



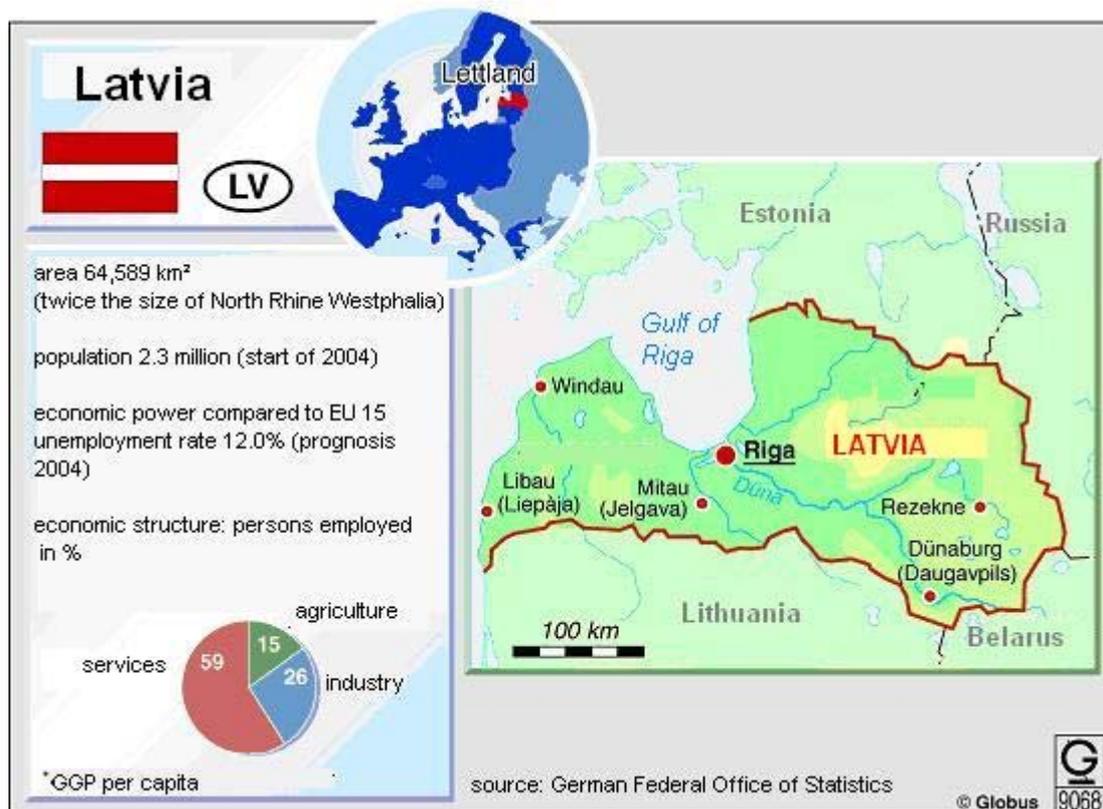
Hanseatic Parliament



HAUS RISSEN HAMBURG
Internationales Institut für Politik und Wirtschaft

Latvia at a glance

Information on and analyses of politics, the economy and education in Latvia including basic vocabulary and negotiating tips



AN OVERVIEW OF LATVIA	1
ANALYSIS AND PROGNOSIS OF THE SITUATION IN LATVIA	3
GEOGRAPHICAL DATA	5
BASIC HISTORICAL INFORMATION	6
BASIC POLITICAL DATA	7
STATE PRESIDENT	7
PARLIAMENT	7
GOVERNMENT.....	7
ADMINISTRATION.....	7
BASIC ECONOMIC DATA	9
CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION	10
FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS.....	10
COMMERCIAL LAW	10
FORMS OF ENTERPRISE.....	10
EMPLOYMENT LAW	10
EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT.....	10
WORKING TIME	11
LEAVE	11
WAGES/SALARY.....	11
TRADE UNIONS	12
LABOUR MARKET	12
SOCIAL SITUATION	12
SOCIAL INSURANCE	12
PENSIONS	12
DEMOGRAPIC SITUATION	12
NEGOTIATING IN LATVIA	13
EDUCATION SYSTEM	13
STRUCTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION	14
UNIVERSITY TRAINING.....	14
NON-UNIVERSITY TRAINING.....	14
LINKS AND ADDRESSES	15
BASIC VOCABULARY	16

Imprint

Analysis and prognosis of the situation in Latvia

The middle of the three young Baltic Republics has experienced enormous growth over recent years. In 2004, with growth of 7.5%, Latvia was even the fastest growing European economy. The record levels of economic growth, however, should not detract attention from the fact that the country has hitherto achieved only just over a third of the average economic level of EU states. A long and rocky road lies ahead if the country is to attain parity.

The unstable nature of Latvian politics has been of very little help in this process. There have already been eleven changes of government since the Republic gained independence in 1991. Although this is acceptable for a new democracy, the fact that a period of stabilisation has not yet been reached is troublesome. 2004 saw two changes of government, resulting in the third government since the elections of October 2002. The only positive aspect is that the change was achieved without the need for fresh elections, at least enabling stability to be maintained in this respect. Nevertheless, the fact that the centre-right coalition of the "People's Party" (TP), "New Time" (JL), "Latvia's First Party" (LPP) and the "Greens/Farmers' Union" (ZZS) holds 70 of the 100 seats in parliament and thus enjoys a comfortable majority has engendered the hope that the current government under Prime Minister Aigars Kalvītis will be able to survive at least until the next elections. Whether this situation will continue after the next elections in September 2006, however, is open to considerable doubt. Surveys undertaken in January 2006 showed the governing parties with only 35.4% of votes between them.

Internal problems

In 1999, an unbelievable 49 parties and political groupings were registered in Latvia, most having arisen from splits in other parties. Renaming of parties and alliances are also common, rendering the situation even more confusing. In addition to all this, a number of politicians changed their party allegiance shortly before the last elections.

Although the economic problems facing the country are considerable, they are soluble. Nevertheless, the issues relating to the Russian minority and the question of nationality are placing an intolerable strain on Latvian politics. The situation itself is clear. Not even 60 % of the inhabitants of Latvia are ethnic Latvians, the Russian minority representing the largest ethnic group and making up 30% of the inhabitants. Prior to independence, the Latvians even constituted a minority within their own country, a particular result of this being the suppression of the Latvian language in public life. When independence came, around 40 % of the population were unable to speak Latvian. After independence, the Latvian leadership responded with a radical de-Russification programme. The aim was to abolish Russian as the official language overnight. The rights of the Russians, Belarusians, Ukrainians and Poles living in the country were slashed from one day to the next, although international pressure and in particular the conditions imposed on EU accession brought about a significant easing of the Latvians' policy towards minorities. Today, only 10 % of the Latvian population are unable to speak the official language. The fact that such progress has been made is important. The political and economic cost of the exclusion of more than a third of the population of such a small country is too high.

Notwithstanding their improving linguistic skills, many non-Latvians still remain excluded economically and politically. The reason for this is the principle of citizenship, which has remained strict down to the present day. Anyone seeking the opportunity to acquire Latvian citizenship needs to speak good Latvian as well as demonstrating well-founded knowledge of history, the constitution and the political system. For this reason, 21 % of the population remained stateless in 2003, and this is a situation which is to their economic detriment. Non-citizens are excluded from certain occupations and are unable to purchase land, real estate or industrial property. This is producing internal political tensions, especially between Latvians and members of the Russian minority, and is creating a frosty relationship between Riga and Moscow. To signal the fact that the Latvians may be prepared to make concessions, President Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga accepted the invitation of Russian President Vladimir Putin to visit

Moscow for the celebrations marking the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, unlike her colleagues in Lithuania and Estonia.

Economic problems

According to the coalition agreement, the new government will focus on the following issues: solving the crisis in the health system; drawing up a balanced budget; reducing the rate of inflation; supporting the competitiveness of Latvian trade and industry; ratifying the EU Constitution; concluding the process of privatisation.

All of these issues are of enormous significance for the future of Latvia. The crisis surrounding the health system will endanger social stability in the long term, and the rate of inflation will jeopardise the introduction of the EURO. Any hopes that the inflation rate of 6.2% in 2004 as opposed to 2.9% in 2003 represented a statistical anomaly caused by the significant rises in controlled prices before EU accession and one-off statistical effects after membership were dashed. Instead of falling below 5 % as had been hoped, inflation actually rose to 6.9 % in 2005. The ambitious target of introducing the EURO as legal tender for cash payments as early as 2007 is in deep peril at the moment. It is, however, also questionable whether this young economy should subject itself to the rigidities of the European financial regime whilst it still finds itself in a phase of catching up in terms of growth, although Latvia is experiencing few problems with compliance with the other Maastricht criteria. Yields on long-term state bonds are around 4.5 %, for example, within the band of acceptability. National debt is less than 15 % of GDP and borrowing is at 0.8 %, both well below the limits of 60 % and 3 % respectively.

Conclusion

The foundations of political stabilisation are, in fact, already in place. Nearly 75 % of the parliamentary majority comprises like-minded political groupings from the conservative and economically liberal spectrum. As progression towards long-term stability is made, however, Latvia's politicians need to establish a climate of trust. Casting blame on one another and exchanging accusations of corruption are not conducive to assisting the country in attracting hesitant investors. The future must bring the establishment of stable parties on the basis of the loose alliances which currently exist rather than involve the foundation of individual small parties by yet more leading politicians. This is the only method of creating a climate of constructive cooperation enabling different interests to be served in a balanced way via making compromises. A politically constructive climate will help secure good the economic development for the long term and overcome the dangers posed by the foreign trade imbalance.

Geographical data



Area: 64,589 km²

Population: 2,299,600 (July 2005)

Population density: 36 inhabitants/km²

Capital: Riga (733,000 inhabitants)

Number of ports – 3 with movement of goods of 57.4 million Tkm (2002)

Length of coast: 531 km

Navigable waters: 300 km

Road network: 60,472 km, no motorways.

Railway network: 2,303 km.

Inter. airports: 2; freight quota of 7 thousand tonnes (2002); passenger quota of 305 thousand people (2001)

Proportion of land in agricultural use compared to whole surface area: 30 %

Source: CIA World Fact Book

Basic historical information

HISTORY	
9 th century AD	Immigration of Slavic-Baltic tribes
11 th century	Rule of Novgorod and Polatsk
1180	Beginnings of Christianisation
1202	Livonian Brothers of the Sword
1237	Order of the Teutonic Knights
1255	Archbishopric of Riga
Beginning of 16 th cent.	Reformation
1561	Livonia Polish, Duchy of Courland a Polish fiefdom, Riga a free Imperial City
1581	Riga Polish
1621/29	Livonia and Riga Swedish
1711	Courland under Russian influence
1721	Livonia Russian
1795	Courland Russian
1918	Independent Republic
1939	Hitler-Stalin Pact, emigration of the Baltic Germans
1940	Invasion by the Soviet Army, Soviet Socialist Republic of Latvia
1949	Deportations, resettlement of Russians
1988	Latvian official language alongside Russian
1989	Latvian the national language
1990/91	Independent Republic
1994	Withdrawal of the final Russian troops
2004	Accession to NATO and the EU

Latvian state history began in the 13th century with the establishment of the Livonian Confederation (covering the areas of modern-day Latvia and Estonia) by the Teutonic Knights. In 1201, Riga (known as Reval in German) was founded, developing into an important trade hub between East and West and the regional centre of the eastern Baltic, which had close cultural ties with western Europe.

After the Livonian War (1558-1583), Latvian territory came under the rule of the Polish-Lithuanian crown. In the 17th century, Livonia belonged to Sweden and in the 18th century the territories were conquered by the Russian Empire.

The idea of independence did not become reality until after the end of the First World War in November 1918. In 1934, the Prime Minister declared a state of emergency, dissolved parliament and conducted his own authoritarian rule by decree. Latvian independence survived only until 1940. Following the Hitler-Stalin Pact, the Red Army occupied Latvian territory on 17 June 1940. At the beginning of the eastern campaign, the German Army invaded Latvia in June 1941. Heavy fighting between the German and Soviet armies took place on Latvian soil in 1944, the USSR gaining the upper hand. After the conquest of Latvian territory, the country reverted to Soviet rule.

During the period spent as part of the Soviet Union, considerable changes took place within the structure of the population, many Latvians being deported to camps in Siberia and people from other parts of the Soviet Union (mostly Russians) being resettled in Latvia. As a result, the proportion of Latvians of the population as a whole was only just under 50 % by the end of the 1980's. The Perestroika policy pursued by Gorbachev sparked off a strong independence movement in Latvia, which led to the formation of the Latvian People's Front, a collection of reform forces.

Latvia declared independence in 1991 and gained international recognition after the August Coup in Moscow. The policy since independence has been to introduce democracy and a market economy and to align the country westwards, manifesting itself in NATO membership and EU accession.

Schmid, Thomas. "Das politische System Lettlands" (*"The political system in Latvia"*) in: Ismayer (Ed.): "Die politischen Systeme Osteuropas" (*"The political systems of Eastern Europe"*) Opladen

Basic political data

Latvia is a Parliamentary Republic. The strong level of identification of Latvians with the constitution of 1922 led to its re-enactment, supplemented by additional elements relating to basic rights and liberties.

State President

The **State President** (since 1999 Freia Vike-Freiberga) is elected by Parliament for four years, re-election for one further term being possible. He or she has the right to initiate legislation and proposes a candidate for the office of Prime Minister, the latter requiring a majority in Parliament. The unclear nature of the majorities have rendered this a difficult task thus far. The State President can also convene extraordinary sittings of Parliament for which he or she may draw up the agenda and which he or she chairs. He or she also has the right to inspect legislation and may express concerns and propose amendments. He or she further represents Latvia abroad.

Parliament

The **Parliament** – the Saeima – comprises 100 members and is elected for four years. It has wide-ranging competences, such as electing the State President with an absolute majority, holds legislative powers and holds the government to account. For its part, the government is obliged to provide the Parliament with information and allow inspection of documentation.

Government

The government comprises the Prime Minister (since 2004 Aigars Kalvitis) and the ministers, who are responsible to Parliament. The current government coalition is made up of the People's Party, New Time, Latvia's First Party and the Greens/Farmers' Union (with 16.7, 23.9, 7.6 und 9.5 % of votes respectively) and holds 70 of the 100 seats in Parliament.

Administration

Latvia is a centralised state, local self-administration only being possible to a limited extent. The state is divided into 26 *rajoni* (singular: *rajons*). The status of a *rajons* is roughly equivalent to that of an administrative district in Germany. Seven cities and towns have a special status:



Daugavpils, Jelgava, Jūrmala, Liepāja, Rēzekne, Rīga, Ventspils.

Map: Wikipedia, sources: Tauber, Joachim. "Das politische System Lettlands" (*"The political system in Latvia"*) in: Is-mayer (Ed.): "Die politischen Systeme Osteuropas" (*"The political systems of Eastern Europe"*) Opladen

Current composition of the Latvian Parliament according to party after the most recent elections on 5 October 2002			
Party	%	Seats (Total 100)	
<i>Jaunais laiks (JL)</i> New Time: anti-corruption, conservative	23.9	26	
<i>Par cilvēka tiesībām vienotā Latvijā (PCTVL)</i> For Human Rights in a United Latvia (dissolved)	<i>Tautas Saskaņas Partija (TSP)</i> People's Harmony Party, left	18.9	25
	<i>Latvijas Sociālistiskā Partija (LSP)</i> Latvian Socialist Party, left		
	<i>Lidztiesība savienība (LS)</i>		
<i>Tautas partija (TP)</i> People's Party, conservative	16.7	20	
<i>Latvijas Pirmā Partija (LPP)</i> Latvia's First Party, Christian democrat	<i>Latvijas Pirmā Partija (LPP)</i>	9.6	10
	<i>Kristīgi Demokrātiskā savienība (KDS)</i> Christian Democratic Union, Christian democrat		
<i>Zaļo un Zemnieku savienība (ZZS)</i> Greens, Farmers	<i>Latvijas Zaļā Partija (LZP)</i> Green Party of Latvia	9.5	10
	<i>Latvijas Zemnieku savienība (LZS)</i> Farmers' Party of Latvia, agrarian		
<i>Apvienība "Tēvzemei un Brīvībai"/LNNK (TB/LNNK)</i> Alliance for "Fatherland and Freedom", national conservative	5.4	7	
<i>Savienība "Latvijas ceļš" (LC)</i> Alliance for the "Latvian way", liberal	4.9	-	
<i>Latvijas Sociāldemokrātu Stradnieku Partija (LSDSP)</i> Christian Democrats of Latvia	4.0	-	
<i>Latgales Gaisma (LG)</i> Lettgallian Party	1.6	-	
<i>Sociāldemokrātu savienība (SDS)</i> Social Democratic Union	1.5	-	
<i>Sociāldemokrātiskā Labklājības partija (SDLP)</i>	14	-	

Source:

osteuropa.ch

Basic economic data

Exports are dominated by wood products, textiles and metal goods. Imports predominantly comprise machines and equipment, textiles and foodstuffs. Foreign trade is fully oriented towards Europe, 77 % of this trade being conducted with the EU in 2004. Latvia's largest national trading partner is Germany with a proportion of 12.3 % of total exports and 14.5 % of total imports.

GDP at respective prices

(total in bn. EUR)

2001	2002	2003	2004
9.2	9.8	9.9	11.1

GDP proportion of the EU (25) in %: 0.1

Gross Domestic Product

(total, per capita, EUR):

2001	2002	2003	2004
3900	4170	4220	4740

GDP according to purchasing power per inhabitant: 43.3 % of EU 25 (2004) 37.4 % (2001)

GDP growth rate (%):

2001	2002	2003	2004
8.0	6.4	7.5	7.5

GDP according to sector (2004, %):

Agriculture	4.4
Industry	24.8
Services	70.8

Currency:

Lats, (LVL) (100 Santims = 1 Lats)

Currency system: Currency Board System

Exchange rate: 1 EUR = 0.7028 LVL

1 LVL = 1.435 LVL

Inflation rate (%):

2001	2002	2003	2004
2.5	1.9	2.9	6.2

Budget deficit (% of GDP):

2001	2002	2003	2004
1.6	2.7	1.8	2.2

Gross foreign debt:

8 bn. EUR or 82 % of GDP (2002).

National debt:

1.58 bn. EUR or 14.4 % of GDP (2004).

Tax ratio (% of GDP): 20.5 (2001)

Overall ratio of levies (% of GDP): 28.4 (2004)

Unemployment rate (%):

2001	2002	2003	2004
12.9	12.6	10.4	9.8

Employment structure according to sector

(2003, %):

Agriculture	15.0
Industry	25.0
Service sector	60.0

Export/import (in million EUR)

2001	2002	2003	2004
2230/3910	2420/4280	2560/4630	3200/5600

Proportion of households with:

Mobile telephone	52.0 %
Internet access	42.0 %
Savings	31.0 %

Source: Eurostat

Current economic situation

A continuous economic boom has been ongoing in Latvia since the start of the 1990's, the country's favourable geographical position between East and West and the economic reforms which have taken place being general factors in this development. GDP grew by 9.1 % in the third quarter of 2004. Growth is driven by domestic demand and increasing private consumption. The only source of worry remains the balance of payments deficit.

Future opportunities and risks

The high rate of growth is producing a favourable climate for investment. Important factors here are that tax on profits has been reduced to 15 % and that foreigners enjoy parity with domestic investors.

Commercial law

Entry into the Trade Register is regulated by the Trade Law, which has been in force since 2002. The "Act on Electronic Documents" facilitates the rapid and cost-effective establishment of companies, enabling the registration procedure to take place almost entirely in electronic form.

Forms of enterprise

The following forms of enterprise are possible in Latvia:

- **Individualais Komersants (IK)** – individual companies which can simply be formed on application.
- **Pilna sabiedriba (unlimited company)** – founded by at least two people, who have unlimited liability.
- **Komanditsabiedriba (KS)** – very rare in Latvia, but legally possible.
- **Sabiedriba ar ierobežotu atbildību (SIA)** – private limited company. Shares are restricted to the various shareholders and may not be traded publicly. A majority of shareholders need to be mainly domiciled in Latvia. The minimum capital is 2,000 LVL (around €3,000).
- **Akciju sabiedriba (AS)** – public limited company, also requiring more than half of board members to be mainly domiciled in Latvia. The minimum capital is 25,000 LVL (€36,000).

Source: KSV1870, German Office for Foreign Trade

Employment Law

Employment contract

Pursuant to the Latvian Employment Act (of 1 June 2002) the contractual relationship between an employer and an employee is based on a contract of employment. In exceptional cases, another form of contract under civil law may be concluded between the employer and employee (such as a power of attorney or an agency contract), but the foundation of the ensuing legal relationship is then pursuant to other specific laws.

A contract of employment must be concluded in writing and contain the following information:

- name, surname, personnel code, address of the employee, name, surname (designation) of the employer, registration number and address;
- date of commencement of employment;
- planned duration employment (if the contract is limited);

- place of work;
- occupation (area of employment, position) of the employee and the general characteristics of the work forming the object of the contract;
- extent and date of remuneration;
- the contractually agreed daily or weekly working time;
- the duration of annual leave;
- periods of notice;
- reference to the skeleton contract (if there is one);
- conditions relating to the organisation of work applicable to legal working relations.

Limited contracts of employment are possible in the case of certain short-term work to be carried out. Activities which may form the object of a limited contract are determined by the Latvian Employment Act and individual regulations stipulated by the ministerial cabinet. A limited contract may not exceed two years' duration (including extensions).

The probationary period must not exceed three months, this being the usual length of time used.

The employer is only entitled to give notice of termination in writing, and such notice must be for reasons connected with the employee's conduct, his or her abilities or the execution of economic, organisational, technological or similar measures.

Working time

Normal working time is 40 hours per week and 160 hours per month. Overtime is widespread in the private sector.

Leave

The Latvian Employment Act accords employees annual leave of not less than four calendar weeks' duration.

Source: Rae Nörr Stiefenhofer Lutz: *Arbeitsrecht in den EU-Beitrittsländern ("Employment Law in the EU accession states")*

Wages/salary

Latvia has a state guaranteed minimum wage, which in 2004 was 80 LVL (€123) and is adjusted every year by the ministerial cabinet.

The average monthly salary in 2004 was 225 LVL (about €280) in the private sector and 172 LVL (about €260) in the public sector. Fixed wages do not, however, give the full picture, often being supplemented by performance related bonuses. In 2004, there were wage rises in virtually all sectors, the reasons for this being inflation and the tendency of well qualified workers to emigrate since the opening up of the labour markets. Wage increases in the private sector were significantly higher than rises in the public sector, the figures being 12 % and 9 % respectively.

Source: KSV1870

Trade unions

The Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia, which was founded in 1990, has 170,248 members and is represented in around 300 companies, is the umbrella organisation of the 25 Latvian individual trade unions. The Confederation's aim is solidarity between employers and employees, and to this end it co-operates with government bodies and the Confederation of Latvian Employers' Associations.

Source: <http://www.lbas.lv/Ru/lbas.html>

Labour market

Unemployment was at 10 % in 2004, although there is considerable regional variance. In the region surrounding Riga, unemployment is significantly below the national average, but it is considerably higher in the South of the country. The Russian minority is more severely affected by unemployment than the Latvians. At the same time, economic growth and a declining population are intensifying competition for skilled labour.

Sources: German Office for Foreign Trade

Social situation

Social insurance

The Latvian social insurance system covers the areas of old age, disability and survivors' pensions, unemployment, health, maternity accidents at work and occupational diseases. The system is centrally organised and is funded via contributions and taxes. Contributory social benefits and pensions are funded via a ring-fenced budget, which comprises compulsory contributions, voluntary contributions, payments from the central government budget and other sources. The contribution rate is a proportional and fixed rate which is stipulated and adjusted on an annual basis by the ministerial cabinet. The rate for employees is 33.09 %, 24.09 % being paid by the employer and 9 % by the employee. Family benefits are funded via general taxation.

Pensions

There is a three-tier pension system comprising a state compulsory non-funded pension scheme, a state funded pension scheme and a private voluntary pension scheme. The state pays compulsory pension contributions for certain groups of persons, such as those performing military service and those caring for children under eighteen months old. Retirement age is currently 62 for men and women.

Sources: European Commission

Demographic situation

Latvia has 2.3 million inhabitants which are extremely heterogeneous in ethnic terms. 57.7 % are Latvians, 29.6 % Russians, 4.1 % Belerussian, 2.7 % Ukrainians, 2.5 % Poles, 1.4 % Lithuanians and 2 % others. The population is declining owing to the low birth rate and emigration. The age structure in 2002 was as follows: 14.4 % of the population were under 14 years old, 69.4 % between 14 and 64 and 16.1 % over 65.

Sources: CIA Worldfact Book

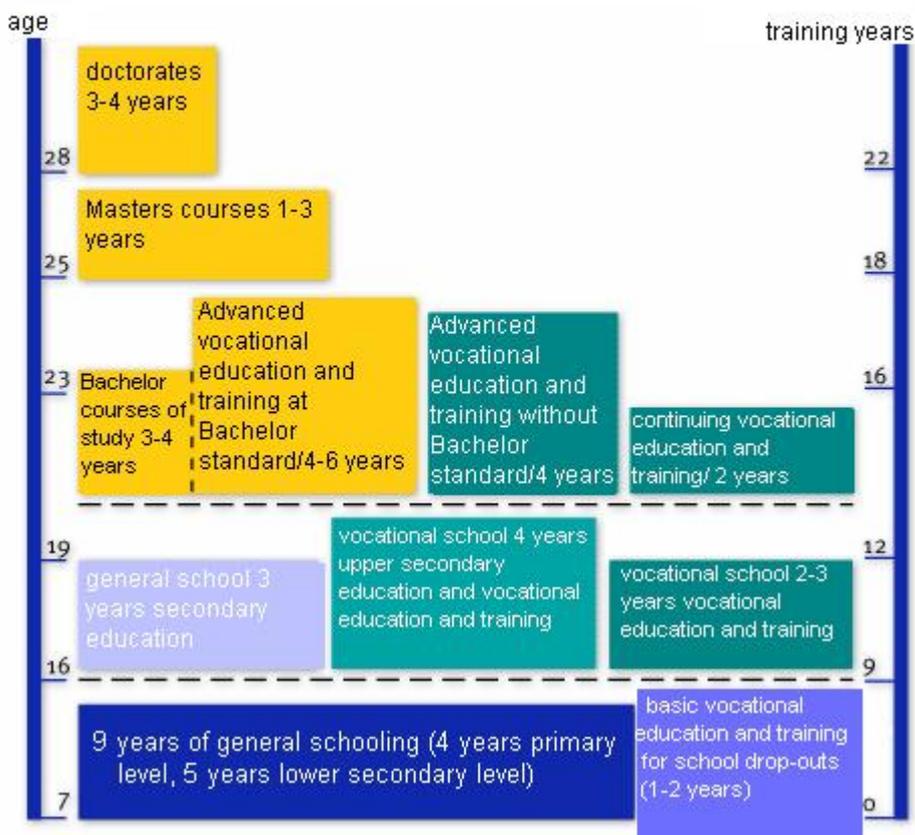
Negotiating in Latvia

Latvian business partners set great store by good manners and punctuality. Their own manners are those of the old school, particularly expressed in the way they treat women. They hold the door open, help ladies on with their coats and pay the restaurant bill. Any rejection of these attentions is viewed as an insult and can cause annoyance. Latvians are also extremely proud and wish to be treated accordingly. In the same way as their Estonian and Lithuanian neighbours, Latvians do not enjoy being described as “Baltic”. They value Latvia’s political and cultural independence very highly, although Baltic is accepted as a geographical term.

Any smart-alec behaviour or exaggerated self-profiling will not be well received. For the Latvians, a well-structured agenda is of great importance. The main focus of the negotiations is content-based, and they are open to well-founded arguments. Ideas snatched from thin air will not achieve any kind of resonance. The Latvians also exhibit Nordic reticence and reserve in the tone of their voices and in their body language, although they display more animation than their Estonian neighbours.

Source: Frank, Anna and Sergey (2004): *Brücken der Verständigung in den EU-Beitrittsländern ("Bridges to understanding in the EU accession countries")*, in: Hofmann/Fritsche (Eds.): *So kommen Sie in die EU-Beitrittsländer ("How to get into the EU accession countries")*, Munich.

The Latvian education system



General schooling in Latvia is of 12 years' duration and is divided into basic education (9 years: 4 years primary and 5 years lower secondary level concluding with basic education certificate) and upper secondary level. At the end of the 12th class, pupils sit 5 final examinations and receive a diploma which is the equivalent of the German upper secondary school leaving certificate.

Vocational education and training follows basic education. Training takes place entirely at vocational schools rather than within the dual system.

VET courses for all branches of Latvian trade and industry are offered by both vocational schools and vocational secondary schools. Those participating in VET courses alternate between theoretical teaching and practical training units in school workshops and laboratories as well as practical in-company deployment. Anyone who has completed basic education has the choice between two training pathways at different levels.

Successful completion of basic vocational education and training (level 1) provides the necessary training to carry out simpler activities, whereas the subsequent 2-3 year VET courses (level 2) provide qualifications for independent skilled worker activities. Those completing vocational education and training courses can build on level 2 and achieve qualification level 3 after a further year. This even affords participants the opportunity of obtaining a higher education entrance qualification.

Vocational grammar schools and technical secondary schools provide four-year training courses at qualifications level 3, covering planning and organisation of work as well as the execution of occupational activities.

Structure of higher education

The "Educational System Act" of 1995 introduced a dual system of higher education, comprising university and non-university training. There are 20 state and 14 non-state teaching institutions at higher education level with 101,270 students.

University training

In Latvia, the level of training (university, non-university) is differentiated on the basis of the study programme pursued rather than on the basis of the type of institute of higher education attended. The law permits both vocational as well as academic programmes of study to be offered in the same teaching institution. Alongside the universities, there is also a range of officially recognised state and private institutions at higher education level. In accordance with European standards, Bachelor, Masters and Doctors degrees may be obtained at Latvian universities.

Non-university training

Non-university training comprises practically related courses of study (comparable with courses at Universities of Applied Sciences in Germany). In these programmes of study, a differentiation is made between courses leading to an academic qualification (the entitlement to pursue studies further at university level), courses of advanced vocational education and training at Bachelor standard and advanced vocational education and training courses not leading to an academic qualification.

Source: German Federal Employment agency

Links and addresses

German Chamber of Commerce in Latvia

<http://www.ahk.de/bueros/l/lettland/index.php>

Baltic Chamber of Commerce in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania

<http://www.ahk-balt.org/>

Latvian Investment and Development Agency

<http://www.liaa.gov.lv/>

Representative office in Germany

Head of Representative Office Ginta Petra

Investitions- und Wirtschaftsförderungsagentur Lettland

(Latvian Investment and Development Agency)

Ferdinandstr. 28-30

D-20095 Hamburg, Germany

Tel.: +49 40 3333 22500

Fax.: +49 40 3333 34460

E-mail: ginta.petra@liaa.gov.lv

Guide for investors and exporters:

http://www.myksv.at/ksv_edit/KSV/download_de/940-LeitfadenLettland.pdf (40 pages, German)

http://www.hagen.ihk.de/inhalte/download/AUWI/Laenderschwerpunkt_Lettland.doc (40 pages, German)

Guide to employment law

http://www.heilbronn.ihk.de/upload_dokumente/infothek/anlagen/4867_1130.pdf (covers all ten new member states)

Basic vocabulary

Greetings, introductions, taking your leave

Pronunciation

Hello / goodbye (informal)	Sveiks	Svāiks
Hello (formal)	Labdien	Lab di en
Goodbye (formal)	Uz redzēšanos	Uz redseishanos
What's your name?	Kāir Jūsu vārds?	
Are you Richard?	Vai jūs esat Ričards?	
My name is ...	Mans vārds ir ...	
How are you?	Kā jums klājas?	Kaa yums klaayas?
Fine thanks, and you?	Paldies, labi.	Paldi es labi
Very pleased (Nice to meet you).	Jauki ar Jums tikties.	
Happy birthday!	Daudz laimes dzimšanas dienā!	Da uds laimes dzimshenes di enaa!

Making yourself understood

I don't understand	Es nesaprotu
Do you speak German / English / French?	Vai Jūs runājat vāciski / angļiski / franciski
I don't know	Es nezinu

Little words

Thank you	Liels Paldies	Paldi es
Please	Lūdzu	Luudse
You're welcome	Nav par ko!	
Yes	Jā	Yaah
No	Nē	Nei
Good	Labi	Gereij
Bad	Slikti	Blodgeij

Apologising

Sorry	Piedodiet! / Atvainojiet!
It doesn't matter	Nekas, nekas!

Personal information

First name	priekšvārds
Surname	uzvārds
Address	Uzruna / adrese
Telephone number	telefons
E-mail	e-pasts
Nationality	nacionalitāte
Citizenship	pavalstniecība
Age	Pilngadība / gadi / vecums
Date of birth/place of birth	dzimšanas datums / izcelsmes vieta; rašanās vieta
Occupation	profesija
Husband / wife	Virs / sieva
Widower / widow	Atraitnis / atraitne
single, married	:

Imprint

First published:

February 2006

Published by:

HAUS RISSEN HAMBURG – International Institute for Politics and Economics,
Hanseatic Parliament

Funding:

This project is funded by the European Union as part of the Prince Programme.

Editorial staff of this issue:

Michael Gwosdz (responsible for content within the meaning of press law), Sandra Budy, Andrei Deviatkov,
Alexander Frevel, Kerstin Kochta, Dr. habil. Peter Robeisek

Set by: Michael Gwosdz

Production: editiononline.de, Hamburg.

Ordering address:

HAUS RISSEN HAMBURG
Rissener Landstraße 193
22559 Hamburg

Tel: (040) 81 90 70

Fax: (040) 81 907 59

E-mail: mail@hausrissen.org

URL: <http://www.hausrissen.org/>