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**Ms Helle Sjelle**

Chair of the Labour Market Committee

**Mr Martin Henriksen**

Chairman of the Social Services Committee

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1/0411-67

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the Baltic Assembly I am pleased to invite you and members of the committees to the parliamentary discussion "Demography – a matter of social security, economic prosperity and sustainability of the region" to be held on 19 – 20 May 2011 in Rīga, Latvia.

The challenge of demographic change and its widespread economic and social implications have received considerable attention in the whole European Union and particularly in the Baltic States in the recent years. By continuing the existing negative tendencies in the field of demography, changes in the population are expected to lead to large increases in public spending, mainly on pension, health care and other public infrastructure. Accordingly, the challenges resulting from demographic developments must be taken seriously. We think that it is necessary to place them correctly in the context without exaggerating the risks and forcing through solutions which, if not neutral in both social and economic terms, could have negative consequences in the long run. Therefore we are organizing a parliamentary debate involving our international partners on the following aspects of the theme:

- Firstly, socioeconomic aspects of the demographic situation and forecasts;
- Secondly, social values and attitudes in the context of demography;
- Thirdly, the most effective short-term and long-term solutions for improving the demographic situation – plan of urgent measures.

During the debate we will raise wide range of questions to which we will aim to find practical and targeted answers - What impact will the current demographic situation have on societies and economies of the region?; What is the experience of European countries with regard to trends in the demographic situation and causes of deterioration of the demographic situation?; What is the experience of European countries in improving the demographic situation?; What decisions should be made now in order to improve the demographic situation in the medium and long term?; What should be done to change modern social values and attitudes towards the demographic issue?; How to promote remigration? What are the benefits and risks of immigration, also taking into account its impact on national identity?

You are kindly invited to participate in the parliamentary discussions on the demographic situation by sharing information on the Danish experiences and expressing proposals on the improving of the situation in the region. Please find attached the programme and agenda of the discussion, and inform us about your participation by 2 May 2011 at the latest.

Sincerely,

**Silga Lejasmeiere**

Deputy Chair of the Social and Employment Matters Committee of the Saeima  
Vice Chair of the Social Affairs Committee of the Baltic Assembly

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