**Valga-Valka Twin Town City Centre Development**

**Project purpose and results:**

The Valga-Valka twin city motto is "One city, two states", which seeks to introduce Valga-Valka as a single city to its inhabitants, visitors and business. The goal of the Valga-Valka twin city development project is to unite the parts of the city of Valga and Valka in order to shape a single central area and a pedestrian street that would support cross-border movement and create a common urban space.

During the project, a common public space will be renewed and developed, covering both the city center area and the pedestrian street in the cities of Valga-Valka. The goal is to create a cozy and unique public space for the city's residents and visitors. The pedestrian street, which is being created, combines two visual and symbolic landmarks ¬- on the Estonian side of Jani and on the Latvian side the Lugaži Evangelical Lutheran Church. Both buildings are important dominant visual urban portraits, but at the moment there are physical obstacles between them. The so-called central square of Valka, as well as the pedestrian street, should encourage the development of small businesses and promote the return of everyday life to the historic city center.

Valka City Council and Valga City Council also organized in 2016 international architectural competition "Valga - Valka Twin city centre area and pedestrian street". The aim of the competition was to find the best and most suitable solution for the pedestrian street connecting the common Latvian-Estonian border and the state to both sides of the city. The winner was the design with the word "Cross-Border Strands", created by Spanish architects.

**The direct objectives of the Valga-Valga twin city development project are:**

1) To improve physical connectivity and create new joint and integrated cross-border urban area in the Valga-Valka Twin Town Centre.

2) To promote Valga-Valka as a joint town, encourage integration of communities across the borders and increase visibility of the developed Twin Town Centre among inhabitants, tourists and entrepreneurs.

3) To develop appropriate business environment to support and attract private investments and entrepreneurship and promote cross–border cooperation in Valga-Valka Twin Town Centre.

**Project budget:**

The cost of the project is approximately 3.5 million, of which 3 million (85%) of the Estonian-Latvian program.

**Project lead partner:**

The project will be implemented in cooperation with Valka Municipality.

**Project duration:**

Project duration is 01.06.2017-31.05.2020

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