

Looking for work in *Latvia*

Looking for work in another country requires more than just the obvious CV translation. You will be confronted with issues that probably didn't even cross your mind when you decided to go for an international career, but don't underestimate the big impact they can have on the outcome of your adventure! Think for example about the different rules and habits regarding immigration, job application procedures, the selection procedures and the management culture.

Expertise in Labour Mobility has prepared practical factsheets to support you in your job hunting abroad. A thorough preparation will give you a head start in the country of your choice. Here is some info on Latvia:

Work permits in Latvia

- From the 1st of May 2004 onwards, Latvia will be open for EU nationals concerning study or residence purposes. However job mobility between the 'old' 15 EU Member States and the 10 'new' EU Member States still faces some restrictions for up to a maximum of seven years after the EU enlargement.
- Contact the Latvian embassy in your home country for further information.

The application procedure in Latvia

- Use any contacts (your network) you might have to find a job in Latvia.
- Speculative applications to internationally oriented firms can be successful.
- Do not underestimate the value of taking up volunteer work in Latvia. It will help you build a network and understand what drives the Latvians in their approach towards certain issues.
- Latvian employers value a good academic background, linguistic and computer skills and an understanding of business.

Writing a CV in Latvia

- The key focus of your CV should be to persuade the employer to invite you for an interview. Therefore your CV is a marketing tool, which should be adapted to the market in which you intend to use it.
- Emphasise your education above practical experience.
- Mention your English skills on your CV. Languages are considered very important in Latvia.
- In Latvia CVs are structured in reverse chronological order. Marital status is usually given under the heading personal details. Skills and extracurricular activities are included too, usually at the bottom of the CV.

The application letter in Latvia

- Often, when personal contacts lead to an application, the first phase of having to write an application letter is replaced by less-formal telephone or e-mail contact.
- The covering letter in Latvia should be short and typed. It is possible to send an application letter without a CV in the initial phase of the process.
- Elaborate on your experience and skills to convince the employer you possess the qualities and dedication for the job at stake.

Do's

- Learn Latvian (or some Russian); it is an obvious advantage when applying in Latvia.
- Realise that interviews are the most important part of the application procedure in Latvia.
- Look interested – ask questions in the interview.
- Provide examples to prove your achievements.

Don'ts

- Sit until invited in an application interview in Latvia.
- Forget to bring copies of your diplomas and references to the interview.
- Criticise former employers.
- Go over the top – stay calm and stick to the facts.

Management culture in Latvia

- Most companies are very hierarchical in structure.
- Communication in Latvian companies is top down. However, most Latvian businesses are eager to adapt their processes to West European standards.
- Important business issues always need to be discussed in person.
- Meetings in Latvia take place in a rather formal setting.
- Meetings are a means of exchanging information or of concluding contracts.
- It is important to establish a general sense of mutual trust with Latvian counterparts.

This information is based on the Looking for work in the ten EU accession countries guide (ISBN 90-5896-051-X), written by Expertise in Labour Mobility. This one-pager is one step to making your international career aspirations become reality. The full Looking for work in the ten EU accession guide tells you everything you need to know. If you want to order or more information about our services, have a look at www.labourmobility.com.



Good luck with your application in Latvia!