its visitors, local associations, state and local government institutions, the European Union and other countries will be involved.
- Results that will be achieved through the implementation of this project:
 - Promoted environmental friendliness / climate neutrality.
 - Created cultural dialogue with other European countries and nations.
 - Created new and sustainable opportunities for different groups of the population so that they can attend and participate in cultural events, with a special focus on making these events accessible to seniors and people with disabilities.
 - Increased feeling of local pride and patriotism towards the native municipality, its achievements, more knowledge about the rich history of the municipality has been gained.
- It will not be listed separately but there will be two guiding themes flowing through all topics and activities – water and light. They will exist alongside each other, cross from time to time and unite the whole project *Ogre, the European Capital of Culture 2027*.

CHALLENGES SET BY THE PROJECT

- This project will set a big challenge for the town of Ogre and the whole municipality – Ogre is already developing very fast and this fact has been recognized in the national media. Therefore, Ogre has a justified reason to take on new challenges in order to make this development even faster and more dynamic.
- Besides, the challenge will be to implement all the ideas, however, as mentioned in the risk analysis, the project implementation team is working to make the planned activities and ideas realistic and feasible.
- The final challenge will be to secure funding for all ideas, but it is also feasible and not exaggerated.

PROJECT PARTNERS

The main partner of the project is the Council of Ogre municipality, to which Lielvārde, Ķegums and Ikšķile municipalities will be added in July 2021 as a result of the Administrative-Territorial Reform. Cultural institutions of Ogre municipality, as well as state and local government institutions operating in the territory of Ogre municipality will be involved as project partners.

Project cooperation will also be established with the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia and the responsible EU institutions.

The other Capital of Culture from Portugal will be invited as a project partner with twinning activities.

FUNDING PLAN

Position	2024	2025	2026	2027
Municipal funding	€ 500,000.00	€ 1,000,000.00	€ 1,500,000.00	€ 3,000,000.00
Funding raised from the State Culture Capital Foundation (SCCF)	€ 100,000.00	€ 200,000.00	€ 200,000.00	€ 500,000.00
Funding that should be formed as municipal co-funding (e.g., participation of OCC groups in events)	€ 40,000.00	€ 100,000.00	€ 100,000.00	€ 200,000.00
Revenue from the sale of the "Ogre, ECC 2027" brand as a trademark	€ 1,000.00	€ 2,000.00	€ 3,000.00	€ 5,000.00
Ticket revenue	€ 20,000.00	€ 30,000.00	€ 30,000.00	€ 100,000.00
Private sector sponsorship / co-funding	€ 50,000.00	€ 150,000.00	€ 200,000.00	€ 200,000.00
State budget / EU funding through projects	€ 100,000.00	€ 100,000.00	€ 200,000.00	€ 300,000.00
Co-funding of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia (50% of the total budget, up to 10 million EUR)	€ 811,000.00	€ 1,582,000.00	€ 2,233,000.00	€ 4,305,000.00
Total per year	€ 1,622,000.00	€ 3,164,000.00	€ 4,466,000.00	€ 8,610,000.00
			Total budget	€ 17,862,000.00

LONG-TERM IMPACT OF CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

GRAND EVENTS

Activity	The European dimension theme	How will the residents / social groups / associations / cultural places of the municipality and EU countries be involve	Results to be achieved / sustainability of activity
Opening event	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	By involving the cultural institutions of the municipality in the event and by attracting the leading Latvian artists (also those who were born or who live in Ogre municipality). In addition, participants from European countries will be invited.	This event will show the strength and opportunities of culture workers in Ogre municipality.
Grand Capital of Culture event (July/August),	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Our desire is to organize this event simultaneously with the other Capital of Culture, so that individual performances can be broadcasted interactively at the cultural event of the other Capital of Culture, thus promoting mutual cooperation, communication and developing EU cooperation. Residents and students of Ogre municipality, as well as artists from Latvia and the EU will be invited as volunteers.	A vivid cultural event that is broadcasted live on the Internet as well as on national TV and radio channels, later to be used in the marketing activities of Ogre municipality.
Closing event	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Residents of Ogre municipality will be involved in the arrangement process, fireworks will be provided by a local fireworks company, which is one of the largest fireworks companies in Latvia.	The climax event / event of the year in Latvian culture – a performance of L. van Beethoven's 9th Symphony, involving soloists and choirs from EU countries, as well as the Ogre-based Musical Theatre Symphony Orchestra. It will be broadcasted live on the Internet as well as on national TV and radio.

EVENTS (FESTIVALS)

Activity	The European dimension theme	How will the residents / social groups / associations / cultural places of the municipality and EU countries be involve	Results to be achieved / sustainability of activity
Ogre Art/Culture Festival (Ogre + municipality towns / cultural places)	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Leading artists from Ogre, Ogre municipality, Latvia, as well as artists from the EU and non-EU countries will be involved in the implementation.	A new high-quality art festival will be created, which will then play an important role in the cultural life of Latvia until 2027 and attract tourists to Ogre.
Independence Festival (Ogre open air stage “Pērkonis” concert, Lāčplēsis / Lielvārde park → Rock opera “Lāčplēsis”), Juris Podnieks (at Ķeipene Cinema Station - Podnieks lighthouse)	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Cultural institutions, residents, associations, and active personalities of Ogre municipality, who played a significant role in gaining independence from the USSR, will be involved in the implementation, both as organizers and participants of the activities.	Establishing a festival, which will help to promote pride in one’s municipality, country, as well as help to remind the events in the establishment and restoration of the independence of Latvia.
Sergei Eisenstein Film Festival	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	An important role will be played by Sergei Eisenstein’s communication centre in Ķeipene (Ogre municipality), which will take on the role of project coordinator, establishing cooperation with the National Film Centre, former <i>Arsenāls</i> film festival organizers and the EU and Russian cooperation institutions.	Establishing a film festival in the name of Sergei Eisenstein, which could in the future become the most important film festival, first, in the Baltics, but in time also in Northern Europe, with an established award for the best films.
Folklore festival	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town	The organizers will be the Ogre Culture Centre, in cooperation with the Latvian National Culture Centre, folk groups subordinated to the Ogre Culture Centre, folklore groups of other EU countries and the folk groups of the other European Capital of Culture from Portugal.	An existing but not so well-developed festival in Ogre municipality, which has been more like a set of various smaller events without a unified concept, is now developed, arranged and summarized with joint marketing.
Festival of Sacred Music (churches + St. Meinard’s Island)	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Churches in Ogre municipality and cultural places suitable for this purpose.	An existing but not so well-developed festival in Ogre municipality, which has been more like a set of various smaller events without a unified concept, is now developed, arranged and summarized with joint marketing.
Festival of non-traditional musical instruments	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	The organizers will be the managers of the “ <i>Skaņu māja</i> ” in Krāpe, Ogre municipality, as well as the inventors and builders of non-traditional musical instruments living and working in Ogre municipality, some of whom have already gained world fame.	A non-traditional and attractive cultural place has been developed in Krāpe, Ogre municipality, which needs help in promoting its significance by attracting tourists and non-traditional cultural event lovers.

TOWN SLOGAN EVENTS

Activity	The European dimension theme	How will the residents / social groups / associations / cultural places of the municipality and EU countries be involve	Results to be achieved / sustainability of activity
Events on the water, at the lighthouses	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Producers of the Ogre Culture Centre, active associations and entrepreneurs will be involved as organizers. Residents and students of Ogre municipality – as volunteers.	Developed cultural activity in the water-rich territory of Ogre municipality, emphasizing the guiding theme of light, which has not been used a lot so far.

A competition of ideas/concepts will be organized for the activities, respecting the requirements of the EU dimension and common guidelines	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Any cultural organization of Ogre municipality, Latvia or EU countries will have the opportunity to participate in the idea/concept competition, as long as they express their wish to offer its concept to the project <i>Ogre, the European Capital of Culture 2027</i> .	The direction of activities has been developed through concept competitions - the urban/industrial past of Ogre, which will be included in cultural activities alongside with showing the untold events of Ogre's industrial past.
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VISUAL ARTS AND EXHIBITIONS

Activity	The European dimension theme	How will the residents / social groups / associations / cultural places of the municipality and EU countries be involve	Results to be achieved / sustainability of activity
Plein airs in EU countries (in Taurupe civil parish, where Purvītis native house "Jauži" is located, and in Madliena, where the painter Karl Jacob Wilhelm Huhn (Kārlis Hūns) was born). Exhibition of original works by Purvītis and Huhn	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Ogre Culture Centre, representatives from Taurupe civil parish, where the house of Vilhelms Purvītis will be opened in 2027, and representatives from Madliena, where Kārlis Hūns was born, will be involved as organizers.	Regional values in visual art – Vilhelms Purvītis and Kārlis Hūns, as well as Ansis Čirulis' famous drawings in the sanatorium building are popularized.
Interactive stories with outdoor projections of paintings by Ansis Čirulis, Vilhelms Purvītis and Kārlis Hūns in the town streets, marking the history and interesting facts of Ogre, the EU and the exchange town	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	The implementation of the activity will be ensured by the Ogre Tourism Information Centre, in cooperation with museums and cultural places, where paintings by Vilhelms Purvītis, Kārlis Hūns and Ansis Čirulis are exhibited.	Additional environmental objects attracting tourists have been created.
Audio-visual robot exhibition in Ogre library (a robot), which will also be shown in EU countries	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	The implementation will be provided by the Ogre Library, where the robot is exhibited, in cooperation with the Ogre Tourism Information Centre and the cooperation institutions of the EU countries, where the robots will be displayed.	The activity will show Ogre as a technologically advanced town.

OPERA, DANCE, THEATRE, MUSICAL THEATRE

Activity	The European dimension theme	How will the residents / social groups / associations / cultural places of the municipality and EU countries be involve	Results to be achieved / sustainability of activity
The great cycle of operettas	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Ogre Musical Theatre artists, as well as soloists and directors from EU countries will be involved in a series of performances dedicated to Europe's most important operettas and musicals.	5-6 operettas and musicals will be staged, which will remain in the repertoire of the Musical Theatre until 2030-2035. Project <i>Ogre, the European Capital of Culture 2027</i> will help to launch the operation of the Musical Theatre in 2025 and will make a great contribution to the development of the theatre. The Musical Theatre will be one of the biggest beneficiaries of this project.
Theatre festival	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	The Ogre Professional Theatre, Ogre Culture Centre, Ikšķīle and Ogre Theatre of Positive People with Special Needs <i>Ārpus robežām</i> will be involved in the implementation of the project.	A new festival, in which the Ogre-based theatre of people with special needs will also play a major role. It will help the theatres gain international recognition.

MUSIC AND SOUND (JAZZ, POP, STREET MUSIC)

Activity	The European dimension theme	How will the residents / social groups / associations / cultural places of the municipality and EU countries be involve	Results to be achieved / sustainability of activity
Activities on the water (water music, the Daugava, the Ogre river), activities on the pier (water, light shows). Islands (Meinard, Nāve, Ogre, Lielvārde/ Kegums islands), the Daugava (Lielvārde, Kegums, Ogre near the lighthouse, Ikšķīle), the Ogre river (above the 2nd dam), Plaužu lake, Lobes lake, Dubkalni reservoir)	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Producers of the Ogre Culture Centre, active associations and entrepreneurs will be involved as organizers. Residents and students of Ogre municipality – as volunteers. Exchange activities will be organized with the cultural organizations of the EU countries and the other European Capital of Culture from Portugal.	The values of Ogre and Ogre municipality – waters and nature – have been popularized.
Jazz concerts in Ciempupe (on the open-air stage near the culture house, ride a bike and enjoy jazz)	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Producers of the Ogre Culture Centre will be involved as organizers. Latvian and EU jazz artists – as artists. Residents and students of Ogre municipality – as volunteers. Exchange activities will be organized with the cultural organizations of the EU countries and the other European Capital of Culture from Portugal.	An existing and environmentally friendly jazz festival has been developed, which will be closely connected with cycling tourism.
Summoning event (Ogre, municipality towns, castle mounds, Latvian cities and towns, European cities and towns) "Europe Calling"	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Producers of the Ogre Culture Centre and Ogre Tourism Information Centre will be involved as organizers. Latvian and EU artists – as artists. Residents and students of Ogre municipality – as volunteers. Exchange activities will be organized with the cultural organizations of the EU countries and the other European Capital of Culture from Portugal.	An established summoning event, which will create a joint summoning both in nature and interactively, both in art and music, uniting the EU countries and inviting to think in an environmentally friendly way.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES IN CULTURE

Activity	The European dimension theme	How will the residents / social groups / associations / cultural places of the municipality and EU countries be involve	Results to be achieved / sustainability of activity
Application / exploratory geocaching type game about the history of the municipality, also telling the history of Latvia (culture, art, natural objects, etc.) Different routes. Geocaching by car, bicycle, on foot, for children and youngsters	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	The implementation of the activity will be ensured by the Ogre Tourism Information Centre in cooperation with the Riga Technical University, Ogre Gymnasium and Ogre Secondary School No. 1, inviting the Ogre-based technology company <i>Hansa Matrix</i> .	An entertaining game about the history of the municipality, Latvia and the EU, the main audience of which will be young people, thus promoting their interest in history.

LITERATURE, DISCUSSIONS, DEBATES, COMMUNICATION

Activity	The European dimension theme	How will the residents / social groups / associations / cultural places of the municipality and EU countries be involve	Results to be achieved / sustainability of activity
Business forum on business development in the region, promotion of the municipality marketing	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Residents, associations, entrepreneurs of Ogre municipality, European Union and Latvian business organizations will be involved.	Developed regional business and marketing development strategy Ogre 2040.

European Design and Architecture Forum on the historical heritage of Ogre municipality and its development (contribution, preservation and development). How to find applications in other forms. Where to draft a development plan for historical objects.	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Ogre Tourism Information Centre, residents, associations, entrepreneurs of Ogre municipality, European Union and Latvian business organizations are involved.	Implemented design and architecture forum, which will help identify Ogre's strengths and opportunities in the field of design and architecture, also highlighting weaknesses and threats that will facilitate Ogre's development as a town of design and architecture.
Literature discussions	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Producers of the Ogre Culture Centre and Ogre Tourism Information Centre will be involved as organizers in cooperation with the association <i>The Latvian Writers' Union</i> , implementing prose reading activities throughout the municipality during the whole year of the Capital of Culture, also offering street reading activity. Residents and students of Ogre municipality – as volunteers. Exchange activities will be organized with the cultural organizations of the EU countries and the other European Capital of Culture from Portugal.	Ogre marked as an open town and municipality for various cultural activities also in the field of literature.

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY EVENTS

Activity	The European dimension theme	How will the residents / social groups / associations / cultural places of the municipality and EU countries be involve	Results to be achieved / sustainability of activity
Environmental lessons in all schools of the municipality	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	The Council of Ogre Municipality and all Ogre municipality schools are involved.	By 2027, Ogre will be the first municipality where a lesson on environment is introduced in all schools.
Light Trail (<i>Gaismas taka</i>) (the park in the Blue Hills, Christmas lights in Brīvības Street)	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Producers of the Ogre Culture Centre, Ogre Tourism Information Centre, active associations and entrepreneurs will be involved as organizers. Residents and students of Ogre municipality – as volunteers. Exchange activities will be organized with the cultural organizations of the EU countries and the other European Capital of Culture from Portugal.	Popularization of the activities that have already been recognised in Latvia portraying Ogre as a "town of light", and development of new activities promoting tourism.
Mushrooming Championship (Tome civil parish)	Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Active associations and entrepreneurs of Ogre municipality.	An already and successfully launched championship has been developed.
Events in the centre of Latvia – the historical and geographical centre of Latvia. Dedicated to another topic each year (flora, fauna)	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Producers of the Ogre Culture Centre, Ogre Tourism Information Centre, active associations and entrepreneurs will be involved as organizers. Residents and students of Ogre municipality – as volunteers. Exchange activities will be organized with the cultural organizations of the EU countries and the other European Capital of Culture from Portugal.	The geographical centre of Latvia, which is located 3.3 km from Ogre, has been marked. A new project has been developed that will secure Ogre with a large flow of tourists.
Fishing Championship (Association "Mēs zivīm")	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Active associations and entrepreneurs of Ogre municipality.	An already and successfully launched championship has been developed.
Tweed Ride	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Active associations and entrepreneurs of Ogre municipality.	An already and successfully launched activity has been developed.

DESIGN, ARCHITECTURE

Activity	The European dimension theme	How will the residents / social groups / associations / cultural places of the municipality and EU countries be involve	Results to be achieved / sustainability of activity
Activities to promote Ogre architecture (Ogre gate, Ogre lighthouse, Uldevens castle, Kegums HPP (the first HPP), Ogre petrol station, etc. The heritage created by Latvian architects in Ogre – K.Pēkšēns, K.Bikše, V.Šervinskis, T.Hermanovskis, I.Devendruss, I.Blakenburgs, etc. - Ogre as a town of modern functionalism. - Architectural gems of health care institutions - sanatoriums <i>Saulstari</i> and Ogre	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Producers of the Ogre Culture Centre, Ogre Tourism Information Centre, active associations and entrepreneurs will be involved as organizers. Residents and students of Ogre municipality – as volunteers. Exchange activities will be organized with the cultural organizations of the EU countries and the other European Capital of Culture from Portugal.	Promotion activities, trying to include some of them in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

SPORTS, SPORTS GAMES

Activity	The European dimension theme	How will the residents / social groups / associations / cultural places of the municipality and EU countries be involve	Results to be achieved / sustainability of activity
The oldest sports festival in the country (80 years in 2027) – <i>Meņģele</i>	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Ogre Municipality Sports Centre, as well as active associations and entrepreneurs of Ogre municipality will be involved as organizers.	The tradition of the oldest Latvian sports festival has been maintained and developed.
Sports activities in Kegums municipality (European motocross championship on the <i>Zelta zirgs</i> track, SUP festival, Winter volleyball championship, skijoring)	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Ogre Municipality Sports Centre, as well as active associations and entrepreneurs of Ogre municipality will be involved as organizers.	Various sports activities of European and world significance in several sports fields and of important sports towns in Ogre municipality have been maintained and developed.
Frisbee Championship	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Ogre Municipality Sports Centre, as well as active associations and entrepreneurs of Ogre municipality will be involved as organizers.	A successfully operating sports activity has been maintained and developed.
First European Winter Volleyball Championship 2027 (with smaller championships before that)	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Ogre Municipality Sports Centre, as well as active associations and entrepreneurs of Ogre municipality will be involved as organizers.	A new kind of sport has been created, developing it from a local championship level to a possible European Winter Volleyball Championship.

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Activity	The European dimension theme	How will the residents / social groups / associations / cultural places of the municipality and EU countries be involve	Results to be achieved / sustainability of activity
A funding tender for creative activities in Ogre town and municipality will be announced.	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Any cultural organization of Ogre municipality, Latvia or EU countries will have the opportunity to participate in the idea/concept competition, as long as they express their wish to offer its concept to the project <i>Ogre, the European Capital of Culture 2027</i> .	The direction of activities has been developed through concept competitions – the urban/industrial past of Ogre, which will be included in cultural activities alongside with showing the untold events of Ogre's industrial past.
Events of the associations of Ogre municipality	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Any cultural organization of Ogre municipality will have the opportunity to participate in the idea/concept competition, as long as they express their wish to offer its concept to the project <i>Ogre, the European Capital of Culture 2027</i> .	The direction of activities with the guiding theme of Water or Light has been developed through concept competitions.

HISTORICAL EVENTS

Activity	The European dimension theme	How will the residents / social groups / associations / cultural places of the municipality and EU countries be involve	Results to be achieved / sustainability of activity
Liv activities that will mark the roots of antiquity	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Producers of the Ogre Culture Centre, Ogre Tourism Information Centre, active associations and entrepreneurs will be involved as organizers, as well as organizers from the other European Capital of Culture in Portugal. Artists from Latvia, Portugal and other EU countries.	Important events in the history of Latvia have been highlighted, to which not much attention has been paid so far.
Latvian roots and symbols of strength - Lielvārde belt / European belt	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Producers of the Ogre Culture Centre, Ogre Tourism Information Centre, active associations and entrepreneurs will be involved as organizers, as well as organizers from the other European Capital of Culture in Portugal. Artists from Latvia, Portugal and other EU countries.	Launched activities to show the roots of the Latvian people – the Lielvārde belt with its Latvian symbols of strength, which are also found in the ancient symbols of European nations and even Indian culture, showing it to Europe and looking for points of contact with the traditional culture of European nations.
Activities regarding the history of the European Union	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Producers of the Ogre Culture Centre, Ogre Tourism Information Centre, active associations and entrepreneurs will be involved as organizers, as well as organizers from the other European Capital of Culture in Portugal. Artists from Latvia, Portugal and other EU countries.	Important events in the history of Latvia and the European Union have been highlighted, to which little attention has been paid so far.

TWINNING ACTIVITIES WITH THE OTHER CAPITAL OF CULTURE

Activity	The European dimension theme	How will the residents / social groups / associations / cultural places of the municipality and EU countries be involve	Results to be achieved / sustainability of activity
Exchange of exhibitions – art, history	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Producers of the Ogre Culture Centre, Ogre Tourism Information Centre, active associations and entrepreneurs will be involved as organizers, as well as organizers from the other European Capital of Culture in Portugal. Artists from Latvia, Portugal and other EU countries.	Implemented cooperation activities, which will improve the significance of activities of both European Capitals of Culture.
Exchange of artists-in-residence with the other Capital of Culture	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Producers of the Ogre Culture Centre, Ogre Tourism Information Centre, active associations and entrepreneurs will be involved as organizers, as well as organizers from the other European Capital of Culture in Portugal. Artists from Latvia, Portugal and other EU countries.	Implemented cooperation activities, which will improve the significance of activities of both European Capitals of Culture.
Interactive cultural projects	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Producers of the Ogre Culture Centre, Ogre Tourism Information Centre, active associations and entrepreneurs will be involved as organizers, as well as organizers from the other European Capital of Culture in Portugal. Artists from Latvia, Portugal and other EU countries.	Implemented cooperation activities, which will improve the significance of activities of both European Capitals of Culture.
Exchange photo exhibitions about the other town in the urban environment	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Producers of the Ogre Culture Centre, Ogre Tourism Information Centre, active associations and entrepreneurs will be involved as organizers, as well as organizers from the other European Capital of Culture in Portugal. Artists from Latvia, Portugal and other EU countries.	Implemented cooperation activities, which will improve the significance of activities of both European Capitals of Culture.

Interactive stories telling about the history of Ogre, Latvia and the EU through the paintings of Vilhelms Purvītis and Ansis Čirulis	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Producers of the Ogre Culture Centre, Ogre Tourism Information Centre, active associations and entrepreneurs will be involved as organizers, as well as organizers from the other European Capital of Culture in Portugal. Artists from Latvia, Portugal and other EU countries.	Implemented cooperation activities, which will improve the significance of activities of both European Capitals of Culture.
Cooperation in the field of choirs and folklore, which are well-developed in both Latvia and Portugal	Ogre – a contemporary town Ogre – an environmentally friendly town Ogre – a technologically advanced town	Producers of the Ogre Culture Centre, Ogre Tourism Information Centre, active associations and entrepreneurs will be involved as organizers, as well as organizers from the other European Capital of Culture in Portugal. Artists from Latvia, Portugal and other EU countries.	Implemented cooperation activities, which will improve the significance of activities of both European Capitals of Culture.

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

- A strong and cohesive team works on preparing the project, ready to take on the coordination in case of implementation of the European Year of Culture project
- The cooperation among various cultural institutions of Ogre municipality is already being implemented
- Strong political support from the council of the municipality
- Stable and predictable development of the town and municipality
- Favourable environment for innovative ideas and sustainable development
- A clear infrastructure development plan for cultural, scientific and sports institutions
- A clear, viable and demonstrable development of tourism and culture, which creates an ever-increasing offer of culture and number of jobs in this sector

WEAKNESSES

- Insufficient awareness of one’s own cultural roots, which will be addressed by this project
- The town has no experience in the implementation of such projects, which will be solved by attracting individual producers

OPPORTUNITIES

- National and regional support as an opportunity to attract co-financing from EU structural funds and EC programs
- Active non-governmental organizations
- Public support
- Education of the population
- Improving the infrastructure
- Increase in the number of tourists in recent years, which will continue to grow
- Implementation of the project will be a great way to unite Ogre municipality and develop its patriotism
- Cross-sectoral cooperation and creation of new contact networks
- Flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances and to unite and interact with like-minded individuals
- Cooperation with foreign organizations implementing similar projects

THREATS

- Insufficiently developed administrative capacity for project implementation
- Challenge to maintain the same level in the celebrations of the centenary celebrations in Ogre in 2028 after the expressive
- EYC programme of 2027

1.2. Describe the city’s plans to strengthen the capacity of the cultural and creative sectors, including through the development of long term links between these sectors and the economic and social sectors in your city

Ogre is rich in cultural institutions. By 2025, the only Musical Theatre in Latvia with a professional troupe will be opened. Amateur groups are active here. Ogre is developing as an attractive tourist destination for tourists, even for one day – during Christmas, Ogre has already been called the capital of light due to the illuminated environmental objects. In winter, Ogre is becoming an increasingly popular destination for engaging in winter activities, infrastructure is being set up for summer activities, there is a professional theatre, and a Musical Theatre will be built in the coming years. There is a powerful development of enterprises, including technology enterprises. The economy is developing rapidly.

All this development is closely linked – culture cannot be developed without tourism, tourism cannot be developed without a close cooperation with strong and homogeneous municipal management, the municipality cannot develop itself without the support of the population, the population cannot support their town and municipality without strong entrepreneurship, enterprises and economy. All this, in turn, cannot be developed without a strong culture and cultural offer.

The long-term strategy of the project *Ogre, the European Capital of Culture 2027*, which will also be the basis for the culture strategy and development of the new joint Ogre municipality.

The team preparing the application for the project *Ogre, the European Capital of Culture 2027* has consulted with the local entrepreneurs. During the Covid-19 period, it has also set up remote discussion seminars and has received clear support for the implementation of such a project.

In the long run, the project *Ogre, the European Capital of Culture 2027* will not only give a major impetus to the town's development, but also, in cooperation with the European Union responsible institutions, partner cities and using other opportunities, will help to quickly expand the town's capacity and experience in the implementation of large projects, which will foster the ability to not lose the ambition to maintain a high bar for a high-quality cultural offer in Ogre. And this capacity and experience will grow not only at the organizational level, it will also help to grow quality and ambition in Ogre-based Cultural Collectives and Institutions in order to create an even higher quality Cultural offer. This capacity and experience will not only expand at the organizational level, it will also help to increase the quality and ambitions of the Ogre-based cultural groups and institutions in order to create a cultural offer of even higher quality.

1.3. How is the European Capital of Culture action included in this strategy?

In 2028, Ogre will celebrate its 100th anniversary. In recent years, Ogre has experienced rapid development and its plans for future development are serious, ambitious, but at the same time justified in their logical development. Projects *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027* and *Ogre-100*, which will take place in 2028, are logically connected festivals that will complement each other. The status of *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027* is an additional means for Ogre to grow as a developed town. It has already been mentioned that this project will also help to build experience and knowledge in the implementation of similar projects.

1.4. If your city is awarded the title of European Capital of Culture, what do you think would be the long-term cultural, social and economic impact on the city (including in terms of urban development)?

In addition to this project, activities are planned with a long-term impact on the development of Ogre cultural life. The only relatively short-term projects will be the opening, climax and closing events.

All other activities are planned as a long-term investment in the development of Ogre, as activities that will be preserved after the end of the European Capital of Culture status and the *Ogre-100* celebrations. The most striking example is the European Parade of Operettas. This will be the way the Musical Theatre, which will be opened only in 2025, will secure a brilliant repertoire by European composers in a few years' time and will keep this repertoire for many years after the end of the European Capital of Culture status.

In many media, Ogre is already mentioned as a town that is increasingly active in the cultural life of Latvia. With the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027* we will only increase the recognition of Ogre and make Ogre a cultural spot in the long run.

Even without the European Capital of Culture status, Ogre has a very broad and strategic plan for infrastructure development, which will play an important role in the implementation of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027*:

2021 – Opening of the new building of Ogre Central Library, as well as opening of the pier and the lighthouse.

2022 – Opening of the new building of Ogre Gymnasium.

2023 – Opening of the scientific centre *Ogres vārti* (the Gates of Ogre).

2024 – Opening of the Health and Culture Centre Ogre Sanatorium.

2025 – Opening of the Musical Theatre, as well as arrangement of the pedestrian street section in Brīvības Street (Independence Square and Musical Fountains).

2026 – Opening of the Ogre overpass over the railway line, which will improve traffic and facilitate access to cultural objects.

2027 – Opening of the Soldiers' trail, which will tell about the history of Latvia and the most important events.

All this infrastructure is already envisaged in Ogre's development plans as work to be performed with marked funding. It means that regardless of the success of Ogre in the European Capital of Culture competition, these objects will be built and will occupy an important place in the life of Ogre, Latvia and in European culture. However, the status of the European Capital of Culture will help to give greater prominence to the opening and revitalization of these sites in its cultural life.

It is undeniable that the honorary title of the European Capital of Culture will only help and make its long-term contribution to attracting visitors and ensuring sustainability for the infrastructure objects planned until 2027

1.5. Outline briefly the plans for monitoring and evaluation

3 teams will be formed for the project, which will monitor and evaluate the organizational and implementation quality of the planned activities. This will help both to mobilize the project management team and to create a well modelled organizational structure that will be motivated to achieve high quality results. There will be 2 teams to monitor the project:

- As soon as the status of the EYC is confirmed, an artistic council will be established immediately, which will include the cultural personalities living in the municipality.
- Representatives of the council of Ogre municipality and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia will be included in the Supervisory Board.
- Evaluation team, which will be organized in cooperation with Rīga Technical University, the Latvian Academy of Culture, local educational institutions (Ogre Gymnasium, Ogre Secondary School No. 1, Ogre State Vocational School, etc.). This team will deal with the statistical compilation and project evaluation. Students of Ogre educational institutions will be invited to form 'shadow management teams' with their own vision and ideas. It will help to develop young people's competences, wisdom in life and professional experience.



Social enterprise restaurant *Pie Zelta Liepas*, which employs people with special needs



Students of the Music and Art School in a concert at Ogre History and Art Museum



Brivibas Street during the National Celebrations



Brivibas Street at Christmas



Digital fountain in the centre of Ogre



The new pedestrian bridge over the Ogre river

2. CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

2.1. What is the artistic vision and strategy for the cultural programme of the year?

The artistic vision of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027* is created by emphasizing the local cultural diversity from the formation of the settlement of Ogre to the present day, when Ogre has acquired the status of a state town. During the town formation period, Ogre has experienced several concepts regarding the ideas of what the town's image and its spatial plan should be. Initially, Ogre developed as a resort town, but after the occupation of Latvia by the USSR, Ogre became one of the permanent residences of USSR army soldiers, as Ogre is located very close to Rīga. An industrial zone was also created, thanks to which blocks of apartment buildings appeared, as well as labor force was brought in from the entire territory of the Soviet Union, thus the proportion of residents of other nationalities in relation to Latvians increased rapidly in the town. After Latvia regained independence, Ogre continued to develop rapidly, although the town's image and spatial plan was based on both historical heritage and the development of the European example. It should be noted that the factories created in Ogre during the USSR era are not used practically these days, therefore most of them are empty and abandoned. We will reflect this historical evidence of the time in our artistic set of events, we will go on a journey from the beginnings of Ogre to the present day. During this journey, we will highlight not only the significance of history and how it has affected both the population and the development of the territory as it is today, but also how it all affects the environment, human equality and people's attitude towards each other.

The strategy of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027* is to create versatile artistic content, so that the residents of Ogre and its visitors get to know not only the town of Ogre, but also the territory of Ogre municipality and its historical icons.

The artistic content of the event offer will provide both locals and visitors with an understanding of the history of the town of Ogre, where the oldest settlements are almost 1,000 years old. Historical personalities also play an important role, such as bishop St. Meinard or Lāčplēsis – the hero of the epic story, and surely the legend about the Lielvārde belt – so iconic for the Latvians.

Also, through the artistic content offer we will tell how Ogre municipality has managed to change in a short time from a small settlement to the fastest growing town and municipality of Latvia.

The programme offer will be developed not only by highlighting the traditional cultural sector, but also by closely involving parallel sectors – sports, education, entrepreneurship, and science. All these fields form a human understanding of culture and events, and the representatives of these sectors will be able to make a major contribution to ensuring the diversity of the set of events.

2.2. Give a general overview of the structure of your cultural programme, including the range and diversity of the activities/main events that will mark the year

We plan to implement the program of events not only in the town of Ogre, but in the entire territory of Ogre municipality, thus promoting the sense of belonging both to our municipality and the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027*.

We will provide a range of events for residents of all ages, as well as create content so that everyone has the opportunity to be a visitor or a participant of *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027*.

The events will be structured according to the following 14 themes:

Grand events – the opening event, Grand Capital of Culture event, closing event

Events (festivals), such as:

- The territory of Ogre municipality has always been present at important and historical events for Latvia, therefore a new festival will be launched in Ogre - the Independence Festival, which will form and develop pride in this municipality, pride in this country, pride in belonging to the European Culture.

- Ogre municipality is a birthplace and home of creative people, who have built many non-traditional musical instruments, e.g., Vairis Nartišs has created the world's largest trumpet, while another active performer from Ogre, Artūrs Mangulis, has invented “*pēdu klavieres*” (foot piano) and various instruments made of plastic and glass. Krape, the civil parish in Ogre municipality, hosts one of the few Latvian traditional and non-traditional musical instrument workshops in Latvia. The status of the European Capital of Culture in the territory of the municipality will help to establish a new – non-traditional and unique – tradition of the festival of musical instruments.

- The only exposition dedicated to Sergei Eisenstein is located in Ķeipene civil parish in Ogre municipality. For a long time, we have been preparing for the creation of a short film festival, which would bear the name of Sergei Eisenstein Film Festival. Like the Cannes Film Festival, the Sergei Eisenstein Film Festival would be a film competition with its own prize, which would gradually become one of the most important film events in the Northern Europe. Young people would also be involved in the festival, where a special competition category would be created for their artistic expressions.

Town slogan events

- Cultural activities in the water-rich territory of Ogre municipality, emphasizing the guiding theme of light. Unused spaces with great future potential will be revitalized during the cycle of events.

- A competition of ideas/concepts will be organized, observing the requirements of the EU dimensions and common guidelines, where any cultural organization of Ogre municipality, Latvia or EU countries will be able to participate. Through the concept competition, we would see the development of the direction of activities – the urban/industrial past of Ogre, which would be included in cultural activities alongside with showing the untold events of Ogre's industrial past.

Visual arts and exhibitions – the territory of Ogre municipality was the birthplace and first place of living for two world-famous painters – Vilhelms Purvītis and Kārlis Hūns. The most important visual art events of the year of the Capital of Culture will be closely connected with the works of both of these painters – plein airs, environmental installations, interactive activities.

Opera, dance, theatre, musical theatre. As one of the main projects in the European Capital of Culture programme will be the only Musical Theatre in Latvia, which will open its doors in Ogre in the season of 2025/2026. Starting from 2025, 2 performances will be staged every year – operettas or musicals dedicated to a European composer. By 2027, 6 performances will be staged in this way and a large parade of all these performances will take place in the Capital of Culture programme. As a result, Ogre and the whole Latvian culture will gain a new repertoire, which will be staged by European level directors. These performances will remain in the repertoire of the Musical Theatre for several years. This project will be one of the brightest examples of how the status of the European Capital of Culture will help to implement a major project on the restoration of the musical theatre in Latvia after it was abolished in the 1990s.

Music and sound (jazz, pop music, street music)

- Water activities will be created on:

- the Daugava, the Ogre river,

- the pier,

- the islands of St. Meinard, Death, Ogre, Lielvārde/Ķegums,

- lakes – Plaužu lake, Lobes lake, Dubkalni reservoir.

- Summoning event “Europe Calling”, creating an increasing gradation – amongst the castle mounds of Ogre municipality, civil parishes of Ogre municipality, Latvian cities and towns, European cities and towns, or in other words – “Europe Calling”.

Digital technologies in culture – a mobile application game will be created, which will be an exploratory geocaching-type game about the history of the municipality. The player will have the opportunity to get to know their municipality, from Livonian times to the present day. The game will include not only the digital world, but will also be connected with real life, where the player will also have to visit real places in life.

The target audience of the game will be young people, while the aim of the game will be to promote the player’s interest in the history of Ogre municipality.

Literature, discussions, debates, communication

- Regional business and marketing development strategy Ogre 2040 will be developed.
- A European Design and Architecture Forum on the historical heritage of Ogre municipality and its development (contribution, preservation and development) will be established. How to find applications in other forms. Where to develop a development plan for historical objects, etc.
- Ogre will be marked as a town and municipality open for various cultural activities also in the field of literature.

Environmentally friendly events – by 2027, Ogre will be the first municipality where a lesson on environment will be introduced in all schools.

- Design, architecture– we will invite to add to the UNESCO heritage list cultural and historical objects and heritage located or originating from Ogre municipality – epic story Lāčplēsis, Lielvārde belt, etc.

Sports, sports games

- The oldest sports festival in the country will be highlighted (80 years in 2027). This sports festival has taken place every year, without interruption, in Meņģele civil parish in Ogre municipality.
- Promotion of a new sport – winter volleyball – will be started, developing it from a local championship level to a possible European Winter Volleyball Championship level.

Creative industries

- The direction of activities will be developed through concept competitions – the urban/industrial past of Ogre, which will be included in cultural activities alongside with showing the untold events of Ogre’s industrial past.
- The direction of activities with the guiding theme of Water or Light has been developed through concept competitions.

Historical events

- Important events in the history of Latvia will be highlighted, to which not much attention has been paid so far – actualization of the liv culture, which will mark the roots of antiquity.
- Activities will be launched to show the roots of the Latvian people, e.g., the Lielvārde belt with its Latvian symbols of strength, which are also found in the ancient symbols of European nations and even Indian culture, showing it to Europe and looking for points of contact with the traditional culture of European nations.

Twinning activities with the other Capital of Culture.

2.3. Explain succinctly how the cultural programme will combine local cultural heritage and traditional art forms with new, innovative and experimental cultural expressions?

Ogre is a town that keeps up with innovations. We already have one of the most modern libraries in Europe, with state-of-the-art technology that can be appreciated by the public, as well as state-of-the-art solutions to make it energy efficient. Ogre plans to continue to use modern opportunities in its development, which provide both innovation and an environmentally friendly attitude.

We like challenges, therefore one of the experimental cultural expressions of the municipality will be concerts on the water. Until now, concerts on the water have not been a usual form of events in Ogre municipality. Such concerts are planned in an environment that does not normally form classical concert venues, therefore we will use the latest technological innovations to make these venues available for concerts, as well as provide efficient scenography.

By highlighting the historical icons and places of the municipality – the epic story *Lāčplēsis*, St. Meinard's island, the Lielvārde Belt, Vilhelms Purvītis, Ķegums Hydroelectric Power Station, motocross track *Zelta Zirgs* – events will be created, underlining historical evidence by connecting modern innovations and art trends, thus giving these icons a fresh start.

These are just a few examples of the cultural program that we plan to implement using modern technology and creating innovative cultural activities.

2.4. How has the city involved, or how does it plan to involve, local artists and cultural organisations in the conception and implementation of the cultural programme?

Already in this first round of the competition, we have consulted with local artists, creative personalities, entrepreneurs, schools and other organizations regarding their vision of the implementation of this project and the developments to be included in it. The working group of the project Ogre. The European Capital of Culture is led by one of the leading orchestra conductors in Latvia, the Ogre-native Atvars Lakstīgala. The project development working group also includes Arno Jundze, a writer living in Ogre and the head of *the Latvian Writers' Union*, as well as Vairis Nartišs, a trombonist who has lived in Ogre for many years, Elīna Aupe, director of the Ogre Culture Centre, Evija Smiltņiece, director of the Ogre History and Art Museum, and Elīna Baltiņa, the head of the Ogre Region Tourism Information Centre.

In the second round of the European Capital of Culture 2027 competition, we plan to form working groups for the creation of an artistic programme by including artists from Ogre municipality – both those who live in it and those who were born but have not lost their connection with it. During the implementation of the project, events will be created where Ogre artists and creative personalities will be highlighted. In turn, a project competition will be created for local cultural organizations with the aim of providing them with activities within the framework of the European Capital of Culture 2027. Thanks to the proximity of Rīga, many artists from the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, the Latvian National Opera and Ballet, the Sinfonietta Rīga, the State Academic Choir Latvia and other professional groups live in Ogre.



Winter solstice celebrations in 2019



Monument of architecture and art – former sanatorium Ogre after reconstruction in 2021



Ogre Culture Centre



Restored ceiling paintings by artist Ansis Cīrulis in sanatorium Ogre



Easter decorations in the urban environment, painted using motifs from the works of artist Vilhelms Purvītis.



Ogre Music and Art School

3. EUROPEAN DIMENSION

THE PROJECT WILL HAVE THREE EUROPEAN DIMENSIONS:

- Ogre – a contemporary town
- Ogre – an environmentally friendly town
- Ogre – a technologically advanced town

All these dimensions will highlight the close connection of Latvian culture with European culture, its cultural heritage and common historical aspects, as well as pay attention to European integration and other European issues.

Europe's cultural diversity will be emphasized through engagement and the search for innovation in artistic expressions, attracting European artists, inviting us to think about our European unity, promoting dialogue and greater cohesion. It is no secret that, although the European Union looks like a single group of countries, sometimes Northern Europe does not understand the problems of Southern Europe and vice versa. Similarly, Western Europe does not always understand the problems and concerns of Eastern Europe (especially the post-Soviet bloc countries). Activities will be designed to highlight this awareness and promote overall cohesion.

With European dimensions and activities, Ogre will be able to brilliantly show that the project Ogre. The Capital of Culture 2027 is not just a local project, but with common challenges we will present Ogre as a new, bright and promising 'star' on a European scale, able to talk more and more about itself and its achievements in culture, science, sports, climate neutrality and openness to Europe.

Great emphasis will be placed on raising awareness among the residents and visitors of Ogre – we will tell about the history of the European Union, as well as about artists, achievements, innovations created in Ogre and their significance to the rest of Europe.

Cooperation with European artists and cultural institutions will be a very important aspect of the European dimension. This will promote long-term benefits for the long-term development of Ogre.

THE EUROPEAN DIMENSION. OGRE – A CONTEMPORARY TOWN

European artists will be widely involved in the activities and joint projects with European Union countries will be organized and presented.

With these projects and the dimension of a contemporary town, Ogre wants to show its openness and ability to join the family of European countries. In addition to everything, the dimension of a contemporary town shows Ogre's desire to be on the same level with other contemporary European cities.

THE EUROPEAN DIMENSION. OGRE – AN ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY TOWN

This dimension will be very important during the implementation of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027*.

Ogre has long been an environmentally friendly town. It has been a recognized resort town since the beginning of the 20th century, offering the opportunity to relax, enjoy nature and fresh air.

During the Soviet era, Ogre experienced rapid industrial development, which made it less environmentally friendly. However, since Latvia regained its independence in 1991, Ogre has been actively and purposefully moving in the direction of being an environmentally friendly town. It is Ogre, as the European Capital of Culture, that will have the opportunity to speak and implement environmentally friendly cultural activities, thus emphasizing the ambitions of the current president of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen and all European Union countries to reduce harmful emissions and create an environmentally friendly and climate-neutral town. In general, this will also be an important highlight in almost all activities of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027*.

THE EUROPEAN DIMENSION.

OGRE – A TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED TOWN

The aim of this dimension is to involve the widest possible audience for all activities of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027* through the overall project plan. It will be difficult to bring all Europeans to Ogre, but with the technological possibilities we will be able to invite everyone here interactively.

All new infrastructure objects are already being planned with modern technological solutions that ensure maximum savings in the area of energy resources – whether they are energy –efficient smart technology houses or a robot waiting for and talking to the visitors in the Ogre library opened in 2021. Such activities promoting technological development will be planned in many parts of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027*.

That is why one of our themes will be digital technologies in culture, where we will focus on this dimension in full, of course, without ruling out that the theme of technology would not appear in other activity themes.

By 2030, self-charging electric buses built in the town of Ogre will run here. They are already of great interest both in Latvia and internationally. Visitors of the European Capital of Culture will have the opportunity to see this unique bus factory.

3.1. Give a general outline of the activities foreseen in view of:

3.1.1. Promoting the cultural diversity of Europe, intercultural dialogue and greater mutual understanding between European citizens

- The grand events (the opening, climax and closing events) will emphasize the cultural diversity in Europe. At the climax event, we would also like to have an interactive exchange of performances, connecting the two Capitals of Culture and giving each other the love and applause of their citizens and visitors.
- The festivals section will include both a folklore festival, where we will invite other European countries, emphasizing our traditional culture, and other festivals that will build a dialogue with other countries. The Independence Festival will be the event that will help us promote mutual understanding – through the discussion of our history, through the acquisition of the state, the restoration of independence, through the integration of Latvia into the family of European countries.
- In the town’s slogan events, the sections of the visual arts, literature, music, sport and creative industries’ themes will light up this slogan – *Spark the change* – and highlight this time of change after we have gone through the stages of the virus and we are moving towards a common, united and environmentally friendly European Union.

- The theme of digital technologies in culture will be interactivity, where we will promote dialogue and understanding through technology, while emphasizing the fact that sometimes digital technologies can also be a barrier to a dialogue and mutual understanding.
- An important theme of activities will be joint activity projects with the other Capital of Culture in Portugal. The implementation of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027* cannot be conceivable without close cooperation with the other European Capital of Culture in Portugal. This will be a particularly important theme, in which Ogre will show dialogue with Europe.

3.1.2. Highlighting the common aspects of European cultures, heritage and history, as well as European integration and current European themes

The activity sections include the theme *Historical Events*, within which the planned activities reflect the oldest history and historical roots of Ogre municipality, tell about important Latvian national symbols, and at the same time vividly confirm the common historical path and development of Latvia and European countries and highlight common important events. In many events of the culture programme – concerts, performances, festivals, exhibitions, plein airs, etc. participants from European countries will be involved. Those will be musicians, choirs, writers, painters, architects, film and theatre directors, etc. This common communication and action will make it possible to get to know each other, to search for and find common aspects in European culture, art and cultural heritage, as well as to understand that the different and diverse peoples of Europe, with their national cultures, have the same roots, the same history and a common united future. A vivid example of joint collaboration will be the productions of the most important operettas and musical performances in Europe, which will involve artists of the Ogre Musical Theatre, as well as soloists and directors from the European Union countries.

Discussion forums on issues of European integration, common and different aspects, the most successful ways of integration towards a united and strong Europe are planned for various cultural sectors, as well as in the area of business. Many activities will also focus on other issues of European importance. Measures on environmental protection, ecology, green thinking and energy efficiency play an important role. The forum of architects will discuss the preservation of the historical heritage and its development, renovation and use in other forms. Much attention is also paid to the issues of social integration and social accessibility, trying to involve socially disadvantaged groups in the culture programme both as participants and visitors.

3.1.3. Featuring European artists, cooperation with operators and cities in different countries, and transnational partnerships.

Many of the activities are planned with the participation of European artists. Also, a separate section in the activity plan is planned for cooperation activities with the other European Capital of Culture from Portugal. We have already had communication with one of Portugal's candidate cities in the Azores. After this discussion, we have understood the possible points of contact in the folk art section, as well as other possible activities.

In addition, joint activities with Ogre's existing twin cities in the European Union will be planned. The council of the Ogre municipality has an actively working development department, which will assist the implementation team of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027* with involvement in suitable international partnership projects. This section is very developed for Ogre – the town has extensive experience in cooperation in international projects.

The town of Ogre has been actively and continuously cooperating with several European Union municipalities for a long time, cooperation agreements have been concluded with Hengelo in the Netherlands, Åge in Sweden, Joué lès Tours in France, Kelmė in Lithuania, Bollnäs in Sweden, while cooperation with other municipalities takes place within the framework of separate projects.

3.2. Can you explain your overall strategy to attract the interest of a broad European and international public?

The overall message will be based on the theme of change, which is linked to the established slogan: Ogre 2027: *Spark the Change*. We will address foreign audiences with activities that talk about the topical issues, using the theme of transformation and change.

At events and festivals, we will address themes of change that are important to most Europeans, such as:

- environmental change
- rapid development of technology
- generational change
- transformation of society after regaining independence
- preserving traditions in today's changing environment.

Activities in the new, innovative infrastructure projects implemented in the years before the EYC (e.g., Ogre Central Library, Ogre Musical Theatre and musical fountains, cognitive centre), as well as interactive art projects in the digital environment will play an important role in attracting European audiences.

In order to ensure the availability of information at the European level, in the further stages of the project it is planned to attract media specialists, local and national tourist destination management organizations, as well as to ensure the availability of information in the most important transport networks used by foreigners.

In order to ensure the success of the events, in the years before the EYC status, we will run a marketing campaign related to the theme of change for the target audience of local residents, the aim of which will be to encourage locals to get involved in the organisation of events and coming up with their own initiatives.

3.3. To what extent do you plan to develop links between your cultural programme and the cultural programme of other cities holding the European Capital of Culture title?

We have already communicated with one of the potential candidates for the European Capital of Culture from Portugal, the Azores.

After this communication and research into Portuguese history, we have understood the possible directions where we could find some points of cooperation.

In the scope of our activities, there is a separate theme – cooperation projects with the other European Capital of Culture 2027. These will be both exchange exhibitions in the form of environmental objects and interactive projects, in which we will tell each other's history and achievements, and interactive joint concerts where viewers from one town will be able to see the cultural events of the other town streamed live on the screens, as well as other activities where we will build dialogue and long-term friendship and cooperation.



Visualization of Ogres New Gymnasium. Opening in 2022

4. OUTREACH

4.1. Explain how the local population and your civil society have been involved in the preparation of the application and will participate in the implementation of the year

In the preparation of the application and implementation of the project, if Ogre acquires the right to be the European Capital of Culture 2027, mainly local residents of Ogre municipality, representatives of non-governmental organizations, people working in the area of culture, and civically active residents are and will be involved. The application preparation working group consists of the heads of the most important cultural institutions of Ogre municipality and invited specialists from various fields – music, theatre, cultural heritage and literature professionals – Latvian cultural authorities, whose life is closely connected with Ogre. Such composition of the team has allowed to create a purposefully grounded cultural programme that meets the interests and possibilities of the town, but at the same time is also ambitious.

Relying on the local human resources and intellectual potential is an important factor both in the preparation of the application and in the further implementation process, which will increase the feelings of patriotism and pride in one's strengths, one's town and municipality in the long run. Along with the working group, local civil society is involved in the application process, with an intention to cover the widest possible range of social, age and interest groups. Any inhabitant of Ogre is encouraged and invited to come with their ideas to expand and enrich the offer of the cultural programme.

Anyone who was interested could participate in the online forum Ogre as a possible European Capital of Culture 2027, ask questions, engage in the discussion and express their proposals, thoughts and suggestions. The working group presented the plans regarding claiming the internationally important title and the ideological concept of the proposed programme, the benefits and opportunities of the town. All inhabitants and industry professionals were invited to interact and develop innovative ideas for future projects in the field of culture, education, urban environment, creative business and other fields. A clear example of public involvement is the invitation to all residents of Ogre municipality to participate in the competition of the visual identity and slogan development for the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027*. The idea competition ended in April 2021 and since May 2021 Ogre has been colouring its application activities with the visual identity developed by J. Rožukalns and the slogan developed by E. Baltiņa.

In order to jointly create the offer of the cultural programme of the town of Ogre, local entrepreneurs, public organizations, cultural workers are also addressed individually, thus already involving the municipality's most active people in the planning and implementation of the events.

4.2. Explain how you intend to create opportunities for participation of marginalised and disadvantaged groups

Widely represented in Ogre are associations whose activities are related to solving social problems and providing assistance to socially excluded and disadvantaged groups. One could mention Ogre Disabled People Association, Ogre Pensioners' Association, Club of the Ogre Repressed, associations *Aspazija* and *Baltā dūja*. The recommendations and suggestions of these public organizations are included in the preparation of the application, cooperation will be continued in the planning and implementation of future activities. It is planned to organize competitions for ideas so

that these groups of the population would have the opportunity to create larger-scale activities involving non-governmental organizations from other European Union countries.

A great example is the Latvian Positive People's Theatre *Ārpus robežām*. Young people living in Ogre municipality with physical and intellectual disabilities play in this theatre. They will be involved in both the Ogre Theatre Festival, and the Musical Theatre will have a performance, in which the main actors will be the members of this theatre. In order to gain more publicity and draw the public's attention to this social group, the Ogre Museum of History and Art will also host an exhibition of the theatre *Ārpus robežām*.

The development of social entrepreneurship has been started in Ogre municipality with the aim to integrate people with physical and intellectual disabilities into society. It is planned to continue this work purposefully. Cultural institutions of Ogre municipality – the museum, library, school of music and art – in cooperation with Ogre municipality social service, are already organizing various activities, considerable experience has been gained in working with this social group. Continuing what has been started and developing new forms of activities, socially disadvantaged people will be involved in the events of the European Capital of Culture, both as participants and visitors, through cultural institutions and associations.

4.3. Explain your overall strategy for audience development, and in particular the link with education and the participation of schools

One of the most important ideas of the project Ogre. The Capital of Culture 2027 is to involve all residents of Ogre municipality in the activities. Starting with the preparation of the application, then participating in the development of the cultural programme with ideas and recommendations, and later – participating in the organization and implementation of events within a public organization, institution, group of active like-minded people, family or individually. And, of course, every Ogre. The Capital of Culture 2027 viewer and listener will become a participant of the project. In order to achieve this goal, it is very important to actively inform the public about the project's goals, meaning, intentions and progress, using all available forms and means of communication, especially social network sites. In the process of informing the public, it is planned to attach great importance to maintaining contacts and implementing cooperation with already organized public groups – non-governmental organizations, ensuring communication with the target audience of various fields, ages and interests. Online and face-to-face forums will be organized to communicate with the public, where everyone will be able to express their opinion and recommendations or get involved in organizing an activity. The offer of cultural events will be balanced in the whole territory of the municipality, providing an opportunity to participate in the preparation of events or to attend them near one's place of residence. A unified calendar of events will be created, which will allow people to follow all the developments in a transparent way and choose the most desirable cultural offers.

The involvement of schools in the project will be realized by linking it with the most important themes of the project: Ogre – a contemporary town, Ogre – an environmentally friendly town, and Ogre – a technologically advanced town.

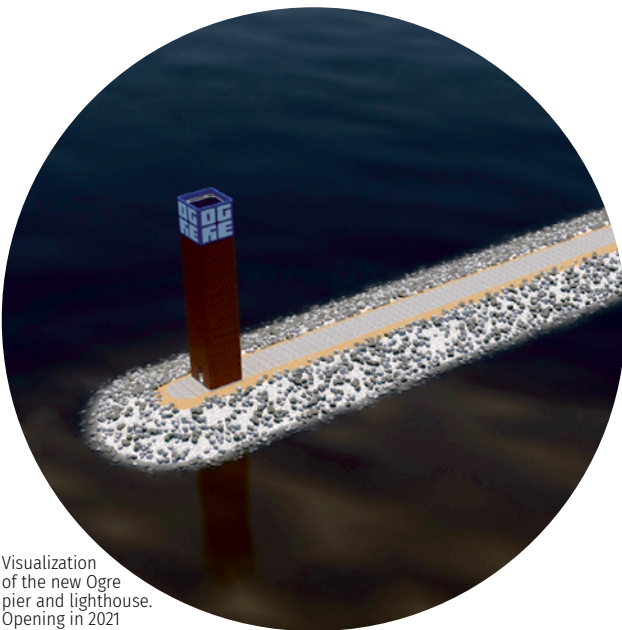
One of the activities will be a lesson on environment in Ogre town and municipality schools. A lesson about natural processes, flora and fauna, the preservation of the environment and its sustainability, as well as the implementation of other environmentally friendly measures and activities, environmental cleaning work. Scientists, universities and environmental specialists will also be involved, so that these activities are meaningful, cognitive and logically continued over a long period of time. A pilot project is currently being implemented in the schools of Ogre municipality, integrating the recently created audio guide in several subjects, which provides an opportunity to learn about the history and culture of the municipality with the help of a smartphone. It is planned to continue and develop these activities in

the coming years. In 2021, the new Ogre Library will be opened, where interactive technologies will be integrated with the aim of attracting children and young people, e.g., a talking robot will meet visitors. In 2022, the new Ogre Gymnasium building with student research laboratories will be built. In 2023, the scientific centre *Ogres vārti* will be opened, which will be located 7 meters below the level of the Daugava river. Digital interactive elements will also be used in the new educational programs created by the museum, which have been developed within the framework of the Latvian education project *Skolas soma* (School Bag).

New activities, e.g., connected with the cinema, will be organized to attract a wider audience, especially the younger generation. Short film competition for both students and professionals, film award, professional master classes. As the topic of ecology becomes more and more important, a bicycle network is being developed in the municipality. Within the project Ogre. The Capital of Culture 2027 events for families related to cycling tourism will be organised. People will be invited to the event by bicycle instead of a car, as suitable conditions at the venue will be provided, thus attracting supporters of an ecological lifestyle. Unusual, non-traditional cultural offer formats and extraordinary cultural spaces and places, both in industrial and unspoilt natural environments, will also be used to stimulate public interest.



Visualization of Ogre Central Library. Opening in 2021



Visualization of the new Ogre pier and lighthouse. Opening in 2021



Visualization of the scientific centre Ogres vārti (the Gates of Ogre). Opening in 2023



5. MANAGEMENT

5.1. Finance

5.1.1. City budget for culture:

What has been the annual budget for culture in the city over the last 5 years (excluding expenditure for the present European Capital of Culture application)? (Please fill in the table below).

Year	Annual budget for culture for the town of Ogre (euro)	Annual budget for culture for the town of Ogre (in % of the total annual budget for the town)	Annual budget for culture for the town of Ikšķile (euro)	Annual budget for culture for the town of Ikšķile (in % of the total annual budget for the town)	Annual budget for culture for the town of Kegums (euro)	Annual budget for culture for the town of Kegums (in % of the total annual budget for the town)	Annual budget for culture for the town of Lielvārde (euro)	Annual budget for culture for the town of Lielvārde (in % of the total annual budget for the town)	Annual budget for culture for the newly established municipality (euro) TOTAL	Annual budget for culture for the newly established municipality (in % of the total annual budget for the newly established municipality) TOTAL
2017	4,861,071.00	10,3	1,067,190.00	6,42	546,730.00	8%	990,480.00	9%		
2018	5,623,962.00	10,8	1,117,898.00	5,82	582,826.00	9%	1,098,889.00	11%		
2019	5,601,085.00	11,1	1,112,820.00	7,18	547,477.00	8%	1,102,668.00	9%		
2020	4,003,982.00	6,8	1,107,538.00	8,26	571,728.00	9%	964,709.00	8%		
2021	4,496,550.00	6,3	1,271,785.00	8,54	657,132.00	11%	1,202,419.00	9%	7,627,776.00	7.22%

In case the city is planning to use funds from its annual budget for culture to finance the European Capital of Culture project, please indicate this amount starting from the year of submission of the bid until the European Capital of Culture year.

The annual budget for culture will be used only as co-financing for the participation of Ogre municipality cultural institutions in the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027*. The rest of the budget will be planned separately and the European Capital of Culture project will not reduce the existing budget for culture of Ogre municipality.

Year	Amount (EUR)
2021	0,00
2022	0,00
2023	0,00
2024	40,000.00 EUR
2025	100,000.00 EUR
2026	100,000.00 EUR
2027	200,000.00 EUR
Total	440,000.00 EUR

Which amount of the overall annual budget does the city intend to spend for culture after the European Capital of Culture year (in euros and in % of the overall annual budget)?

Regardless of whether the town of Ogre is declared the European Capital of Culture 2027 or not, the share of the budget for culture in the total budget of Ogre will only increase – by 2027 new cultural institutions will be opened, which will have to be filled with content and for which operating expenses will have to be covered.

In 2028, Ogre will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the town and the planning of the anniversary events has already begun. It is clear that the share of the budget for culture will increase, but at the moment it is impossible to say exactly the ratio of this share.

It would be reckless to promise specific figures and a specific ratio against the total budget of Ogre for 2029 at the moment, but it is more than clear that the budget allocated to culture will only increase.

5.1.2. Operating budget for the title year – 2027

Income to cover operating expenditure:

Explanation for the overall operating budget (i.e. funds that are specifically set aside to cover operational expenditure). The budget shall cover the preparation phase, the year of the title, the evaluation and provisions for the legacy activities. Please also fill in the table below.)

Total income to cover operating expenditure (euro)	From the public sector (euro)	From the public sector (%)	From the private sector* (euro)	From the private sector* (%)
8,610,000.00 EUR	8,310,000.00	96%	300,000.00	4%

* - It is planned that up to 15% of the total budget will be attracted from the private sector, however, we are currently planning this share with great caution.

Income from the public sector:

What is the breakdown of the income to be received from the public sector to cover operating expenditure? Please fill in the table below.

Income from the public sector to cover operating expenditure	euro	%
National government	4,305,000.00	51%
City	3,000,000.00	36%
Region	0.00	0%
EU (with exception of the <i>Melina Mercouri</i> prize)	300,000.00	4%
Other	800,000.00	9
Total	8,405,000.00	100%

Have the public finance authorities (City, Region, State) already voted on or made financial commitments to cover operating expenditure? If not, when will they do so?

The council of the municipality has already decided to participate in the project. The decision was almost unanimous, indicating that the decision on financial participation in the project will not be difficult. The final decision on the allocation of funding will be taken if Ogre is selected as the European Capital of Culture.

The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia has expressed its commitment to co-finance the town that has acquired the status of the European Capital of Culture with funding of up to 50% or up to 10 million euros.

Income from the private sector

What is the fund-raising strategy to seek support from private sponsors? What is the plan for involving sponsors in the event?

Several strategies will be used to attract private sponsors:

- Attracting sponsors (different levels of sponsorship).
- Attracting sponsorship as co-financing – so far, e.g., the services of an Ogre-based fireworks company have been used, paying part from the Ogre municipality budget as a service, while attracting the other part as sponsorship co-financing of the fireworks company.
- Sale of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027* trademark rights licenses.
- Establishment of a guild of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027*, in which both residents and companies of Ogre municipality and all interested parties will be able to join and participate at the level of various memberships.

Operating expenditure: 2024-2027

Programme expenditure (euro)	Programme expenditure (%)	Promotion and marketing (euro)	Promotion and marketing (%)	Wages, overheads and administration (euro)	Wages, overheads and administration (%)	Other (please specify) (euro)	Other (please specify) (%)	Total of the operating expenditure (euro)
11,610,300.00	65%	2,679,300.00	15%	1,786,200.00	10%	0,00	0%	17,862,000.00

Budget for capital expenditure: 2021-2027

What is the breakdown of the income to be received from the public sector to cover capital expenditure in connection with the title year? Please fill in the table below.

Income from the public sector to cover capital expenditure	euro	%
National Government	5,000,000.00	8.81
City	28,034,333.40	49.42
Region	0.00	0
EU (with exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize)	21,195,000.00	37.36
Other	2,500,000.00	4.41
Total	56,729,333.40	100

Have the public finance authorities (city, region, state) already voted on or made financial commitments to cover capital expenditure? If not, when will they do so?

Financial commitments to cover capital expenditure have been made:

On 31 July 2017, the Central Finance and Contracting Agency and the council of Ogre municipality concluded an agreement on the implementation of the project “Prevention of flood and coastal erosion risks in the territory of the town of Ogre by rebuilding the old protective dam and building a new protective pier (breakwater) at the point where the Ogre river flows into the Daugava.

In 2018, the council of Ogre municipality and the Central Finance and Contracting Agency signed an agreement on the implementation of the European Union fund project “Improving the learning environment of schools of general education in Ogre municipality”.

At the meeting of the council of Ogre municipality on September 20, 2018, a decision was made on the participation of the council of the municipality in the project tender in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 418 ‘Regulations of the open tender for projects financed by the Emission Allowances Auction Instrument “Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Developing the Construction of Self-Sufficient Energy Buildings”’ with the developed project application “Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Construction of the Ogre Central Library Building”.

On January 11, 2019, an agreement was signed between the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia, the Latvian Environmental Investment Fund and the council of Ogre municipality on the allocation of EUR 5 million from the Emission Allowances Auction Instrument for the reconstruction of Ogre Central Library.

On May 29, 2020, the council of Ogre municipality signed a contract with SIA *Būvinženieris* on the construction of a hanging pedestrian bridge across the Ogre river in accordance with the construction project developed by SIA *BT Projekts*. The contract price of the construction works is 1,082,075.05 euros (including VAT), their due date is May 2021.

There is a specific plan for capital expenditure. Work is also being done to provide financial sources in 2023-2027, it is planned to attract EU funding for a part of capital expenditures from the 2021-2027 planning period, while the council of the municipality approves the annual budget in December of the previous year or in January of the current year. The medium-term plan, in turn, is reflected in the Ogre Municipality Development Programme for 2021-2027.

What is your fund raising strategy to seek financial support from Union programmes/funds to cover capital expenditure?

We are currently using the Sustainable Development Strategy of Ogre Municipality, which has been developed until 2037. Considering the Administrative-Territorial Reform, the Development Programme of the newly formed Ogre municipality (2021-2027) with the Investment Plan is currently being developed. While it is being developed (1st edition will be ready on November 15, 2021), the Ogre municipality Development Programme is in force until at least February 2022, in which almost all (except for the soldiers' trail) measures are included/planned.

If appropriate, please insert a table here that specifies which amounts will be spent for new cultural infrastructure to be used in the framework of the title year.

Infrastructure object	Amount	Source of funding
2021		
Ogre Municipality Central Library	8,890,339.94 EUR	The co-financing of the emission allowances auction instrument is 5,000,000.00 EUR. The municipality has undertaken to provide co-financing for the implementation of the project in the amount of 3,890,339.94 EUR.
The new pedestrian bridge	1,360,432.23 EUR	The municipality
The pier and the lighthouse	4,200,000.00 EUR Lighthouse – 100,000 EUR	ERDF – 85% The municipality – 15% The municipality – for the lighthouse
2022		
The new gymnasium	21,149,149.48 EUR	ERDF – 4,000,000.00 EUR The rest – the municipality
2023		
Ogres vārti	3,529,411.77 EUR	ERDF – 3,000,000.00 EUR The municipality – 529,411.77 EUR
2024		
Ogre Sanatorium (Health and Culture Centre)	2,000,000.00 EUR	Public-private partnership (PPP)
2025		
Musical theatre	3,000,000.00 EUR	PPP
Arrangement of the pedestrian street section of Brīvības Street (Independence Square and musical fountains)	1,500,000.00 EUR	ERDF The municipality
2026		
Overpass over the railway line in the centre of Ogre (a tourism object and an object improving traffic infrastructure)	8,000,000.00 EUR	ERDF The municipality
2027		
Soldiers' trail that will tell about the history of Latvia and the most important events	3,000,000.00 EUR	ERDF The municipality

5.2. Organisational structure

An outline of the intended governance and delivery structure for the implementation of the European Capital of Culture year

The organizational structure of the project will be organised at several levels: The highest level will be the **supervisory board**. It will be formed by the management of Ogre municipality - the chairman of the council, members of the council, the executive director of the council, the head of its Education, Culture and Social Affairs Committee, the managers of the largest companies in the municipality.

The artistic board of the project. This board will consist of a team of cultural authorities with advisory rights. The board will include creative personalities living in Ogre municipality, as well as of Latvian and European scale, who will give their professional advice, expertise and assessment to the intentions and the course of their implementation.

Project implementation team. This will be the project management team that will organize and coordinate the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027*. It will consist of a project manager, CEO, producers and other team members. Leading managers would be invited for certain activities,

but basically these processes would be done by local culture managers, thus increasing the capacity, knowledge and experience of local culture workers. It will be a contribution to the resilience of local people.

■ **Producers** – heads of local cultural institutions. This level will be partly duplicated by the work done by the producers, however, to ensure that the project implementation team is not too cumbersome and too numerous, some of the producers, who will also be the heads of the local cultural institutions, will also form this level of implementation structure.

5.3. Contingency planning

What are the main strengths and weaknesses of your project? How are you planning to overcome weaknesses identified?

Based on the experience of Covid-19 in 2020/2021, as well as the long-term experience in project preparation regarding the implementation of various cultural projects, the strategy of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027* cannot be imagined without risk analysis for cases where something can happen and for this reason the course of events is limited.

There are several possible risks:

- financing risk
- risk of infections
- the risk of unrealistic and exaggerated plans, which the candidate country is later unable to implement.

FINANCING RISK

The potential budget has already been marked, and it is realistic, absolutely commensurable with the town's financial capabilities.

The plan of infrastructure objects is independent of the total budget of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027* – all the planned infrastructure objects are included in the development plan of Ogre municipality and will be implemented even if Ogre does not gain the nomination of the status of the European Capital of Culture.

The budget sources of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027* itself are both direct financing of the municipality budget and co-financing through the participation of cultural institutions, attraction of EU funding, direct state co-financing, and state funding through projects.

The sources of the budget are extensive and they reduce the risk to a minimum if one of the sources of funding suddenly comes in insufficient. Ticket revenues are planned rather modestly, so as not to create unnecessary risks in budget planning.

RISK OF INFECTIONS

2020 and 2021 proved the need to anticipate global challenges, even a pandemic. Project "Ogre. In the event of the implementation of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027* we will plan the possibilities, which could be realised if the gathering restrictions suddenly come into force or the invited foreign artists are not able to come to the cultural projects.

THE RISK OF UNREALISTIC AND EXAGGERATED PLANS, WHICH THE CANDIDATE COUNTRY IS LATER UNABLE TO IMPLEMENT

This is the reason why the project development team from the very beginning includes the leading employees of the cultural institutions, as well as active artists – all activities must be realistic and feasible. For their realization, situations are modeled as if I had to participate in them myself. Such modeling of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027* helps the preparation team to minimize the risk of unrealistic and exaggerated plans.

5.4. Marketing and communication

Outline of the city's intended marketing and communication strategy for the European Capital of Culture year.

The main message of the marketing and communication strategy will be related to the established slogan: *Ogre 2027: Spark the Change*. By gaining the status of the European Capital of Culture, we will focus on stories, experiences, and performances related to transformation and change.

Using various art forms, our desire is to promote the change of public habits by bringing to attention current issues, such as environmental change, the ever-increasing pace of life and the role of technology in everyday life, as well as highlight the differences between generations that grew up and were formed during the Soviet era and after the restoration of Latvia's independence. In preparation for the European Capital of Culture year, we will also pay close attention to the target audience of the local population – we will implement a marketing campaign aimed at encouraging active participation. Its message would be that even small initiatives lead to greater change, which can lead to great success.

In order to ensure a unified messages and unambiguous connection of the activities with the project, a logo and slogan have been created, which are intended to be used in all stages of the project, starting from 2021. Following the announcement of the European Capital of Culture title receivers, it is planned to set up a separate project website and social media accounts to provide a platform where all information about the project is available.

TARGET AUDIENCE – LOCAL RESIDENTS

Given the important role of local communities in the implementation of the project, in the years leading up to the European Capital of Culture title receiving, great emphasis will be placed on communication with the local residents. Various activities in the digital environment, events, and environmental installations in the town and municipality of Ogre are planned. During the year of the project implementation, as well as before, projects will be designed for as many different groups of the population as possible in order to ensure a wider public understanding of the European Capital of Culture project.

The printed and digital information channels created by the municipality and its cooperation partners will be used to inform the local residents:

- The newspaper *Ogrēnietis*
- The newspaper *Ogres Vēstis Visiem*
- *Ogres Apriņķa Ziņas – reģionālā televīzija*
- News site www.ogre.net.lv

- Official websites of Ogre municipality and its institutions (www.ogresnovads.lv, www.visitogre.lv, www.okutura.lv etc.
- Official social media accounts of Ogre municipality and its institutions;
- Application *Ogres novadnieks*
- Websites and social media accounts of local businesses, associations, and influencers
- Outdoor advertising.

In order to acquaint the local population with the European Capital of Culture project, draw the attention of the population to the cultural processes in the town and municipality, as well as encourage local residents to involve in the project, the campaign *legriežam Ogrī!* (Let's make Ogre spin!) has been started in June 2021, within the framework of which various local activities are being implemented, for example:

- a video business card of Ogre as the European Capital of Culture has been created, in the creation of which the residents of Ogre from different age groups, fields of activity and social statuses were involved;
- a photo gallery has been installed in the tunnel of Ogre station. The photographs emphasize the diversity and variety of Ogre as a town and of local residents;
- throughout June, cafes in Ogre offer to their visitors a special food, drink or any other product called *legriežam Ogrī*;
- a social networking campaign, in which local residents are invited to share short videos filmed in and around Ogre using the hashtag #iegriežamOgrī.

Reaching the second round of the project, activities on a wider scale are planned using the slogan *legriežam Ogrī*, involving the territories of the new Ogre municipality – Ikšķīle, Ķegums and Lielvārde, as well as wider involvement of civil parishes is ensured.

TARGET AUDIENCE – RESIDENTS OF LATVIA

Latvia-wide communication is planned through stories, images and themes that are relevant and known to the majority of the country's population. Examples include the epic *Lāčplēsis* by the local writer Andrejs Pumpurs, the ruins of Ikšķīle church on St. Meinard's Island, which are preserved from the ancient times and are related to the christianization period in Latvia, as well as the legendary Ogre open air stage and the Ogre Culture House, where significant events related to the restoration of independence have taken place. It is planned to develop these themes and to stimulate the interest of Latvian residents in the project and its activities through cultural activities.

National-wide printed and digital information channels will be used to inform the residents of Latvia. Successful cooperation has already been established with several of them, and we plan to develop it within the framework of the European Capital of Culture project:

- Publishing house SIA *Dienas žurnāli*
- Publishing house SIA *Žurnāls Santa*
- AS *Latvijas Mediji*
- News site www.delfi.lv
- News site www.tvnet.lv
- News site www.jauns.lv
- Latvian Regional Television ReTV

In order to ensure that the information reaches various target groups, local influencers will also be addressed, as well as media visits will be organized in Ogre municipality.

Taking into account that the territory of Ogre municipality is crossed by the railway line Rīga-Daugavpils, we plan to continue cooperation with AS *Pasažieru vilciens* and create advertising materials for placement on trains, as well as other railway-related activities to promote the European Capital of Culture project.

TARGET AUDIENCE – EUROPEAN PEOPLE

Digital projects aiming to create the image of the town of Ogre as an innovative, modern town prone to digital technologies, will play an important role in communication with the European audience. Emphasis will also be placed on Latvian values, which form an integral part of the life of local residents – our traditions, songs, and dances. In order to promote interest at the Baltic States level, the common history will be emphasized, for example, through the theme of regaining independence.

To ensure the availability of information at the European level, in the further stages of the project it is planned to attract media specialists, who will systematically organize the transfer of high-quality and comprehensive information to foreign media.

Taking into account the fact that the town of Ogre is a rapidly growing tourist destination, it is planned to use tourism resources to draw the attention of foreign audiences. By involving local (Ogre Municipality Tourism Information Centre) and national (Vidzeme Tourism Association, LIAA Tourism Department) organizations in the project, it is planned to represent the status of the European Capital of Culture by participating in tourism exhibitions in Germany, Russia, Finland, Estonia, and Lithuania. It is also planned to establish close cooperation with the LIAA Tourism Department with an aim to create a broader marketing campaign, including organizing visits of tour operators/bloggers and ensuring the presentation of the project in foreign markets.

We also plan to establish cooperation with the most important transport networks and companies used by foreigners – Rīga Airport, airline *airBaltic*, Freeport of Rīga and VAS *Latvijas dzelzceļš*, in order to ensure the visibility of the project in these transit points with the help of advertising activities.

Within the project, we also want to establish artistic cooperation with Tartu, which will become the European Capital of Culture in 2024, in order to ensure a connection with the Estonian target audience and draw media attention to Latvia and Ogre as the European Capital of Culture 2027.

5.5. How does the city plan to highlight that the European Capital of Culture is an action of the European Union?

The European Capital of Culture programme will include a number of initiatives related to Ogre and Latvia as part of the European Union. They will especially emphasize the close connection of Latvian culture with European Culture, its cultural heritage, and history.

European policies related to the environment, adaptation to climate change, as well as the integration of smart technologies and innovations in the urban environment are already being implemented in Ogre municipality. Projects related to these EU policies, a Europe closer to the citizens, promoting

sustainable and integrated territorial development and local initiatives, especially in the field of cultural development, are being actively pursued.

Ogre municipality, by attracting EU funding, systematically attracts investments in cultural infrastructure, paying special attention to measures aimed to improve the operation of cultural facilities. Investments have been made in unique protected cultural monuments of national, regional and local significance, new cultural infrastructure has been created with the aim to improve the quality of the public environment, ensure preservation of architectural and cultural values, as well as further use of cultural objects in cultural services.

The created infrastructure will be used for the implementation of several events, such as the cycle of operettas at the Ogre Musical Theatre, the audiovisual robot exhibition at the Ogre Central Library and a musical project on the water of the Daugava river.

Extensive international cooperation is envisaged within the project. It is planned to create art projects with the participation of European artists, joint projects with European Union countries will be organized. The opening, climax and closing events, as well as activities in the festival section, will emphasize the diversity of European culture and create joint activities that unite the people of Europe. It is planned to create a special project, within the framework of which the theme of common and different aspects of European history in comparison with the Baltic States will be examined in more depth.

The European Union logo will be used in Ogre 2027 publicity materials and platforms related to Ogre as the European Capital of Culture. In the year when Ogre will be the European Capital of Culture, the flag of the European Union will be raised at the main cultural institutions of Ogre municipality.



Ogre
Evangelical
Lutheran Church



Town
decorations during
Christmas 2020



Town
decorations during
Christmas 2020



Senior group
Artava at the event
at the museum



Educational
lesson for students
at the museum



Decorated
Brivibas Street
during Christmas
2020

6. CAPACITY TO DELIVER

6.1. Evidence that you have broad and strong political support and a sustainable commitment from the relevant local, regional and national public authorities

Since the restoration of independence, Ogre municipality has been paying very serious attention to cultural infrastructure, events, and education. However, the greatest development in the field of culture in Ogre municipality started in 2005, when Ogre, thanks to the local government of the municipality, started an ambitious tradition – Ogre Music Festival. Various musical events have taken place during this festival, but the most anticipated event has always been the opera concert, in which the performers are not only the Latvian National Opera orchestra and choir, but also the outstanding Latvian opera stars, such as soprano Kristīne Opolais, mezzo-soprano Elīna Garanča, tenor Aleksandrs Antoņenko, bass baritone Egils Siliņš and others.

In 2017, Egils Helmanis, a member of the political party *Nacionālā apvienība (National Union)*, became the chairman of the council of Ogre municipality. Since the beginning of this year, the town of Ogre has become a leader in the field of development of culture, education and infrastructure in Latvia. We would like to note that the political party *National Union* with several ministers is also represented in the national government. Since 2011, all Ministers of Culture have also been represented only by the *National Union*.

Since 2017, the Culture Commission has been very active in Ogre municipality. The commission consists of the director of the Ogre Culture Centre, the director of Ogre Central Library, the director of Ogre History and Art Museum, the director of Ogre Tourism Information Centre, the artistic director of Ogre Theatre, several Ogre urban artists, as well as the director of Ogre School of Music and Art. Both the chairman of the council of Ogre municipality Egils Helmanis and his deputy Gints Siviņš regularly participate in the meetings of the Culture Commission.

In 2017, the town of Ogre acquired a new visual identity (logo), which fits perfectly into the urban environment of Ogre. The local government of Ogre municipality, in cooperation with the Culture Commission, has renovated the facade of the Ogre School of Music and Art, renovated the school's concert hall, as well as partially renovated and modernized its classrooms. During this time, the Big Hall of the Ogre Cultural Centre with 700 seats was renovated, an open stage was created where free concerts of various genres for town residents and visitors take place from May to the end of September.

One of the most significant political initiatives to support culture not only in Ogre, but at the national level is the New Ogre Central Library project. It will receive its first visitors in June 2021. The building will be a multifunctional cultural education centre and a public building of unprecedented scale in Latvia. It is a modern building with the lowest possible consumption of resources for heating and ventilation, intelligent lighting control and recuperation ventilation system. The building is also accessible for people with special needs. Library visitors will be greeted by a librarian's assistant – a robot that will be able to answer questions in Latvian and English, recognize people's emotions and even dance.

On July 1, 2021, the new administrative territory of Ogre municipality will come in force, and the territories of Ogre, Ikšķile, Ķegums and Lielvārde municipalities will be united. As per the initiative of the chairman of the council of Ogre municipality and in cooperation with the heads of the existing cultural institutions of the municipality, active communication is taking place in order to create a unified cultural development programme both in terms of content and infrastructure development. Reconstruction

of the Ikšķīle open air stage is one of the most ambitious initiatives of the chairman of the council of Ogre municipality.

In 2019, the chairman of the council of Ogre municipality presented the initiative to establish a professional Operetta and Musical Theatre in Ogre. It should be noted that Latvia is the only country in the European Union that does not have a professional musical or operetta theatre. Ogre municipality is the first in Latvia to come up with such an initiative. The idea of establishing a musical theatre in Ogre has received support at the national level. On February 26, 2021, Minister of Culture Nauris Puntulis and the chairman of the council of Ogre municipality Egils Helmanis signed a letter of intent on the possibility of developing a musical theatre in Ogre. According to the letter of intent, Ogre municipality undertakes to create, develop and maintain the necessary infrastructure in Ogre, in the building of the former Ogre Culture House, while the Ministry of Culture, if these preconditions are met, undertakes to cooperate with the municipality in promoting the development of the musical theatre. The opening of the musical theatre is planned for 2025. No local government in Latvia has planned such an ambitious long-term investment. We are sure that the Ogre Musical Theatre will secure a wide resonance throughout Europe.

6.2. Evidence that your city has or will have adequate and viable infrastructure to host the title. To do that, please answer the following questions:

6.2.1. How the European Capital of Culture will make use of and develop the city's cultural infrastructure.

The infrastructure of the town of Ogre has been developing very noticeably since 2014, but since 2017, in our opinion, we are the fastest growing town in Latvia in terms of cultural infrastructure. The culmination of the development is planned for 2025, when the Ogre Musical Theatre will be opened, which will attract extensive international attention. If Ogre acquires the status of the European Capital of Culture in 2027, the town has a great opportunity to regain the 'legendary' Ogre open air stage. It is this Ogre open air stage that is one of the symbols of the restoration of Latvia's independence in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Here we can gather 1,500 participants on stage and 15,000 audience members at the same time. In the warm months of the Capital of Culture year, about 50 different events are planned for this stage. The town centre is home to the Ogre Culture Centre, which is the largest in Latvia. The culture centre has four halls – the largest with 700 seats. The whole building can provide four events simultaneously with 1,200 seats. The new Ogre Central Library can accommodate up to 100 visitors. Next to the library is the Ogre School of Music and Art, which can accommodate 50 participants and 250 audience members. The renovated Ogre sanatorium is a unique place both in terms of acoustics and interior. Here it is possible to organize exhibitions and excellent chamber music concerts for up to 150 visitors at a time. Ogre town square stage is of open type and can accommodate 50 participants and about 1000 audience members. Ogre History and Art Museum can accommodate up to 2,000 different exhibits at a time and up to 100 visitors at a time. So far, Ogre has created various cultural events on the water – e.g., *River Concerts*, where participants are on stage in the water, but the audience has the freedom to find their place on the river banks. And undeniably – the musical theatre, where a space for up to 200 participants of the show at a time and up to 900 spectators at a time is planned. This was a small summary of the cultural places of the town of Ogre, but the events will also take place in the towns of Ogre municipality – Ikšķīle, Lielvārde, Ķegums and 16 civil parishes of Ogre.

6.2.2. What are the city's assets in terms of accessibility (regional, national and international transport)?

This territory is attractive due to its strategic location. Ogre municipality is located in the centre of Latvia, it is easily accessible to visitors from different parts of the country. Ogre is located only 34 kilometers from Rīga, the capital of Latvia. The town is easily accessible by Rīga-Daugavpils highway or railway, it is connected to the capital by a convenient public transport network. Rīga International Airport is less than an hour's drive from Ogre. Ogre is a local transport hub where all local trains and many buses stop. The railway line is used not only for domestic, but also for international passenger transportation to Russia (express train routes Rīga-Moscow-Rīga and Rīga-St. Petersburg-Rīga).

The territory of the municipality is crossed by several highways of national and regional significance, therefore it is possible to use paved roads to get to other places of the municipality, where the activities of the project *Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027* are planned.

6.2.3. What is the city's absorption capacity in terms of tourists' accommodation?

There are 2 hotel-type accommodations with 73 beds in the vicinity of the town of Ogre, as well as more than 25 guest houses and short-term rental apartments. Currently, there is no hotel available in Ogre, but the local government is actively working on improving the tourism infrastructure and attracting entrepreneurs. If necessary, in the summer season it is possible to attract additional resources – in the territory of the town there is a vocational education competence centre Ogre Vocational School, which manages 3 well-equipped student hotels, the newest of which were opened only in 2019. In total, 500 beds are available in these student hotels. If Ogre becomes the European Capital of Culture, it will definitely be a great economic benefit for the capital city of Rīga as well. One can reach any hotel in the centre of Rīga by train from the centre of Ogre in less than 1 hour.

6.3. What are the projects Ogre plan to carry out in connection with the European Capital of Culture action between now and the year of the title?

2021

■ On the 31st anniversary of the restoration of Latvia's independence, the **new pedestrian bridge** over the Ogre river was opened. It is located in the area between Jānis Čakste Avenue (*Jāņa Čakstes prospekts*) and Ogres Street. The bridge is 120 meters long and 1.5 meters wide, it consists of 3 span steel structures. In addition to the construction of the bridge, measures have also been taken to improve the banks of the Ogre river. At the opening of the new bridge, the ribbon was cut by Egils Helmanis, the chairman of the council of Ogre municipality, and Raimonds Vējonis, the former president of Latvia and resident of Ogre. At the solemn moment, Antra Stafecka and Atis Ieviņš, two artists from Ogre, performed the premiere of the song *Freedom*. The new bridge was consecrated by Mārtiņš Kalējs, the pastor of Ogre Evangelical Lutheran Church and Dainis Pandars, the pastor of Ogre Trinity Baptist Church. With the construction of this bridge, a 3.5 km long circular route has been created on both sides of the Ogre river. It goes along the promenade of the Ogre embankment and J. Čakste Avenue, offering charming views to the river and its banks. The Ogre river can now be crossed in two places – along the arched bridge and the new pedestrian bridge, thus allowing one to see both banks of the river. In order to make the walk more exploratory, it is possible to listen to the stories of an audio guide about the objects on the route: the Ogre river, the wooden footbridges, soldiers' graves, the former sanatorium Saulstari and the Ogre open air stage. Audio guide stories are available for free in the mobile application's *Ogres novadnieks* section of tourism.

■ On May 15, 2021, **the protective pier** was opened **at the point where the Ogre river flows into the Daugava**. With the participation of the local government of Ogre municipality and the Minister of Agriculture Kaspars Gerhards, the ribbon was cut and the new pier was officially opened, making it accessible to the town's residents and visitors.

The implemented project has created a unique place for relaxation and walks in the town of Ogre. Improvement works have been carried out in the new protective pier area – paving has been placed, asphalt pavement has been restored, benches and an environmental object in the form of three modern young people have been installed. The aim of this environmental object is to encourage people to think about the intensity of the use of smart devices, without seeing and appreciating the power of nature, society, their loved ones and life around them, which flows away like the water of the Daugava. It should be noted that the improvement and landscaping works will continue.

This structure will protect the Ogre riverbed from contamination and will facilitate the unhindered discharge of runoff and ice into the Rīga HPP reservoir, reducing the impact of the reservoir on the Ogre river flood runoff.

■ In May 2021, the construction of the **Ogre Central Library** was completed. Modern, self-sufficient, two-storey energy efficient building with low heating costs. The intelligently controlled lighting installed in the new building will ensure that the lighting level changes according to the supply of natural light, thus maximizing resource savings. The recuperation ventilation system will automatically monitor the indoor air parameters and its operation will change as the indoor air quality changes, increasing the indoor air exchange accordingly, if necessary. A unique heating system has been built for the building – a sewage recuperation system connected to the town's main sewerage networks. The installation is designed for wastewater heat recovery, further diverting it for the heating of the building and production of hot water. A green plant wall with an area of 50m² has been created in the atrium of the building. For irrigation it is planned to use the collected rainwater from the roof of the building. Solar panels for electricity generation are installed on the roof of the building. 4 electric car charging stations have been built in the parking place of the new building. The calculations show that the total energy consumption for heating in the new building on the calculated area of the building will not exceed 14.8 kWh/m² per year. It will be the first public building with such low heat consumption in Latvia. The new building is home not only the Ogre Central Library, but also to the Registry Office of the Ogre municipality, whose wedding room has an altar overlooking the pine forest, thus confirming that Ogre is a town in nature, and for newlyweds it will set a special mood in this important moment.

■ In the summer of 2021, it is **planned to open a lighthouse** at the confluence of the Daugava and the Ogre rivers, which will be located at the end of the newly built pier and will create a special atmosphere in the urban environment of Ogre. The lighthouse will be visible to everyone who will drive to Ogre along the national highway A6, or just pass the town. The lighthouse with giant spotlights will also be illuminated at night. The idea for the lighthouse came with the idea that Ogre could claim the status of the European Capital of Culture. one of the cornerstones of the project Ogre 2027 is the theme of light, and the council of Ogre municipality, not knowing whether Ogre will become the European Capital of Culture or not, has supported the appearance of a lighthouse in Ogre, symbolically showing that we can be light bearers in our country and be a small and ambitious light across Europe.

2022

■ In the autumn of 2022, it is planned to open the **New Ogre State Gymnasium building**. It must be mentioned that general education schools is not common in Latvia, as the population numbers are declining. In Ogre, the opposite is true – the population is growing every year and the demand for general education schools is very high. The goal of the local government of Ogre municipality is to make Ogre State Gymnasium an educational institution where young people can acquire the knowledge that would open up opportunities for them to continue their education in foreign universities as well. This educational institution is planned to have three floors – on the first floor there will be a lobby, assembly hall, library, as well as auditoriums for science subjects and teachers' rooms. On the second floor there will be classrooms for mathematics, technology, humanities and social sciences, as well as teachers' rooms. On the third floor, in order to form a separate environment from the active life of the school, there will be a social pedagogue, a psychologist, a career counselor, as well as technical facilities.

2023

■ In the summer of 2023, it is planned to open a new cultural, tourism and cognitive infrastructure object **Ogres vārti (The Gates of Ogre)** by the Daugava River at 45 Rīgas Street, Ogre. It is a reconstruction of a former pumping station. This object is planned to offer a boat mooring, as well as many opportunities for cultural, recreational and sporting activities.

2024

Ogre Sanatorium. In 2024, it is planned to open a completely renovated Ogre Sanatorium. In 2019, the local government of Ogre municipality started the restoration of the former sanatorium *Ogre*. Surrounded by forests on the outskirts of Ogre, at the foot of the Blue Hills, since its construction in the 1920s, it has served as a place to improve children's health. So far, the facade of the building and the impressive dining room in the centre of the building have been partially restored, the walls and ceilings of which are decorated with paintings by the legendary Latvian artist Ansis Cīrulis. This building has been granted the status of a cultural monument of national significance. Ansis Cīrulis' wall and ceiling paintings have survived to this day only in Ogre sanatorium, Rīga castle and Dzintari concert hall in Jūrmala. It is planned to create a hotel and sauna complex with SPA treatments in Ogre sanatorium by 2024. Thanks to its historic interior, it is already possible to hold excellent acoustic music concerts or other cultural events in the central hall of the building.

2025

■ In the autumn of 2025, the local government of Ogre municipality plans to open the **Ogre Musical Theatre**. In 1995, the Latvian government, forced by the circumstances of the economic crisis, decided to liquidate the Rīga Operetta Theatre. Since then, the genre of operettas, musicals and other musically theatrical performances in Latvia has remained in a 'status of a homeless person'. The Operetta Foundation has been working successfully in Latvia since 2013, proving that the public needs this theatre genre. For Latvia, it is a shame to be the only country in Europe where there is no musical or operetta theatre. The Latvian National Opera and Ballet in Rīga very rarely includes operettas in its repertoire. At the beginning of 2020, the chairman of the council of Ogre municipality E. Helmanis proposed an initiative to establish a professional Musical Theatre in Ogre, thus renewing the tradition of this genre in Latvia. It was agreed that the most suitable place for it was the building of the former Ogre Culture House, which, according to experts, was recognized as suitable for a professional musical theatre. In February 2021, the local government of Ogre municipality has concluded a letter of intent with the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia on the establishment of a Musical Theatre in Ogre.

■ In 2025, **Independence Square and musical fountains** will be opened in Ogre. The area where the Ogre Musical Theatre will be located was historically the centre of Ogre, but now it is one of the areas of the town where no infrastructure investments have been made for several decades and it looks bad visually. The building, which is planned to be transformed into the Ogre Musical Theatre, was one of the first ones where the Latvian flag was raised in 1990, thus this house and its surroundings symbolize Latvia's independence from the Soviet rule. Taking into account the important historical facts, the chairman of the council of Ogre municipality proposed the initiative to create the Independence Square and musical fountains, which symbolize Latvians as a musical nation, in front of the planned Musical Theatre.

2026

In 2026, an overpass over the **railway line** will be opened in the centre of Ogre, which will be one of the most ambitious objects in the history of Ogre that has ever increased the flow of tourists and traffic. The town of Ogre is divided by a railway with a very dense traffic intensity, therefore serious congestion moments occur due to the regularly closed railway on weekday mornings. Such an overpass over the railway would normalize the movement of private and public transport.

2027

Next to the Musical Theatre and Independence Square, the local government of Ogre municipality intends to create a **Soldiers' Trail**. It will be an open-air cultural place, where, in cooperation with the Ogre School of Music and Art and the Latvian Academy of Arts, various sculptures and other cultural objects will be created and placed. They will, through the twists and turns of time, show the fate of our soldiers and people in a common European context. The main target audience for this infrastructure is young people. We want to remind them of the fate and contribution of our ancestors that now allows us to live in an independent Latvia and experience European values.



Project
 Ogre. The European Capital
 of Culture 2027 preparation team
 together with Egils Helmans, chairman
 of the council of Ogre Municipality.
 From left – Elina Aupe, Atvars Lakstīgala,
 Elina Baltiņa, Arno Jundze, Evija Smiltņiece,
 Egils Helmanis, Vairis Nartišs



The Ogre
 river



Daugava
 promenade

Photos by: Anete Andersone, Ernests Austrīņš, Ģirts Ceriņš, Ainis Kursiņš, Māris Ruskulis, Edgars Sparāns, Voldemārs Stāvisis, Visvaldis Vegners, Dace Voitkeviča and Ogre municipality photo archive

ANNEXES

Annex 1



OGRES NOVADA PAŠVALDĪBA

Reģ.Nr.90000024455, Brīvības iela 33, Ogres nov., LV-5001
 tālrunis 65071160, fakss 65071161, e-pasts: ogredome@ogresnovads.lv, www.ogresnovads.lv

In Ogre

20.05.2021 /Nr. 2-5.1/1187

Confirmation

Herewith Ogres Municipality confirms that it will provide financial contribution to the implementation of the project “Ogre. The European Capital of Culture 2027”.

This confirmation is intended for submission to the Competition for the 2027 European Capital of Culture.

Chairman of the Council
 of Ogres Municipality

Egils Helmanis

Annex 2

OVERVIEW OF THE CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS OF THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED OGRE MUNICIPALITY

	Ogres municipality	Ķegums municipality	Lielvārde municipality	Ikšķile municipality
Town	1	1	1	1
Civil parishes	10	3	2	1
Total	11	4	3	2
Grand total	20			

There are a total of 20 cultural institutions in the newly established Ogres municipality. Cultural sites are available in every town and civil parish. Cultural institutions are maintained in good technical condition, therefore local residents also can actively attend the diverse events offered by local cultural sites. These events include both focusing on the promotion of folk art and events by professional artists. These cultural sites actively follow cultural trends and are able to offer topical forms of events to residents. Almost every town and civil parish has open air stages, where cultural events are held every summer,

thus ensuring a continuous offer of cultural events. Ogre municipality has a very well-organized infrastructure of the cultural sector, which within the project of the European Capital of Culture 2027 is an excellent basis for providing events accessible for every local resident, as well as other Latvians, to broaden the knowledge about populated areas in Latvia, while foreign visitors would be taken and shown a diverse cultural offer outside traditional destinations.

NUMBER OF FOLK ART / AMATEUR GROUPS

	Folk dance groups	Choirs	Vocal ensembles	Theatres (town / folk)	Folklore groups	Folk applied art studios	Orchestras	Children's groups (folk dances, vocal studios)	Other groups of interest
Ogre municipality									
Ogre Culture Centre	4	6	1	1	1	1	1	2	3
Ciemupe Culture House	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Ogresgals Culture House	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	-
Suntaži Kultūras nams	3	1	1	1	1	-	-	1	-
Laubere Culture House	2	-	-	1	-	1	-	2	-
Ķeipene Culture House	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	1
Krape Culture House	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Meņģele Culture House	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	2
Madliena Culture House	2	1	1	1	-	-	1	-	2
Mazozoli Culture House	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	1
Taurupe Culture House	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	2	-

	Folk dance groups	Choirs	Vocal ensembles	Theatres (town / folk)	Folklore groups	Folk applied art studios	Orchestras	Children's groups (folk dances, vocal studios)	Other groups of interest
Ķegums municipality									
Ķegums Culture House	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	3
Rembate Culture House	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Birzgale Culture House	1	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	1
Tome Culture House	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-
Lielvārde municipality									
Lielvārde Municipality Culture Centre	2	2	1	1	1	-	-	2	-
Lēdmane Culture House	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Jumprava Culture House	2	1	1	1	1	-	-	2	1
Ikšķile municipality									
Ikšķile Culture House	2	1	4	1	-	-	-	2	1
Tinūži Culture House	3		1		1	1	-	1	
Total	30	14	20	14	6	3	3	22	16

The new Ogre municipality is rich in folk art groups, together with its sub-sectors forming 128 groups, which gather more than 4,000 inhabitants in the daily folk art movement. The largest number of the amateur art participants is in the town cultural centres.

Ogre Municipality Agency Ogre Culture Centre gathers more than 1,500 participants in the folk art movement. Also at a state-wide level, Ogre municipality is the richest in folk art collectives.

Annex 3



OGRE MUNICIPALITY COUNCIL

Reg.No.90000024455, Brīvības Street 33, Ogre, Ogres nov., LV-5001

Tel. 65071160, fax 65071161, e-mail: ogredome@ogresnovads.lv, www.ogresnovads.lv

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MUNICIPALITY COUNCIL MEETING

Ogre, Brīvības Street 33 No.4 February 25, 2021

35.

On participation in the pre-selection for the award of the title of the European Capital of Culture 2027 announced by the Ministry of Culture

On August 4, 2020, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia (hereinafter - the Ministry) announced the pre-selection for the award of the title of the European Capital of Culture 2027 (hereinafter - pre-selection) in accordance with Paragraph 2 of the Cabinet Regulation No. 464 "Procedure for awarding the title of the European Capital of Culture 2027" (hereinafter - the Regulation) and Article 7(1) of Decision No 445/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 establishing a Union action for the European Capitals of Culture for the years 2020 to 2033 and repealing Decision No 1622/2006/EC (hereinafter - the Decision).

In accordance with Paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Regulation, an application for the nomination of a city for the title of the European Capital of Culture shall be submitted by the city municipality, city administration, municipality town or municipality council applying the relevant city for the selection. An application deadline of 10 months from the announcement of the pre-selection in the official publication "Latvijas Vēstnesis" is set, i.e., by June 4, 2021 at 17:00.

According to the Ministry, the European Capital of Culture event is one of the best-known European initiatives. The initiative has two objectives: to protect and promote cultural diversity in Europe and to highlight its common features, to increase citizens' sense of belonging to the common cultural space, and to promote the contribution of culture to the long-term development of cities in accordance with their respective strategies and priorities.¹

In accordance with the calendar included in the Annex to the Decision, in 2027 the title of the European Capital of Culture will be awarded to one Latvian city and one Portuguese city. This is the second opportunity for Latvia to be awarded the title of the European Capital of Culture. In 2014, the title was awarded to two European cities - the capital of Latvia, Riga, and Umeå in Sweden.

Previous European Capitals of Culture have indicated that the event has had the following long-term effects:

- 1) having awarded the title of the European Capital of Culture has contributed to a gradual change in the development of a city or a specific urban area,
- 2) the implementation of the event has significantly increased the self-confidence of the city's residents and increased their pride in their city,
- 3) residents are more likely to attend urban cultural events, especially those residents who tend to attend such events less often;
- 4) new cultural products have been created, artists and cultural organizations have acquired new skills, the event has provided them with new opportunities and helped them to find new partners at European and international level;

¹ The European Capital of Culture | The Ministry of Culture (km.gov.lv)

- 5) European and global citizens' awareness of the city and, consequently, its visibility at European and international level have improved, often as evidenced by the increase in the number of tourists and improvement of the city's reputation.

According to the selection criteria for the European Capital of Culture, Ogre Municipality Council must:

- 1) have a cultural strategy implemented, which is closely related to the development strategy of the respective municipality;
- 2) ensure sufficient cooperation with local residents (many candidate cities involve schools, universities, youth clubs, civil society organizations, etc.) and cultural service providers (both bottom-up and bottom-up cooperation);
- 3) establish links with European and international arts and cultural service providers, cooperation networks, etc.;
- 4) set up a team that prepares the application for the competition and learns from previous European Capitals of Culture;
- 5) gain the support and interest of residents and stakeholders;
- 6) create a new cultural infrastructure (and/or complete the project(s) by the year of the European Capital of Culture event.

Ogre municipality has always been the cradle of Latvian cultural traditions - the legendary concert of "Pērkons", later also the concert of "Čikāgas piecīši" at the Ogre open air stage, one of the first gatherings at the red-white-red flag raising event in the tower of the Ogre Culture House at the time, etc. Ogre is an environmentally friendly town that has been growing very rapidly in recent years - a professional theatre is already operating in Ogre, a new library and several other infrastructure objects will be opened in 2021, and in 2024 it is planned to open an Operetta and Musical Theatre. Ogre is not only the centre of Latvia in terms of its local location, but it can also be called so due to its range of cultural events. The strength of Ogre is in its unity, patriotism, and pride in its municipality.

The 2.2.5. guideline "Qualitative and accessible cultural environment" of the Sustainable Development Strategy of Ogre Municipality for 2013-2037 (approved by the decision of Ogre Municipality Council of August 29, 2013 (Minutes No. 14, § 1)) provides that Ogre municipality will preserve and develop the municipality's cultural heritage and creative initiatives of the residents in order to strengthen national self-confidence and sense of belonging to Latvian and European cultural space, support creativity and cooperation, promote tolerance and social cohesion.

At its meeting of February 8, 2021, the Ogre Municipality Cultural Advisory Commission decided to support the participation of Ogre municipality in the pre-selection (minutes No. K.3-71/1) and to establish a project management working group for the preparation of application documents, providing funding of 20,000.00 euros (twenty thousand euros), including payment for work in a working group, technical and administrative expenses related to the development of the application, the funds being provided in the budget of Ogre municipality for 2021.

Considering the proposal of the members of the Ogre Municipality Cultural Advisory Commission on the participation of Ogre in the pre-selection as the newly established Ogre municipality, the issue of the participation of Ogre municipality in the pre-selection was also considered at the meeting of the Ogre, Ikšķile, Lielvārde and Ķegums Municipal Finance Commission (hereinafter - the Finance Commission) on February 24, 2021. In accordance with the decision of the Finance Commission (Protocol No. 4, § 5), the Finance Commission provides a positive approval for the participation of Ogre municipality in the pre-selection.

After evaluating the goal of the pre-selection, opportunities for Ogre municipality's participation in pre-selection and, as a result, possible benefits for the municipality's development, taking into account the 2.2.5. guideline of the Sustainable Development Strategy of Ogre Municipality for 2013-2037, it can be concluded that the town of Ogre meets the objective of the European Capital of Culture event and Ogre Municipality Council will be able to meet the selection criteria for the European Capital of Culture.

Having heard the information provided by Atvars Lakstīgala, Chairman of the Ogre Municipality Cultural Advisory Commission, and Artūrs Mangulis, Chairman of the Ogre Municipality Education, Culture and Sports Committee, on the basis of Article 15(1)(5), Article 21(1)(24), Article 41(1)(2) and Article 61(1, 2, 3) of the Law on Local Governments,

voting: with 15 votes "for" (Antra Purviņa, Artūrs Mangulis, Dainis Širovs, Dzintra Mozule, Dzirkstīte Žindiga, Edīte Strazdiņa, Egils Helmanis, Gints Sīviņš, Ilga Vecziedīņa, Jānis Iklāvs, Jegors Laptevs, Juris Laizāns, Māris Siliņš, Mārtiņš Leja, Sarmīte Kirhnere), "against" - 0, "abstain" - 2 (Edvīns Bartkevičs, Jānis Latīšs),
the Ogre Municipality Council DECIDES:

1. To support the participation of Ogre municipality in the pre-selection of the competition "European Capital of Culture 2027" by applying Ogre for the title of the European Capital of Culture.
2. In order to develop an application for the nomination of Ogre for the title of the European Capital of Culture and other documents necessary for participation in the competition, to establish a project management working group (hereinafter - working group), inviting specialists to work there, as follows:
 - 2.1. project manager - Atvars Lakstīgala, director of Ogre Music and Art School
 - 2.2. project executive director - Vairis Nartišs, invited specialist;
 - 2.3. members of the working group:
 - 2.3.1. Elīna Aupe, acting director of Ogre Municipality Cultural Centre;
 - 2.3.2. Elīna Baltiņa, head of Ogre Municipality Tourism and Information Centre;
 - 2.3.3. Evija Smiltneice, director of Ogre History and Art Museum;
 - 2.3.4. Arno Jundze, invited specialist.
3. To approve the Ogre Municipality Internal Regulations No. 10/2021 of 25 February, 2021, "Regulations of the project management working group for the competition "European Capital of Culture 2027"" in accordance with the Annex to this Decision.
4. To provide that the work in the working group shall be paid for from the budget resources of Ogre municipality in accordance with Paragraphs 7 and 8 of this Decision.
5. To provide that the working group may invite consultants to work on the application, determining their remuneration for the work in the working group in accordance with paragraphs 7 and 8 of this Decision.
6. To authorize the executive director of Ogre Municipality Council on behalf of Ogre Municipality Council to enter into an agreement with invited specialists and consultants, if necessary, for the development of an application or participation in a working group.
7. Funding in the amount of 20,000.00 euros (twenty thousand euros) is allocated for the preparation of application documents, technical and administrative costs of the working group in connection with the preparation of the application and payment for work in the working group, from the Ogre municipality budget for 2021, position "Contingency funds".
8. The working group is instructed to:
 - 8.1. to prepare an estimate of the expenditure of the funding referred to in Paragraph 7 of this Decision by 10 March 2021 and submit it to the executive director of Ogre Municipality Council for approval;
 - 8.2. to use the funding granted in Paragraph 7 of this Decision in accordance with the expenditure estimate approved by the executive director of Ogre Municipality Council;
 - 8.3. to prepare an application for participation in the pre-selection of the competition "European Capital of Culture 2027" and prepare a Declaration of Honour by the Applicant City in accordance with the form published on the official website of the European Commission, for submission to the Ogre Municipality Council Cultural Advisory Commission by 1 June 2021;
 - 8.4. to submit to the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia the application referred to in paragraph 8.2. of this Decision and the declaration of honour of the town of Ogre by June 4, 2021.
9. To entrust control over the implementation of this Decision to the deputy chairman of the Ogre Municipality Council.

(Signature of the chairman of the meeting,
chairman of the council E. Helmanis)