

# Lawyers training systems in the EU

## Latvia

Information provided by: **Latvijas Zvērinātu advokātu padome (Council of Sworn Advocates)**  
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### DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM FOR LAWYERS in Latvia

#### 1. Access to the Profession

Higher education / university education	YES
A law degree is compulsory	YES
Steps to becoming a fully-fledged lawyer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examination (Organized by Bar - Council of Sworn advocates) according to <a href="#">Advocacy law</a> and the Cabinet Regulations No 227 "Procedure of examination of sworn advocates"</li> <li>• PhD holders are exempted from the examination.</li> <li>• at least 25 years of age;</li> <li>• Proven faultless reputation;</li> <li>• Submit an application to enter the list of Practicing Advocates (after having successfully passed the Advocates qualification examination)</li> </ul>
Alternative routes to the profession:	<p>YES</p> <p>A person seeking alternative routes to practicing as an advocate in Latvia must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a record of at least <b>5 years</b> of service in the legal profession; after this stage, he/she has to pass the Advocates Qualification Examination; or</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• undergo induction period training of at least <b>2 years</b> as an apprentice (as an advocate's assistant). After this stage, he/she can take the Advocates Qualification Examination; or</li><li>• have a record of at least <b>7 years</b> of working as a judge or holds a degree of doctor or doctor habilis in social sciences (law), or has worked as member of academic personnel in a Law Department at an institution of higher education or in any other position with juridical specialisation, then he/she does not have to pass the qualification examination in order to practice as an advocate.)</li></ul>	
2. Training during induction period		
Is there an induction period?	YES (For candidates who chose to acquire the status of an advocate's assistant and to work as apprentices in order to become advocates)	<b>Legal basis:</b> Advocacy Law of the Republic of Latvia, Articles 14, 34 and Part five <b>In Latvian</b> available at: <a href="http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=59283">http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=59283</a> <b>in English</b> available <a href="#">here</a>
Compulsory	YES (Only if a particular route is chosen (See Section "Alternative routes to the profession")	<b>Set length:</b> <b>at least 5 years</b>
Types of structures responsible for organising induction training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Private practices and law firms</b> (One fully fledged lawyer (sworn advocate) will be in charge of the training (at least 7 years of experience in practicing as fully fledged lawyer, faultless reputation etc.)</li><li>• <b>A special institution established by the Council of sworn Advocates</b> (Professional preparedness, Activity Supervision and Examination Commission of Assistants to Sworn Advocates)</li></ul>	
Form of induction training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Apprenticeship supervised by a private practice and</li><li>• Bar supervision and</li><li>• Law training with specific curriculum common to all trainee lawyers and</li><li>• Training on legal professional skills</li></ul> <b>These conditions are cumulative</b>	

	<p>Specific obligations for apprentices (stipulated in Advocacy law and regulations/decisions of the Council of Sworn Advocates):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- During all years – attend monthly training (1,5 hour),</li> <li>- During 1st year – publish an article/paper on legal issues, contribute to work of Latvian Council of Sworn Advocates</li> <li>- During 2nd year – practice certain amount of criminal, administrative and civil cases with authorisation of patron practice certain amount of criminal and civil cases</li> <li>- After 2nd year – practice certain amount of criminal, administrative and civil cases independently</li> <li>- Take an exam after 1st, 2nd and 5th year.</li> </ul>
Entrance exam / check before induction period	YES
Set curriculum during induction period	<p>YES</p> <p>There is no precise curriculum of the lectures organised once in a month by the Bar. Normally they cover issues, which should be learnt in order to pass the examination for sworn advocates, although in practise lectures mostly concern ethics of sworn advocate and State legal aid.</p> <p>During the induction period, candidates are required to learn (if not in lectures, then individually) all the topics which are covered in the examination in order to become a sworn advocate.</p> <p>These topics are determined by the Cabinet Regulations No 227 “Procedure of examination of sworn advocate” and specified in more detail by the decision of the Council of sworn advocates</p> <p>Topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constitutional law</li> <li>• Legal theory</li> <li>• Criminal law and criminal procedure law</li> <li>• Civil law and civil procedure law</li> <li>• Administrative law and administrative procedure law</li> <li>• Labour law</li> <li>• Company law</li> <li>• Financial and tax law</li> <li>• International cooperation in civil and criminal matters</li> <li>• Latvian Advocacy Law and related legal acts</li> <li>• Ethics of a sworn advocate</li> <li>• International legal acts regarding exercise of a lawyer’s profession</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record-keeping of a sworn advocate</li> <li>Communication and argumentation skills</li> </ul> <p>(list of topics in Latvian is available in the following link:  <a href="http://www.advokatura.lv/?open=eksameni&amp;lang=lat">http://www.advokatura.lv/?open=eksameni&amp;lang=lat</a>)</p>	
Specificities regarding EU law and linguistic training:	<p><b>Linguistic training:</b> NO</p> <p><b>EU law:</b> There might be <b>reference to EU law</b> when certain topics are presented</p>	
Induction period divided into different stages	<p><b>YES</b></p> <p>There are different requirements for each period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>After 1 year</b> an assistant to a sworn advocate shall take the first examination. Main topics: civil and civil procedure law, administrative and administrative procedure law, company law, labour law</li> <li><b>After 2 years</b> an assistant to a sworn advocate shall take the second examination. Main topics: criminal and criminal procedure law</li> </ul> <p>An assistant to a sworn advocate can take the advocate examination after having worked under the guidance of an employer for <b>5 years</b>. Main topics of the examination: topics of the curriculum described above</p>	
Post-induction period assessment / exam	<b>YES</b>	<p><b>Through written exams</b></p> <p>(Assistants to sworn advocates are released from oral part of examination to become a sworn advocate)</p>
<b>3. Continuous training system</b>		
Differentiation between continuous training / specialisation training	<b>NO</b>	
Obligations regarding continuous training	<b>YES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Compulsory training obligations</b> as stated in the internal regulations of the Bar (the current system is applicable since the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2013).</li> </ul> <p>All sworn advocates must undergo continuous training. More specifically, every sworn advocate must attend training of at least 16 (in total) academic hours (45 min.) per year.</p> <p><b>Legal Basis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decision No 149, dated 26.06.2012, of the Latvian Council of Sworn Advocates, approving Regulations</li> </ul>

		<p>on Continuous Training and Raising of the Qualification of the Sworn Advocates (“Noteikumi par zvērinātu advokātu kvalifikācijas paaugstināšanu un tālāk apmācību”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Decision No 237, dated 23.10.2013, of the Latvian Council of Sworn Advocates, approving Procedure on Qualification Raising Arrangements Organised by the Council of Sworn Advocates (“Noteikumi par reģistrācijas kārtību padomes organizētiem kvalifikācijas paaugstināšanas pasākumiem”)</li></ul>
Obligations regarding learning foreign languages	No obligations	
Obligations regarding EU law content in relation to continuous	NO	
4. Accreditation systems and training providers		
Possibility for accreditation	N/A	
Number of training providers offering continuous training activities	More than 50	
Type of training providers developing accredited continuous training activities	N/A No requirements for accreditation	
Activities and methods		
Type of training activities accepted under the obligations of continuous or specialization training	N/A	Participation in training activities in another Member State: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Yes, it counts toward continuous training obligations</li></ul>
5. Supervision of training activities		
Organizations involved in supervising continuous training activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Bar Association</li></ul> <p>The Law on the Bar establishes a duty for an advocate (Advocate’s assistants as well) to continuously improve his professional qualifications. The improvement of professional qualifications of advocates is organised by the Latvian Bar Association (there is an internal regulation too). But also a person can improve his professional qualifications in many other ways.</p>	

	The Latvian Bar Association from time to time checks if advocates or advocate's assistants update their professional qualifications and how.
Supervision process	N/A

Source: Pilot Project - European Judicial Training: "*Lot 2 – Study on the state of play of lawyers training in EU law*", carried out by the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) and the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA)