



L at v i a i n F a c t s

Government:

democratic, parliamentary republic. Legislative power is in the hands of a single chamber parliament - the Saeima, consisting of 100 deputies. Parliamentary elections take place every 4 years

The country's head of state is the President, who is elected by the Saeima for a period of 4 years. The President signs laws, chooses the Prime Minister (who heads the government) and performs representative functions.

Membership in International Organizations

Latvia is a member of United Nations, Council of Europe, World Trade Organization, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Council of the Baltic Sea States, Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, International Criminal Court, and others.

Latvia actively participates in the work of these international and regional organizations. The participation of the Latvian judges Egils Levits and Anita Ušacka at two significant judicial institutions - the European Court of Human Rights and the International Criminal Court - demonstrates the significant contribution Latvia can make towards ensuring a safer and fair world to live.

Latvia invited to join the NATO and EU

In 1995 the Latvian Parliament approved the Latvian Foreign Policy Concept which defined that the full-pledged membership in NATO and integration in the European Union are the main priorities of Latvia's foreign policy. Since then tremendous reforms have been taking place in Latvia to meet NATO and EU standards. Currently Latvia is invited to join NATO and the European Union and is working hard to become a full-pledged member of both organizations in 2004.

