

History of Latvia in brief

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| 9000 B.C. | Arrival of the first inhabitants on Latvian soil, after the withdrawal of the glaciers. |
| Early 2000 B.C. | Baltic tribes (forefathers of the modern Latvians) settle Latvia's territory. |
| 900 A.D. – early 1200 A.D. | Individual tribal groups (Couronians, Latgallians, Selonians, Semgallians) start to form specific tribal realms. |
| Latter half of the 1100's – 1200's | The arrival of German traders, missionaries and crusaders in Latvia. The city of Rīga founded 1201. Territories inhabited by tribal realms fall into the hands of the Germans. Livonia is established. |
| 1500's | Livonian War (1558-1583). Latvian territory under Polish-Lithuanian rule. The dukedoms of Kurzeme and Pārdaugava are formed. |
| 1600's | Polish-Swedish War (1600-1629). Vidzeme and Rīga under Swedish rule. Rīga - Sweden's largest city. Dukedom of Kurzeme experiences an economic boom. |
| 1700's | The Great Northern War (1700-1721). Vidzeme and Rīga come under Russian rule. During the course of this century Latgale and the dukedom of Kurzeme are annexed to Russia. |
| 1850's – 1870's | National awakening of the Latvian people. The movement of New-Latvians (<i>jaunlatvieši</i>). |
| November 18, 1918 | Proclamation of independence of Latvia. |
| August 11, 1920 | Soviet Russia (later – the USSR) and the Republic of Latvia sign a Peace Treaty. Russia acknowledges Latvia's independence and for ever withdraws its claims for the territory of Latvia. |
| August 23, 1939 | Non-aggression pact between the USSR and Germany: both totalitarian states divide Eastern Europe between them. According to the secret protocol, Latvia together with Estonia and later also Lithuania, are absorbed within the Soviet sphere of influence. |
| October 5, 1939 | Threatening armed intervention, the USSR forces Latvia's government to sign an agreement allowing Soviet army bases on Latvian territory (officially called a „mutual assistance agreement”). |

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| June 16, 1940 | Violating all agreements and treaties between the two states, as well as the principles of international law, the USSR delivers an ultimatum to Latvia. It demands the formation of a new pro-Soviet government and announces the immediate deployment of Soviet armed forces to the country. |
| June 17, 1940 | Latvia occupied by USSR troops. |
| July 23, 1940 | The USA Foreign Affairs department declares that the occupation of the Baltic countries is illegal and their incorporation into the USSR is not recognised by the USA. |
| June 14, 1941 | 15,424 Latvians are deported from Latvia to Siberia: the political and business elite of Latvia is considered to be hostile towards the occupation regime. Among the deported are almost 100 infants under the age of 1 and more than 3000 children under the age of 16. |
| 1941 – 1945 | Latvia occupied by the German Third Reich. |
| March 1943 | Germany begins compulsory recruitment of Latvian civilians into its occupation army. |
| 1941 – 1944 | The German occupation regime exterminates over 90,000 Latvian civilians, mainly Jews. |
| May 8, 1945 | End of the war. The German occupation army capitulates and the USSR occupation power is re-established in the territory of Latvia. |
| 1945 – 1956 | A continuous Latvian national partisan armed struggle against the second Soviet occupation spread throughout the country. |
| March 25, 1949 | More than 43,000 innocent people are labelled as enemies of the re-established Soviet regime and are deported to Siberia. |
| June 14 and August 23, 1987 | The first large anti-Soviet and anti-occupation demonstrations in Rīga. |
| May 4, 1990 | A declaration restoring independence with a transition period is adopted. |
| August 21, 1991 | Complete reinstatement of Latvia's independence. |
| August 31, 1994 | The last troops of Russian (former USSR) occupation army leave Latvia. |
| April – May 2004 | Latvia becomes a member of NATO and the European Union. |