

Nature Conservation Agency
Republic of Latvia



Junior Ranger programme



Guidelines and
motivation

The material was prepared using the experience of the Latvian Junior Ranger programme (20 years), the materials of the Finnish project partner Leader Sepra (Marjo Talvonen) "Sepra Youth section Team Guidelines", materials of the EUROPARC Federation, and internet resources.

Young people make up nearly 20% of Europe's population. They are the decision - makers of tomorrow. It is important they are given the opportunity to consider how the present management of our environment will affect them, so they can express their thoughts, opinions and get involved in the issues that will eventually impact them.



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Junior Ranger programme

EUROPE

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Junior Ranger programme in **EUROPE**





EUROPARC Junior Rangers programme

The Junior Rangers programme is an initiative open to all protected areas that are members of the **EUROPARC Federation***, thereby creating a valuable exchange and learning network among those who lead youth activities.

It is a non-formal education programme for children and **teenagers aged 12 to 18** (most often starting at 11–16), who live or study in or near a protected nature area.

In each country, the EUROPARC Junior Rangers programme is adapted to the specifics and context of the local protected area.

Goals of the Junior Rangers programme

- To introduce the Junior Rangers to the natural and cultural heritage of the protected area.
- Spend as much time as possible outdoors in Protected Areas.
- Building cooperation, a sense of belonging with other young people in the local Community and across EUROPE.
- To build cooperation and a sense of belonging with other young people in the local community and across EUROPE.
- Spend time with like-minded people.



EUROPARC Junior Ranger programme Principles

At least a 5-day programme per year: it can be at one time or several separate days throughout the year.

Events must include practical nature conservation activities **or good deeds for nature**, explaining why the specific task is being done. It is also recommended to include cultural and social activities and topics.

A large part of the events must take place outdoors.



The leaders of the Junior Rangers programme are nature inspectors, environmental education specialists, or Protected Area staff.

The Junior Rangers movement fosters the development of young people **positive attitude** towards the environment, as well as promoting a healthy lifestyle.

The Junior Rangers movement helps improve and promote **good relationship** between the Protected Area and the local community.

EUROPARC Junior Rangers' main activities and examples

Nature conservation activities

These may include participation in habitat or infrastructure maintenance work, monitoring, combating invasive species, tree planting, collecting and sowing seeds of natural meadows, waste collection, event organization, and more.



Exploring nature and culture

Getting to know the local flora and fauna, exploring their habitats. Measuring ancient trees, recording species, studying protected species and natural values. Introducing the local community to nature. Exploring local culture and the region. Presenting one's own research. Creating student enterprises.



Learning and doing

Learning activities at the nature center, talks with experts, excursions to other nature centers, an ornithology station, workshops on outdoor activities, survival basics, first aid, and more.



Recreation and outdoor activities

Camps, participation in tourism activities such as hikes, cycling trips, walks with bog shoes, boat rides, and overnight stays in tents. Educational night trails, board game evenings, cooperation, and being together.



Opportunities offered by EUROPARC to mentors

- Experience exchange for mentors/ organizations
- Online seminars for mentors
- Methodological materials
- Journal publications
- News
- Project partners
- Mentor email correspondence/ list



- EUROPARC digital materials guide mentors on how to organize youth work in Protected Areas.
- The enthusiasm of the Junior Rangers inspires mentors and gives them a sense of fulfillment in their work.
- The Junior Rangers programme helps staff view their Protected Area from a different perspective.

International opportunities for Junior Rangers

Once a year in summer – the International EUROPARC Junior Rangers Camp in one of the European countries – an opportunity for participants from Latvia to take part.

It is recommended to select participants representing two areas. Those to be nominated for participation in international events should have at least one year of positive experience in the Junior Rangers movement, taking into account the rules set by the event organizers and the recommendation of the leader of the regional Junior Rangers group.



EUROPARC Nordic Youth+ and Junior Rangers event, where experienced (16+) Junior Rangers participants have the opportunity to take part.

Participation in international events is usually free of charge, but travel and insurance are the responsibility of each participating organization or each individual participant.





Junior Ranger programme in **LATVIA**





Junior Ranger programme in Latvia

In Latvia, five Junior Rangers groups are active – in **Gauja, Ķemeri, Rāzna, and Slītere National Parks**, as well as in the **North Vidzeme Biosphere Reserve**. Each group involves 10–20 young people.



Information on the Junior Rangers programme can be found at:
www.tiekamiesdaba.lv

The basis of the Junior Rangers programme

The Junior Rangers programme shall be co-ordinated and managed by the **Nature Conservation Agency**.

- Junior Ranger programme is implemented as the initiative of EUROPARC Federation, in coordination with the membership status and its granted opportunities of Nature Conservation Agency.
- Junior Ranger programme is implemented in accordance with the cooperation agreement No 7.8/57/2023 between the EUROPARC Federation and Nature Conservation Agency on implementation of Junior Ranger and Youth+ programme in Latvia.
- Junior Ranger programme is based on the Strategy (strategic direction No 2.5.) and Action Plan of Nature Conservation Agency. Legal basis – “Sub-paragraph 3.17 of Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 507 of 2 June 2009 ‘By-laws of the Nature Conservation Agency’.”
- Each Junior Ranger group has been registered in the EUROPARC Junior Ranger data base and can be found on the map.



Main principles of the Junior Ranger programme

All Junior Rangers groups in Latvia follow similar principles, yet, there are regional differences, too.

Group leadership: Nature Education Specialists

Age of participants: 12 (sometimes 11) – 17. There are no limits of participation within this period (at least 2 years participation recommended in Junior Ranger programme).

Timing: All year round – approximately 6–10 times per year, during school time, holidays and summer camp.



Camps: at least one joint summer camp for all Junior Ranger groups of Latvia (3-4 days).

Recognition of skills and participation: Junior Ranger certificates.

Funding: Nature Conservation Agency budget of protected areas, project funding, parents.

Support: parental support in reaching the event location and bringing lunch, practical support in organizing the camp.

Internal communication: Each PA's Junior Ranger group has a WhatsApp group for quick communication. In addition, both the youths' and parents' emails are used to send and receive information.

Media: Junior Rangers of Slītere, Ķemeri, Gauja National Parks and North Vidzeme Biosphere Reserve have their own Facebook pages. Meanwhile, the Junior Rangers of Rāzna National Park publish their activities on the National Park's Facebook page.



Visual identity: the Junior Ranger programme has a unified LOGO, which is used for printing promotional materials and for recognition. There are also beach flags, badges, and mugs with carabiners. (With own money, or project funding – also backpacks, hoodies, sweatshirts, t-shirts).

Each group of Junior Rangers has **a flag with symbolism and logo** recommended events.

It is planned to introduce a small flag that can be carried in a backpack or pocket and used during hikes as a photo record.

Management of the Junior Rangers programme

The Junior Rangers programme Coordinator – coordinates overall information and activities, compiles results, and organizes communication with regional Junior Rangers mentors and with the EUROPARC Federation for international camps and cooperation purposes.

In Latvia, Junior Rangers mentors are **nature education specialists**. Mentors can also be other specialists connected with Protected Areas.



Mentors – organize Junior Rangers group activities and record participation in events.

Other specialists and project staff are involved in Junior Rangers programme activities to diversify the activities and topics.

Additional support comes from NGOs, Youth/Youth+, volunteers, local partners (Projects).



During Junior Rangers events, good and respectful cooperation is encouraged, and attention is given to the use of polite language.



Problems arising during Junior Rangers events that concern youth behavior and safety issues are resolved by contacting the parents.



The contact information and personal data of Junior Rangers are maintained and securely stored by each group's mentor:

- parent-signed applications/ registration forms,
- event participant lists with signatures,
- camp documents during camp organization,
- video and photo materials.



Application for the Junior Rangers programme

Information about the Junior Rangers programme is available on the website: www.tiekamiesdaba.lv



To apply for participation, one must contact the Junior Rangers mentors of the nearest Protected Area or the program coordinator and submit **an application form*** signed by parents or guardians.

An application form/ written agreement has been developed for the Junior Rangers Program, which must be signed by parents or guardians for their child's participation in the Junior Rangers programme.



The application form includes parental consent for photographing and filming Junior Rangers for publicity purposes; this information is included in the signed document.

To involve new participants, information is published on the social media of the Junior Rangers and Protected Areas, inviting people to attend open events where those interested can get acquainted with Junior Rangers activities.

Ķemeru Nacionālā parka jaunie reindžeri
May 30, 2023 · 🌍

Savā pulciņā gaidām jaunus Jaunos reindžerus! 🌿🐾

JAUNIE REINDŽERI
Saki JĀ piedzīvojumiem dabā!

Kas mēs esam?
Esam jaunie dabas pētnieki (no 12 g. vecumā), dala no starptautiskās kustības, kuri došas piedzīvojumos un palīdz aizsargāt dabu.

Ko mēs darām?
Mēs iepazīstam un galīšam dabā, dodamies pārgājienos, piedalāmies nometnēs, tā arī iepazīstam Jaunos draugus!

Kur?
Meža mājā, Ķemeru Nacionālajā parkā

Pievienojies iepazīšanās dienā
5. Junijā
no 13.00 - 16.00

Ķemeru Nacionālais parks
May 30, 2023 · 🌍

Vai Tu esi aktīvs jauniešs, kuram patīk daba un esi gatavs mesties jaunā varbūt esi šāda jaunieša vecāks?

... See more

Agnese Čamane and 10 others

Like Comment

Gaujas Nacionālā parka Jaunie Reindžeri
October 17, 2024 · 🌍

AICINĀM CIEMOS - GNP JAUNO REINDŽERU KUSTĪBAI 20...

Gaujas Nacionālā parka Jaunajiem reindžeriem 20!

Aicinām ciemos
22. oktobrī
16.00-19.00

GNP Dabas centrā Siguldā, Baznīcas ielā 3

Arta Jasmīna Krūmiņš, Agnese Čamane and 14 others · 2 shares

Like Comment Share

Comment as Elna Grāvelsina



Ķemeru Nacionālā parka jaunie reindžeri updated the event cover photo in Ķemeru Nacionālā parka Jauno reindžeru atvērto durvju diena. · Follow
May 22 · 🌍

EUROPARC JUNIOR RANGER LATVIA

JAUNO REINDŽERU atvērto durvju diena

6.06. 10.30
Meža mājā Ķemerose

EUROPARC JUNIOR RANGER

EUROPARC JAUNO REINDŽERU DIENA!

Tiekamies pie kafejnīcas "NEPTŪNS", Jaunķemerī

iesim dabā!

Based this post to get more reach for Ķemeru Nacionālā parka Jaunie reindžeri.

Agnese Čamane and 7 others

Like Comment Share

Ķemeru Nacionālā parka jaunie reindžeri
September 6, 2023 · 🌍

23. septembrī ne vien Latvijā, bet arī citviet pasaulē tiek gūlinošs atzīmēt EUROPARC Jauno Ranger dienu, kas nozīmē, ka šī mums būs ne vien svarīgs atzīmētais diena, D... See more

JAUNIE REINDŽERI
Saki JĀ piedzīvojumiem dabā!

23. septembris
no 10.40 - 15.00

EUROPARC JUNIOR RANGER

EUROPARC JAUNO REINDŽERU DIENA!

Tiekamies pie kafejnīcas "NEPTŪNS", Jaunķemerī

iesim dabā!

Based this post to get more reach for Ķemeru Nacionālā parka Jaunie reindžeri.

Agnese Čamane and 7 others

Like Comment Share

Funding of the Junior Rangers programme

Funding is planned within the budget of the Nature Conservation Agency, which is mainly used for organizing the Summer Camp in Latvia, as well as for providing materials for the operation of the Junior Rangers programme, coordination, and mentor capacity building.

In addition to funding, the following agency resources are used (territory, premises, tools, accommodation, etc.).

Additional resources

- Additional funding can be attracted through NGOs and projects.
- Support from local municipalities by sending Junior Rangers to international camps.



Practical support

- Support from volunteers and Youth+.
- Parental support (snacks, time, logistics).

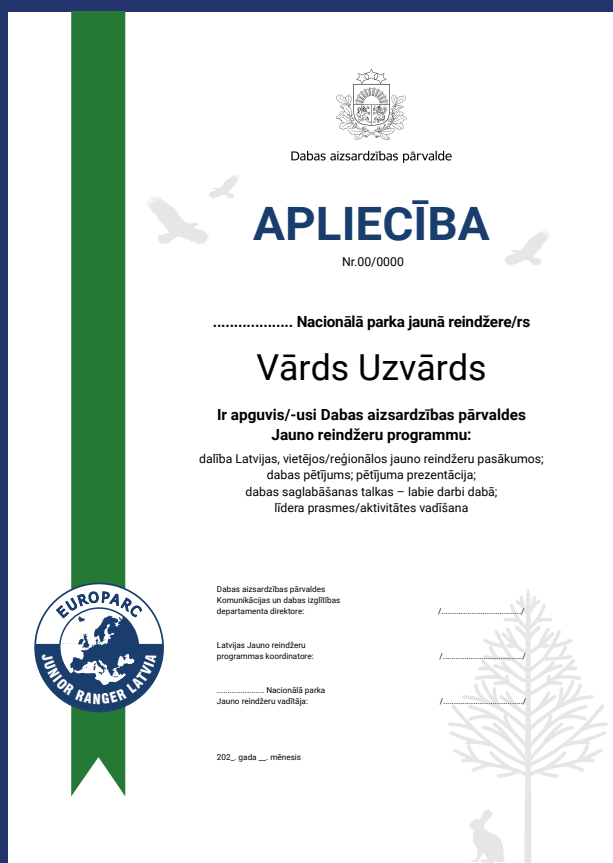
Procedure for the Junior Rangers Certificate

The Junior Rangers Certificate for participation in the programme can be obtained once the criteria are met (recommended within a 2-year period).

The certificate is signed by the Junior Rangers group mentor, the coordinator of the Latvian Junior Rangers programme, and the Director of the Communication and Nature Education Department of the Nature Conservation Agency.

The certificate award ceremony is organized **once a year** at the joint Latvian Junior Rangers camp.

Participation in events and the tracking of criteria fulfillment are carried out by the regional leaders/mentors of the Junior Rangers.



Criteria for the Junior Rangers Certificate

The Junior Rangers Certificate criteria are developed based on EUROPARC guidelines and adapted to the Latvian context, as well as discussed with the Junior Rangers. The criteria include all activities and topics to be covered in the Junior Rangers programme.

The criteria to be fulfilled within a 2-year period are the following:

- ✓ Participation in at least **four** Junior Rangers events.
- ✓ Participation in at least **four** practical **nature conservation activities** (good deeds for nature/habitat clean-ups).
- ✓ Leading two activities (leadership) at Junior Rangers events or public events organized by Nature Centers (conducting an educational activity, team-building, game, group work, quiz, etc.).
- ✓ Participation in at least **one** joint Latvian Junior Rangers **camp** (recommended).
- ✓ **Creative or research work/** study of natural values.
- ✓ Using the results of the creative/research work, a **presentation** has been prepared and delivered at a local Junior Rangers event.



- ✓ To know and explain **what the Junior Rangers are and what they do**.
- ✓ To get to know and point out on a map the most **significant Protected Areas** of Latvia (4 national parks, 4 nature reserves, and the biosphere reserve).
- ✓ To recognize up to **ten protected plant and animal species** characteristic of the territory represented by the Junior Rangers.
- ✓ To recognize the typical **tree species** in Latvia's nature (during the season).
- ✓ To name and be able to locate on a map the most significant **water bodies and wetlands** (sea, rivers, lakes, bogs) in the territory represented by the Junior Rangers.
- ✓ Explaining the **importance of biodiversity** (providing examples).
- ✓ To be familiar with the **Protected Area represented by the Junior Rangers on a map** and be able to explain **why it was established**, its main objectives (nature, cultural, and historical values).
- ✓ To be able to explain the **main tasks of the Nature Conservation Agency**, including the Junior Rangers programme.

WHAT THE JUNIOR RANGERS DO?



Nature friendly
behaviour



Hiking



Knowledge
of nature



Camps



Good works
for nature



Benefits from the Junior Rangers programme



- The Junior Rangers programme is good publicity for the Protected Area.



- Nature sector professionals and enthusiasts are being developed.
- Professional contact with young people and the development of their mutual skills.

- Potential future employees in the environmental sector.
- Positive public attitude.



- Opportunities to hear the opinions and interests of young people.
- Junior Rangers may possibly become future politicians, business owners, entrepreneurs, and leaders.



Junior Ranger programme – in LATVIA



- Connection with local communities, society, families.
- Youth involvement is important to diversify opportunities and reach different target audiences.



- International exchange opportunities.



- Junior Rangers help in biodiversity conservation – (for example: habitat restoration; reduction of invasive species).



- In cooperation with NGOs, through the Junior Rangers programme, there is an opportunity in certain cases to obtain project funding.





Benefits for the Junior Rangers and **MOTIVATION**



Benefits and Motivation of the Junior Rangers

To identify the benefits and motivation of young people, Junior Rangers from Latvia, Finland, and Estonia, along with Youth+ and Junior Rangers mentors, took part in a working group and a survey.

Benefits in the environmental context

- Opportunity to get to know and explore nature.
- Knowledge about protected areas and protected species.
- Learn about cultural heritage in protected areas.
- Promotes a positive attitude towards nature, the environment and nature protection.

Personal benefits

- Spending time in nature.
- Promotes a healthy lifestyle.
- Making friends.
- Positive and organized fun.
- Maintaining physical and mental health.

Professional benefits

- Ideas for future careers.
- Learning new skills (first aid, outdoor survival skills, crafts).
- Competence development: communication, teamwork, increased self-confidence, reduced stress.
- Acquired skills and experiences can be demonstrated and included in a Curriculum Vitae (CV) in the future.

Social and cultural benefits

- Promotes a sense of belonging to one's region and the Protected Area.
- Opportunity to explore new places in Protected Areas.
- Economic accessibility (small resources for participation).
- Opportunity to participate in camps.
- Junior Rangers who have at least two years of experience have the opportunity to participate in international events.

What qualities are characteristic and necessary for Junior Rangers?

J – Joyful

U – Understanding

N – Never-giving-up

I – Inspiring

O – Observant

R – Responsible

R – Resourceful

A – Active

N – Neat

G – Generous

E – Energetic

R – Resilient

S – Supportive

What is your motivation to be a Junior Ranger?

combining it with other hobbies

doing good for nature

unique opportunities not available to everyone

activities are not every week

like to be in nature

exploring the nature and culture of a home area

enjoying helping

opportunity to meet new people

a hobby

improving trails and infrastructure

enjoying being outdoors

being among like-minded

learning new things

individuals

being different

developing social skills

parents or a friend recommended it and I liked it

helping to choose a future profession

understanding what and how needs to be protected in nature

connected with nature, but not scouts



APPENDIX



Sample application



We offer the opportunity to participate in the **Junior Ranger** programme, which is coordinated by the Nature Conservation Agency in **pecially protected areas in Latvia**. The Junior Ranger programme in Latvia has been operating since 2004 and is based on the guidelines of the EUROPARC Federation and the experience of local specialists.

What do Junior Rangers do?

Junior Rangers has opportunity to **learn and practically implement various activities in nature in an understandable and informal way** - go hiking, meet nature experts, participate in nature clean-ups and learn about nature in other practical ways. Participants get to know protected nature areas in Latvia and get involved in nature conservation activities. The most active participants have the opportunity to participate in local and international camps. Junior Ranger activities take place regularly, about once a month, most often during each school holiday and also on Saturdays.

Who leads the Junior Ranger programme?

The mentors of the Junior Rangers are nature education specialists from the Nature Conservation Agency. The Junior Ranger programme is coordinated by Anda Andrušaitė, senior nature education specialist at the Gauja National Park Nature Education Center, at the Nature Conservation Agency. (anda.andrusaite@daba.gov.lv; gauja@daba.gov.lv)

- **Gauja National Park** Anda Andrušaitė (anda.andrusaite@daba.gov.lv)
- **Ķemeri National Park** Agnese Čamane (agnese.camane@daba.gov.lv);
Linda Liepiņa (linda.liepina@daba.gov.lv)
- **Rāzna National Park** Diāna Selecka (diana.selecka@daba.gov.lv)
- **North Vidzeme Biosphere Reserve** Linda Kauliņa (linda.kaulina@daba.gov.lv)

Parent participation: Junior Rangers do not have to pay for activities, however, we expect you to support transportation to event venues and sometimes provide children with food (snacks/drinks) for activities and child insurance at camps.

Where to get more information?

<https://www.tiekamiesdaba.lv/lv/iesaisties-dabas-saglabasana/latvijas-jaunie-reindzeri>

or communicate Anda Andrušaitė, ph.: +371 26433668, anda.andrusaite@daba.gov.lv



Registration National Park/ Biosphere Reserve Junior Ranger programme

I, by leaving my signature, agree that my child (*name, surname*)

.....,

child's personal code.....,

address

.....,

child's telephone number:

child's e-mail address:.....

school..... grade

participates in the Junior Ranger programme organized by the Nature Conservation Agency.

Parent's name and surname.....,

Parent's phone number.....,

Parent's e-mail address:

.....

I agree that events in which my child participates may be photographed or filmed, and the materials may be used for publicity purposes.

Date..... Signature

The Nature Conservation Agency informs that it processes the above-mentioned personal data to ensure the person's involvement in the Junior Rangers movement and to organize and promote related events.

1.The controller of the relevant data is the Nature Protection Agency, Baznīcas iela 7, Sigulda, LV-2150 Tel.: 67509545.

2.The justification for the processing of the relevant data arises from the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 507 of 2 June 2009 "Nature Protection Agency Regulations" as set out in Section 3.17, by which the Nature Protection Agency promotes the involvement of the public (including landowners) in the management of protected areas and micro-reserves and the protection of species and habitats, and your consent

3.The Nature Protection Agency will process your and/or your child's personal data categories specified in this application, as well as, if there is relevant consent, image or voice recordings (in photo, video, or audio format).

4.We inform you that the personal data you provide will be processed for as long as your child participates in the Junior Rangers programme.

5.You have the right to contact the Nature Conservation Agency at any time with a request to correct, delete, or restrict the processing of your personal data, as well as to withdraw the consent given to the processing of data. You also have the right to file a complaint with the Data State Inspectorate if you believe that the Nature Conservation Agency has violated the conditions for the protection of your personal data. You can obtain additional information about the processing of personal data by the Nature Conservation Agency on the Nature Conservation Agency's website in the section - Personal data processing, as well as by contacting the Nature Conservation Agency's personal data protection specialist by e-mail: datu.aizsardziba@daba.gov.lv.

6. The data you provide will not be transferred to third parties, unless the need for their transfer is created by applicable laws and regulations, based on which the Nature Conservation Agency has received a request to provide your submitted personal data.