

7. Motor Vehicles

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The existing Traffic Laws and Regulations apply to all drivers participating in public traffic. No exceptions are made for persons having diplomatic immunities and privileges.

An accredited staff member of a diplomatic mission and his or her spouse or partner, who is not a Latvian citizen or a permanent resident of Latvia, is entitled to register one motor vehicle and one motorbike each for their personal use with special number plates.

There are no restrictions as to the number of trailers which can be registered with special number plates.

Customs duty exemption for motor vehicles imported in Latvia applies only to accredited staff members of missions located in Latvia. The exemption applies to accredited diplomatic agents, career consular officers, administrative and technical staff, as well as to accredited staff members of international organisations and representations thereof, including spouses of aforementioned staff, provided they are not citizens of Latvia or permanently resident in Latvia. The exemption 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 Conventions, or by virtue of international agreements.

In compliance with the Vienna Convention 1961 (Articles 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 accredited staff members of the mission.

If a vehicle purchased under tax exemption is resold to a non-privileged person, the initial buyer - 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 resold to another privileged person, it may be sold free of taxes.

It should be noted that Latvian legislation does not foresee a period after which the customs duty should not be paid upon re-selling a vehicle purchased under exemption.

Reimbursement of VAT for motor vehicles purchased in Latvia follows the same procedure as for other goods and services and is stipulated by the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 908 VAT is being refunded under the procedure specified in the Clause 51.3 of the Regulation, which states that the VAT 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 a 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 said Regulation specifies 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. In cases where the same vehicle has been resold to another privileged person, the duty of VAT refund is transferred with the ownership.

Please, note, that for all vehicles participating in road traffic and exceeding the total weight of 3500kg a vignette has to be purchased.

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 the head of mission or accredited staff members of diplomatic missions, consular posts, international organisations and representations thereof.

The OCTA may be purchased via most commercial insurance companies and agents.

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 may be obtained in:	The 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
Homepage:	www.ltab.lv

To drive a vehicle in Latvia or to obtain a Latvian Drivers' licence, a valid licence issued by the sending state is a prerequisite. If the national driving licence has expired, Latvian driving licences may be obtained according to Latvian legislation.

According to Section 2 of Article 47 of Road Traffic Law a driver, who arrives in Latvia from abroad and stays in Latvia for more than one year, shall replace a driving licence in accordance with the procedures specified, except for a driving licence issued by a member State of the EU or a member state of the European Free Trade Association. The aforementioned obligation does not apply to a person enjoying diplomatic or consular immunities and privileges in the Republic of Latvia.

The persons enjoying diplomatic or consular immunities and privileges and wishing to exchange their driving licence are obliged to pass the driving exams except for the citizens who have a driving licence issued by a member state of the European Union or a member state of the European Free Trade Association. However, all persons have to pass a medical examination. When receiving a driving licence of the Republic of Latvia a foreign driving licence is to be submitted to the Road Traffic Safety Directorate.

In case when a driving licence of a diplomatic or consular staff is not exchanged to a driving licence of the Republic of Latvia and the entries in the foreign driving licence is made with letters other than of Latin alphabet, a person shall present an officially certified Latvian translation of that particular driving licence.

Diplomatic ID card holders are advised to carry their diplomatic ID cards with them in order to be able to prove their identity and their registration at the State Protocol *of the MFA upon request of the State police*

Additional information may be obtained from:	Road Traffic Safety Directorate (CSDD), Riga City Division (<i>CSDD Rīgas pilsētas nodaļa</i>)
Address:	Bauskas iela 86, Rīga, LV- 1006
Tel.:	+371 6702 5777 +371 6702 5789
E-mail:	riga@csdd.gov.lv
Homepage:	www.csdd.lv

Registration

Motor vehicles with special number plates are registered at the Road Traffic Safety Directorate, Riga City Division (*CSDD Rīgas pilsētas nodaļa*). The special number plates are issued for the period indicated in the ID card provided by the State Protocol of the MFA following the process of accreditation.

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).

Types of special number plates issued for motor vehicles:

“CD” for vehicles of diplomatic missions, international organisations, representations thereof, and the representation of the European Commission to Latvia, as well as to diplomatic agents and their spouses

“CC” for vehicles of consular offices and career consular officers

“C” - for vehicles of the administrative and technical staff

Persons with diplomatic or administrative technical status are entitled to special number plates for one car and one motorbike each. This privilege is extended also to accredited spouses and common law partners

For the registration of a motor vehicle, a mission submits a verbal note to the State Protocol stating the owner of the vehicle, the make and model of the vehicle, and the chassis number. Once the submitted data in application has been verified, it 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 the registration documents are submitted in the stead of mission or a diplomatic agent with the power of attorney by a citizen or a permanent resident of Latvia, the latter has to present the following:

A power of attorney confirmed by the head of mission concerned

A personal identification documents

If a diplomatic agent submits the documents himself, his or her ID card as issued by the State Protocol has to be presented. The registration address should always coincide with the address of the respective mission or representation.

Deregistration

If a vehicle with CD, CC or C registration plates is about to be exported from Latvia permanently, resold, or destroyed, it has to be removed from the National Register before carrying out such actions.

Missions shall inform the State Protocol of a successful deregistration by a verbal note, specifying the following:

the reason for deregistration (resold, exported or destroyed)

the owner/user of the vehicle

make and model of the vehicle

the number of the deregistered plate

status of the next owner, if the vehicle is to be resold to a non-privileged person under conditions specified in article 7.1.

To complete the deregistration, a diplomatic agent or his attorney has to make an appointment in CSDD Riga City Division and should be ready to produce:

the registration certificates

the special registration plates

When a holder of special number plate completes his or her mission in Latvia, the person concerned has a duty to initiate the deregistration process. If the vehicle is to be exported, the CSDD may issue a transit registration certificate and

transit licence plates. Transit licence plates are valid for up to 30 days.

Vehicle registration documents and diplomatic licence plates are the property of the Latvian state and are to be returned directly to the CSDD once the vehicle is removed from the National Register. The MFA would like to emphasize that failure to observe the correct procedure can cause delays in issuing the vehicle registration certificate and special licence plates to a new vehicle of the mission or its staff member.

7.5. Accidental Loss of Special Licence Plates

If the special licence plates or one of both is lost, stolen or damaged beyond use, the holder of the special number plates or his /her attorney has to notify the police about the fact and have to apply for replacement. New special licence plates, as well as new registration documents, will be issued by the CSDD, following a request from the State Protocol.

It should be noted that lost special licence plates cannot be renewed.

7.6. Resale

A motor vehicle, bought under exemption from customs duty and/or VAT, may be resold without payment of such duty and/or VAT to another privileged person enjoying exemption from customs duty and the taxes in the Republic of Latvia. If the vehicle is sold to a non-privileged person, then customs duties and taxes shall be paid by the vendor in line with article 7.1.

Before selling the vehicle while in Latvia, the special licence plates shall be returned to the CSDD, to be replaced by regular licence plates.

If the vehicle has been imported from abroad, the originals or true copies of the customs allowance for its purchase, as well as vehicle's foreign registration documents should also be present.

7.7. Annual Technical Inspection

According to the Road Traffic Law (4.11.97 cl. 16.7.) and 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 their staff members in Latvia. The Technical Inspection of a vehicle is valid for one or two years, depending of the production year. It may be carried out at the Road Traffic Safety Directorate (CSDD) Riga City Division or in any of the regional branches. 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 holders of the special number plates are exempt from the annual motor vehicle tax, but they have to pay the technical inspection fee.

More information available at: www.csdd.lv

7.8. CSDD Fidelity Line



Committed to transparency and provision of high-quality services, the CSDD has a dedicated fidelity line. After dialling 67025757 an anonymous auto-recorded message may be left concerning:

unsatisfactory attitude or impolite treatment

improper behaviour by employees of the CSDD

any unpleasant occurrence experienced at the premises of the CSDD

7.9. Parking for Vehicles of Missions



Requests in the form of a verbal note concerning the mission's need for a parking space in vicinity of the mission should be addressed to the Director of Property and Logistics Department of the MFA, which will be then conveyed to the respective municipal authorities. The municipal authorities have full autonomy as regards their policy on reserved parking spaces within their administrative territory. For incoming missions, the municipality of Riga reserves 2 parking spaces on a public road in the closest possible distance from the main office of a mission. These parking spaces may be used only by vehicles belonging to the mission and members of the mission, and not by visitors.

The Director of Property and Logistics Department, MFA, +371 6701 6130, may provide additional information.

Vehicles with CD, CC, C or CH number plates have the right for temporary parking in front of the central entrance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs only during visits and appointed meetings.

Public 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.

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

<https://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/7-motor-vehicles>