Economics – Export

GRINDEKS
Founded in 1946, Grindeks is the leading pharmaceutical company in the Baltic States. The company produces an extensive range of original products, including the widely known Mīdrontāšs® and Florafur®, as well as over a hundred generics and active pharmaceutical ingredients. Products are exported to more than 40 countries.

MADARA NATURAL COSMETICS
Madara produces entirely local, natural, and ecological cosmetics in esthetically pleasing packaging. Their products contain organically certified natural extracts from the unique spread of flora and fauna that grow in the Baltic region. Extracts from these plants are what form the foundation of Madara cosmetics, which are centered in accordance with the international ECOCERT standard.

PLYWOOD PRODUCTION COMPANY LATVIJAS FINIERIS
The origins of plywood products in Latvia date back to 1873, when the first plywood mill was founded. Latvijas Finiers was established in 1992, and since then has grown from a plywood production company into a group of 18 subsidiaries. Its focus is the development, manufacture, and sales of birch plywood. Latvijas Finiers is also active in forest management, logging, and production of synthetic resin and phenol films.

DD STUDIO
Did Studio is a success story of the Latvian creative industry. It is a multimedia studio that brings together artists, researchers, IT specialists and comes up with a wide range of information about Latvia, its branding and its foreign dignitaries, diplomats, academics, students and international wide range of information about Latvia. It works closely with local and international Audiovisual Festival on Museums and Heritage.

CLOTHING DESIGN
In Latvian clothing design you will notice a smart and stylish use of natural materials – especially linen (Annalėd, Laima Kaugure, Natalija Jansone) – you will find daring fantasy (Marēņu)‘s, Kate and brand 030470), good prêt-à-porter items (Alyona Bauska with brand QooQoo) or even social design with brand MAMAM, which collaborates with young mothers in creating unique linen, jersey and silk scarves. There is also every day fashion (2b.; Tundra and One Wolf), recycled fashion (recycled.lv) and the first designer shoe label in the Baltics, ZoFa.

Science

IVARS KALVĒNS (1947)
One of the best-known Latvian pharmaceutical products is Mīdrontāšs®, a drug for the treatment of cardiovascular diseases and cardiac energy consumption reduction. It was developed in the 1970s by a team led by Ivars Kalvēns, director of the Latvian Institute of Organic Synthesis. The drug’s effectiveness in treatments has earned the recognition of medical professionals and patients in 14 countries.

QUANTUM COMPUTING
One of Latvia’s leading professors, Rusēls Mārniņš Freivalds (1942), is the founder of the Latvian scientific school of quantum computing. He has received several academic awards, and became a member of the European Scientific Academy in 2010. His student Andris Ambainis (1975) is now of the world’s most accomplished researchers in quantum computing. Ambainis was accepted into the Princeton Research Center without competition due to his excellent test scores.

CARDIOLOGY
Latvia has earned international recognition for its world-class cardiologists, who are at the forefront of research and practice in the field of heart disorders. The leading cardiologist in Latvia is Andris Ērglis (1964), head of the Latvian Cardiology Center at Pauls Stradiņš Clinical University Hospital. His main field of study is the development of new percutaneous coronary intervention procedures for patients with coronary artery diseases.

Nations have long understood that their greatest treasure is their people. Latvia is an exceptional example of how great people and great ideas can be born anywhere, and can make a small country very proud. This is just a brief look at the people, the ideas and achievements which bring Latvia’s name into the world, and which make Latvia proud.

Culture

MEZZO-SOPRANO ELĪNA GARANČA (1976)
Endowed with a magnificent mezzo-soprano voice, Elīna Garanča has swiftly become one of the world’s brightest stars in classical music. She has collected several prestigious awards, such as from Echo Klassik and MIDEM, and performed at the world’s best opera houses in New York, Vienna, London and Paris. She is currently a soloist at the Wiener Staatsoper.

CONDUCTOR ANDRIS NELSONS (1978)
Andris Nelsons began his career as a trumpeter in the Latvian National Opera Orchestra, swiftly moving on to conducting the orchestra for several years. In 2008 Nelsons became musical director of the City of
Conductor Andre Fackows

Composer Pēteris Vasks and pianist Vestards Šimkus

Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and was named the musical director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in the summer or 2013. He has received numerous rav- ing reviews for his guest conductor appearances at the world's best opera houses.

COMPOSER ERIK’S EŠENVALDS (1977)

Ēriks Ešenvalds is one of the most popular and beloved Latvian composers of the new generation. His piano, clarinet, and choral music has been performed in Ger- many, Austria, the United States, and elsewhere, and has been recorded by several international choirs on albums showcasing new Latvian music. He is currently resident composer at Cambridge University.

COMPOSER PĒTERIS VASKS (1946)
Pēteris Vasks is the most internationally renowned composer from Latvia. Vasks has regularly received commissions from world-famous musicians, including the Kronos Quartet. Many of his hauntingly beautiful works have been used by international choreographers in original ballet productions. Vasks is the only Latvian composer who has a contract with the renowned mu- sic publisher Schott Musik International.

CONDUCTOR MĀRIS SIRMAIS (1969)
Māris Sirmais is one of Latvia’s most celebrated con- ductors. In 1980, as a student, he founded one of the best youth choir’s in Latvia – Kamēr... and conducted it for 22 years, winning 60 national and international competitions. Sirmais is also the artistic director and chief conductor of the State Choir Latvia, which regu- larly participates in performances with prominent or- chestras, musicians, and conductors.

PIANIST VESTARDS ŚIMKUS (1984)
Śimkus started playing the piano at age 5, and went on to be educated at world-class academies, such as the Queen Sofia School of Music and the University of Southern California. Śimkus has performed and par- ticipated in music performances and festivals all over the world, earning the New Names of the Planet schol- arship, the Estonian White Star medal, as well as the Latvian Grand Music Award. He has released five solo albums and won first place in several international pi- ano competitions.

Accordionist Ksenija Sidorova

Ksenija Sidorova has become famous worldwide as an accordionist who has injected accordion music with both quality and modernity, raised its status, and en- hanced its popularity within the classic music genre. A number of famous composers have created works just for Ksenija. Ksenija has two solo albums to her name and multiple international prizes to her name.

DIRECTOR ALVIS HERMANIS (1965)
Internationally renowned Latvian theater director Alvis Hermanis has been the director of Riga’s New Theater since 1997 and has more than 55 performances to his name, staged throughout Europe. Hermanis takes a documentary approach to theatre - the dramatic ma- terial is created together with the actors, based on at- tentive observations of real life situations and human behaviour.

POP/ROCK BAND PRAĪTA VĒTRA
PRAĪTA VĒTRA was established by four ambitious school mates and is undoubtedly the most popular band in Latvia. The band received international recognition in 2000 in the Eurovision Song Contest; in 2006 PRAĪTA VĒTRA won the first ever Best Baltic Act award at the

MTV Europe Music Awards. Recently the band has toured all over Europe, played at the Glastonbury festi- val, and performed as far away as Singapore.

INDIE ELECTRO-POP DUO INSTRUMENTI
The hottest new band from Latvia is the indie electro- pop duo Instrumenti, which consists of two classically trained musicians from Rīga – Jānis Špēlēvičs, who has one of the most impressive fleshtetes on the current music scene, and Reins Šējāns, a master of harmo- nies. In 2017, the duo released its debut album, TRU, and their second album Procrasinājum came out in May 2013. The band has a devoted following in Rīga as well as on the European festival circuit.

THE WONDERS OF LATVIAN ANIMATION
Animation is one of Latvia’s most attractive exports. The most outstanding Latvian animators are the stu- dios RIJA, Ani, and Atom Art, as well as directors Siguld Baumane, Nils Skapāns, and Vladimir Lescov. RIJA has taken part in more than 40 international coproduction projects. One such collaboration, the animated film The Trippers of Belleville, was nominated for an Acad- emy Award as Best Animated Feature in 2003.

ILLUSTRATOR REINIS PĒTERSONS (1981)
One of the most prolific Latvian illustrators, Reins Pētersons, is known for his magnificent visual interpre- tations of books, particularly for children. He also works in character and set design, poster art, illustration, cartoons, and animation. His first charcoal on paper animation film about the loneliness of a motorcycling circus bear won awards both in Latvian and abroad.

FILM DIRECTOR, SCRIPTWRITER, AND JOURNALIST LAILA PAKALNĪNA (1962)
Laila Pakalnīna first received international recognition in 1996, when her documentaries Ferry and Post were included in the Cannes Film Festival and received the FIPRESCI award. In 2003, the film Pyhon was included in the Venice Film Festival – the first time a Latvian film was demonstrated at the event. Whereas Dream Land was nominated for best documentary at the European Film Academy awards, Pakalnīna’s newest feature film Pizzas was awarded special prize by the jury of the 7th International Cinema XI Rīme Film Festival.

Skeleton racer Martins Dukurs

At the 2008 Summer Olympics, Māris Stroembergs be- came the first Olympic champion in BMX cycling. He continued to cement his Olympic glory at the 2012 London Games, scoring a second Gold medal. He con- tinues to add more wins to his growing list of victories, including European and World Championship titles and the US National Cycling League champion title.

The Latvian beach volleyball duo Aleksands Samołows and Jānis Šmedēvičs started playing together in the sum- mer of 2002. Since then they have played together at the highest level of world and Olympics. They have won several awards in Latvia and abroad, including European and World Championship titles and the US National Beach Volleyball World Rankings.

SKELETON RACER MARTINS DUKURS (1984)
Trained by his father, Martins Dukurs began compet- ing in skeleton events in 1999. He is the 2010 Vancou- ver Olympic Games silver medalist, has won four World Cups, and is a two time world champion and four time European champion.

Skeleton racer Martins Dukurs

Olympic champion Māris Stroembergs

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