CONTENTS

The Protocol Guide..................................................................................................................1
Republic of Latvia................................................................................................................1
Contents .................................................................................................................................2
The state protocol..................................................................................................................5
The President’s Division of the Chancery of the President of the Republic of Latvia.........5
1. PROTOCOL OF VISITS.................................................................................................6
  1.1. General information ...................................................................................................6
  1.2. Categories of visits ....................................................................................................6
  1.3. Practical Information ..................................................................................................7
  1.3.1. Lists of Participants ..............................................................................................7
  1.3.2. Language ................................................................................................................7
  1.3.3. Arrival/Departure ...................................................................................................7
  1.3.4. Local Transportation ............................................................................................7
  1.3.5. Accommodation ....................................................................................................7
  1.3.6. Security ................................................................................................................. 7
  1.3.7. Dietary Restrictions or Preferences ......................................................................8
  1.3.8. Medical Care ......................................................................................................... 8
  1.3.9. Exchange of Gifts and Decorations during visits ..................................................8
  1.3.10. Other arrangements ............................................................................................ 8
  1.3.11. Programme for accompanying spouse ...............................................................9
  1.4. Financial Aspects of the Visits ..................................................................................9
  1.4.1. Expenses covered by the Latvian Government .......................................................9
  1.4.2. Expenses not covered by the Latvian Government during State and Official Visits:9
  1.5. THE DIPLOMAT IN LATVIA...................................................................................22
  2.2. Arrival and Departure of Members of Diplomatic Missions ..................................22
  2.2.1. Notification of appointments ................................................................................22
  2.2.2. Identity cards (ID-cards) ..................................................................................... 22
  2.2.2.1. Types of Identity cards ....................................................................................22
  2.2.2.2. Registration of new staff members ..................................................................23
  2.2.2.3. Lost ID Card .....................................................................................................23
  2.2.2.4. Extension of ID card ........................................................................................24
  2.2.3. Family members ..................................................................................................24
  2.2.4. The Diplomatic List ............................................................................................24
  2.2.5. Arrival and Departure of Heads of Mission .........................................................25
  2.2.5.1. Agrément ..........................................................................................................25
  2.2.5.2. Arrival of Ambassador-designate ...................................................................25
  2.2.5.3. Presentation of the Letters of Credence ............................................................26
  2.2.5.3.1. Presentation of copies of the Letters of Credence and Recall .......................26
  2.2.5.3.2. Practical aspects for the preparation of the ceremony ...................................26
  2.2.5.3.3. Courtesy call on the Head of the State Protocol ...........................................26
  2.2.5.3.4. Ceremony of presentation of the Letters of Credence ..................................27
  2.2.5.3.5. Gifts .............................................................................................................27
  2.2.5.3.6. Duration of the accreditation visits of the Head of Mission .........................28
  2.2.5.4. Departure of a resident Head of Mission ........................................................ 28
  2.2.5.5. Departure of a non-resident Head of Mission ................................................ 28
  2.2.6. Appointment of Charges d’Affaires ad interim .....................................................29
  2.2.7. Appointment of Defence Attachés ........................................................................29
  2.3.1. Notification of arrival and departure ....................................................................29
  2.3.2. Courtesy visit to the Minister of Defence .............................................................30
  2.3.3. Other calls at the Ministry of Defence (hereafter - MoD) and its subordinated institutions ...........................................................................................................30
  2.3.4. Identity cards .......................................................................................................30
  2.3. The Consular Corps ..................................................................................................30
  2.4. Consular functions ...................................................................................................30
  2.4.2. Consular districts .................................................................................................31
  2.4.3. Classification of consular posts ............................................................................31
  2.4.4. Career Heads of Consular Post - admission to functions ...................................31
  2.4.4.1. Notification of arrival and departure .................................................................31
  2.4.4.2. Courtesy visits at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs .............................................31
  2.4.4.3. Immunity and inviolability Immunity...............................................................31
  2.4.4.4. Identity cards .................................................................................................32
2.4.5. Consular Posts headed by Honorary Consuls ................................................................. 32
2.4.5.1. Establishment of Consular Posts headed by Honorary Consuls ................................. 32
2.4.5.2. Appointment of Honorary Consuls ........................................................................... 32
2.4.5.3. Admission to functions ............................................................................................. 33
2.4.5.4. Accreditation ............................................................................................................. 33
2.4.5.5. Immunities and privileges ......................................................................................... 33
2.4.5.6. Flags .......................................................................................................................... 34
2.4.5.7. Motor vehicles ......................................................................................................... 34
2.5. International Organizations ............................................................................................. 34
2.6. Representations of International Organizations ................................................................. 34
2.6.1. Courtesy visits to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ......................................................... 34
2.6.2. Identity cards .............................................................................................................. 34
2.7. Status of foreign government agencies and personnel ....................................................... 35
3. DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY ................................................................................................. 35
3.1. Persons enjoying diplomatic immunity ............................................................................ 35
3.2. Immunity from civil jurisdiction ..................................................................................... 36
3.3. Immunity from criminal jurisdiction .............................................................................. 36
3.4. Traffic offences .............................................................................................................. 36
3.5. Driving under the influence of alcohol and police powers .............................................. 36
3.6. Arrest and tests ............................................................................................................... 37
3.7. Criminal proceedings and other measures ....................................................................... 37
4. SECURITY .......................................................................................................................... 37
4.1. Protection of personnel and premises ............................................................................ 37
4.2. Emergency situations ..................................................................................................... 38
4.3. Demonstrations ............................................................................................................. 38
4.4. Elections ....................................................................................................................... 38
5. FIREARMS ....................................................................................................................... 39
5.1. Import of firearms for security service personnel accompanying high-level foreign visitors ................................................................. 39
5.2. Import of weapons by staff members of foreign diplomatic and consular representations ........................................................................ 39
5.2. Hunting .......................................................................................................................... 40
6. RADIO TRANSMITTERS ................................................................................................. 42
7. MOTOR VEHICLES ......................................................................................................... 43
7.1. Tax exemption ............................................................................................................... 43
7.2. Insurance ...................................................................................................................... 44
7.3. Driving license .............................................................................................................. 44
7.4. Registration and Cancellation of the Registration of Motor Vehicles ............................... 44
7.4.1. Registration ............................................................................................................... 44
7.4.2. Cancellation of the registration .................................................................................. 45
7.4.3. Loss of diplomatic license plates .................................................................................. 46
7.4.4. Sale of the motor vehicle ........................................................................................... 46
7.4.5. Annual Technical Inspection ..................................................................................... 46
7.4.6. CSDD fidelity line ...................................................................................................... 47
7.5. Parking in Riga ............................................................................................................... 47
7.5.1. Parking place for the vehicles of the Mission ................................................................ 47
7.5.2. Parking near the Ministry .......................................................................................... 47
7.5.3. Parking and Penalties for Parking Offences ............................................................... 47
7.6. Traffic regulations ........................................................................................................ 47
8. LOCAL STAFF ............................................................................................................... 48
8.1. Social Insurance ........................................................................................................... 48
8.2. Annual leave .................................................................................................................. 48
9. EMPLOYMENT OF SPOUSES ...................................................................................... 49
10. EMPLOYMENT OF PRIVATE SERVANTS ................................................................. 50
11. TAXES ............................................................................................................................ 51
11.1. Reimbursement of Value Added Tax (VAT) and Excise Tax .......................................... 51
11.1.1. Reimbursement of VAT for goods and services acquired for the official needs of the representation ........................................................................ 51
11.1.2. Reimbursement of VAT for goods and services acquired for personal use of privileged persons ................................................................. 52
11.1.3. Restrictions .............................................................................................................. 53
11.1.4. Application for VAT and Excise Tax reimbursement to goods and services acquired for the official needs of the representation and for personal use of resident diplomats ................................................................. 54
11.1.5. Application for VAT and Excise Tax reimbursement to goods and services acquired for the personal needs of administrative-technical staff of missions ........................................................................... 55
11.1.6. VAT exempt purchases in other EU countries ........................................................... 55
11.1.7. VAT reimbursement to non-resident diplomats

11.2. Customs duties

11.2.1. Procedure

12. MISCELLANEOUS

12.1. Export and Import Authorisation for Works of Art

12.2. Diplomatic Clearance of Foreign Aircraft

12.3. Diplomatic Clearance of Foreign Naval Vessels

12.4. Diplomatic Clearance of Foreign Scientific Research Ships

12.5. Riga International Airport

12.3.1. Aviation security requirements and restrictions

12.3.2. Parking and Driving in Airport Territory

12.3.3. VIP service centre

12.3.4. Charter flights

12.3.5. Diplomatic Consignments

12.3.6. Health care

12.3.7. State Compulsory Health Insurance

12.3.8. Primary health care and hospitalization

12.3.9. European Health Insurance Card

12.3.10. Emergency health care

12.3.11. Diplomatic Service Medical Centre

12.4. Schools

12.6. The Latvian Institute (under supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

12.7. International Women’s Club of Riga (IWCR)

12.8. Latvia’s National holidays and Remembrance days

Last update on 25 July 2014
THE STATE PROTOCOL

The State Protocol conducts activities concerned with diplomatic protocol and state ceremonies. The duties of the State Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs include the activities of the President, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia with foreign Heads of States and Governments and diplomatic representatives accredited to Latvia.

The State Protocol is in charge of organising high level Visits and State Ceremonies and also takes part in organising high-level international conferences, summits and forums held in Latvia. It handles matters concerning foreign diplomatic and consular missions and international organisations in Latvia, monitors the application of the 1961 Vienna Convention on the Diplomatic Relations and the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Affairs, and takes care of matters related to diplomatic immunity and privileges.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE STATE PROTOCOL

The State Protocol monitors the provision of diplomatic privileges and immunities implemented in Latvia to foreign diplomatic and consular missions, international organisations and their staff, on the basis of international conventions, multilateral and bilateral agreements, international practice and national law.

The State Protocol carries out registration of staff of foreign missions and international organisations and arranges the admission of military attaches. It co-ordinates the registration of motor vehicles and, where possible, driving licences, as well as customs clearances. Fiscal privileges are also the responsibility of the State Protocol.

The State Protocol renders assistance in obtaining flight diplomatic clearances for government and military aircraft and naval vessels, radio and firearms licences, as well as supervises the introduction and granting of agreement to ambassadors, preparation of accreditation and farewell visits by Heads of Diplomatic Missions.

The State Protocol is in charge of the organisation of visits made by foreign Heads of Government and their spouses, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and their spouses in Latvia.

The President’s Division of the Chancery of the President of the Republic of Latvia

The Division is concerned with the functions / activities of the President and spouse, coordinating and organising visits abroad and those made by foreign heads of state and their spouses in Latvia.
1. PROTOCOL OF VISITS

1.1. General information

The President’s Division of the Chancery of the President of the Republic of Latvia is responsible for the organisation and logistics of incoming and outgoing visits by Heads of states and their spouses.

The State Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the organisation and logistics of incoming and outgoing visits by Government, and Ministers for Foreign Affairs.

Incoming visits of Speakers of Parliaments, as well as outgoing visits of the Speaker of the Saeima (the Latvian Parliament) are the responsibility of the Protocol Division of the Saeima.

For incoming and outgoing visits of line ministers and EU Commissioners, the respective protocol departments in their ministries are responsible.

1.2. Categories of visits

Visits are divided into following categories: state, official, working and private visit. Transit visits and visits due to technical reasons are also possible.

1.2.1. Heads of State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of visit</th>
<th>State Visit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of visit</td>
<td>The invitation of the President of Latvia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Components of the visit | - Guard of honour, red carpet on arrival and departure at the airport  
- Official welcoming ceremony at the Blackheads’ House  
- Official photographs and signing the Guest Book  
- Exchange of State Decorations (by agreement of both parties)  
- Exchange of State Gifts  
- Meeting with the President of Latvia and his/her spouse (if the visiting Head of State is accompanied by his/her spouse)  
- Discussions between both Heads of States and Delegations  
- Press conference for both Heads of States  
- Flower laying ceremony at the Monument of Freedom  
- Meeting with the Chairperson [Speaker] of the Saeima [Parliament]  
- Meeting with the Prime Minister  
- State Dinner hosted by the President of Latvia and his/her spouse  
- Visit to the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia  
- Meeting with the Chairperson of the Riga City Council  
- Business Forum (as appropriate to the context of the visit)  
- Visit to cultural or other establishments, a public speech  
- Regional tour  
- Reception hosted by visiting country  
- Separate programme for the spouses of both Heads of States |
| Composition of the foreign delegation | Official delegation 1 (2) + 10 (the principle of reciprocity) |
| Responsible institution | The Chancery of the President of Latvia |
| Financing | - The costs for the official delegation - (Airport VIP lounge, hotel, official meals, transport and interpreter services) are covered by the Latvian side, following the principle of reciprocity  
- Depending on the context of the visit additional expenses may be |
| **The Latvian welcoming and farewell party at the airport** | – The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Latvia to the state concerned  
– The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the state concerned to Latvia  
– The Head of the State Protocol  
– A Protocol Officer from the President’s Division |
| **The Latvian party at the official welcoming ceremony at the Blackheads’ House** | – The President of Latvia and his/her spouse  
– The Chairperson of the Saeima  
– The Prime Minister  
– The Minister of Foreign Affairs  
– The Dean of the Foreign Diplomatic Corps in Latvia  
– Appropriate ministers and other officials who participate in discussions and are included in the official delegation of the welcoming country  
– The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Latvia to the state concerned  
– The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the state concerned to Latvia  
– The Commander of the National Armed Forces  
– The Head of the President’s Chancery  
– The Chairperson of the Riga City Council  
– The Head of the State Protocol  
– Advisors to the President of Latvia |
| **Security** | Military police, the Security Service of the President of Latvia |
| **Category of visit** | Official Visit |
| **Purpose of visit** | The invitation of the President of Latvia |
| **Components of the visit** | – Guard of honour, red carpet on arrival and departure at the airport  
– Official welcoming ceremony at the Blackheads’ House  
– Official photographs and signing of the Guest Book  
– Exchange of Official Gifts  
– Meeting with the President of Latvia and his/her spouse (if the visiting Head of State is accompanied by his/her spouse) |
| **Composition of the foreign delegation** | Official delegation 1 (2) + 10 (or the principle of reciprocity) |
| **Responsible institution** | The Chancery of the President of Latvia |
| **Financing** | – The costs for the official delegation - (Airport VIP lounge, hotel, official meals, transport and interpreter services) are covered by the Latvian side, following the principle of reciprocity  
– Depending on the context of the visit additional expenses may be permitted, which are covered by the Latvian side Other expenses are to be covered by the visiting country |
| **The Latvian welcoming and farewell party at the airport** | – The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Latvia to the state concerned  
– The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the state concerned to Latvia  
– The Head of the State Protocol  
– A Protocol Officer from the President’s Division |
| **The Latvian party at the official welcoming ceremony at the Blackheads’ House** | - The President of Latvia and his/her spouse  
- The Chairperson of the Saeima  
- The Prime Minister  
- The Minister of Foreign Affairs  
- The Dean of the Foreign Diplomatic Corps in Latvia  
- Appropriate ministers and other officials who participate in the discussions and are included in the composition of the official welcoming party  
- The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Latvia to the foreign state  
- The Commander of the National Armed Forces  
- The Head of the President’s Chancery  
- The Chairperson of the Riga City Council  
- The Head of the State Protocol  
- Advisors to the President of Latvia |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Security</strong></td>
<td>Military police, the Security Service of the President of Latvia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category of visit</strong></td>
<td>Working Visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of visit</strong></td>
<td>The invitation of the President of Latvia or on the initiative of the visiting country, as well as for a particular occasion (conference, presentation etc), commemoration events, or according to the context of the visit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Components of the visit** | - Meeting with the President of Latvia  
- Other meetings at the suggestion of the Latvian side or at the request of the visiting country  
- Individual event (conference, presentation, commemoration ceremony etc.)  
- The exchange of gifts is not provided (with exception of the request of the visiting country, tradition of the state concerned, or a part of the context of the visit)  
- If the Head of State is accompanied by his/her spouse - a separate meeting with the spouse of the President of Latvia is possible, a separate programme may be organised |
| **Composition of the foreign delegation** | Official delegation 1 (2) + 3 (the principle of reciprocity) |
| **Responsible institution** | - The Chancery of the President of Latvia  
- Depending on the content of the visit or specific event (e.g. conference), a particular organiser in charge of the visit or event concerned |
| **Financing** | - On the principle of reciprocity or at the expense of the visiting country  
- Hotel, Airport VIP lounge, transport for the delegation within the format 1 (2) + 3 is covered by the Latvian side |
| **The Latvian welcoming and farewell party at the airport** | - The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Latvia to the state concerned  
- The Head of the State Protocol  
- A Protocol Officer from the President’s Division |
| **Security** | Military police, the Security Service of the President of Latvia |
| **Category of visit** | Private Visit |
| **Purpose of visit** | The invitation of the Latvian side or on the initiative of the visiting country |
| **Components of the visit** | According to the purpose of the visit |
| **Composition of the foreign delegation** | As determined by the visiting country |
| **Responsible institution** | The Chancery of the President of Latvia, the Embassy of foreign state concerned |
| Financing | Expenses of the Airport VIP lounge (for the Head of State and his/her spouse) is covered by the Latvian side  
| | Other expenses to be covered by the visiting country |
| **The Latvian welcoming and farewell party at the airport** | A Protocol Officer from the President’s Division |
| **Security** | Military police, the Security Service of the President of Latvia |
| **Category of visit** | Transit Visit |
| **Purpose of visit** | The initiative of the visiting country |
| **Components of the visit** | As determined by the visiting country |
| **Composition of the foreign delegation** | As determined by the visiting country |
| **Responsible institution** | The Chancery of the President of Latvia, the Embassy of foreign state concerned |
| **Financing** | Expenses of the Airport VIP lounge (for the Head of State and his/her spouse) is covered by the Latvian side  
| | Other expenses to be covered by the visiting country |
| **The Latvian welcoming and farewell party at the airport** | A Protocol Officer from the President’s Division |
| **Security** | Military police, the Security Service of the President of Latvia |
| **Category of visit** | Spouse Visit |
| **Purpose of visit** | The invitation of the spouse of the President of Latvia or on the initiative of the visiting country, as well as to attend an individual function or event (e.g. conference, presentation, commemoration event etc.), or according to the content of the visit |
| **Components of the visit** | With regard to the purpose of the visit |
| **Composition of the foreign delegation** | To be determined by the visiting country |
| **Responsible institution** | The Chancery of the President of Latvia  
| | Depending on the content of the visit or specific event (e.g. conference), a particular organiser in charge of the visit or event concerned |
| **Financing** | On the principle of reciprocity or by the visiting country |
| **The Latvian welcoming and farewell party at the airport** | A Protocol Officer from the President’s Division |
### 1.2.2. Heads of the Parliament

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of visit</th>
<th>Official Visit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of visit</td>
<td>The official invitation of the Chairperson of the Saeima</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Components of the visit | Welcoming at the airport  
| | Flower laying ceremony at the Monument of Freedom  
| | Meeting with the Chairperson of the Saeima  
| | Meeting with the Prime Minister  
| | Meeting with the President  
| | Meeting with the Minister for Foreign Affairs  
| | Official luncheon/dinner - hosted by the Chairperson of the Saeima  
| | Meeting with the Saeima Group for co-operation with the State concerned  
| | Press conference  
| | Visit to the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia  
| | Regional tour (with regard to the visiting country’s interests and the history of co-operation)  
| | Exchange of gifts |
| Composition of the foreign delegation | Official delegation 1 (2) + 8 (the principle of reciprocity) |
| Responsible institution | The Saeima |
| Financing | The costs for the official delegation - (Airport VIP lounge, hotel, official meals, transport and interpreter services) are covered by the Chancellery of the Saeima  
| | Other expenses covered by the visiting country  
| | Accommodation for the delegation is offered at the Saeima Guest House at Jurmala |
| The Latvian welcoming and farewell party at the airport | The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Latvia to the state concerned  
| | The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the state concerned to Latvia  
| | The Head of the Saeima Protocol Division  
| | A Protocol Officer from the Saeima Protocol Division |
| Security | Security and the Road Police escort is provided according to the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 340 “Procedure for providing protection (security service) by Security Police to public officials” |
| Category of visit | Working Visit |
| Purpose of visit | The invitation of the Chairperson of the Saeima or on the initiative of the visiting country |
| Components of the visit | Meeting with the Chairperson of the Saeima  
| | Other meetings at the suggestion of the Latvian side, or at the request of the visiting country (e.g. Specific Commissions, Ministries)  
<p>| | Exchange of gifts by mutual arrangement |
| Composition of the foreign delegation | 1 + 8 or within the principle of reciprocity |
| Responsible institution | The Saeima |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financing</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>– On the principle of reciprocity or by the visiting country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Working luncheon/dinner - the Saeima</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Transport for the delegation, Airport VIP lounge - the Saeima</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Accommodation for the delegation is offered at the Saeima Guest House</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– at Jurmala</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Latvian welcoming and farewell party at the airport</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– The Head of the Saeima Protocol Division</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– A Protocol Officer from the Saeima Protocol Division</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Security and the Road Police escort is provided according to the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 340 “Procedure for providing protection (security service) by Security Police to public officials”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.2.3. Heads of the Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of visit</th>
<th>Official Visit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of visit</td>
<td>The invitation of the Prime Minister</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Components of the Visit | – Official welcoming/ farewell ceremony at the airport. Guard of honour. Red carpet (only special flights)  
– Official welcoming and flower laying ceremony at the Monument of Freedom  
– Meeting with the Prime Minister  
– Press conference  
– Official luncheon/dinner hosted by the Prime Minister (and his/her spouse if the visiting Prime Minister arrives with his/her spouse)  
– Meeting with the President of Latvia  
– Meeting with the Chairperson of the Saeima  
– Meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs  
– Visit to the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia  
– Visit to a cultural, educational or research establishment and/or a public lecture/speech at the business forum  
– Exchange of gifts  
– If the Prime Minister is accompanied by his/her spouse then a separate programme might be organised for the spouse |
| Composition of the foreign delegation | Official delegation 1 (2) + 9 or on the principle of reciprocity |
| Responsible institution | The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the State Chancellery |
| Financing | – The costs for the official delegation (Airport VIP lounge, hotel, official meals, transport and interpreter services) are covered by the State Chancellery, on the principle of reciprocity  
– Depending on the content of the visit additional expenses might be permitted, which are covered by the Latvian side  
– Other expenses are covered by the visiting country |
| The Latvian welcoming and farewell party at the airport | – The Head of the State Protocol  
– The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Latvia to the state concerned  
– The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the state concerned to Latvia  
– A Protocol Officer from the State Protocol |
| Security | Security and the Road Police escort is provided according to the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 340 “Procedure for providing protection (security service) by Security Police to public officials” |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of visit</th>
<th>Working Visit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of visit</td>
<td>The invitation of the Prime Minister or on the initiative of the visiting country</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Components of the visit | – Meeting with the Prime Minister  
– Other meetings on the initiative of the Latvian side, or upon request of the visiting country (e.g. a visits to a specific ministry, educational institution, enterprise) |
### Possible meeting with the President of Latvia
- Working luncheon/dinner - hosted by the Prime Minister
- Possible press conference
- Exchange of gifts is not provided (with the exception if it is a wish of the visiting country or a tradition of the state concerned)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition of the foreign delegation</th>
<th>Official delegation 1 + 4 or on the principle of reciprocity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsible institution</td>
<td>The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the State Chancellery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financing</td>
<td>The costs for the official delegation (Airport VIP lounge, hotel, official meal times, transport and interpreter services) are covered by the State Chancellery, on the principle of reciprocity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other expenses are to be covered by the visiting country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Latvian welcoming and farewell party at the airport</td>
<td>The Head of the State Protocol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Latvia to state concerned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the state concerned to Latvia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A Protocol Officer from the State Protocol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Security and the Road Police escort is provided according to the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 340 “Procedure for providing protection (security service) by Security Police to public officials”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category of visit</td>
<td>Transit Visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of visit</td>
<td>The initiative of the visiting country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Components of the visit</td>
<td>As determined by the visiting country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition of the foreign delegation</td>
<td>As determined by the visiting country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible institution</td>
<td>The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Embassy of foreign state concerned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financing</td>
<td>Expenses of the Airport VIP lounge (for the Prime Minister and his/her Spouse or Security Officer) are covered by the Latvian side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other expenses are covered by the visiting country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Latvian welcoming/ farewell party at the airport</td>
<td>A Protocol Officer from the State Protocol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Security and the Road Police escort is provided according to the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 340 “Procedure for providing protection (security service) by Security Police to public officials”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category of visit</td>
<td>Private Visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of visit</td>
<td>The initiative of the visiting country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Components of the visit</td>
<td>As determined by the visiting country</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Composition of the foreign delegation

As determined by the visiting country

### Responsible institution

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the relevant foreign Embassy

### Financing

- Expenses of the Airport VIP lounge (for the Prime Minister and his/her Spouse or Security Officer) are covered by the Latvian side
- Other expenses are covered by the visiting country

### The Latvian welcoming/ farewell party at the airport

A Protocol Officer from the State Protocol

### Security

Security and the Road Police escort is provided according to the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 340 “Procedure for providing protection (security service) by Security Police to public officials”
### 1.2.4. Ministers for Foreign Affairs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of visit</th>
<th>Official Visit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of visit</strong></td>
<td>The invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs (usually once per each period of government)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Components of the visit</strong></td>
<td>Official welcoming ceremony at the airport. Red carpet (only special flights)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Official flower laying ceremony at the Monument of Freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with the President of Latvia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with the Chairperson of the Saeima</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with the Prime Minister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Official luncheon/dinner - hosted by the Minister of Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Press conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visit to the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visit to a cultural, educational or research institution/school/university and/or a public lecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exchange of gifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Composition of the foreign delegation</strong></td>
<td>Official delegation 1 (2) + 4 (the principle of reciprocity and thus could change this format)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsible institution</strong></td>
<td>The Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financing</strong></td>
<td>The costs for the official delegation (Airport VIP lounge, hotel, official meal times, transport and interpreter services) are covered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, taking into account the principle of reciprocity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Depending of the context of the visit additional expenses may be permitted, which are covered by the Latvian side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other expenses are to be covered by the visiting country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Latvian welcoming and farewell party at the airport</strong></td>
<td>The Minister of Foreign Affairs and his/her spouse (if the foreign visitor is accompanied by his/her spouse)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Latvia to the state concerned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the state concerned to Latvia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Head of the State Protocol and a Protocol Officer from the State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Security</strong></td>
<td>Security and the Road Police escort is provided according to the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 340 “Procedure for providing protection (security service) by Security Police to public officials”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Working Visit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of visit</th>
<th>Working Visit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of visit</strong></td>
<td>The invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs or on the initiative of the visiting country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Components of the visit</strong></td>
<td>Meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Possible working luncheon/dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Possible press conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Composition of the foreign delegation</strong></td>
<td>On the principle of reciprocity, but no larger than 1 + 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsible institution</strong></td>
<td>The Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Category of visit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transit Visit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Purpose of visit

- The initiative of the visiting country

### Components of the visit

- As determined by the visiting country

### Composition of the foreign delegation

- As determined by the visiting country

### Responsible institution

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the relevant foreign Embassy

### Financing

- Expenses of the Airport VIP lounge (for the Foreign Minister and his/her spouse or security officer) are covered by the Latvian side
- Other expenses are covered by the visiting country

### The Latvian welcoming and farewell party at the airport

- A Protocol Officer from the State Protocol

### Security

Security and the Road Police escort is provided according to the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 340 “Procedure for providing protection (security service) by Security Police to public officials”

## Category of visit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Private Visit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Purpose of visit

- The initiative of the visiting country

### Components of the visit

- As determined by the visiting country

### Composition of the foreign delegation

- As determined by the visiting country

### Responsible institution

- The Embassy of foreign state concerned

### Financing

- Expenses of the Airport VIP lounge (for the Foreign Minister and his/her spouse or security officer) are covered by the Latvian side
- Other expenses are covered by the visiting country

### The Latvian welcoming and farewell party at the airport

- A Protocol Officer from the State Protocol

### Security

Security and the Road Police escort is provided according to the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 340 “Procedure for providing protection (security service) by Security Police to public officials”

---

**Financing**

- On the principle of reciprocity, or on the visiting country initiative
- Working luncheon/dinner - hosted the Latvian side
- Expenses for transport for the delegation and Airport VIP lounge (1 + 2) are covered by the Latvian side

**The Latvian welcoming and farewell party at the airport**

- Deputy Head of the State Protocol
- A Protocol Officer from the State Protocol

**Security**

Security and the Road Police escort is provided according to the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 340 “Procedure for providing protection (security service) by Security Police to public officials”
1.3. Practical Information
The State Protocol will designate a Protocol Officer to be responsible for arranging the visit to Latvia. It is advisable that the Embassy also designates one person to liaise with the Protocol Officer.

1.3.1. Lists of Participants
To facilitate seating and transportation arrangements, lists should be submitted to the State Protocol as early as possible indicating the participants of meetings and other events. The list of the delegation should include the following: full name, title and order of precedence.

1.3.2. Language
The State Protocol shall be notified as to what language the VIP prefers to speak during official meetings and whether an interpreter is required or if the guest is bringing an interpreter.

1.3.3. Arrival/departure
- **VIP lounge:** the State Protocol is responsible for booking the VIP lounge at the Airport.
- **Passports and luggage:** A member of the visiting delegation shall be designated to collect passports and luggage tags prior to landing in Latvia and should be able to hand them over to the Latvian protocol officer in charge at the airport upon arrival and departure. A member of the Embassy staff, or a designated member of the delegation, should assist with luggage handling on arrival and departure. The visiting side is kindly asked to prepare special luggage tags with the national flag and the name of the delegation member on it, to make the organisation of logistics easier.
- **Special flights:** An application for over flight and landing permission for the aircraft must be submitted by the Embassy concerned to the State Protocol of the MFA at least a week before arrival. The Embassy is responsible for making all the necessary arrangements regarding the flight. The same applies to booking a hotel and arranging transportation for the crew of the aircraft.

1.3.4. Local Transportation
The Latvian side provides transport for the VIP, his or her spouse, the official delegation and their luggage, where necessary.

If the number of persons of the delegation exceeds the number stated in sub-section 1.4.3., it is the responsibility of the Embassy concerned to cover expenses for the rest of the persons. Journalists accompanying the delegation use vehicles provided by the Embassy, however, the State Protocol will render assistance if requested.

1.3.5. Accommodation
For VIPs and official delegations hotel reservations will be made by the State Protocol.

1.3.6. Security
Security provisions during the visit are the responsibility of the Latvian Government. Security officers of the visiting state escorting the VIPs are requested to respect the regulations of the Republic of Latvia concerning firearms.

Accompanying bodyguards of the VIP must be identified well in advance, and the following information shall be submitted to the State Protocol: full name, passport number, ID number, date and place of birth. If the bodyguards are armed, full details must be provided concerning any firearms to be brought into Latvia, specifically: type and number of firearms, quantity and calibre of ammunition.

If the security officials accompanying VIP wish to bring along communication equipment, the frequencies and the capacity of radio equipment must be notified in advance to the State Protocol.
providing the number and type of transmitters, the required and reserve operating frequency, the period of time for which the permit is needed.

1.3.7. Dietary Restrictions or Preferences
Any dietary restrictions of the VIP or any other member of the official delegation, as well as particular preferences or any other information which might be useful, should be submitted to the State Protocol well in advance.

1.3.8. Medical Care
Medical care for the VIP, his or her spouse is provided for the duration of their stay in Latvia.

In order to make all the necessary arrangements, the State Protocol requests the following information and details to be submitted as early as possible prior to the visit:
- blood group of the VIP and his or her spouse
- information regarding any special health precautions to be taken by the VIP
- any other special information that needs to be taken into account during the State Visit

1.3.9. Exchange of Gifts and Decorations during visits

Exchange of Gifts and Decorations during State Visits and Official Visits

Gifts
The visiting Head of State and the President of the Republic of Latvia usually exchange gifts during State and Official visits, if the Protocol services of both states have agreed about it in advance.

The exchange of gifts may be done directly or indirectly.

Direct exchange of gifts is practised between the Heads of States during State and Official Visits.

The official delegations exchange gifts indirectly, i.e, through the Protocol.

The spouses of the Head of State of the guest country and the President of the Republic of Latvia, the aides-de-camps of the host and guest countries, heads of the relevant Presidential protocol of both states, and the official press may attend the ceremony.

Other categories of visits do not foresee the exchange of gifts as an essential requirement of Protocol. The State Protocol takes this opportunity to issue a reminder that in all cases the exchange of gifts should be initiated by the visiting state.

Decorations
In the case of a State Visit, an exchange of decorations may be arranged.

Exchange of gifts between Heads of Government and Ministers of Foreign Affairs during official visits
Acting on the visiting state’s initiative to exchange gifts during the official visits of the Heads of Government and Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the exchange of gifts between the VIPs is traditionally carried out indirectly, i.e. through the Protocol.
1.3.10. Other arrangements
Information about any other appointments arranged by the Embassy which have to be included into the programme shall be submitted to the State Protocol in advance. This should also contain information about any sightseeing that is scheduled or requested etc.

1.3.11. Programme for accompanying spouse
The State Protocol will be pleased to arrange a separate programme for the official guest’s accompanying spouse during State and Official Visits. The State Protocol would appreciate being informed about his or her special interests as early as possible. A Protocol Officer will be designated to take responsibility of the programme.

1.4. Financial Aspects of the Visits

1.4.1. Expenses covered by the Latvian Government
The financial aspects of Working Visits are agreed on during the development of the visit programme and the principle of reciprocity is observed.

The size of an unofficial delegation is not restricted.

The expenses for the official delegation during visits that are covered by the Latvian side are mentioned in the tables below accordingly to the status of the visit.

1.4.2. Expenses not covered by the Latvian Government during State and Official Visits:
Any other expenses, e.g. telecommunication services, mini-bar, laundry, dry cleaning, incurred by members of the official delegation are not covered by the Latvian side, except those of the Head of State or Government.

The financial aspects of a forthcoming working visit are usually initially coordinated by the State Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and by the Protocol Service of the State concerned. The principle of reciprocity may be applied.

Advance Team
In connection with the preparation of the State and Official Visits, an Advance Team may arrive in Latvia before the visit of the VIP. The size of the Advance Team is not limited. Financial expenses of the Advance Team will not be covered by the Latvian Government. The same applies to official guests and delegation members who arrive in Latvia before the official programme begins, or remain in the country after it has ended.
### 1.4.3. Expenses covered by Latvian side

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heads of State</th>
<th>VIP Lounge</th>
<th>Hotel</th>
<th>Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Visit</strong></td>
<td>1 (2) + 10 or on the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td>1 (2) + 10 or on the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Official visit</strong></td>
<td>1 (2) + 10 or on the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td>1 (2) + 10 or on the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Working visit</strong></td>
<td>1 (2) + 3 or on the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td>1 (2) + 3 or on the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private visit</strong></td>
<td>1 (2)</td>
<td>No covered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transit visit</strong></td>
<td>1 (2)</td>
<td>No covered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spouse visit</strong></td>
<td>On the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td>On the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td>On the principle of reciprocity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heads of the Government</th>
<th>Embassy</th>
<th>VIP Lounge</th>
<th>Hotel</th>
<th>Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Official visit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Resident</strong></td>
<td>1 (2) + 9 or on the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td>1 (2) + 9 or on the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td>Only official delegation for all meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-resident</strong></td>
<td>1 (2) + 9 or on the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td>1 (2) + 9 or on the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td>All delegation, excluding business delegation and journalists for all meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Working visit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Resident</strong></td>
<td>1 + 4 or on the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td>1 + 4 or on the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td>Only VIP car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-resident</strong></td>
<td>1 + 4 or on the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td>1 + 4 or on the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td>All delegation, excluding business delegation and journalists for all meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transit visit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Resident</strong></td>
<td>1 (2)</td>
<td>Not covered</td>
<td>Only VIP car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-resident</strong></td>
<td>1 (2)</td>
<td>Not covered</td>
<td>Only VIP car</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private visit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Resident</strong></td>
<td>1 (2)</td>
<td>Not covered</td>
<td>Not covered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-resident</strong></td>
<td>1 (2)</td>
<td>Not covered</td>
<td>Not covered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ministers of Foreign Affairs</th>
<th>Embassy</th>
<th>VIP Lounge</th>
<th>Hotel</th>
<th>Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Official visit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Resident</strong></td>
<td>1 (2) + 4 or on the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td>1 (2) + 4 (the principle of reciprocity)</td>
<td>Only official delegation only for official meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-resident</strong></td>
<td>1 (2) + 4 or on the principle of reciprocity</td>
<td>1 (2) + 4 (the principle of reciprocity)</td>
<td>All delegation, excluding business delegation and journalists only for official meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Working visit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Resident</strong></td>
<td>On the principle of reciprocity, but no larger than 1 + 2</td>
<td>Not covered</td>
<td>Only VIP car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-resident</strong></td>
<td>On the principle of reciprocity, but no larger than 1 + 2</td>
<td>Not covered</td>
<td>Only official delegation (no larger than 1+4) only for official meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transit visit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Resident</strong></td>
<td>1 (2)</td>
<td>Not covered</td>
<td>Not covered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-resident</strong></td>
<td>1 (2)</td>
<td>Not covered</td>
<td>Not covered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private visit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Resident</strong></td>
<td>1 (2)</td>
<td>Not covered</td>
<td>Not covered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Non-resident 1 (2) Not covered Not covered

*Security and the Road Police escort is provided according to the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 340 “Procedure for providing protection (security service) by Security Police to public officials”

**The costs for official meals are covered by the Latvian side at all times

***Depending of the context of the visit additional expenses may be permitted, which are covered by the Latvian side
2. THE DIPLOMAT IN LATVIA

2.2. Arrival and Departure of Members of Diplomatic Missions

2.1.1. Notification of appointments

In accordance with Article 10 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961), Missions are requested to notify the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (hereinafter-Ministry) as soon as possible of the appointment, the dates of arrival and final departure of members of diplomatic missions and career consular posts, as well as members of their families and private servants (other than persons resident in Latvia and not entitled to privileges and immunities).

In addition to the above, the State Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (hereinafter- the State Protocol) requests the Missions to submit a list of diplomatic staff twice a year.

2.1.2. Identity cards (ID-cards)

The State Protocol issues identity cards (hereinafter- ID cards) to members of Diplomatic missions, consular posts and representations of international organisations, administrative- technical staff, as well as private servants, honorary consuls general and honorary consuls for the term of office or residence in Latvia.

Missions should take note of the fact that the Ministry does not accept the assignment of Latvian nationals or permanent residents as diplomatic agents in Latvia. Similarly the Ministry does not issue ID cards to locally engaged staff of missions who have permanent residence in Latvia.

ID card holders are advised to carry their ID cards with them in order to be able to prove their identity and their registration at the State Protocol.

ID cards are granted to the family members of the staff of Diplomatic missions, consular posts, representations of international organisations and administrative-technical staff.

The Ministry does not issue ID cards to:

- family members of service staff and private servants
- family members of staff of missions, consular posts, representations of international organisations and administrative-technical staff who are Latvian nationals or permanently resident in Latvia
- family members of honorary consuls general and honorary consuls

2.1.2.1. Types of Identity cards

Persons subject to accreditation are issued ID cards of six categories (A,B,C,D,E,F), depending on their status and eligibility to privileges and immunities:

- category A (red) - to heads of mission and members of the mission who enjoy privileges and immunities under international law
- category B (yellow)- to members of administrative and technical staff of mission who enjoy restricted privileges and immunities under international law
category C (white) - to heads and members of the representations of international organisations who enjoy privileges and immunities according to relevant international treaties

- category D (blue) - to career consular officers who enjoy privileges and immunities under international law

- category E (grey) - to honorary consuls general and honorary consuls of foreign states

- category F (green) - to members of the service staff of a mission and to private servants

2.1.2.2. Registration of new staff members

For registration of a new staff member the mission shall submit to the State Protocol the following documents:

- an original of registration form which is available from the State Protocol, and on the English version of the Ministry’s website under “State Protocol” - Standard forms. Filled in electronically or by hand using block letters, it has to be signed by the applicant and the Head of Mission, and the seal of the mission must be affixed:
  - a copy of the passport (pages of personal data and position of person concreted)
  - 1 (one) photo
  - please note that photo (30x40 mm) should be no older than six months. The name of the applicant as well as the name of the mission should be written on the back of a photography
  - a Verbal Note
  - a copy of the ID card issued by the residence state for non-resident staff of missions only

In addition to the above mentioned documents, staff members of the missions accredited to the Republic of Latvia residing outside the Schengen area states, prior to applying for the ID card, shall have to obtain a national visa of category “D” at the Latvian diplomatic and consular representation, except as provided by bilateral agreements on the waiving of visa requirements for entry and staying in the Republic of Latvia.

Missions and consular posts are requested to return the ID cards of departing members of missions and consular posts and their family members to the State Protocol within a week of their final departure from Latvia or the termination of their functions. The State Protocol may delay the issuance of an ID card to a newcomer until the predecessor and his family members have returned their identity cards.

An ID card is issued for a period of three years, unless the validity of the person’s passport is shorter. Where a person is appointed to the mission for a period less than three years, the ID card shall be issued, at the request of the mission, for a specified period of time.

Based on the Schengen Borders Code, accredited members of diplomatic missions and of consular representations and their families may, as a rule, enter the territory of the EU Member States on presentation of the identity card issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of a valid travel document.

Application form for ID card for foreign diplomats

2.1.2.3. Lost ID Card

If your ID card is stolen, please immediately inform the nearest Police Station. In the event the ID card is lost or stolen, the mission shall forward a note with an enclosed application for a new ID card, a copy of the passport and 1 photo (see section No. 1.2.2). If the ID card has been stolen, a copy of the Police station report shall be also attached.
2.1.2.4. Extension of ID card

The procedure for extension of ID cards is identical to that of registration of new staff members (see section No. 1.2.3.). The expired ID card shall be attached to the Verbal Note or submitted to the State Protocol at the moment of delivering the new card. The mission should apply for extension of ID cards before the expiry of old ID cards.

2.1.3. Family members

Family members of staff of the Diplomatic mission, if they are not citizens or permanent residents in the Republic of Latvia, are issued ID cards of the same category as the accredited person. They enjoy the same diplomatic or consular immunities and privileges in the territory of the Republic of Latvia as the registered person.

The following persons are regarded as family members of the staff of the mission:

- spouse of the person concerned. This applies both to officially registered and nonregistered marriages, the only criterion is the recognition of the marriage by the government of the respective sending state. This recognition may be demonstrated by a copy of the marriage certificate or other confirmation provided by the respective Ministry of Foreign Affairs on recognition of the person as a spouse by the government of the respective state
- unmarried children under the age of 18 who reside exclusively in the principal household or join the household during visits to Latvia
- unmarried children under the age of 21 attending an institution of graduate studies in Latvia on a full-time basis who continue to form part of the household and depend on it financially

In exceptional cases ID cards may be issued to other persons, if the registered person regards them as members of his or her family and who are part of his or her household. Each such case is considered on an individual basis upon receipt of a Verbal Note with reasonable arguments/justifiable reasons from the mission.

For registration, each family member shall fill out the application form (see section No. 1.2.3.) individually and a copy of his/her passport shall be included, together with 1 photo. For minors, the application form shall be signed by a parent and the Head of Mission.

2.1.4. The Diplomatic List

The Diplomatic List, including also the Directory of International Organisation, Representations of International Organisations and Honorary Consuls, is formed from the Protocol database. It is updated on regular basis.

The Diplomatic List gives telephone, fax and e-mail details for use by members of the public.

However, the State Protocol may ask the missions for mobile telephone of contact person to be used in case of emergency. This information will not be made public.

As of 1 January 2008, the Diplomatic List will not be published in a hard copy format. The content of the List will appear on the Ministry’s website at: www.mfa.gov.lv.

Missions are encouraged to access the List on the website for current information.
Although the website is updated regularly, the State Protocol will request missions to check the accuracy of the computer printout of the mission’s entries. The latter will be communicated to the missions and posts twice a year. It is essential that posts respond to this communication, even if no amendments to their entries are required.

2.2. Arrival and Departure of Heads of Mission

2.2.1. Agrément

In accordance with Article 4 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961), Agrément shall be sought for the person proposed to be accredited as the Head of Mission to the Republic of Latvia.

Agrément shall be received before the person concerned officially arrives in Latvia or his or her identity is made public. The request for Agrément shall include a Curriculum Vitae of the person proposed to be accredited as the Head of Mission.

A request for Agrément may be submitted to the Head of State Protocol. Such requests may be made in the form of a Verbal Note or letter from the mission concerned in Riga, or from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the sending state or, in case of non-resident missions, by communication through the Latvian mission in the capital where the Head of Mission resides.

In cases where the Head of Mission is to be accredited to more than one state and the head is to reside outside Latvia, it is customary to await the Agrément of the country in which the prospective head of the mission is to reside. If the new Head of Mission is not to reside in the same place as his predecessor, the Republic of Latvia should also be notified to that effect in compliance with Article 5, paragraph 1 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961).

Once Agrément has been given, State Protocol will notify the sending state through the diplomatic channels concerned. The granting of Agrément can then be made public as desired.

2.2.2. Arrival of Ambassador-designate

The Ambassador-designate, who will reside in Latvia, is free to arrive in the country at any time following the notification of the Agrément.

As soon as State Protocol is provided with Ambassador-designate’s date of arrival along with a request for a date for the presentation of the Letters of Credence, the State Protocol will schedule the date of the presentation of the Letters of Credence with the Chancery of the President.

As soon as the date of the Ceremony for the presentation of the Letters of Credence is set, the Ambassador-designate will receive from the State Protocol notification concerning the date of the above-mentioned ceremony and an aide-memoire concerning the presentation of credentials from State Protocol prior to his or her arrival in Riga.

Upon his or her arrival in Riga, the Ambassador-designate will be greeted only at Riga International Airport by a State Protocol Officer. Although Ambassadors-designate are free to choose the time and day of arrival in Riga, the State Protocol would appreciate it if their arrivals were not to coincide with weekends or National Holidays, or take place out of office hours.

For non-resident Ambassador-designate, it is recommended that he or she arrives at least one day before the ceremony of the presentation of the Letters of Credence. Usually the official programme of the accreditation visit should not exceed 3 working days.
On arrival to take up his or her post as a Head of Mission the expenses concerning the VIP service at Riga International Airport will be covered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For non-resident Ambassadors transfers from/to the Airport or other place (Riga Passenger Terminal, Railway station) of the arrival/departure according to the visit programme, will be covered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well.

Ambassadors do not take up their functions and/or any public duties in Latvia until they have presented their Letters of Credence to the President of the Republic of Latvia.

Likewise, the Head of Mission-designate may not enter into contact with other Ministers or Secretaries of State, or with members of the Saeima (Parliament) or other elected representatives of the institutions, or with officials from other Ministries, and may not entertain in an official status until his or her Letters of Credence have been presented to the President of the Republic of Latvia, an act which marks the formal completion of his or her accreditation procedures.

In accordance with Article 13 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961), precedence among Ambassadors depends on the date of presentation of the Letters of Credence to the President.

2.2.3. Presentation of the Letters of Credence

2.2.3.1. Presentation of copies of the Letters of Credence and Recall

- Copies of the Letters of Credence and Recall of his or her predecessor are presented to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (only for resident Ambassadors) and State Secretary (for non-resident Ambassadors) if the programme of the accreditation visit envisages an official call on the Minister before the accreditation ceremony at the President of the Republic of Latvia. In other cases copies of the Letters are presented to the State Secretary or Head of the State Protocol.

- Once the Minister of Foreign Affairs (State Secretary or Head of the State Protocol) has received the copies of the Letters of Credence and Recall of his or her predecessor, the Ambassador-designate may contact the Ministry on a working basis.

- Were there any needs for contacts to be made or specific meetings to be held due to a force majeure situation, the new Ambassador should inform the Head of State Protocol.

- Similarly, the new Ambassador should refrain during this period from giving public interviews or making official declarations to the mass media.

2.2.3.2. Practical aspects for the preparation of the ceremony

The State Protocol is in charge of the organisation of the Ceremony of Presentation of the Letters of Credence. All practical aspects are arranged in close cooperation with the mission of the relevant country. The Embassy concerned will be supplied with all the necessary information, particularly detailing the ceremonial aspects of the ceremony of the presentation of the Letters of Credence.

When the date of the Ceremony has been determined, the Embassy is requested to forward the following information to the State Protocol:

- Time of the arrival and departure of the Ambassador, including the flight number
- Names of accompanying persons
- Working language to be used at the audiences

2.2.3.3. Courtesy call on the Head of the State Protocol

On the predetermined date (usually on the day of presentation of the Letters of Credence or the day
before) the Ambassador-designate pays a courtesy visit to the Head of State Protocol.

2.2.3.4. Ceremony of presentation of the Letters of Credence

**Dress code:** Dark Suit, Diplomatic or Military Uniform, National Dress.
**Venue:** Residence of the President of the Republic of Latvia – Blackheads House.
**Official languages:** Latvian and English

**Arrival at the Blackheads’ House**
On the day of the ceremony, at the time advised in the programme, after courtesy calls at the Ministry, the Ambassador leaves for the Blackheads House for the Ceremony of the presentation of the Letters of Credence. The Ambassador escorted by State Protocol, boards limousine and the motorcade proceeds to the Blackheads House. The Ambassador’s party should comprise the spouse of the Ambassador (if wished) and maximum three persons of the diplomatic staff of the Embassy, including the Defence Attaché.

The State Protocol will provide following vehicles to take the Ambassador and his or her suite to the Blackheads House:
- for Ambassadors residing in Riga: a limousine (VIP)
- for non-resident Ambassadors: a limousine (VIP) and a motor-car (VIP’s suit)

The President’s Protocol officer will greet the Ambassador and his or her party in the lobby of the Blackheads House where they will wait for the beginning of the Ceremony.

**Description of the Ceremony of the Presentation of the Letters of Credence**

Following the first fanfares, the Head of State Protocol will accompany the Ambassador and his or her suite up to the Grand Stairs to the Celebration Hall.

They will enter the Celebratory Hall and walk directly towards the centre of the hall. The Ambassador will make a light bow by head to the President of the Republic of Latvia. The accompanying party will follow the Ambassador and take their places behind him or her.

The Head of State Protocol will introduce the Ambassador to the President by saying in Latvian “Your Excellency, President of the Republic of Latvia, I have the honour to present to you the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to be accredited of the Republic of……(country)………….. H.E. ... (name, surname).......”.

As soon as this short presentation ends, the President will make a small sign to the Ambassador requesting him or her to introduce himself or herself to the President of the Republic of Latvia, saying : “Your Excellency, I have the honour to present ........ and to express my.....”.

The Ambassador will then approach the President and stop at a distance of two steps so that he or she will be able to hand over his or her Letters of Credence to the President of the Republic of Latvia. As the Ambassador approaches the President, the Ambassador’s party will move several steps as indicated by the relevant officers of the President’s Protocol division of State Protocol.

Then he or she will hand over the Letters of Credence together with the Letters of Recall of his or her predecessor to the President, who will reply accordingly. After the presentation of the Letters of Credence, an official photo will be taken of the President together with the Ambassador.

Following that, the Ambassador will request permission from the President to introduce his or her party with the words: “Your Excellency, may I present to you the member(s) of my staff?”
At the end of the Official Ceremony the President will invite the Ambassador to the Luebeck Hall for a brief conversation in the presence of the President’s Foreign Policy Adviser and a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ambassador’s spouse and one other representative of the diplomatic staff of the Embassy may be present.

The Ceremony is over after a short conversation and the Ambassador, together with the accompanying suite, are escorted by the Head of State Protocol to the front entrance of the Blackheads House, where the cars are waiting. The Ambassador boards the limousine and an officer of State Protocol will accompany him or her to the hotel, the place of residence or to a location where another meeting is to take place.

2.2.3.5. Gifts
According to the traditions of Latvian Protocol it is not customary for gifts to be presented (neither directly nor indirectly) to the President during the Ceremony of the Presentation of the Letters of Credence.

2.2.3.6. Duration of the accreditation visits of the Head of Mission
a) Resident Head of Mission
Accreditation visits of a resident Head of Mission include courtesy calls on the Speaker of the Parliament, Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and/or Secretary of State of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These visits are organised by the State Protocol and are included in the official programme.

Other appointments should be arranged by the Ambassador’s office.

b) Non-resident Head of Mission
The Programme may include courtesy calls on the Speaker of the Parliament, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 
_Courtesy calls to the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs are not practiced._

Other appointments should be arranged by the Ambassador’s office.

2.2.4. Departure of a resident Head of Mission
The mission shall inform the State Protocol of the date of termination of office of the Head of Mission in Latvia by means of a Verbal Note. A programme for the Ambassador’s farewell visits is agreed on this occasion. According to the Protocol, the Ambassador pays official farewell visits to the President of the Republic of Latvia, the Speaker of the Saeima and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and to the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Other farewell visits should be arranged by the Ambassador’s office.

An officer from the State Protocol will escort the Ambassador to Riga International Airport to bid farewell. The State Protocol will appreciate if departures would not take place on weekends and national holidays, or out of office hours.

_The expenses concerning the VIP Lounge service at Riga International Airport will be covered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (format 1+ family members)._

2.2.5. Departure of a non-resident Head of Mission
Missions shall inform the State Protocol of the date of termination of office of Heads of Mission in Latvia by a Verbal Note. In order to arrange the programme of the Ambassador’s farewell visit, the State Protocol would appreciate being informed about the arrival of the Ambassador in due time.

The following information shall be conveyed to the State Protocol:
- Time of the arrival and departure of the Ambassador, including the flight number.
Protocol Guide

Last update on 25 July 2014

- Names of the accompanying persons
- Hotel reservation (if needed)
- Working language to be used at the audiences

The respective Embassy will be supplied with the information setting out the details of the Ambassador’s programme in Riga.

On departure from Riga the Ambassador and his accompanying party will be escorted by an officer of the State Protocol to Riga International Airport. The State Protocol will appreciate if departures would not take place on weekends and national holidays, or out of office hours. However, on Ambassador-designate departure by car through the border of the Republic of Latvia escort will not be provided by an officer of the State Protocol.

*The expenses concerning the VIP Lounge Service at Riga International Airport, as well as transfers from/to the Airport or other place (Riga Passenger Terminal, Railway station) of the arrival/departure according to the visit programme, will be covered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (format 1+2).*

2.2.6. Appointment of Charges d’Affaires ad interim

In accordance with Article 19 of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, if the post of head of mission is vacant, or if the head of mission is unable to perform his duties, a Charge d’Affaires ad interim shall act provisionally as head of the mission. The name of the Charge d’Affaires ad interim shall be notified, either by the head of the mission in a letter bearing his or her signature or, in the case where he or she is unable to do so, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the sending state to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the receiving state.

In cases where no member of the diplomatic staff of the mission is present in the receiving state, a member of the administrative and technical staff may, with consent of the receiving state, be designated by the sending state to be in charge of the day-to-day administrative affairs of the mission. Such person will have the title of Charge d’Affaires.

Please note that a Charge d’Affaires ad interim may not appoint another Charge d’Affaires ad interim.

2.3. Appointment of Defence Attachés

Article 7 of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations makes provision, in the case of appointment of Defence, Naval, Army and Air Attaches to the staff of missions, for the receiving State to require that the names of all such appointees be submitted in advance for its approval. Missions should submit names and a brief biography to the State Protocol, Ministry of Foreign Affairs at least four weeks before the planned arrival date.

Military personnel may be appointed to the Republic of Latvia only after the sending state has secured the Latvian Government’s consent to the establishment of a defence office within the mission. The approval of the appointment will be communicated to the Mission by means of a Verbal Note.

2.3.1. Notification of arrival and departure

Defence, Naval, Army and Air Attaches who have been approved remain subject to the provisions of Section 2.1 Arrivals and Departures of Diplomatic Missions.
2.3.2. **Courtesy visit to the Minister of Defence**

On arrival the Defence Attache should pay his first courtesy visit to the Minister of Defence or, in the latter’s absence, to the State Secretary of the Ministry of Defence.

No special accreditation ceremony is envisaged.

2.3.3. **Other calls at the Ministry of Defence (hereafter - MoD) and its subordinated institutions**

The defence attache should feel free to pay whatever calls he wishes.

The list below is meant to be a recommendation for the setting up of courtesy visits at the Ministry of Defense and National Armed Forces:

- Deputy Secretary of State (Defence planning), (MoD)
- Director of the International Relations Department, (MoD)
- The Commander of National Armed Forces (NAF)
- The Chief of NAF Joint Headquarters
- The Commander of Land Forces (LF)
- The Commander of Naval Forces (NF)
- The Commander of Air Forces (AF)
- The Commander of National Guard (NG)

The Embassy shall request the Organisation Division at the Ministry of Defence to make appointments for the visits in advance.

2.3.4. **Identity cards**

Along with the diplomatic and consular corps, Defence Attaches are registered at the State Protocol of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and issued an identity card (See subsection 2.1.2 Identity cards-ID cards).

2.3. **The Consular Corps**

2.4.1. **Consular functions**

The establishment of a consular post in the Republic of Latvia requires the Latvian Government’s prior consent and its approval of the seat, classification and consular district, in accordance with Article 4 of the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Affairs. New post proposals should be addressed to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia. If the proposing country has a diplomatic mission in Latvia, the mission may initiate the request by a Verbal Note to the Ministry. A consular post headed by a career consular officer may also seek consent for a new consular post to be established in this way. If, however, the proposing country does not have diplomatic representation in Latvia, or is represented by honorary consular officers only, the request should come direct from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the sending state’s capital through the nearest, most convenient Latvian mission.

When a country proposes to establish a new consular post headed by a career consular officer, the request to establish a post should address the projected scope and volume of the workload of the new post.

Where a country maintains diplomatic representation in Latvia, members of the mission may perform whatever consular functions are required in accordance with Article 70 of the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Affairs and Article 3(2) of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic
Relations. Members of diplomatic missions (i.e. based in Riga) may perform such functions throughout Latvia, regardless of the existence of any consular post or it’s approved consular district.

2.4.2. Consular districts
The number of consular districts corresponds to the number of representations the relevant foreign state has been granted permission to open.

The consular district of the Embassy includes also consular districts of other consular representations.

Overlapping of consular districts is not allowed.

2.4.3. Classification of consular posts
Consular posts in Latvia are classified as Consulates-General and Consulates.

2.4.4. Career Heads of Consular Post - admission to functions
The Head of a Consular Post shall be provided by the sending state with a document, in the form of a commission or similar instrument, made out for each appointment, certifying his capacity and showing, as a general rule, his full name, his category and class, the consular district and the seat of the consular post. The sending state shall transmit the commission or similar instrument through the diplomatic or other appropriate channel to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as specified in the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Affairs, Article 11.

In due time the Latvian Government will issue an authorisation termed also an Exequatur admitting the head of a consular post to the exercise of his functions (Article 12). Pending delivering of the Exequatur the head of a consular post is admitted on a provisional basis to the exercise of their functions (Article 13). As soon as the Head of a Consular Post is admitted even provisionally to the exercise of his functions, the Latvian Government shall immediately notify the competent authorities of the consular district. It shall also ensure that the necessary measures are taken to enable the Head of a Consular Post to carry out the duties of his office and to have the benefit of the provisions of the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Affairs.

2.4.4.1. Notification of arrival and departure
Career consular officers who have been approved remain subject to the provisions of Section 2.1 - Arrivals and Departures of Members of Diplomatic Missions.

2.4.4.2. Courtesy visits at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
The Ministry advises that career Heads of the Consular posts should pay their courtesy visits to the State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or in his absence, the Undersecretary of State for Legal and Consular Issues, as well as to the Director of the Consular Department.

If a consular post is temporarily headed by the Deputy Head of the Consular post the latter should pay a courtesy visit to the Undersecretary of State for Legal and Consular Issues, or in his/her absence - to the Director of the Consular Department.

2.4.4.3. Immunity and inviolability

Immunity
Under the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, consular officers and consular employees enjoy immunity from jurisdiction in respect of acts performed in the exercise of their consular duties. Career officers also enjoy immunity from arrest or pre-trial detention, except in the case of a grave crime and pursuant to a decision given by the competent judicial authority. However, consular officers may also be arrested or subjected to restrictions on their personal freedom in execution of a final and irrevocable court judgment.
**Inviolability**

Under the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, the following are inviolable:

- the consular premises
- the consular archives
- the official correspondence of the post
- the consular courier
- consular officers, to a limited extent
- Consular officers who are nationals of or permanently resident in the receiving state only enjoy immunity from jurisdiction and personal inviolability in respect of official acts performed in the exercise of their duties.

Based on reciprocity, career consular officers are normally equated with the diplomatic staff of missions. In accordance with the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Affairs, a diplomatic mission may also exercise consular functions, in which case the status of the staff will continue to be governed by the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations

2.4.4.4. **Identity cards**

As with the diplomatic corps, career consular officers and their family members are registered at the State Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and are issued an identity card. (See subsection 2.1.2 Identity Cards (ID-cards).

2.4.5. **Consular Posts headed by Honorary Consuls**

Latvia’s practice related to the establishment of honorary consulates and the admission of honorary consuls is based on the provisions of the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Affairs.

2.4.5.1. **Establishment of Consular Posts headed by Honorary Consuls**

The Latvian practice related to the establishment of consulates headed by honorary consuls and the admission of honorary consuls is based on the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations.

The establishment of a consular post in Latvia requires prior consent of the Latvian Government and its approval of the seat, its classification and the consular district (Articles 4 and 68).

New post proposals should be addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. If the sending country has a diplomatic mission in Latvia, the mission may initiate the request with a Verbal Note to the Ministry. If the sending country does not have diplomatic representation in Latvia, the request to establish a consular post must come directly from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the sending state.

Any proposal to establish a consular post headed by an Honorary Consul should be supported by an explanation of the scope and the volume of consular services to be provided by the post.

2.4.5.2. **Appointment of Honorary Consuls**

The appointment of an Honorary Consul reflects a formal agreement between a sending government and a receiving government, as outlined in the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations.

A nominee for appointment as an Honorary Consul in the Republic of Latvia will normally be a Latvian citizen or permanent resident who has some substantial connection with the sending state. The nominee must be of sound character and should enjoy a good reputation in the local community. He or she should have the capacity to communicate and maintain good relations with the local authorities in the consular district. The Latvian Government, in consultation with the relevant State authorities, will consider the personal qualities of each nominee and may reject a nomination where it
has doubts about the nominee’s suitability. The nominee’s full curriculum vitae, current home and business address, telephone, fax and e-mail contact details should be provided with the nomination.

2.4.5.3. Admission to functions

Provided that the sending state’s proposal is acceptable, the MFA shall request the sending state to provide the Ministry a commission or similar instrument for the purpose of issuing an Exequatur.

Honorary Consuls will normally be given a commission by the sending government, outlining the consular functions they are empowered to perform. Before they exercise functions, however, Honorary Consuls must be formally accepted by the Latvian Government. Such confirmation is constituted by the Exequatur issued by Ministry of Foreign Affairs and conveyed to the post when the nomination is approved.

2.4.5.4. Accreditation

Honorary Consuls along with other members of the Consular Corps are formally recognised by the State Protocol. The State Protocol will provide Honorary Consuls with an ID card as evidence of the Honorary Consul’s status ((See sub-section 2.1.2 Identity Cards (ID cards). Identity cards are usually issued for a term of three years at a time. Honorary Consuls should ensure that ID cards remain valid. Please note that ID cards are not issued to the family members of Honorary Consuls.

2.4.5.5. Immunities and privileges

The 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (Chapter III) lays down provisions on the facilities, privileges and immunities applying to honorary consuls and consular posts headed by them.

In accordance with the provisions of the Vienna Convention, Honorary Consul’s privileges and immunities are limited.

Honorary consuls in Latvia enjoy immunity from jurisdiction in respect of official acts and from giving testimony concerning matters connected with the exercise of those official functions. It is important to note that honorary consuls are not immune from arrest or detention.

A consulate headed by an honorary consul enjoys exemption from customs duties only on the following articles, provided that they are for the official use of the consulate: coats-of-arms, flags, signboards, seals and stamps, books, official printed matter, office furniture, office equipment and similar articles supplied by or at the insistence of the sending state.

The purpose of the privileges mentioned above is obviously not to benefit individuals but to ensure the efficient performance of the functions of missions and consular posts.

In Latvia, consular posts headed by honorary consuls are not allowed to designate diplomatic or consular couriers, or to use diplomatic or consular bags.
2.4.5.6. Flags
Consular posts headed by honorary consuls may display the national flag and coat of arms of the country they represent. This practice is useful in designating the consular premises for the purposes of both clients and the local authorities. Car pennants, however, should not be flown except on specific occasions when the vehicle is being used solely for official business of the sending state.

2.4.5.7. Motor vehicles
The official motor vehicle of the Honorary Consul is may be registered with a special CH number plate.
The procedure for the registration or cancellation is described in sub-section 7.4.-Registration and cancellation of Motor Vehicles.

2.5. International Organizations
Privileges and immunities are granted to the International Organizations in accordance with the bilateral treaties and agreements between Latvia and the respective International Organization. In conformity with the concluded bilateral treaties and agreements between Latvia and the respective International Organization, the International Organization is requested to notify the State Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as soon as possible of the appointment, arrival and final departure of its head, members, as well as members of their families and service staff (other than persons resident in Latvia and not entitled to privileges and immunities).

The International Organizations are requested to notify to the State Protocol about changes in personnel stating the actual function or position of the person concerned, and the name of the person being replaced.

2.6. Representations of International Organizations
Privileges and immunities are granted to the Representations of International Organizations in accordance with the bilateral treaties and agreements between Latvia and the respective International Organization.
In conformity with the concluded bilateral treaties and agreements between Latvia and the respective International Organization, the Representation of the latter is requested to notify the State Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as soon as possible of the appointment, arrival and final departure of its head, members, as well as members of their families and service staff (other than persons resident in Latvia and not entitled to privileges and immunities).

The Representations are requested to notify to the State Protocol about changes in personnel stating the actual function or position of the person concerned, and the name of the person being replaced.

2.6.1. Courtesy visits to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
The Ministry advises the heads of the International Organizations and Representations of the International Organizations to pay courtesy visits to the Secretary of State, or in his absence, the Under-Secretary of State (2nd Political Directorate) and the Director of the Department for International Organizations and Human Rights).

2.6.2 Identity cards
Along with the diplomatic and consular corps the members of the International Organizations and Representations of International organizations are registered at the State Protocol of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and issued an identity card. (See sub-section 2.1.2 Identity Cards (ID-cards)

In addition to the aforementioned, Representations shall submit lists of their staff to the State Protocol twice a year.
2.7. Status of foreign government agencies and personnel

The 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, Article I, foresees that "premises of the mission" are the buildings or parts of buildings and the land ancillary thereto, irrespective of ownership, used for the purposes of the mission including the residence of the Head of the Mission.

Offices which are not within mission’s premises and which do not fulfill a genuinely diplomatic function are not regarded as constituting parts of foreign embassies.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is not in a position to accept persons as members of missions who have functions other than those that fall within the officially accepted sphere of diplomacy.

2.7. Diplomatic List

The Diplomatic List will be updated every month and can be accessed on the Internet: http://www.am.gov.lv

The Heads of Missions are kindly requested to communicate to the State Protocol all changes related to their staff members (arrivals, departures, promotions, new addresses etc.) to be included in the next edition of the Diplomatic List.

Once a year the State Protocol circulates a note to the Heads of Missions kindly asking to provide the latest changes related to the staff members of their Mission.

3. DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY

The term ‘immunity’ in the broadest sense covers both inviolability and immunity from jurisdiction. Inviolability means that the Latvian Government may not take any such measures as the arrest and remand in custody of individuals, forced access to and seizure of buildings, and seizure of goods. Immunity from jurisdiction means that Latvian courts are not competent to hear disputes where the defendant enjoys immunity from criminal or civil jurisdiction.

At the same time, Diplomatic missions and consular posts, their staff and their families must respect the law of the Republic of Latvia. Article 41, section 1 of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, reads:

“Without prejudice to their privileges and immunities, it is the duty of all persons enjoying such privileges and immunities to respect the laws and regulations of the receiving State. They also have a duty not to interfere in the internal affairs of that State”.

A diplomatic agent, and his family members who are part of his or her household, enjoy immunity from Latvian jurisdiction as specified in the Vienna Convention. So do the administrative and technical staff, and their family members. However, if family members are engaged in profitable activities in Latvia they do not enjoy immunity in connection with such activities.

3.1. Persons enjoying diplomatic immunity

Under the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the following persons enjoy partial degree of immunity:

– diplomatic agents and members of their families forming part of their households
– members of the administrative and technical staff and members of their families forming part of their households
– members of the service staff in respect of acts performed in the course of their duties

Persons enjoying diplomatic immunity cannot be arrested or withheld by the police and cannot be fined or punished otherwise (1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, Article 31). Only
the sending state can waive a person’s diplomatic immunity.

If a person enjoying diplomatic immunity commits an offence, the police will forward its report to the State Protocol at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In serious matters, or in case of repeated offences, the State Protocol will notify the Mission involved

3.2. Immunity from civil jurisdiction

A diplomatic mission, consular post, diplomatic agent, consular officer or member of administrative or technical staff may receive a summons in a civil case. If a privileged person is summoned to appear in a Latvian court of law, he should not await developments but should engage an attorney immediately. The Ministry will be willing, upon request, to give informal advice to diplomatic missions on how to deal with these matters.

3.3. Immunity from criminal jurisdiction

Members of diplomatic missions, and members of their families who form part of their households, enjoy immunity from criminal jurisdiction. If there are suspicions that an offence has been committed by a privileged person, the relevant legal institutions will request the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to establish whether the suspect enjoys such immunity. In the case of serious criminal offences, the Ministry will request Sending State to lift a privileged person’s diplomatic immunity. The Ministry may also issue a warning message via the Head of the Diplomatic Mission. In more serious cases the person concerned will be declared a persona non grata and asked to leave the country.

3.4. Traffic offences

If a person who enjoys diplomatic or consular privileges commits a traffic offence, he or she is liable to be fined like all ‘ordinary’ citizens. Although privileged persons enjoy immunities which preclude prosecution under administrative or criminal law, the host country is confident that the privileged person respects its law and thus will agree to pay the imposed fines in the event of a violation.

If members of diplomatic missions come into contact with the Police Authorities (either when an official report is being drawn-up on an offence or on any other occasion) they should immediately inform the Police Authorities of their privileged status by presenting their ID card, so that the Police Authorities can treat them with the respect to which they are entitled by virtue of their position. It should be noted that showing the identity card does not relieve the bearer of the obligation to show other documents (e.g. driving licenses, vehicle registration documents) upon request.

3.5. Driving under the influence of alcohol and police powers

The Ministry would like to refer to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic relations (1961) and remind that without prejudice to their privileges and immunities, it is the duty of all persons enjoying such privileges and immunities to respect the laws and regulations of the receiving State.

Thus, if the Police Authorities have reasonable grounds to assume that a privileged person is driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs or certain medicines, they may take preventive measures to ensure that the driver does not endanger himself or others. In the interests of public order the Police Authorities have the right to take action against the violator to eliminate his or her further participation in the road traffic, using measures that do not contradict the Vienna Conventions. The Police Authorities have the right to flag down a privileged person and ask to identify himself or herself. The privileged person must show to the Police Authorities his or her diplomatic identity card and, if asked to do so, hand it over for verification. The Police Authorities do not, however, have the power to confiscate identity cards. They must return the card to the privileged person once they have checked his or her identity.

The Police Authorities may also use testing equipment such as breathalysers. The breathalyser test shows whether a driver has exceeded the statutory limit. This is currently a blood alcohol level of 0.5 per mille % per litre of exhaled air (for drivers with less than two years of Drives Licence and all
drivers with D1, D, D1E, DE, TRAM, TROL Licence - 0.2 per mille % per liter of exhaled air). Privileged persons are requested to cooperate with these tests as the tests provide a simple way of determining whether a driver is in fact driving under the influence of alcohol. At the same time they cannot be compelled to do so. In controversial situations the privileged person may request the presence of an Embassy representative.

The Ministry highly appreciates Embassies and diplomats who demonstrate a responsible attitude and respect for the laws and regulations of the receiving state, setting a positive example of diplomats as persons of high ethical standards and culture. At the same time, the Ministry and the respective authorities would like to request them to assess the given situation self-critically, and to cooperate with Latvian law enforcement institutions.

3.6. Arrest and tests

A privileged person who enjoys immunity from criminal jurisdiction may not be arrested or compelled by the police to take a breath, blood or urine test at a police station. Here too, however, the Ministry would request privileged persons to cooperate.

3.7. Criminal proceedings and other measures

If the Police Authority shall discover that a privileged person has been driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medicines, the Police Authority will draw up an official report and will notify the State Protocol at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which will in turn inform the Head of the Embassy or Consulate concerned.

If a privileged person has caused serious injury to a third party while under the influence of alcohol, drugs or certain medicines, the sending state may be requested to recall the person concerned. In addition, in cases where a privileged person has not caused serious injury, but has twice been stopped while driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the sending state will be immediately requested to recall him or her.

If necessary, Latvian authorities may request the sending state to waive the immunity of a privileged person, so that criminal proceedings can be instituted and any sentence passed can be enforced. Failing such cooperation, the sending state may be requested to recall the person concerned.

In case of serious violations of law, the involved privileged person may be declared a persona non grata (Article 9, Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961).

4. SECURITY

4.1. Protection of personnel and premises

The Government of the Republic of Latvia very seriously follows its obligations under the Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic and Consular Relations for the protection of Diplomatic and Consular Missions and their staff. It takes all appropriate steps to protect the premises of Diplomatic Missions and Consular posts against any intrusion or damages to prevent acts of aggression towards missions and consular posts or impairment of their dignity.

The security of the Ambassadors and Embassies, Consulates - general and Consulates is the primary responsibility of the Government of the Republic of Latvia. The primary operational responsibility of law enforcement and public order rests to the State police.

The protection of Diplomatic and Consular missions is provided on the basis of threat assessment.

In the event of threats or risks to the safety of Diplomatic and Consular Missions or to its personnel, Diplomatic Mission or Consulate should at first contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the State Protocol which in turn immediately will contact the relevant authorities to take appropriate measures.
Customary Diplomatic Missions and Consular Posts should take all necessary measures to protect their premises, offices and residential accommodation. Adequate insurance against fire and burglary should be obtained.

If a diplomatic person wishes to report an offence directed against a mission and consular post, or any other matter concerning security which does not require immediate action of the State Police, a report should be sent to the State Protocol.

4.2. Emergency situations
If police assistance is required, the following procedures are advised:
In the event of an emergency (including accidents) diplomatic missions and consular posts can always call:

- MFA 24-hour hot line tel.: +371 6701 6201
- National Fire fighting and Rescue Service : 112
- State Police, 24-hours Hotline: (+371) 67075017 or (+371) 67075310
- Embassies and Special Objects Protection Unit, 24-hours Hotline: (+371) 67219931 or (+371) 29706363

In emergency situations, such as fire, missions should call the emergency number of the State Fire fighting and Rescue Service 112.

4.3. Demonstrations
The freedom to hold demonstrations is a constitutional right of the Republic of Latvia. Latvia has defined very clearly both the limits within which this right may be exercised and the limits within which the competent authorities may impose restrictions on demonstrations. The municipal authorities notify the State Protocol about a demonstration in advance. Further the State Protocol informs the Embassy and the competent authorities and requested their assistance in providing necessary security measures.

The competent authorities such as the State Police ensure that demonstrations proceeds in an orderly manner. Impeding of the normal course of Embassies and Consular post activities is prohibited. The City Municipality is empowered to issue directives for demonstrators to follow, and give orders to terminate a demonstration if these directives are not complied with. The aim is to comply with the obligation laid on the receiving state by the Vienna Conventions of diplomatic and Consular Relations to take all appropriate steps to protect the premises of diplomatic missions and consular posts against any intrusion or damage and to prevent any disturbance of the missions or posts or impairment of their dignity.

4.4. Elections
The Diplomatic Missions must preliminary inform the State Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the date of upcoming elections, planned Polling Stations and required security measures to be provided.
5. FIREARMS

5.1. Import of firearms for security service personnel accompanying high-level foreign visitors

In coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and receiving permission from the State Police, in compliance with the legislation of the Republic of Latvia, Security Service personnel accompanying high-level officials of foreign states or international organizations may carry B category semi-automatic repeat action or single shot - short barreled firearms in the Republic of Latvia while performing their duties.

During visits of high-level officials of foreign states or international organizations, the State Police Authorities may permit foreign security personnel to import into the Republic of Latvia and carry automatic firearms and ammunition. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs shall advise the diplomatic representation of the state concerned or the relevant international organization of the need for such firearms permit.

Personnel of foreign armed forces may carry and use firearms during their stay in the Republic of Latvia for the performance of their duties only.

The State Police Authorities shall issue a firearm permit to import and export a weapon after receiving a request from State Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a copy of the note of the Diplomatic or Consular representation of the relevant state for the period of time indicated in the request.

State Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs shall submit the request to the State Police not later than one working day prior to the anticipated import of the firearm or pneumatic stun gun and ammunition into the Republic of Latvia.

In order to receive a permit to import and carry arms, an Embassy shall submit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a Note containing the following information:

- Name and surname of the employee of the security service
- Passport number
- Dates of import and export of the relevant firearm
- State/states from where and to which the firearm is imported and exported
- Type of transport used to enter and leave the Republic of Latvia
- Type of firearm, calibre, registration number, number of cartridges

5.2. Import of weapons by staff members of foreign diplomatic and consular representations

Pursuant to the legislation of the Republic of Latvia, members of staff of foreign Diplomatic and Consular representations in the Republic of Latvia may, after coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and receiving a permit from the State Police, purchase, keep or carry and use in the performance of their duties, B category semi-automatic repeat action or single shot short barreled firearms with caliber not exceeding 9mm. In order to acquire and possess a firearm or firearm component, the applicant must contain a justifiable purpose for its use. A license must be acquired in advance of the import of the firearm into Latvia.

Staff members of foreign Diplomatic and Consular representations with valid State Police’s issued permit for import, export or transit of a firearm, through the border may transport their B category short barreled firearm in its holster, without cartridges in the magazine.
In order to receive an import or export permit for a firearm, an Embassy shall submit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a note containing the following information:

- Name and surname of the importer
- Passport number
- Date of import
- Type, calibre, registration number of the firearm and number of cartridges

The imported firearms shall be registered with the State Police within five days.

Prior to the registration a mandatory test shot should be carried out at the Forensic Department (Bruņinieku iela 72B, Riga, LV 1009, tel.: +371 6720 8754), as provided by the legislation of the Republic of Latvia. The Diplomatic Mission may request the issue of a firearm carrying license only after a test shot has been carried out.

In order to receive the firearm caring and storage license, the Mission shall submit an application to the State Protocol with the following information:

- Name and surname of the carrier
- Number of diplomatic or service passport
- Required term of the permit (up to 5 years)
- Type, caliber, registration number of the firearm and number of cartridges
- Confirmation from the Forensic Department that the test shot has been completed

In addition, the firearm’s owner’s photo (3 x 4 cm) should be attached to the application.

If, due to unforeseen circumstances, the activities necessary for registration of the firearm cannot be carried out within the prescribed five days, the weapon shall be handed over to the State Police until the registration of the weapon is completed.

5.2. Hunting

Foreigners have the right to hunt in Latvia after receiving Hunting Permit of the Republic of Latvia. In compliance with the Law on Hunting, persons residing abroad can obtain a Hunting License without passing a test in Latvia, if they have a valid Hunting License issued in their country of residence. This regulation has also been extended to diplomats and to members of the administrative and technical staff of Embassies, provided they are not citizens or permanent residents of Latvia. Hunting Licenses of the Republic of Latvia are issued by the State Forestry Service Central Office.

Applications for Hunting Licenses should be sent to:

State Forestry Service

Valsts mežu dienests
Address: 13. janvāra iela 15, Riga, LV 1932
Tel. +371 6721 2776, Fax. +371 6721 1176
Further information can be obtained at: www.vmd.gov.lv

To receive the Hunting License, the following documentation must be provided:

- copy of passport
- copy of hunting licence
- copy of registration certificate for firearm
The Hunting license fee:
- 1-day Hunting license – 14.23 EUR
- 10-day Hunting license – 35.57 EUR
- Seasonal Hunting license (March 21 until March 20 the following year) - 99.60 EUR

The carrying of a rifle for hunting purposes is permitted only after a certificate has been issued allowing the concerned person to possess such a weapon.

Applications for hunting rifles must specify the category, make, serial number and caliber of the firearm. The applications must be endorsed by the Head of Mission and sent to:

2nd unit (System of licenses and permissions) of Prevention Bureau of the Central Public Order Police Department of the State Police

Valsts policijas kārtības policijas pārvaldes Prevencijas biroja 2
Nodaļa (Licenzēšanas un atļauju sistēma)
Address: Stabu iela 89, Riga, LV 1009
Tel: +371 67208188
E-mail: lasn@vp.gov.lv

Legislation:
1. Law On the Handling of Weapons and Special Means, 27 December 2011
   On 13 June 2013, amendments were made to the law On the Handling of Weapons and Special Means. The said amendments would come into effect on 1 October 2013. Please note paragraph 19 of the Amendments concerning Section 40, paragraph 3 of the Law that has been amended by removing the word “official”. As a result, the new wording of the paragraph reads as follows:
   “(3) During the visits of officials of the foreign diplomatic and consular representations, high foreign officials or officials of international organizations, after co-ordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and receipt of an authorization of the State Police, the officials and the employees of the security service thereof are permitted to carry Category B semiautomatic, non-automatic or single-shot short firearms in Latvia during and at the place of performance of their service duties in accordance with the laws of the relevant country and to utilize and use them in accordance with Section 30 and 31 of this law”

2. Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 113, 26 February 2013
   Hunting Regulations

3. Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 109, 2 March 2004
   Regulations regarding State Fees for Issuance of a Hunter’s Certificate, a Hunter’s Seasonal Card and Hunting Permit, for Issuance of a Permit for a Foreign Hunter to Hunt in the Territory of Latvia and for Issuance of a Permit to Export Hunting Trophies from Latvia, as well as Procedures for the Export of Hunting Trophies
6. RADIO TRANSMITTERS

Pursuant to Article 27 of the VCDR, a foreign mission may install and use a wireless transmitter only with the consent of the receiving state.

The management of the radio frequency spectrum in accordance with the *Electronic Communications Law of the Republic of Latvia* is ensured by the State joint stock company “Elektroniskie sakari” [Electronic Communications].

Radio frequency assignment use permits are granted in accordance with the Cabinet Regulation No 453 of 6 June 2006 “Regulations on radio frequency assignment use permits”.

A prerequisite for being granted an installation and use permit is the compliance of the use of radio equipment with the Cabinet Regulation No 1151 of 6 October 2009 “Regulations on the allocation of radio frequency spectrum bands for radio communication types and the allotment thereof to radio communication systems, and on general conditions for the use of radio frequency spectrum bands (The National Radio Frequency Plan)”.

The compliance of the use of radio equipment with the said regulations is not binding during the visits of high-level officials from abroad, the time of which is coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the State joint stock company “Elektroniskie sakari”.

The request supported by an application must be presented through the State Protocol, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The application should indicate the technical parameters describing the radio equipment:

- The desired frequency
- The system of radio contacts to be used
- Information on the location where the radio equipment and antenna will be installed
- Radiation class
- Signal intensity

Information to be attached to the installation permit application has been specified in Annex I to the Cabinet Regulation No 453 of 6 June 2006 “Regulations on radio frequency assignment use permits”.

Application forms may be obtained from:
Electronic Communications Office

Valsts akciju sabiedrība „Elektroniskie sakari”
Address: Elizabetes iela 45/47, Riga, LV-1010
Tel: +371 6733 3034; +371 2632 0800; +371 2640 6612
Fax: +371 6782 1275,
Email: vases@vases.lv
Link to homepage: http://www.vases.lv

The respective application forms are also available on the website of the State joint stock company “Elektroniskie sakari” at:
http://www.vases.lv/lv/darbibas_virzieni/radioraidoso_iekartu_registracija/pieteikumu_veidlapas/

Consent will be given by the Electronic Communications Office after assessing the electromagnetic compatibility of the radio equipment indicated in the application.

If the Security Officials accompanying high-level visitors wish to bring along communication equipment, the frequencies and capacity of radio equipment must be notified in advance to the

- Number and type of transmitters
- Desired and reserve frequency
The period of time for which the permit is needed

In the event the radio equipment causes harmful radio interference, the ECO may change the permitted technical parameters and other conditions for use, including cancellation of the permit.

The request supported by an application must be presented through the State Protocol, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The application should indicate the technical parameters describing the radio equipment:

- The desired frequency
- The system of radio contacts to be used
- Information on the location where the radio equipment and antenna will be installed
- Radiation class
- Signal intensity

7. MOTOR VEHICLES

A member of the Diplomatic Mission and also his or her spouse or partner who is not a Latvian citizen or a permanent resident of Latvia are entitled to register one motor vehicle and one motorbike each for their personal use with Latvian diplomatic number plates.

There are no restrictions with the respect to the number of trailers which can be registered with Latvian diplomatic number plates.

7.1. Tax exemption

Customs duty exemption for motor vehicles imported in Latvia by Missions accredited and residing in Latvia, diplomatic agents and career consular officers, administrative-technical staff who are not nationals of Latvia or permanently resident in Latvia and their spouses, members of international organizations, representations of international organizations and their family members enjoying diplomatic privileges and immunities under international law, is granted under the provisions of the Council Regulation (EEC) No 918/83 of 28 March 1983 setting up a Community system of relief from customs duty. Article No 133 of the Regulation envisages the relief pursuant to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 18 April 1961 and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 24 April 1963, or by virtue of international agreements.

In compliance with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (Article 36.1 and 37.2), customs duty relief is applied to motor vehicles imported into Latvia from a third country for the official use of the Diplomatic Mission, as well as for the personal use of members of the Diplomatic Mission.

If an already exempted vehicle is sold to a non-privileged person, the Diplomatic Mission or the privileged person shall pay customs duty according to the actual tax rate on the day when the vehicle is sold. If the vehicle is sold to another privileged person, it may be sold free of taxes.

It should be noted that Latvian legislation does not foresee a time frame after which the customs duty should not be paid.

Reimbursement of VAT for motor vehicles purchased in Latvia follows the same procedure as for other goods and services, as stipulated by the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 908 Value added tax refunded under the procedure specified in the Clause 51.3 of the Regulation shall be repaid to the state budget, or this amount shall be deducted from the amount of refundable tax calculated in accordance with future applications, if the Diplomatic Mission or a representation in the Republic of Latvia, within three years following the date of purchase and registration of a vehicle in the Republic.
of Latvia, shall sell or otherwise transfer this vehicle to another person or institution not indicated in the sub-clause No 1.1 of the Regulation.

Clause 51 of the Regulation denotes that in the event a person associated with a representation in the Republic of Latvia leaves the territory of the Republic of Latvia, and who has been refunded value added tax paid on the purchase of a vehicle as provided in the Regulation, sells or otherwise transfers the vehicle to another person or institution not mentioned in Sub-clause 1.1 of this Regulation, within three years following the purchase and registration of the said vehicle in the Republic of Latvia, 1/36 of the refunded tax for each month remaining until the end of the period of three years is repayable to the state budget.

7.2. Insurance
Compulsory Motor Owners TPL Insurance (OCTA)
According to the legislation of the Republic of Latvia, Motor Owners Third Party Liability Insurance (OCTA) is compulsory. No exceptions are made for members of Diplomatic Missions.

The Insurance policy can be arranged via insurance agent or insurance company.

KASKO
In case of accident insurance indemnity depends on the risk coverage included in the insurance policy. In this respect the Ministry recommends KASKO, known also as “Comprehensive Insurance”, as it covers damages (e.g. collision, vandalism, theft, fire, glass breakage, etc.) regardless of the reasons and the person responsible.

Additional information concerning insurance of motor vehicles is provided by:
Motor Insurers’ Bureau of Latvia

Address: Lomonosova iela 9, Riga, LV-1019
Phone: +371 6711 4300
Fax: +371 6711 4333
E-mail: ltab@ltab.lv
Web page: http://www.ltab.lv

7.3. Driving license
Members of Missions (whether EU member states and not EU member states) must possess a valid national driving license. If the period of the driving license has expired, Latvian driving licenses may be obtained according to Latvian legislation.

Additional information may be obtained from the Road Traffic Safety Directorate, Riga City Division (CSSD Rīgas pilsētas nodaļa).

The address of the Riga City Division of the Road Traffic Safety Directorate:
Road Traffic Safety Directorate (CSDD), Riga City Division

Address: Bauskas iela 86, Riga, LV- 1006
Telephone: +371 6702 5777, +371 6702 5789
E-mail: riga@csdd.gov.lv
Link to homepage: http://www.csdd.lv
Working hours: Monday- Friday: 8:30- 19:00, Saturday: 8:30- 16:00

7.4. Registration and Cancellation of the Registration of Motor Vehicles
7.4.1. Registration
Motor vehicles of foreign missions, persons with diplomatic and administrative technical status are
registered at the Road Traffic Safety Directorate, Riga City Division (CSSD Rīgas pilsētas nodaļa).

The registration of motor vehicles is carried out in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 1080 “Regulations of the Registration of Motor vehicles” (30 November 2010).

Special number plates shall be issued for Motor Vehicles:
- CD - for vehicles of Diplomatic Missions, International Organizations, Representations of International Organizations, Representation of the European Commission to Latvia, as well as their diplomatic agents as registered at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia
- CC - for vehicles of consular offices and career consular officers
- C - for vehicles of the administrative technical staff

Persons with diplomatic and administrative technical status are entitled to one diplomatic car registration. In the case where they are accompanied by their spouses, they are also entitled to one diplomatic car and motorbike registration.

For the registration of a motor vehicle, a Mission should submit to the State Protocol a Verbal Note indicating the owner of the vehicle, the make and model of the vehicle, and the number of the chassis. An approved application will be forwarded to the CSDD Riga City Division.

It should be noted that the vehicle should be physically present at the registration for inspection. The registration fee is paid at the cash desk of the CSDD Riga City Division in accordance with the price list for the registration of motor vehicles.

If documents are submitted for the registration of a motor vehicle by the Diplomatic Mission or agents authorized person who is a Latvian citizen or a permanent resident, the latter has to present the following:
- A proxy confirmed by the Diplomatic Mission concerned
- Latvian national passport or a permanent resident’s passport or Latvian driving license

In the case where documents are submitted for registration by a diplomatic agent, the latter has to present his or her ID card as issued by the State Protocol.

Additional information concerning the registration is available at:
Road Traffic Safety Directorate (CSDD), Riga City Division

Address: Bauskas iela 86, Riga, LV 1006
Telephone: +371 6702 5777, + 371 6702 5789
E-mail: riga@csdd.gov.lv
Link to homepage: http://www.csdd.lv
Working hours: Monday- Friday: 8:30- 19:00, Saturday: 8:30- 16:00

7.4.2. Cancellation of the registration
If a vehicle with CD, CC or C registration plates is removed from Latvia permanently, sold, or to be destroyed, it should be taken off the National Register before this action has been undertaken.

Missions shall inform the State Protocol of the cancellation of the vehicle’s registration by a Note, indicating the following:
- the reason for cancellation of the registration (indicating whether the vehicle will be sold, exported or destroyed)
- owner/user of the vehicle
- make and model of the vehicle
- the number of the diplomatic registration plate to be removed from the National Register,
- in case of a sale, the status of the person the vehicle will be sold to, i.e. whether a person with
diplomatic status or without, should be indicated

For the cancellation of the vehicle’s registration, the Embassy should forward a Note to the State Protocol. On the basis of the Note the State Protocol will prepare a letter and forward it to the CSDD Riga City Division

Further, the diplomatic agent or the authorized member of the Diplomatic Mission shall present at the CSDD:

– the registration certificate;
– the diplomatic registration plates.

When the diplomatic agent accomplishes his or her mission in Latvia, the person concerned has to cancel the vehicle’s diplomatic registration and to request the CSDD to issue a transit registration certificate and transit license plates. Transit license plates are valid for up to 30 days.

Vehicle registration documents and diplomatic license plates are the property of the Latvian Government and should be returned to the Riga City CSDD once the vehicle is removed from the National Register. The Ministry would like to remind that failure to observe the correct procedure can cause delays in issuing the next vehicle registration certificate and diplomatic license plates to the Mission or a new member of the Mission.

7.4.3. Loss of diplomatic license plates

If the diplomatic license plates or one of them are lost, stolen or damaged, the Mission or a member of the Mission should notify the police about a fact and shall apply for the new ones. New diplomatic license plates, as well as new vehicle registration documents, will be issued.

It should be noted that the lost diplomatic license plates cannot be renewed.

7.4.4. Sale of the motor vehicle

A motor vehicle which is bought without paying customs duty and/or VAT may be sold without payment of such duty and/or VAT to a diplomatic agent enjoying exemption from customs duty and the taxes. If the vehicle is sold to a non-diplomatic person then customs duties and taxes shall be paid by the vendor.

Before selling the vehicle in Latvia, the vehicle’s diplomatic registration license plates shall be returned to the CSSD, to be replaced by Latvian license plates. In the case where the vehicle has been previously imported from abroad, a customs allowance for its purchase, as well as the original copies of the vehicle’s foreign registration documents should be also presented at the CSSD.

7.4.5. Annual Technical Inspection

According to the Road Traffic Law (4.11.97 cl. 16.7.) and also in the interests of road safety all vehicles have to undergo an Annual Technical Inspection. No exclusion is made for vehicles owned by foreign diplomatic missions and diplomatic agents in Latvia. The Technical Inspection of a vehicle is valid for one year, and must be repeated within that period. It is performed by the Road Traffic Safety Directorate (CSSD). If the technical condition of the vehicle complies with the essential requirements a technical inspection approval sticker will be issued.

It should be noted that diplomatic missions and diplomatic agents do not have to pay annual motor vehicle tax, but they have to pay the technical inspection fee.

Further information at: [http://www.csdd.lv/](http://www.csdd.lv/)
7.4.6. CSDD fidelity line
Committed to transparency and the provision of high quality services CSDD has introduced a new service: the fidelity line. When calling 67025757 you can leave a message concerning:
- unsatisfactory attitude or impolite treatment when providing the services
- improper behavior by employees of CSDD
- any unpleasant occurrence experienced at the office of CSDD. This information can be anonymous

7.5. Parking in Riga

7.5.1. Parking place for the vehicles of the Mission
Requests in the form of a Verbal Note concerning the Mission’s intention to create a parking place outside the Mission should be forwarded to the Director of Diplomatic Facilities Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which will inform the municipal authorities. The municipal authorities have full autonomy as regards their policy on reserved parking lots. For new embassies the Municipality of Riga reserves 2 parking lots on the public road outside the main office (the Chancery) of a Mission. These parking lots may be used only by vehicles belonging to the Mission and members of the Mission, and not by visitors.

Additional information is be provided by the Director of Diplomatic Facilities Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, tel+371 6701 6130.

7.5.2. Parking near the Ministry
Vehicles with CD, CC, C or CH number plates have the right to temporary parking in front of the central entrance of the Ministry.

7.5.3. Parking and Penalties for Parking Offences
Parking zones are indicated by special P-zone signs. Pay & Park ticket machines are in operation in many parts of Riga. For the convenience of drivers, several multi-stored parking places have been opened in Riga. In these locations payment for parking is compulsory.

Vehicles with diplomatic license number plates are subject to parking laws and regulations. No exemptions from charges for parking are possible, since the charges are levied by the City Municipality for specific services rendered. Members of the Missions are therefore requested to meet their obligations voluntarily, despite their privileged status.

7.6. Traffic regulations
Traffic Regulations are to be observed by any person who is driving a vehicle. No exception is made for persons having diplomatic immunities and privileges.

Detailed information may be obtained from:
Road Traffic Safety Directorate (CSDD), Riga City Division

Address: Bauskas iela 86, Riga, LV 1006
Telephone: +371 6702 5777, + 371 6702 5789
E-mail: riga@csdd.gov.lv
Link to homepage: http://www.csdd.lv
Working hours: Monday- Friday: 8:30- 19:00, Saturday: 8:30- 16:00
8. LOCAL STAFF

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia does not object of local recruitment of administrative technical staff or private servants if they are Latvian nationals or permanent residents in Latvia.

According to the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, locally engaged staff who are Latvian nationals or permanent residents shall not be entitled to privileges and immunities. The State Protocol does not issue ID cards to the aforementioned category either.

8.1. Social Insurance

According to Paragraph 3, Article 33 and Paragraph 2, Article 37 of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, diplomatic agents or consular employees who employ persons who are citizens of the country of residence or permanent residents shall observe the obligations which the social security provisions of the receiving State impose upon employers. In Latvia, a social security system has been established by the Law on State Social Insurance. The law does not foresee state mandatory social insurance of inland employees working at diplomatic or consular posts accredited to the Republic of Latvia, however the law provides that the person in question may join the State social insurance voluntarily, which qualifies that person for receiving of a State old-age pension in the amount depending on the performed contribution.

Further information available at:
The State Revenue Service

Valsts ieņēmumu dienests
Smilšu iela 1, Riga, LV-1978
tel. +371 6702 8761, +371 6702 8703;
tel/fax+371 6782 0273
Link to homepage: http://www.vid.gov.lv

8.2. Annual leave

Paid annual leave is considered part of the social security provisions in Latvia. Thus, Latvian citizens and permanent residents in Latvia employed by a foreign diplomatic mission are entitled to full annual leave, as stipulated in the Latvian Labour Code.

Link to homepage: http://www.legal.lv/doc/daraba/Atputas
9. EMPLOYMENT OF SPOUSES

Neither the Vienna Conventions nor Latvian laws contain any specific regulations prohibiting or limiting the employment of spouses or other family members of the members of the Diplomatic Missions. For work outside the Diplomatic Mission they are, however, bound by the general regulation relating to foreigners who wish to work in Latvia. When taking up work in another EU country a work permit is obligatory, with the exception of nationals of EU member states, as well as those of another State of the European Economic Area.

Latvia has also concluded bilateral agreements with several states concerning the paid occupation of family members of missions with a view to facilitating their employment in the receiving state.

According to the Vienna Conventions, spouses and dependent children do not enjoy immunity from civil and administrative jurisdiction in the case of actions relating to any professional or commercial activity exercised by them. Nor do they enjoy exemption from taxes or social dues on income from such activity.

Applications for work permits of the family members of the states with whom Latvia have bilateral agreement should be submitted to the State Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Applications for work permits of the family members of the states with whom Latvia have not bilateral agreement should be submitted to the Residence Permit Division of the Office of Migration and Citizenship Affairs (OCMA).

More information can be obtained at:
Office of Migration and Citizenship Affairs (OCMA)

Pilsonības un Migrācijas Lietu Pārvalde (PMLP)
Address: Čiekurkalna 1.līnija, building 3, Riga, LV 1026
OCMA for information tel.: +371 8000 7657
Preliminary signing-up tel.: +371 6782 9750
Fax: +371 6721 9654
E-mail: pmlp@pmlp.gov.lv
Link to the homepage: http://www.pmlp.gov.lv
10. EMPLOYMENT OF PRIVATE SERVANTS
The Mission shall submit to the State Protocol a Verbal Note indicating the employment of a private servant by a member of the Mission, a copy of the passport of the employee, a completed application form and 2 photos (see chapter 2.1.2. Identity cards (ID-cards) for obtainment of accreditation). The ID-card is issued for the period not longer than the term of posting of his or her employer in Latvia.

Family members of private servants are not accredited at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Their presence in the Latvian territory is regulated by the Immigration Law.

The relevant member of the Mission shall ensure that his or her private servant leaves Latvia after expiry of the work contract.
11. TAXES

According to the Vienna Conventions, diplomatic missions, career consular posts, international organizations as well as diplomats, career consular officers and members of administrative-technical staff, members of their families, as well as members of the international organizations are exempt from all national, regional and municipal taxes, personal or real. However, indirect taxes which are normally incorporated in the price of goods and services are not included in this general exemption from taxes.

Information about the Latvian tax system is available on the web site of the State Revenue Service of Tax administration Office of the Republic of Latvia- at www.vid.gov.lv. A publication entitled The Latvian Tax System is available on the website of the Ministry of Finance at: www.fm.gov.lv.

It should be also noted that reciprocity may be taken into account when exemptions from taxes and duties are granted.

11.1. Reimbursement of Value Added Tax (VAT) and Excise Tax

According to the 1961 Vienna Convention, Article 34, a diplomatic agent shall be exempt from all duties and taxes normally incorporated in the price of goods and services e.g. VAT. Based on reciprocity, reimbursement of VAT, which at present in Latvia amounts to 21 per cent of the retail price, is granted to missions and their diplomatic staff and their accompanying family members according to the provisions laid down in the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No 908 (18.12.2012.) „Procedures for the Application of Zero Rate of Value Added Tax to the Supply of Goods and Services Provided to Diplomatic and Consular Missions, International Organisations, European Union Institutions and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), and Procedures for the Reimbursement of Excise Duty for Excisable Goods Purchased in the Republic of Latvia” passed in accordance with the Law „On Value Added Tax”, Section 50, Paragraph eight and Section 20, Paragraph two, Clause 1 Sub-clause “b”, and the Law On Excise Duties, Paragraph four.

The reimbursement of VAT is thus done by courtesy and on reciprocal basis provided the goods are for use by:

a) diplomatic and consular missions in the Republic of Latvia, their diplomatic and consular agents, as well as to the family members of the persons referred for personal use. Staff members other than diplomatic agents are not entitled to the exemption. The administrative and technical staff of missions may import their removal goods exempt from VAT when they settle down in Latvia for the first time;

b) offices of international organizations, and their employees who in the territory of the Republic of Latvia enjoy diplomatic status.

11.1.1. Reimbursement of VAT for goods and services acquired for the official needs of the representation

VAT is reimbursed on:

1. Goods:
   1.1. land vehicles, equipment necessary for driving them, spare parts, lubricants and fuel;
   1.2. goods intended for interior design;
   1.3. music instruments;
   1.4. office equipment, components and accessories thereof, including spare parts;
   1.5. household appliances:
      1.5.1. electric appliances;
      1.5.2. audio equipment and video equipment;
      1.5.3. photographic equipment and accessories thereof;
      1.5.4. mobile phones and accessories thereof;
   1.6. office supplies;
   1.7. printed publications;
   1.8. for the following activities in the premises and territory representations and managers thereof:
1.8.1. construction materials necessary for construction and repairs;
1.8.2. inventory and goods necessary for the management (maintenance, improvement and cleaning);
1.9. supply of electricity, gas and thermal energy, water supply in the central water supply system;
1.10. fire safety equipment and inventory;
1.11. security systems for the protection of persons and property.

2. Services:
2.1. repair and maintenance of land vehicles;
2.2. transport services for carriage of the goods referred to in Paragraph 1 of this Annex;
2.3. mail and express mail services;
2.4. repair and maintenance of musical instruments;
2.5. repair and maintenance of office equipment and household appliances;
2.6. printing and mock-up services;
2.7. for the following activities in the premises and territory representations and managers thereof:
   2.7.1. designing, construction and repair;
   2.7.2. management (maintenance, improvement and cleaning) services;
2.8. rental services;
2.9. sewage and waste removal services;
2.10. services for interior designing, including making and mounting of interior objects;
2.11. repair and maintenance of fire safety equipment and inventory;
2.12. repair and maintenance of security and alarm systems;
2.13. services for ensuring the protection of persons and property;
2.14. electronic communications services;
2.15. radio and television broadcasting services.

11.1.2. Reimbursement of VAT for goods and services acquired for personal use of privileged persons
VAT is reimbursed on:
1. Goods:
   1.1. land vehicles, equipment necessary for driving them, spare parts, lubricants and fuel;
   1.2. goods intended for interior design;
   1.3. office equipment, components and accessories thereof, including spare parts;
   1.4. household appliances:
      1.4.1. electric appliances;
      1.4.2. audio equipment and video equipment;
      1.4.3. photographic equipment and accessories thereof;
      1.4.4. mobile phones and accessories thereof;
   1.5. security systems for the protection of persons and property.
2. Services:
   2.1. repair and maintenance of land vehicles;
   2.2. transport services for carriage of the goods referred to in Paragraph 1 of this Annex;
   2.3. services for interior designing, including making and mounting of interior objects;
   2.4. repair and maintenance of office equipment and household appliances;
   2.5. services for ensuring the protection of persons and property;
   2.6. electronic communications services;
   2.7. radio and television broadcasting services.
11.1.3. Restrictions

VAT and excise tax shall be refunded to the diplomatic representations in the Republic of Latvia, provided that the amount of transaction indicated in each tax invoice, including VAT, exceeds EURO 177.86.

This restriction shall not be applicable to charges for telecommunication services, rent/lease of premises, electricity, gas, heating supply, centralized water supply, sewerage services and waste collection and disposal services, security services, as well as fuel purchased for vehicles.

The excise tax on purchase of fuel shall be refunded for a maximum of 250 liters a month per each passenger car registered in the Republic of Latvia in the name of the respective diplomatic representation and the privileged person in the Republic of Latvia.

VAT and excise tax shall be refunded to privileged persons, provided that the amount of transaction indicated in each tax invoice, including VAT, exceeds EURO 49.80, but the restriction shall not be imposed on charges for telecommunication services and fuel purchased for vehicles. Reimbursement is granted only for purchases of new articles. No reimbursement is given for antiquities, works of art as well as second-hand items purchased in Latvia.

Goods that are subject to the value added tax or excise tax refund may not be used for commercial purposes.

Value added tax refunded under the procedure specified in the Regulation No 908 shall be paid into the state budget or this sum shall be deducted from the sum of the refundable tax calculated in accordance with the subsequent applications, if:

- a representation in the Republic of Latvia, within one year from the purchase date, sells or otherwise alienates for the benefit of another person or institution the goods (except for cars), the value of which (excluding the value added tax) exceeds EURO 1422.87 per unit
- a privileged person, within one year from the purchase date, sells or otherwise alienates for the benefit of another person or institution not mentioned in clause 1.1. of this Regulation the goods (except for cars), the value of which (VAT exclusive) exceeds EURO 711.44 per unit
- a representation in the Republic of Latvia, within three years following the date of purchase and registration of a car, sells or otherwise alienates this car for the benefit of another person or institution
- a privileged person leaving the Republic of Latvia sells or otherwise alienates for the benefit of another person or institution a car within three years following the purchase and registration of such car in the Republic of Latvia, 1/36 of the refunded tax for each month remaining until the end of the period of three years shall be paid into the state budget

Pursuant to the procedure for refund of VAT and excise tax, applicable to representations or privileged persons of the Republic of Latvia in the respective foreign country, the representations and privileged persons of this foreign country at the recommendation of the State Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs may be eligible to refund of VAT and excise tax without the above mentioned restrictions.

In order to enable the application of a special procedure for refund of VAT and excise tax, diplomatic missions or consular posts of the respective country shall submit to the State Protocol an application describing the procedure for refund of VAT or excise tax to representations or privileged persons of the Republic of Latvia in the respective country, enclosing with their application the suggestions on additional easements for the refund of the paid VAT or excise tax to be applied in Latvia.

The State Protocol shall review the application, and not later than within 30 days as of the date of
the receipt of the application shall make a decision on the special procedure for refund of VAT to the respective representation and privileged persons. The State Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs shall communicate the taken decision in writing to the applicant and the territorial institution of the State Revenue Service specifying the future procedure for refund of the value added tax or excise tax.

11.1.4. Application for VAT and Excise Tax reimbursement to goods and services acquired for the official needs of the representation and for personal use of resident diplomats

The application (and a copy of the application) for a refund of the value added tax and excise tax (Annex 1) together with the attached supporting documentation (originals) shall be submitted to the State Protocol on quarterly basis for reimbursement. Application forms are available at the State Protocol and on the Ministry’s homepage: http://www.mfa.gov.lv Value added tax and excise duty may be refunded for the following periods of time:

a. to representations in the Republic of Latvia:
   – once a quarter: for goods and services purchased during the relevant quarter
   – once a month, if the amount of refund due for value added tax on goods and services purchased during the relevant month is not less than EURO 2100.00

b. to persons associated with the relevant representations in the Republic of Latvia: once a quarter on goods services purchased during the relevant quarter

c. to institutions of the European Community in the Republic of Latvia: as required, but not less than once a year on goods and services purchased during the relevant period of time.

When claiming for a refund of the excise tax on fuel, the application should indicate also the passenger vehicles registered in the Republic of Latvia in the name of the relevant representation, privileged person or the European Community institution in the Republic of Latvia.

If the excise tax is imposed on goods as presented in the value added tax invoice, the refundable excise tax charge shall be calculated on the quantity of goods as specified in the value added tax invoice and on the basis of the applicable excise tax rate valid on the date of purchase. The value added tax invoice shall be treated as a supporting (source) document proving the purchase of excise goods.

Applications together with the supporting documents shall be submitted to the State Protocol. Within a period of 30 (thirty) working days the State Protocol shall verify whether the applicant is eligible to the refund of the VAT and excise tax, certify this by the signature and the official seal and forward the application together with the included supporting documents to the territorial institution of the State Revenue Service relevant to the legal address of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The applications, on the basis of which the VAT or excise tax has been refunded, as well as any supporting documents (originals) attached to the application, shall be kept on file with the respective territorial institution of the State Revenue Service. If the applicant for any reasons needs to receive back the original of a supporting document, he or she must submit the copy of the supporting document, certified pursuant to the procedure provided for in legislation.

Legislation:


2. Annex 1 to Cabinet Regulation No 908, dated by 18 December 2012 Submission for Reimbursement of Value Added Tax and Excise Duty to Diplomatic and Consular Missions
Registered in the Republic of Latvia, European Union Institutions and International Organisations.

3. Annex 3 to Cabinet Regulation No 908, dated by 18 December 2012 Goods and Services Intended for the Official Purposes of Diplomatic and Consular Missions Registered in the Republic of Latvia, International Organisations or Representations Thereof, for which Value Added Tax is Reimbursed from the State Budget.

11.1.5. Application for VAT and Excise Tax reimbursement to goods and services acquired for the personal needs of administrative-technical staff of missions

VAT and excise tax shall be refunded to the administrative technical staff of missions and consular posts of non-community states and EU Member States and family members of the said persons, once on the goods and services purchased over period of four months starting from the day when the State Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has received notification on arrival of the respective person in the Republic of Latvia.

Legislation:


3. Annex 4 to Cabinet Regulation No 908, dated by 18 December 2012 Goods and Services Intended for Personal Needs of Persons Related to Diplomatic and Consular Missions Registered in the Republic of Latvia, International Organisations or Representations Thereof, for which Value Added Tax is Reimbursed from the State Budget.

11.1.6. VAT exempt purchases in other EU countries

A mission, international organisation or a diplomatic agent accredited to Latvia may buy goods and/or services in another EU – country exempt from VAT and Excise duty using the exemption form ”VAT and excise duty exemption certificate (Directive 2006/112/EC)” (Annex II).

A buyer who requires VAT-exempt invoicing must complete the relevant EC forms and submit them to the State Protocol for confirmation.

The officially recognized languages in the Republic of Latvia for completing the Certificate application form shall be Latvian or English. It should be noted that the name of the applicant must be clearly marked on the form. The form must be signed and stamped. The State Protocol confirms the duty-free imports and returns 3 pages of the application to the mission.

The Certificate duly approved shall grant the privileged person the right to:
- purchase, free of excise duty, the excise goods indicated in the Certificate in another member state of the European Union;
- purchase, free of excise duty, the excise goods indicated in the Certificate from an excise goods warehouse within the territory of the Republic of Latvia;
- purchase, free of value added tax, the goods indicated in the Certificate and receive services in another member state of the European Union.

In accordance with the approved Certificate, a mission, international organization or institution of the European Community accredited to Latvia, which is building real estate in the territory of the Republic of Latvia for official use, has the right to purchase inland, for the construction of this real estate, goods indicated in the Certificate and receive services with 0 per cent value added tax rate applied (including supply of construction materials, project preparation and construction services).

In the event a mission, international organization or institution of the European Community accredited to Latvia builds real estate for official use, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs may grant the person the right to use the Certificate without approval for the period of execution of the real estate construction project.

In the event the privileged person purchases goods or receives services for official use, the State Protocol may grant the applicant the right to use the Certificate without approval for a period of time not exceeding 36 months. If a decision is made to grant the applicant the rights to use the Certificate without approval, the State Protocol will advise in writing the Applicant, indicating the period of time for which such rights are granted and the State Revenue Service, indicating the person who is granted the right to use the Certificate without approval, the period of time for which the right is granted and the date and number of the decision granting the right to use the Certificate without approval. In the event a decision is made not to grant the applicant the right to use the Certificate without approval, the State Protocol shall within fifteen working days advice the Applicant in writing, indicating the reasons for refusal.

**Legislation:**


**11.1.7. VAT reimbursement to non-resident diplomats**

VAT is not reimbursed to non-resident diplomats. If they are diplomats in another EU country they may, however, from their country of residence make use of the EU VAT exemption scheme described above.
11.2. Customs duties

Missions are exempt from customs duties on goods, including motor vehicles and alcoholic beverages, imported from the countries outside the European Union, for official use.

Diplomatic agents and career consular officers are exempt from customs duties on:

- household articles and luggage, as well as the luggage of members of their families forming part of his household;
- other goods, including motor vehicles and alcoholic beverages, imported for their own use, or for the personal use of members of their families forming part of his household.

Members of the administrative and technical staff of missions and their families’ members may import their personal removal goods exempt from customs duties in connection with their first assignment to Latvia, provided they are not Latvian nationals or permanently resident in Latvia. Such effects should arrive not later than four months after their arrival in Latvia.

International Organization, Representations of International Organizations and their personnel who are not Latvian citizens or permanent residents in Latvia may import and export goods for the official use of the representation and their personal use exempt from import and export taxes in concordance with bilateral treaties concluded between Latvia and the relevant international organization.

A consulate headed by an honorary consul enjoys exemption from customs duties only on the following articles, provided that they are for the official use of the consulate: coats-of-arms, flags, signboards, seals and stamps, books, official printed matter, office furniture, office equipment and similar articles supplied by or at the instance insistence of the sending state.

The purpose of the privileges mentioned above is obviously not to benefit individuals but to ensure the efficient performance of the functions of missions and consular posts.

Duty-free imports shall therefore not exceed the quantities necessary for the direct use by the missions, consular posts or the persons concerned.

The State Protocol wishes to remind that the members of the service staff, locally employed staff, honorary consuls (except the cases mentioned in sub-section 2.4.5.5) and foreign government agencies, such as tourist offices, cultural institutes and trade representations and their staff, do not enjoy exemption from customs duties under the Vienna Conventions or under Latvian law.

Goods that are exempt from customs duties are also exempt from value added tax and excise duty.

11.2.1. Procedure

Applications from missions for exemption from custom duties intended for their chanceries, or for the personal use of those members of their staff who enjoy such exemption, stamped and signed by the head of mission, must be submitted to the State Protocol for verification before being submitted to the customs authorities.

The application should specify the articles in question, i.e. nature of goods, quantity, value, country of purchase and supplier as well as information as to consignee (with regard to motor cars, information should include the chassis and engine numbers as well as the make and the year), as well as indicate through which Customs Control Point the goods will be imported.

If goods received exempt from customs duties are sold to a buyer not entitled to engage in duty free import of goods, the duties and taxes must be paid as required by the regulations in force at the time of the customs declaration.

Customs control points (CCP) in Riga
Muitas kontroles punkti (MKP) Rīgā

Administration:
The Riga regional office of the State Revenue Service
Address: Citadeles iela 1, Riga, LV 1010
Tel. +371 6704 7302
Tel/fax.: +371 6704 7301
Working hours: Monday- Fridays 8.30- 12.00 & 12.30- 17.00
E-mail: mp.rmkpd.lietvediba@vid.gov.lv
Link to homepage: http://www.vid.gov.lv

Lidostas MKP (Airport’s CCP)
Location: International Riga Airport
Tel: +371 6720 7108 Tel./fax: +371 6720 7043
Working hours: Monday-Sunday, 24 hours
Link to homepage: http://www.vid.gov.lv
12. MISCELLANEOUS

12.1. Export and Import Authorisation for Works of Art

Exportation and importation of Works of Art and antiques from and into Latvia is governed by the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 8 (7.01.2003). These Regulations prescribe the procedures by which works of art and antiques (hereinafter - cultural objects) are exported from Latvia and imported into Latvia, as well as procedures for the temporary exportation of cultural monuments.

In order to protect national cultural values and to prevent the exportation (including sending by post) of stolen or lost cultural objects and artifacts, the State Inspection for Heritage Protection (hereinafter - Inspection) at the Ministry of Culture is in charge of taking decisions in regards of export of cultural objects. The Inspection shall issue a permit of a specific form for the exportation of cultural objects (hereinafter — permit).

Procedure for the issue of a permit

In order to receive a permit, the owner shall submit a note together with a list of the cultural objects and a color photograph thereof in three copies (not older than 10 years), in which the photograph of the cultural object shall be easily visible and identifiable to the State Protocol. The minimum size of the photograph shall be 8 x 12 cm, the maximum size — 10 x 15 cm. The State Protocol will forward the submission to the Inspection.

If the photograph of the cultural object (for example, books, post cards) does not provide complete information regarding the relevant object, the Inspection has the right to request that, instead of a photograph, the applicant submits a detailed description of the cultural object to be exported.

If large cultural objects are intended for exportation, the Inspection has the right to conduct an examination of the cultural object at its location.

For the exportation of each cultural object a separate permit shall be issued. If it is intended to export several cultural objects, the Inspection shall determine whether one or several permits shall be issued.

If it is necessary that a cultural object be exported in order to exhibit it in a foreign state, or due to other reasons (for example, for restoration, expert-examination, a training program), the Inspection shall determine temporary exportation of the cultural object. The temporary exportation of a cultural object shall also include its re-importation into Latvia in full and within the specified time period.

The term of the validity of the permit shall not exceed 12 months after its issue. If the term of validity of the permit expires, but the permit has not been utilized, the applicant, within a time period of 15 days from the expiry of the term of validity of the permit, shall return the permit to the Inspection.

Importation of Cultural objects into Latvia

When a cultural object is imported into Latvia, the owner thereof shall complete a customs declaration. The customs authority shall certify it with a seal and signature.
If a person upon entering Latvia does not present to the Customs Authorities the cultural object for which temporary importation is provided for, it shall be considered that the person has purchased this cultural object in Latvia.

If after temporary exportation of a cultural object it is imported into Latvia, the owner shall register the relevant cultural object with the Inspection within a period of 15 days after importation.

When registering a cultural object at the Inspection, the owner shall confirm in writing that the imported cultural object is the same cultural object to which the temporary exportation permit was applied. In case of doubt, the Inspection has the right to request that the owner presents the re-imported cultural object.

**Legislation:**
Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 8, (07 01.2003)
*Exportation of Works of Art and Antiques from Latvia and Importation into Latvia*

Further information:
State Inspection for Heritage Protection

Valsts kultūras pieminekļu aizsardzības inspekcija  
Address: M. Pils iela 19, LV 1050, Riga  
Tel: + 371 6722 9272, fax: +371 6722 8808  
Link to homepage: http://www.mantojums.lv

12.2. **Diplomatic Clearance of Foreign Aircraft**
Regulation No 877 (21.09.2010) of the Cabinet of Ministers provides the procedure for granting permission to subjects of international public law to use Latvian airspace for the performance of public functions by flights of foreign aircrafts as understood by Article 3 of the December 7, 1944 Convention on International Civil Aviation.

These Regulations shall not apply to aircraft intended for military needs of member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization performing monitoring and defense. Foreign aircraft intended for military needs of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization performing battle tasks defending Latvian airspace shall be ensured priority in the use of airspace as opposed to civil aviation aircraft.

Flights of state aircraft of foreign states to, from, or over Latvian territory may only be undertaken with permission. The application for each flight shall be submitted through diplomatic channels to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs not later than 7 days prior to the anticipated entry of a foreign aircraft into Latvian airspace.

**Application for a flight permit shall indicate:**
- A flight permit request shall indicate:
  - the nationality of the aircraft, type, and the maximum takeoff weight (MTOW)
  - the air operator and its address
  - the flight number
  - the registration number and the radio call sign
  - the departure airfield, date, and time (expressed as coordinated universal time)
    - (hereinafter - time (UTC))
  - the place (point of entry), date, and time (UTC) of crossing the border of the Republic of Latvia
  - the air route in the territory of the Republic of Latvia
– the airfield, date, and time (UTC) of landing
– the flight number, where it is planned to continue the flight from the airfields of the Republic of Latvia airfields or to fly over the territory of the Republic of Latvia on a return flight (hereinafter - on a continued flight or a return flight)
– the radio call sign on a continued flight or a return flight
– the departure airfield, date and time (UTC) on a continued flight or a return flight
– the place (point of entry), date, and time (UTC) of crossing the border of the Republic of Latvia on a continued flight or a return flight
  o Latvia on a continued flight or a return flight
– the air route in the territory of the Republic of Latvia on a continued flight or a return flight
– the landing airfield, date and time (UTC) on a continued flight or a return flight;
– the flight assignment
– the communications, navigation, and access equipment of the aircraft
– the type of payment for air navigation services
– relevant information specified hereunder about the cargo carried by the aircraft:
  a confirmation that during the flight the aircraft is not carrying hazardous cargo, narcotic substances, psychotropic substances and precursors, and reconnaissance equipment
  a notification that the aircraft is carrying hazardous cargo, and documentation thereof
  a permit for the transport of radioactive substances (Class 7 of Dangerous Goods) issued by the Radiation Security centre of the State Environmental Authority
  a notification that the aircraft is carrying goods of strategic significance, and documentation thereof
– a confirmation that during the flight the aircraft is not carrying hazardous cargo, narcotic substances, psychotropic substances and precursors, and reconnaissance equipment
– a notification that the aircraft is carrying hazardous cargo, and documentation thereof
– a notification that the aircraft is carrying goods of strategic significance, and documentation thereof
– a confirmation that during the flight the aircraft is not carrying hazardous cargo, narcotic substances, psychotropic substances and precursors, and reconnaissance equipment

Application for arrival permit of foreign aircraft intended for military needs shall indicate, in addition to the afore-mentioned information:
– the aircraft captain’s name, surname and military rank
– the number and military ranks of the aircraft crew members
– the number of passengers, the name, surname and military rank of each passenger
– information on the cargo of the aircraft, confirmation of hazardous cargo (for example, chemical, biological, toxic, radioactive cargo) on board the foreign aircraft, confirmation of goods of strategic nature on the foreign aircraft and their documentation (export license issued by authorised institutions of the exporting country or export permit, or an equivalent document to these, and import licence or import certificate of the importing country, or end use confirmation), confirmation of reconnaissance equipment on the foreign aircraft (in the event there is such equipment on the foreign aircraft, confirmation that it will not be used while in Latvian airspace).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, after receiving the conclusions of the competent Latvian institutions, shall take a decision to issue a flight permit or to refuse it, and shall forward it to the subject of international public law by diplomatic means.

The Ministry should be notified by a Verbal Note or a message as soon as possible, if a flight for any reasons is cancelled

Legislation:
– Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 877 of September 21, 2010 “Procedure for granting permission to subjects of international public law to use the airspace of the Republic of Latvia for the flights of foreign aircraft intended for performing public functions in the meaning of Article 3 of the 7 December 1944 Convention on International Civil Aviation”
12.3. Diplomatic Clearance of Foreign Naval Vessels

In accordance with the Regulation No 759 and the amendments No 5 of the Cabinet of Ministers, all foreign naval vessels and any other ship demanding immunity as a naval vessel are subject to diplomatic clearance before visiting Latvian territorial waters. The request for diplomatic clearance should be forwarded via diplomatic channels not later than 30 days prior to the visit, unless other order is stipulated by special regulation or an international agreement.

Request for diplomatic clearance must specify the following information:

- Nationality and type of vessel
- Name of vessel and Pennant No
- International call sign
- Displacement (tons)
- Length, breadth (extreme), draught (max)
- Commanding officer’s or master’s -rank, -name
- Number of crew (a list of passengers has to be included as well)
- Last port of call
- Port of destination (UTC)
- Purpose of visit
- Estimated date of departure
- Next port of call
- Radio frequencies, transmission art and power
- Additional permits and information

If a head of state or a government official is staying on the naval vessel, the request for diplomatic clearance should be forwarded via diplomatic channels not later than 7 days prior the visit.

Foreign naval vessels staying in the internal waters and harbours of the Republic of Latvia are not levied harbor dues.

Payments are collected for the following:

- pilot services tugboats ice-breaker
- services needed (supplies, water, garbage) electricity
- telecommunications etc.

The request for a permit to enter the territorial waters of Latvia will be processed by the relevant Institutions of Latvia (Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development)) and in due course the answer will be relayed to the State Protocol.

If a situation arises which requires short notice diplomatic clearance, contact Officer on duty of the Naval Flotilla Maritime operation Centre of the Republic of Latvia, telephone: +371 634 04222 (24 hours).

Legislation:
Cabinet Regulation No 759 of 10 August 2010, “Procedures for the entry of foreign military ships into and departure from the territorial sea, inland waters and ports of the Republic of Latvia”
The Marine Environmental Board of the Ministry of the Environment Protection and Regional Development reminds to take into account International Convention on Environmental Defense of the Baltic Sea, the HELCOM recommendation and legislation of the Republic of Latvia.

Further information:

Naval Flotilla

Address: Roņu iela 2, LV 3400, Liepaja
Tel: + 371 63404 222
Fax: + 371 63404245
+ 371 63429065

12.4. Diplomatic Clearance of Foreign Scientific Research Ships

In order to receive a diplomatic clearance for work in Latvian territorial waters, the state institution or international scientific organization coordinating the research must submit the following notification of the proposed research cruise to the State Protocol, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at least 3 months prior to entry into Latvian territorial waters:

The request for a permit to enter territorial waters of Latvia will be processed by the relevant Institutions of Latvia (Ministry of Defense and Marine and Inland Waters Administration, State Environmental Service) and in due course the answer will be relayed to the State Protocol. The application for a diplomatic clearance for the entry of the proposed research cruise.

GENERAL Part A

1. Name of research ship
2. Dates of cruise
3. Operating authority
4. Particulars of the ship:
   - Name
   - Nationality
   - Overall length
   - Maximum draught
   - Gross tonnage
   - Propulsion
   - Call sign
5. Crew: name of master, number of crew
6. Scientific personnel
7. Geographical area in which ship will operate
8. Brief description of purpose of cruise
9. Dates and names of intended ports of call
10. Any special logistical requirements at ports of call

DETAIL Part B

1. Name of the research ship
2. Dates of cruise
3. Purpose of research and general operational methods
4. Attach chart showing (on an appropriate scale) the geographical area of intended work, positions of intended stations, tracks of survey lines, positions of moored/seabed equipment
5. Types of samples required, e.g.: geological / water / plankton / fish / radioactivity / isotope / .. and methods by which samples will be obtained
6. Details of moored equipment
7. Explosives
8. Details and references of:
   a) any relevant previous or future cruises;
   b) any previous published research data relating to the proposed cruise;

9. Names and addresses of scientists of the coastal state in whose waters the proposed cruise takes
place, with whom previous contact has been made.

10. State:
    a) Whether visits to the ship in port by scientists of the coastal state concerned will be
       acceptable (Yes/No);
    b) Whether it will be acceptable to carry on board an observer from the coastal state for any
       part of the cruise, and dates and ports of embarkation/disembarkation (Yes/No);
    c) When research data from intended cruise is likely to be made available to the coastal state,
       and if so, by what means.

B. The activities of scientific research vessels in Latvian territorial waters can be terminated, if the latter
do not observe the regulations of the Republic of Latvia.

Legislation:
Cabinet Regulation No 126 of 21 February 2012 “Procedures for issuing a special permit to a ship of
scientific research of a foreign state for the performance of scientific research works in the territorial
sea, continental shelf and the exclusive economic zone of the Republic of Latvia” (annex 1, annex 2).

Naval Flotilla

Address: Roņu iela 2, LV 3400, Liepaja
Tel: +371 63404 222
Fax: +371 63404245; +371 63429065

Marine and Inland Waters Administration

Address: Voleru iela 2, LV1007, Riga
Tel: +371 6746 9664
Fax: +371 6746 5888
Link to homepage: http://www.ivp.gov.lv
E-mail: jiup@iup.gov.lv
12.3. Riga International Airport

12.3.1. Aviation security requirements and restrictions
The passengers and baggage at Riga International Airport are subject to security checks before departing. Security activities can cause misunderstandings and inconvenience, however, it should be remembered that everybody is the same in the plane; therefore passengers should understand the importance of security measures. It should be reminded that flight operators may carry out luggage and body checks for justifiable reasons. As long as such precautions are considered necessary, members of Diplomatic Missions and their families will also be affected. Special rules apply to diplomatic bags (see section 12.5.5).

Heads of Missions and Consular posts presenting a Diplomatic Passport and an Identification Card issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia enjoy the right to meet a guest and to escort him or her in the Arrival and Departure areas. Such rights can be enjoyed only under the supervision of the Airport Representatives after receiving confirmation from the Security Department of the Riga International Airport, telephone: +371 6 7923 683

12.3.2. Parking and Driving in Airport Territory
CD cars may be parked short term at the CD parking lots near the Passenger Terminal. Driving of CD cars on the apron area is only permitted whilst attending official delegations, when Airport VIP facilities are used. Airport authorities do not issue vehicle passes for entering and driving in the airport's restricted areas.

Additional information concerning driving in airport territory may be provided by the Security Department of the Riga International Airport, telephone: +371 6 7923 683

12.3.3. VIP service centre

Customs and Immigration Clearances
VIP’s are subject to examination by Customs and Immigration. All passengers may be required to undergo such examinations, and must comply with arrangements as advised by VIP staff.

Departure/Arrival Assistance

Departure:
– meeting the VIP and seeing off persons at the Riga Airport VIP Centre;
– accommodation at the VIP lounge;
– registration of flight tickets and luggage;
– escort of the VIP to the aircraft using the VIP’s car or airport transport;
– escort of the seeing-off persons to the aircraft and back to the VIP lounge.

Arrival
– accommodation of the VIP greeting party at the VIP lounge;
– escort of persons meeting the VIP to the aircraft;
– meeting the VIP at the aircraft;
– customs clearances, immigration and other formalities;
– delivery of luggage to the VIP lounge.

Application for VIP facilities
Applications for VIP service should be made a minimum of 24 hours before the arrival/departure of the VIP at Riga International Airport.

Booking of VIP services
The following information is required when booking VIP services:
– the VIP’s name, last name, nationality and status, number of escorts
– name of the organization, address, telephone, fax, name of the contact person
– dates of arrival and departure, flight number
– point of origin/destination
– form of payment

Information concerning VIP service can be obtained from the Riga International Airport VIP Lounge, tel.: +371 6720 7132

Access to VIP lounge
VIP’s who have booked the VIP lounge for their departure are requested to arrive at the airport not later than one hour prior to the scheduled time of departure because of the time required for customs and security clearances, passport control, registration of flight tickets and luggage. Special attention shall be paid to transit flights. VIP’s arriving after this time run a risk of missing their flight.

Meeting and seeing off
The persons meeting or seeing off a VIP should arrive at the VIP lounge twenty minutes before the expected time of arrival and one hour before the expected time of departure. Should there be any changes concerning the expected time of the arrival of the aircraft, the VIP service agent will present all the necessary information to the customer. Usage of VIP lounge during night hours can be charged according to the VIP lounge price list
Telephone: +371 6720 7132; fax: +371 6720 7257

VIP service fee includes the following extra services:
– facilities of the conference hall
– newspapers
– TV
– telephone and fax
– refreshments: coffee, tea, juice, soft drinks and confectionery

The VIP service is available for Heads of Mission at discount rate.

12.3.4. Charter flights
For carrying out the technical servicing of aircraft, the following additional information should be presented to the airport Ground Handling Department:
– company carrying out the flight, its name, telephone, fax
– type of aircraft
– aircraft registration number/letter
– maximum take-off weight
– the anticipated load of the cargo
– any particular technical servicing necessary
– form of payment

Information concerning technical attendance for charter flights can be obtained from the Ground Handling Department, tel. +371 29233018, +371 29479533.

12.3.5. Diplomatic Consignments
Diplomatic courier consignments (the diplomatic bag) must be sealed and the diplomatic status of the consignment must be clearly visible. Diplomatic courier consignments may contain only documents and articles that are intended for official use of the mission. These consignments are not subject to safety control and customs clearance.

If the mission wishes to take a diplomatic bag straight to the aircraft or to collect one from the aircraft, it must apply for a temporary permit from the Security department of the Riga International Airport. The application for the permit must be submitted to the Security department of the Riga International Airport, which will issue a permit to the applicant who must present himself in person, showing the ID card issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. An airport security officer shall accompany the vehicle
to the aircraft.

Consignments other than the diplomatic bag are dealt with at the cargo terminal. The mission's authorized person shall pay the handling fee at the cargo terminal and then, whilst escorted by a member of the cargo area staff, proceed with their own vehicle to the aircraft in order to receive the shipment.

Diplomatic pouches shall not be opened or retained without the presence of a representative of the Mission. If there are serious grounds for presuming that the bag may contain articles other than those permitted, the customs authority has the right to request the foreign mission or an authorized representative to open the bag. The written consent of the Director of Latvian Customs is required before any diplomatic mail may be opened. Diplomatic Missions may authorize a third person to bring into Latvia a sealed bag or cargo belonging to the Diplomatic Mission or its staff members.

Special rules apply to the importation of firearms and ammunition (see chapter 5). Dispatch of weapons in a diplomatic bag is strongly forbidden in Latvia.

In order to facilitate identification and thus ensure correct treatment of courier mail, the Latvian authorities concerned have suggested that the airline company should always specify in its documentation that such mail is on board. Couriers must respect all regulations concerning access to airport restricted areas. Failure to do so will result in a cancelled pass and an administrative report to the State Protocol, as well as to the appropriate mission.

Further information: Security Department of the Riga International Airport, tel.: +371 6 7923 683

12.3. Health care

12.3.1. State Compulsory Health Insurance

**National Health Service** is a direct administrative institution subordinate to Ministry of Health, the main tasks of which are to implement State policy for availability of health care services, administrate the State budgetary funds prescribed for health care, implement State policy in the planning of health care services, ensure rational and the most effective use of State budget and implement the e-Health programme according to the policy decided by the State.

**State compulsory health insurance** is the basic level of medical assistance provided by the state, as laid out in Regulations No 1046 "Health Care Organization and Financing Procedure" issued by the Cabinet of Ministers on 19 December, 2006. It means that the state compulsorily insures its inhabitants to be entitled to basic health care services.

The level of medical assistance guaranteed by the State in accordance with the procedures prescribed by the Cabinet are to be provided to both citizens and non-citizens of Latvia, to EU persons who are employed or self-employed in Latvia and their family members, to refugees as well as to persons detained, arrested and sentenced with deprivation of liberty.

State compulsory health insurance resources, in accordance with the Regulations, are financed by resources from a state budget subsidy as outlined in the annual law "On the State Budget" for health care. The above stated resources guarantee the provision of health care services within fixed parameters.

12.3.2. Primary health care and hospitalization

Under state compulsory health insurance system, all persons in Latvia should have a family practitioner. A person not residing in Latvia may also visit a family practitioner.
If a person would like to visit a medical specialist, a referral from the family practitioner is needed.

To obtain information about an available family practitioner you are advised to call the information line 80001234 toll free.

No referrals are needed for the direct approach to the following specialists: psychiatrist, pulmonologist for tuberculosis treatment, venereologist, narcologist, endocrinologist for diabetes, or private specialists.

For hospitalization, with the exception of emergency health care, referral from a general practitioner or a medical specialist is required.

12.3.3. European Health Insurance Card

Anyone carrying a European Health Insurance Card is entitled to receive any required medical care whilst in an EU Member State, or in Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway. Treatment is provided subject to the legislation and regulations of the country where it is given. A non-resident person shall receive the same medical care to which a resident of that country would be entitled. The procedure for obtaining treatment and any additional payment charged is the same as that which applies to local residents. According to EC regulation 1408/71 citizens in other EU or EE A countries sent to Latvia as privileged persons may be entitled to full public health care, provided they are entitled to public health care in their home country.

12.3.4. Emergency health care

All foreigners have the right to urgent health care, which is defined as care for medical conditions arising unexpectedly in the country of stay and demanding immediate medical assistance. In the case of emergency treatment, a person can always go to emergency reception of a hospital or call an ambulance. The attending physician will decide if the patient needs inpatient treatment. Transportation by ambulance, in case of emergency, is free of charge.

For emergencies call telephone No 112 or 03

Further information about medical benefits in Latvia can be obtained from:

National Health Service

Nacionālais veselības dienests Address: Cēsu iela 31 (6.entrance), Rīga, LV - 1012 Tel: +371 67043700 Fax: +37167043701 Information line: 80001234 (Monday - Thursday from 8:30 until 17:00, Friday 8:30-16:00) Link to homepage: http://www.vmnvd.gov.lv/

12.3.5. Diplomatic Service Medical Centre

Address: Elizabetes iela 57, 4th floor, Rīga, LV-1050 Telephone at the Director’s office: +371 6728 9255 Telephone at the reception: +371 6722 9942 Fax: +371 6728 9413 E-mail: dsmc@navigators.lv Office hours: Monday - Friday, 8:00 - 20:00

The Centre offers consultations and medical services in following fields:

- Family medical care
- Gynecology
- Pediatrics
- Expert consultations
12.4. Schools
The following schools are recommended for children of members of diplomatic missions by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia:

**International School of Latvia**

Address: Meistaru iela 2, Piņķi, Babītes pag., Babītes novads LV-2107
Director Ms. Mary Russman
Tel: +371 6775 5146, +371 6775 5018
Fax: +371 6775 5009
E-mail: isloffice@isl.edu.lv
Link to the homepage: http://www.isl.edu.lv

The International School of Latvia is an independent coeducational day school which offers an educational program for children of all nationalities aged from 3 to 18 years. ISL was founded in 1994. The school year begins in August and finishes in June. The International School of Latvia is an International Baccalaureate World School. It is authorized to offer the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IBPYP) in grades Preschool to grade 5 and IB Middle Years Program (IBMYP) for grades 6 - 10. The school has been authorized to offer the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IBDP) since August 2004.

Instruction is in English. French and German are offered as foreign languages to students from grades 1 - 12 if they meet the English fluency requirement. English as a Second Language classes are offered to students whose native tongue is not English, and need additional English support.

*Instruction is provided in English*

**International School of Riga**

Address: Zvejnieku iela 12, Riga, LV-1048
Director Mr Lee Chalkly
E-mail: isr@isriga.lv
Tel: +371 6762 4622
Fax: +371 6762 4796
Link to homepage: http://www.isriga.lv/en/

International School of Riga was founded in 2001 and provides an internationally accredited education in English to children aged 2 - 16: pre-school education program for children aged 2 - 6 and elementary education for children of grade 1 - 9, which has combined the best research and practices from a range of national systems around the world to provide a comprehensive approach to teaching and learning.
The Riga campus serves Toddler through Grade 8 with the addition of Grade 9 in August 2013 and Grade 10 in August 2014.

*Instruction is provided in English.

**Jules Verne Riga French School**

Address: Rūpniecības iela 32,
Rīga Director: Mrs. Dominique Racle
School’s telephone: +371 29141791 (French, English, Latvian, Russian)
E-mail: administrateur@ecolejulesverne.lv
Link to homepage: http://www.ecolejulesverne.lv

Jules Verne Riga French School is the only school in Latvia, which operates within French education system (preschool and primary grades) and is recognized by both Latvian and French governments - this guarantees the high quality of the education provided to children from 2 years of age.

Our teachers are native speakers of French, professional teachers, selected for their expertise and experience. School has the support of the Embassy of France in Latvia.
The Jules Verne French School of Riga is managed by an association of parents of students APECEF (Association des Parents d’Éleves des Classes d’Enseignement en Français).

*Instruction is provided in French, at the same time, the teachers have excellent command of English*

12.5. **Pets.**

Requirements regarding the import and export of dogs, cats and other pets, if the number of animals does not exceed five, to Latvia have been introduced by the European Union.

The European Union requirements 998/2003 are defining the general rules of moving the animals within the European Union, though the member states can introduce their own rules regards to this question, that is why the travellers are advised to check the regulations of the individual states.

For further information please contact:

**Food and Veterinary Service**

Pārtikas un veterinārais dienests
Address: Peldu iela 30, Riga, LV-1050
Tel: +371 6709 5230
Fax: +371 6732 2727
E-mail: pvd@pvd.gov.lv
12.6. The Latvian Institute (under supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Address: Pils iela 21, Riga, LV 1050
Tel: +371 6750 3663
Fax: +371 6750 3669
E-mail: info@li.lv
Link to homepage: www.li.lv

The Latvian Institute offers background information, publications, e-presentations and videos about Latvia. It also offers in-depth information on all aspects of Latvian society, economy, culture and history.

12.7. International Women’s Club of Riga (IWCR)

Address: Elizabetes iela 281, Riga, Latvia, LV-1010
President: Ms Ina Forande
E-mail: web@www.iwcr.lv
Link to homepage: http://www.iwcr.lv

General information:
The idea of a club originated in 1992 when some expatriate women decided to start organising activities for international women in Riga. From this, in April 1995, the unregistered REIGAL (Riga Expatriate Interest Groups and Luncheons) was founded by a group of six dedicated women.

Finally in June 1995, the International Women's Club of Riga (IWCR) was born, by becoming an official NGO (Non-Government Organization) in Latvia. Its membership at the time was about 20 ladies. They united in an effort to make their life in Riga more rewarding and interesting. They voted in a Constitution and the very first Executive Board.

Today, the Club boasts a membership of 183 women from 38 countries! The Board consists of 12 elected officers: President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Newsletter Editor, Charity Chairperson, Hostess, Web Woman, Activities Chairperson, Tour and Social Director and a Membership Director. The Board meets once per month to discuss IWCR issues and events. Minutes are recorded and members kept informed at monthly luncheons and via the monthly newsletter.

The Club hosts monthly luncheons at carefully pre-selected restaurants and invites members to attend and bring a guest if they wish. The lunches are nice affairs with deliciously prepared and presented meals. They are well attended and members use the opportunity to interact, socialize and network with each other.

Once a month, the Club holds a Meet & Greet coffee which is yet another method of introducing new and existing members to each other, as well as to the Club’s functions and activities in particular and Riga in general. It is also an excellent opportunity to meet in smaller groups and engage in more convivial discussions.

Open to all Club members is the opportunity to participate in a varied range of activities sponsored by the club such as: architecture, ballroom dancing, cooking classes, bridge, a book group, Bible discussion, English conversation, golf, Spanish conversation, tennis, etc.

Membership fees are currently 35 EUR per year from May to April. Club membership entitles members to reduced lunch fees, a subscription to the newsletter, participation in club activity groups and discounts at some stores, companies, organizations and restaurants.
The working language of the Club is English; however with 38 countries represented, the languages likely to be heard at any given gathering are many and varied.

12.8. Latvia’s National holidays and Remembrance days

**National Holidays**

**January 1, New Year's Day.**
Ringing in the New Year, with the festivities usually starting on the evening of December 31 (see also New Year's Eve - December 31), it is one of the most thrilling annual events in Latvia. Usually people stay up until past midnight, and exactly at midnight they toast each other with champagne, wishing everyone a happy New Year.

**March-April, (in accordance with the Western Church calendar) Easter.**
In Latvia, Easter holidays usually last three days: Good Friday, Easter Sunday and Easter Monday. Latvians go to church but also observe Latvian festive traditions, which differ from the rituals introduced by the Christian Church. Easter is usually celebrated in the family or among close friends.

**May 1, Convocation of the Constituent Assembly of the Republic of Latvia; Labour Day.**
In contrast to most European countries, where this date is Labour Day only, in Latvia May 1 is of special national significance, too. On this date in 1920 the Constitutional Assembly, the first Parliament of the Republic of Latvia democratically elected by the whole nation, convened for its first session. Its task was to draft and pass the State Constitution.

**May 4, Restoration of Independence of the Republic of Latvia.**
On May 4, 1990 the Supreme Soviet of the Latvian SSR (the highest legislative institution in occupied Latvia) passed a Declaration on the Restoration of Independence of the Republic of Latvia envisaging a transitional period until full independence was regained.

**The 2nd Sunday in May, Mothers' Day.**
Mothers' Day is a comparatively new holiday in Latvia, officially recognized only from 1992, although it was marked as a family celebration already in the 1920s and 30s. The essence of this family occasion lies in the view that the mother represents the main pillar of a strong family.

**A Sunday in May or June (in accordance with the Western Church calendar), Whitsunday.**
Whitsunday in Latvia is mainly connected with Christian religious observances, but also includes earlier traditions from before Christianity.

**June 23-24, Līgo Day and Jāņi (John's Day).**
This is the biggest traditional Latvian festival, having a deep symbolic meaning for Latvians and known in other countries, too. The Līgo-Festival (Līgo-Eve) is on 23rd of June, with Jāņi on the following day - 24th of June. It coincides with the summer solstice, and the festivities include many ancient traditions: gathering wild flowers and cutting boughs, making wreaths of oak leaves and flowers, decorating houses and animals, burning a ceremonial bonfire and singing songs with the 'līgo' refrain. Ritual food includes Jāņi cheese with caraway seed and barley beer.

**November 18, Proclamation of the Republic of Latvia.**
On this day in 1918, in what is nowadays the National Theatre in Riga, the Republic of Latvia was proclaimed as an independent state. In a favorable situation in the wake of World War I, Latvian political groups realized their dream of establishing an independent state. The first period of existence of the Republic of Latvia lasted up to June 17, 1940, when Soviet forces occupied the country. More than 51 years passed before the independent Republic of Latvia was restored on August 21, 1991.

**December 24, 25, 26, Christmas.**
Christmas is traditionally one of Latvia's most important festivities. Among the Latvians this is a family celebration, when people attend church services. Essential Christmas traditions include decorating the
Christmas tree and gift-giving on Christmas Eve - December 24. The celebrations continue on Christmas Day and the day after.

December 31, New Year's Eve.

Commemoration Days

In autumn 1990, reactionary forces became increasingly more established in the government of the Soviet Union. It was in their interests to stop the Baltic peoples' move towards restoring independence, and in January 1991 the leaders of the USSR in Moscow took a decision to restore the old order in the Baltics. Latvians from all over the country rushed to Riga to build barricades and defend independent power structures. The 20th of January marked the culmination of violence by Soviet forces hostile to Latvian independence. Soviet Special Forces seized the Latvian Ministry of the Interior, a gun-battle ensued and several people were killed.

On this date in 1921 the Entente countries, the victors in World War I, recognized the independent Republic of Latvia. Thus the leading world powers of the time recognized independent Latvia as an equal subject under international law.

March 25, Commemoration Day of Victims of Communist Terror.
On this day in 1949, a total of 43 000 people were deported from Latvia to Siberia, mainly prosperous peasants who were regarded by the Soviet occupation regime as alien to communist ideology and the principles of collectivism.

May 8, The Crushing of Nazism and Commemoration Day of Victims of World War II.
For Latvia and the Latvians, World War II was a time of great suffering. Both Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union violated international law by mobilizing the population of Latvia into their armed forces. About 200 000 Latvian soldiers served in the forces of both occupying states, and about half of them (100 000) were killed in battle.

May 9, Europe Day.
Since the restoration of the independent Republic of Latvia, one of the main foreign policy tasks has been accession to the European Union. Accordingly, Latvia has adopted this day of remembrance, observed in the European Union in honor of Robert Schuman, who made an immense contribution to unifying the countries of Europe after World War II.

June 14, Commemoration Day of Victims of Communist Terror.
On June 14, 1941 the Soviet occupation regime deported to Siberia around 15 000 people from Latvia, regarding them as ideologically opposed to the Soviet communist system.

June 17, Occupation of the Republic of Latvia.
In accordance with a secret protocol of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of August 23, 1939, which apportioned Latvia to Moscow's sphere of influence, the country was occupied by Soviet forces on June 17, 1940. Latvia was under occupation by the Soviet Union (Russia) from 1940 up to 1941, when the country was occupied by Germany. In 1945 the Soviet occupation regime returned, and the Russian forces of occupation left their last military base in 1998.

June 22, Heroes' Commemoration Day (Anniversary of the Battle of Cēsis).
In June 1919 near the town of Cēsis there was a battle between Latvian and German forces (including local Germans). On June 22, the Latvians, together with Estonian forces, won a decisive victory against the Germans. This victory is traditionally regarded as the triumph of the idea of an independent Latvian state over the principles of power embodied by the Germans in the Baltic.
July 4, Commemoration Day of Genocide against the Jews.
On July 4, 1941, shortly after the occupation by the USSR ended and the occupation by Nazi Germany began, Riga's main Jewish synagogue was destroyed, burning alive those who were trapped inside.

August 11, Commemoration Day of Latvian Freedom Fighters.
The day of remembrance for Latvian freedom fighters is connected with the signing of a peace treaty between Latvia and Soviet Russia on August 11, 1920. The treaty ended the Latvian War of Liberation, which had begun in late 1918. In the war, one of the militarily strongest opponents of the idea of a free Latvian state was the Soviet regime, which had become established in Russia and planned to take over power in Latvia as well.

On August 21 the Supreme Council (Parliament) of the Republic of Latvia declared that the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, as passed on February 15, 1922, was restored in full. This ended the transitional period to a fully independent republic, a process formally instituted on May 4, 1990.

September 1, Knowledge Day (First Day of School).
The new school year usually starts on this date, when classes begin in all teaching institutions in Latvia. Younger students, often accompanied by their parents, traditionally bring flowers to their teachers on this day.

September 22, Baltic Unity Day.
On this date in 1236, Baltic peoples - the ancient Latvians together with the ancient Lithuanians - defeated the German crusading order, the Order of Swordbearers. The order had been created to gain military and political control of the Baltic region and to convert the indigenous peoples to Christianity.

November 11, Latvian Freedom Fighters' Remembrance Day - Lāčplēsis Day.
On this date in 1919, the Latvian Army won a decisive breakthrough in the fighting against the Russian and German forces led by Pavel Bermont-Avalov, which had taken up arms against the Republic of Latvia. The victory over the forces of Bermont-Avalov marked the conclusion of the Latvian War of Liberation (1918-1920) and allowed to begin the creation of the new state.

The Last Sunday of November (usually), All Souls' Day (unofficial day of remembrance).
On this day and on the previous eve - "Candles Eve" - people visit cemeteries to remember the deceased loved-ones, lighting candles at the graves. A widespread tradition on this day is a visit to the Riga Fraternal Cemetery. Everyone brings a candle, lit to honor the soldiers who fell in the cause of Latvia's freedom.

The 1st Sunday in December, Commemoration Day of Victims of Genocide Against the Latvian People by the Totalitarian Communist Regime.
After World War II about 200 000 Latvians lived in Soviet Russia (later the USSR), having arrived both in the course of peasant emigration in the late 19th century, and as refugees from the fighting in World War I, since from 1915 the front passed through the present territory of Latvia. In 1937-1938 the communist regime in Moscow began genocide against non-Russians living in the USSR, including Latvians. About 70 000 Latvians living in the Soviet Union were killed. The Latvian Parliament has declared the first Sunday of December as a day of remembrance for the Latvians killed in the USSR in the course of repression by Stalin's regime.