

Main facts and Figures about Latvia

Latvia is situated in the North - east part of Europe on the shore of the Baltic Sea and borders with two other Baltic states – Estonia and Lithuania as well as Russia and Belorussia. The territory covers 64 589 square kilometres.

The capital: Riga;
Population: 2.3 million people (year 2008)
Currency: Latvian Lat (Ls/LVL) = 100 santimes;
 1 Euro – 0,702804 LVL
Local Time: GMT + 2;

Riga

The capital of Latvia developed historically into the regional centre of the Baltic. It has been the intersection of major land and sea routes since long ago. Riga is also a largest city in the Baltic states with a bit less than 1 million populations. There is something for everyone to see and to

do while in Riga, it is also one of the main advantages of Riga over other European or Baltic cities. Riga has both the historic merchant past and the old world charm of the Nineteenth Century. You can find a variety of museums, historical churches and great Art Nouveau buildings as well as enjoy having a meal in the nice restaurants and coffees, going for shopping or enjoying night life in numerous bars and night clubs.

It is always useful to keep in mind that your rights as a consumer are under protection of EU legislation!

Accommodation in Latvia:

You can make a hotel reservation by phone, fax or internet, but after arrival you might have to show written confirmation of the booking.

Hotels can be booked in all Tourism Information Centres, travel agencies or airline offices. Normally the cost of the hotel includes breakfast, and the prices are provided with the VAT. The classification of the

hotels in Latvia is based under the International Standards, 1 to 5 stars, which results in different rates. If you are interested in visiting countryside of Latvia and looking for accommodation then you can book accommodation by contacting the owner, by phone or internet. To help you sort out the offer and find a most suitable country home, guesthouse or self – catering cottage, visit "Lauku ceļotājs" site www.celotajs.lv. You will usually need a cash to pay for those kind of accommodations.

Shopping in Latvia:

There are lots of shopping centres located all around Latvia. If you decide to stay in Riga City Centre and meanwhile sightseeing to purchase also some goods or services then the highest number of small shops and shopping malls are available around the Riga Old Town, e.g., "Galerija Centrs", "Origo", "Stockmann", "Barona Centrs" and others. If you decide to go outside the City Centre then the most popular shopping malls are "Alfa", "Domina", "Spice". Those who are looking for unusual shopping, there is the

Central Market in the Riga City Centre next to the Central Riga's Railway Station. The basic VAT in Latvia is 18% and it should be included in the price.

Some commonly used terms in Latvia for sales: Discount – "Nocenots". Sale – "Izpārdošana!", "Atlaides!"

Transport

Airports:

Riga International Airport

Riga International Airport is a largest airport in the Baltic states it is situated 14km west of the city centre. The airport is connected to the capital by bus, shuttles and taxi.

Liepāja and Ventspils airports

There are few airports located also in the other regions of Latvia where the direct flights are operated to and from Riga as well to and from some cities in Europe.



Public transport in Latvia:

Buses and, to a lesser extent, trains go just about everywhere in Latvia, although services are less frequent to off-the-beaten-track destinations. Both are cheap and slow. Riga has a comprehensive network of trams, trolleys and buses.

Check the national routes of buses in Latvia - timetable and prices at the site of Riga International Bus station <http://www.autoosta.lv>

Taxi

It takes approximately 15 - 20 minutes to go to the centre of Riga from the airport. Charge is about 1.50 LVL plus 0.50 per kilometre; normally it costs from 10 to 15 LVL.

Car Rentals

Most of the major car rental agencies have offices in center of Riga and in the airport. Renting a car you are recommended to consider some issues:

- Always check the car for damage before picking up and returning;
- Check what your insurance covers. Insurance terms should be stated in the insurance.
- Check the amount of money your Credit Card is charged, the company does not have a right to charge you anything other than minor expenses without your permission;

Useful numbers:

Country code: +371,

Emergency numbers in case of accident:

Ambulance 03 from a landline or 112 from a mobile phone.
 Police: 02 or 112 from a mobile phone.
 Hotline for the tourists:
 22033000

General opening hours

Shops:

Monday – Saturday 9.00 a.m. – 7.00/8.00 p.m.,

Trade centres/supermarkets

Monday – Sunday 8.00/10.00 a.m. – 10.00/11.00 p.m.

Banks

Monday – Friday 9.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.

Post Offices

Monday – Friday 8.00 a.m. – 9.00 p.m.

Saturday 9.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m.

European Consumer Centre of Latvia:

If something goes wrong – ECC Latvia is here to help you!

If you have problems:

- Buying goods and services in EU;
- Shopping on-line;

- Travelling by airplane (denied boarding, cancellation, delay, lost or damaged luggage, ect.)
- Buying cars in EU;
- Purchasing package holidays ect.

Appeals to ECC Latvia-

- Latvian consumers who have purchased goods or services in other EU countries;
- Consumers from other EU countries who have purchased goods and services in Latvia

You are always welcomed to contact us!

European Consumer Centre of Latvia

On weekday 8.30 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.
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 Riga, LV – 1013 Latvia
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Consumer guide for tourists visiting Latvia

European Consumer Centre of Latvia welcomes you in Latvia. The guide provides some practical information and useful tips to make your stay in Latvia pleasant and memorable.

