



The Global Economic Education Alliance

in partnership with the

Association of Teachers of Economics – Estonia
&
Junior Achievement Estonia and Latvia



& the

Center for Economic Education
University of Colorado, Colorado Springs (UCCS)



in cooperation with the

Office of International Affairs
University of Colorado, Colorado Springs (UCCS)

REQUEST for APPLICATIONS

to Participate in an
Economic Education Teacher Study Tour
to Estonia and Latvia

Dates: **March 20/21 – March 29, 2020**
(with optional extension March 30 – April 1)

Application Deadline: January 6, 2020

Economic Education Study Tour to Estonia & Latvia

I. Overview.

- The *Global Economic Education Alliance* is offering an 8-day Study Tour to Estonia & Latvia for two to four UCCS students and eight to ten K-12 school teachers from throughout the United States.¹ The Study Tour will be led by Professor John Brock, Director of the *Center for Economic Education* at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs (UCCS), Elbe Metsatalu, *JA-Estonia* and Director of the *Association of Teachers of Economics Estonia*, and Jānis Bukšs, *JA-Latvia*.
- This tour will provide a unique educational opportunity for teachers to exchange ideas, teaching methodology and experiences in economic education with Estonian and Latvian educators as well as colleagues from other states within the U.S.
- This Study Tour to the Baltics is a highly effective way of learning about an economy and experiencing firsthand, not only the educational system, but also the reality of everyday life. Teachers who have participated in such international exchange often remark that it was “an experience of a lifetime.” The objective is that teachers return to their classrooms with renewed appreciation of the importance of economics and enthusiasm for economics education. Students will ultimately gain from their teacher’s life-changing experience.
- For additional thoughts about the value of GEEA Study Tours, you are encouraged to read the Post-Study Tour teacher reflections on the GEEA website, www.globaleconed.org.

II. Structure. The Study Tour is divided into three distinct phases – preparation, trip to Estonia/Latvia, and post-tour follow-up.

A. Preparation.

A preparatory program will be held during several months prior to departure. Once the tour group is selected, Professor Brock will conduct preparatory planning via electronic communication. We will discuss Study Tour planning as well as Baltic country history, culture, politics, economics and education challenges.

B. Trip to Latvia/Estonia.

- ❖ Dates: Participants depart on Friday, March 20th or Saturday, March 21st & return home on Sunday, March 29th. [Optional extension: Return home on April 1.]
- ❖ Participate in all or some of the following activities (among others):
 - Visit schools and classes at both the secondary and university level. These visits will include meetings with teachers, students, and education officials. Participants will observe how Estonian and Latvian educators conduct classes and manage the school.

¹ Note: There is an optional 3-day extension to participate in the International Student Entrepreneurship Competition and Teacher Conference in Riga. Teachers and student entrepreneurship teams from throughout Europe will be in Riga for the competition.

- Visit the Central Bank of Estonia and Central Bank of Latvia and attend a lecture on the economic situation in the country.
- Visit cultural and historic sites in both countries, such as the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia in Riga (or Kgb Building File No. 1914/2014 Museum) and Old Town Tallinn in Estonia, the best-preserved Medieval city in northern Europe.
- Visit Estonian educator's home for dinner.
- Optional extension: Join teachers & students from throughout Europe participating in the 2020 *International Student Company Festival* and *Teacher Conference* in Riga, March 30 – 31. Participate with European teachers in economics/entrepreneurship workshop.

C. Follow-up.

- ❖ Upon returning to your respective schools, each participant will be expected to:
 - Incorporate experiences from this program into teaching at your school. Share the experience with colleagues in your school, your school district, and/or your community (e.g., Power Point presentation with photos, video, etc.)
 - Optional, but encouraged: Based on your Council or Center workshop opportunities, attend a teacher workshop conducted by your local *Center for Economic Education* or state *Council for Economic Education* in the coming year to deliver a presentation about your experiences and observations in the Baltics.
 - Optional: Consider participating in an online exchange with an Estonian or Latvian school teacher (and students) whom you may meet on this trip. This depends on you and your colleague's ability to deal with technology issues, time differences, and other potential challenges.
 - Submit a 1,000 word (about 3 – 4 pages with 12-point font, double space) **Post-Tour Report/Reflection** to your supporting Center/Council and to Professor Brock that summarizes the personal benefits gained from the experience, the benefits to your students, and your ideas for follow-on activities with your school, school district and/or your state Council or local *Center for Economic Education*. Consider this your reflection on the value of the Study Tour.
 - Due date:
 - May 18, 2020
 - The GEEA Study Tour subsidy (\$200 per teacher) for travel will be provided to participants upon submission of this Post-Tour Report.

III. Important Requirements and Miscellaneous Details.

- ❖ Applicants must currently be full-time K-12 teachers in the United States or involved in Economic Education administration (e.g., Center or Council personnel).
- ❖ Applicants ***must*** have valid passports when submitting the application. A copy of the photo page of your passport must be included with your online application. Your passport should not expire for at least 6-months after the completion of our Study Tour.
 - ***Please note:*** participation in a study tour can be physically taxing. Other countries are not always as handicap-friendly as the U.S., and the tour involves a lot of walking in both Riga and Tallinn.
 - You may be required to carry your own luggage. You may not have baggage handlers to help you, so try very hard to **minimize luggage/weight**; large suitcases become difficult to handle, as you may have to carry up and down stairs. Ramps & elevators are sometimes not available.

- Accommodations (**double-occupancy**) are not deluxe, but very comfortable. Be prepared to depart the hotel in the morning (sometimes early) and not have an opportunity to rest until late afternoon or early evening.
- ❖ The plan is to depart your home airport for Tallinn, Estonia on Friday, March 19 or Saturday, March 20, 2020.
 - **In coordination with John Brock** (jbrock@uccs.edu), each participant will purchase his/her own airline ticket to Tallinn (TLL), preferably scheduling a March 20 or 21 arrival in Tallinn. Pre-arranged taxis will take participants to the hotel in Tallinn.
 - Return to U.S.: Participants will schedule the return flight to the U.S. from Riga Latvia Airport (RIX) on Sunday, March 29. You should schedule arrival home on the same day.
 - Those who opt for the extension should schedule the return flight to the U.S. from Riga Latvia (RIX) on Wednesday, April 1.
- ❖ Elbe Metsatalu and the *Association of Teachers of Economics Estonia* will serve as our primary host in Estonia and Jānis Bukšs will be our primary host in Riga.
- ❖ Internet access in Estonia should be available at all hotels. Your phones with international calling should always work.
- ❖ It may not be easy to accommodate special dietary requirements, but our hosts will do their best to insure diet needs are met. Be sure to let us know of any special needs.
- ❖ Participant health insurance coverage will be available at reasonable cost through the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. All participants must have travel medical insurance coverage.
- ❖ Participants will be responsible for the cost of alcoholic beverages and snacks/food outside of the three planned daily meals. Water, soft drinks, and juices will be provided at meals. Bottled water will be provided on bus tours and site visits.
- ❖ **Expense Summary:**

• Airfare: the roundtrip airfare will cost ² approximately:	\$1,300.00
• In-country costs ³	1,900.00
• UCCS Office of International Affairs administrative fee ⁴	50.00
• Travel Health Insurance (thru UCCS; paid directly to Insurance Co.) ⁵	50.00
• Less: GEEA subsidy for teacher	– 200.00
• Net estimated total Study Tour cost paid by each participant	\$3,100.00
- ❖ The *Global Economic Education Alliance* will be the fiscal agent. Each participant is responsible to send a check for \$1,900 payable to GEEA no later than February 21, 2020. [If you select the optional 3-day extension, your payment to GEEA will be \$2,300.]

² Current roundtrip airfares are estimated to be in the \$900 - \$1,600 range, depending on city of U.S. departure, airline and chosen itinerary.

³ Includes hotel (double occupancy), restaurants including tips, local bus transport, museum & other activity entrance fees and tour guides. Only minor personal and incidental expenditures and tour guide tips are borne by participants. Each participant will be responsible to send a check for \$1,900 for in-country expenses payable to the *Global Economic Education Alliance* (via Professor Brock) no later than February 21, 2020. The payment to GEEA should be \$2,300 if you select the optional 3-day extension.

⁴ Before submitting the application, you will be required to pay this UCCS admin fee as specified on the UCCS Office of International Affairs application webpage.

⁵ Premiums range between \$25 - \$75 based on age.

- ❖ Each participant will be required to sign a University of Colorado *Release and Waiver Form*. This form will be provided via an online link after the in-country payment is received.
- ❖ Cancellation Policy: After February 28, 2020, there will be no refunds on payments made to GEEA to cover your in-country expenses.
- ❖ Applicants will receive notification of acceptance no later than January 24, 2020. [**Note:** Applications received well before the deadline may receive acceptance notice well before January 24th.]
- ❖ Optional: Teachers may obtain three hours of graduate economics credit from the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs for a total additional tuition cost of approximately \$300. Economics 6310: *Economics of the Baltics: From the USSR to the EU*. Enrollment will be opened in January or February via a separate UCCS Extended Studies online enrollment process.
- ❖ If you have any questions about the Study Tour itself, contact John Brock at jbrock@uccs.edu. If you have questions about the online application process, please contact the UCCS International Affairs Office at international@uccs.edu or by phone at 719-255-5018.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE⁶

Teacher Study Tour to Estonia & Latvia from March 20/21 – March 29/April 1
DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION IS: January 6, 2020

- ❖ The application is in two parts:
 1. Email your Descriptive Essay and Letter of Support directly to John Brock at jbrock@uccs.edu, and
 2. Complete the online application with the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs Office of International Affairs at this link:
<http://educationabroad.uccs.edu/?go=EconEducationinLatviaEstonia>
- ❖ **Descriptive Essay:**
 - ✓ A double-spaced typewritten descriptive essay addressing the following questions (please limit to 750 – 1000 words; about 2 – 4 pages):
 - Top of the first page:
 - Name: _____
 - School: _____
 - Grade Level(s): _____
 - Courses Teaching: _____
 - Degrees and Universities:
Bachelor's degree in _____ from _____.
Advanced degree(s) in _____ from _____.
 - In your essay, briefly address the following questions:
 1. Why are you interested in participating in this teacher *Study Tour to Estonia and Latvia*?
 2. Identify three goals you have for this Baltic experience.
 3. Describe your leadership experiences.
 4. Describe one of your cross-cultural experiences or your international travel experiences. (Note: Previous international travel experience is NOT required to participate in this Study Tour.)
 5. How do you plan to share your expanded knowledge and experiences from this Study Tour with your students, community, and colleagues?
- ❖ **Letter of Support:**
 - ✓ From either your state *Council for Economic Education* or your local *Center for Economic Education*; or another economic education organization with which you have interacted (e.g., *Foundation for Teaching Economics, Junior Achievement*). In some cases, a letter from your school principal/administrator will be acceptable.

⁶ The *Global Economic Education Alliance*, the University of Colorado, and all organizations involved in the Study Tour selection process shall provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Background Information

Teacher Study Tour to Estonia and Latvia

March 20/21 – March 29, 2020

Why the Baltics?

The Baltic states – Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – were reluctant members of the USSR from WWII until the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. In the relatively short time since the demise of the USSR, these three Baltic republics have risen to high-income classification by the World Bank, are members of the OECD, maintain high Human Development Index rankings, are members of NATO, and are part of the Eurozone. The transition from command to market has been nothing less than astonishing. However, scars remain from the Baltic countries' emergence from behind the trauma of the iron curtain. One survey in 1993 found that more than 40% of citizens had relatives who had been killed, imprisoned or deported by the Nazis, Soviets or both. Given recent history, the Baltics find Russia to be very close and quite scary at times. As *The Economist* magazine reports, "Officials here [in the Baltics] lie awake at night worrying about the Suwalki Gap, the 65 km Lithuania-Polish border strip between Kaliningrad and Russian-allied Belarus that is the Baltics' only land link to the rest of Europe ..." GEEA's Study Tour to the Baltics promises to provide a most interesting look into the economic and political situations confronted by these amazingly resilient people of the Baltic countries.

Program Overview

The study tour will include all or many of the following:

- Visits to K-12 schools in Estonia and Latvia.
- Visit to the Central Banks of Estonia/Latvia, with a talk from a bank economist.
- Social event and/or education sessions with students.
- Participate/conduct an economics workshop with Estonian/Latvian teachers.
- Meetings with school faculty.
- Visit with economic and financial literacy education policymakers.
- Cultural and history component to include: Trip/tour of Old Town Tallinn and Riga, Latvia's historical city center. Tour of Soviet occupation museum(s) in Riga and/or Tallinn. Small group dinner at Estonian educator's home.

As part of the study tour routine, structured group reflection and journaling or field notes will be utilized to share perspectives and to stimulate deeper learning. Participants will be asked to reflect daily on their experience as well as share their insights from the activities.

Benefits of Program

- Travel time on the bus will provide ample opportunity for participating teachers and our hosts to explore mutual areas of interest and to exchange insights on the economic and political challenges in the Baltics.
- Participating teachers will be better able to develop their students' understanding of our world. The program will provide teachers with first-hand knowledge of the Baltic countries and their economies. Classroom educators will be able to compare and contrast issues in both the U.S., the Baltics and the EU. Some participants may choose to incorporate their enhanced knowledge into an expanded unit or topic in a course they teach.
- Participating teachers will also be in a position to bring their enriched international perspective to their community and professional conferences. All are encouraged to share their experiences via a PowerPoint or video presentation at a seminar or workshop conducted by their state *Council for Economic Education* or local *Center for Economic Education*.
- Learn about entrepreneurship education programs in Estonia and Latvia.

Time Line:

Pre-Decision Phase:

As soon as possible, preferably before December 1, 2019:

- Email your Descriptive Essay and Letter of Recommendation to John Brock at jbrock@uccs.edu
- Begin the online application on the UCCS Office of International Affairs website.
 - If you have questions about the online application, please contact the UCCS International Affairs Office at international@uccs.edu or at 719-255-5018.

January 6, 2020: Study Tour application deadline – complete the online application process, to include submission of all required documents.

January 24, 2020: Notification of selection; early applicants receive early notification.

Post-Selection/Preparation Phase:

February 2: Commit to the program online no later than February 2nd.

January 24 – March 1: Airline tickets purchased by participants; before finalizing purchase get approval from John Brock. Post itinerary on our Study Tour webpage.

February 21: Check for \$1,900 made payable to the *Global Economic Education Alliance* received by John Brock. Mail to: John Brock, 1334 Culebra Avenue, Colorado Springs, CO 80903, or deliver to Professor Brock in his office.

- Optional extension: Send \$2,300 check to John Brock

February 21: Complete Study Tour contract requirements:

- sign UCCS *Education Abroad Contract* via online website (includes UCCS waiver of liability and indemnification)
- purchase Health Insurance policy through UCCS (or other agent of your choice
 - upload proof of insurance on UCCS Study Tour website.

Jan/Feb: complete optional enrollment in Economics 6310: *Economics of the Baltics – From the USSR to the EU*, via the UCCS Extended Studies online enrollment process. Enrollment instructions will be distributed to participants in January or February.

Study Tour/Trip Phase (likely trip agenda):

Mar 20/21: Depart for Riga, Latvia.

Mar 21/22: Arrive Tallinn Airport (TLL). Pre-arranged taxi to *Hotel Palace* in Tallinn.

Mar 21-24: Estonian portion of tour. School visits, museum tour, Old Town Tallinn, Central Bank visit, conduct economics workshop for Estonian teachers, etc.

Mar 25: Bus to Riga, Latvia. Check-in to *Neiburgs Hotel* in Riga.

Mar 25 - 28: Riga portion of tour. School visits, KGB Museum, Riga city tour

Mar 29: Taxis to RIX for flights to U.S.

Optional Extension:

Mar 29 – 31: *International Student Company Festival* and *Teacher Conference*

Apr 1: Taxis to RIX for flights to U.S.

Study Tour Follow-up Phase:

Following Study Tour: Implement plan to share experiences with students, colleagues, Council/Center, etc.

May 18, 2020: Deadline to submit Post-Tour Report to Professor Brock and to your supporting Council or Center. GEEA subsidy check then provided.

Study Tour Coordinators:

Elbe Metsatalu is Director of the Association of Teachers of Economics Estonia. She has participated in two Study Tours to the United States (2003, 2011) and is a graduate of the *Council for Economic Education* Training of Trainers program (2000). She also coordinated a U.S. teacher Study Tour to Estonia in 2005 and a GEEA Study Tour to Estonia in 2019. She is a faculty member at Pärnu College of Tartu University and works part-time for Junior Achievement Estonia. She is also a part time teacher of economics in Tallinn 21 School and in Pärnu Joint Gymnasium.

Jānis Bukšs is the Project Manager of *JA-Latvia*. He coordinated the June 2019 GEEA U.S. Teacher/Student Study Tour to Latvia.

Professor John Brock is the Director, *Center for Economic Education*, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs and is presently serving as President of the Board of Directors of the Global Economic Education Alliance (GEEA). He has led eleven study tours – two to South Africa, five to Peru, and four to the post-Soviet region (Ukraine, Lithuania, Russia and Estonia/Latvia). He has taught four teacher workshops in Estonia in 2014, 2016, 2017 and 2018.