RIGA GRADUATE SCHOOL OF LAW

Guidelines for Incoming exchange students in the SPRING semester 2022

UPDATED on 9 October 2021

Thank you for choosing Riga Graduate School of Law for your exchange studies! Our Erasmus code is LVRIGA34, address Strēlnieku iela 4k-2, Rīga, LV-1010, Latvia.

We hope that we will be able to welcome you in Riga in January 2022. This academic year RGSL is operating in so called **"safe green mode"** – everyone on the campus **must present valid digital Covid-19 certificate with QR code (vaccination or recovery certificate), no exceptions**. Teaching in the Autumn semester is organized in the "in-class studies format" in combination with few online sessions if international faculty member cannot travel to Riga. In case the governmental decisions and public health measures in Latvia will change, and new restrictions will be in place that will affect study process, you will be notified in email.

Incoming exchange students are kindly asked to follow the Latvian government **updates** related to Covid-19 pandemic concerning essential travel, mandatory Covidpass, testing, self-isolation and other requirements: *https://www.spkc.gov.lv/lv/valstu-saslimstibas-raditaji-ar-covid-19-0 (scroll down for travellers' info files in English)*

PRIMARY CONTACT FOR EXCHANGE STUDENTS:

RGSL ERASMUS Institutional coordinator Ulla Zumente-Steele,
e-mail: ulla@rgsl.edu.lv; tel.+371 29142588

ONLINE REGISTRATION:

Registration is open only for students planning to study in the Spring semester 2022 and only if you have been officially nominated by your university to RGSL. You can proceed with your

application online open from 11 October, the deadline is **5 November** 2021.

After filling your basic information in the form, the following must be attached to the application form:

- copy of passport or EU national identity card,
- **official style photograph** - passport size, this will be used for printing your student ID and library card at RGSL and for student group lists, make sure to choose a good quality picture,
- academic **transcript** in English from your home university (can be without official letterhead or signatures due to remote operations of most universities this semester),
- NOTE: we **do not require** Erasmus students to submit English language test. We trust your university selection procedure. However, we strongly advise you to **strenghten your legal English language skills** – both written and oral – before the arrival.

ACCEPTANCE LETTER

RGSL will send acceptance letter as e-mail message after November 5th deadline and no later than 25th November.

IMMIGRATION

If you are not a citizen or resident of EU/EEA country and will need Latvian visa to enter the country, please contact by **1st November** RGSL ERASMUS coordinator (ulla@rgsl.edu.lv) to consult individually on further documentation and steps for processing immigration **!!!** Students who need to apply for Latvian entry visa, must obtain a **signed Learning Agreement** beforehand, and have to book accommodation to obtain address in Riga.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR SPRING 2022

Bachelor courses: Orientation days 20-21 January 2022
24 January 2022 - 31 May 2022 (classes and exams 2nd semester)

Masters courses: Orientation day 28 January 2022
1 February 2022 - 2 July 2022 (classes and exams 2nd semester)

ORIENTATION DAYS

- Orientation days are planned on **20-21 January** (Thursday-Friday) **for Erasmus students who plan to take Bachelor level courses at RGSL**. The format: in-class or online (depending on what will be permitted).
- ***If you plan to take only Masters level courses*** *that start on 1 February, brief individual or small-group orientation session will take place on* ***28 January****.*

!! Student should bring his/her ***laptop / tablet/ ipad*** *to the orientation session in order to login and set up IT Access to study portal and e-systems used at RGSL. Smart phone is not sufficient.*

The study process is **highly intensive** from the very beginning of study period/module. **Orientation days** are aimed at introducing incoming students with the study process, academic and administrative procedures, and to settle practical matters.
During the orientation session students will be able to make any necessary final choices of courses and finalize learning agreements, receive intro training to legal databases and other library resources. During the first days your Buddies will also provide assistance, if needed, in obtaining Riga city public transportation e-card for student discount.

COURSES / STUDY SUBJECTS / COURSE OUTLINES

On the website you will find yearly module plans for Masters study subjects, and Bachelor study programmes Law and Business, Law and Diplomacy. **To avoid schedule overlaps in bachelor level courses:**

- for each 6-week study period you should choose one of the two study programmes (either Law and Business, or Law and Diplomacy), and select courses within one study year during that particular 6-week study period (either Year Two, or Year Three, or perhaps Year One).
- If you need to take 3 subjects during one study period (9 ECTS total during the 6 week period), and you are interested in Year Two or Year Three subjects, then choose 2 courses from the so-called A part "Mandatory" column and 1 course from B section "Restricted Electives" column. All Restricted Elective courses are scheduled parallel, so choosing more

than one in the same module will likely create significant schedule overlaps. Restricted Electives are **not available** for students taking **Year One** courses, as they are scheduled at the same time.

- **An example of combination**: in module 24 January - 4 March you choose **"Law and Business"** programme **Year Two** mandatory subjects *RBB110 Internal Market Law + RBB229 Financial Accounting + elective RBE317 Geoeconomics: the Geopolitics of Energy*.
- **Another example**: in module 24 January - 4 March you choose **"Law and Diplomacy"**programme **Year Two** subjects *RBB402 International Diplomatic Law, RBB403 Diplomatic Protocol, (elective) RBE107 Arbitration and Alternative Dispute Resolution*.

The **exact class schedules** for each separate course and each module (6-week study period) become available approximately 2 weeks before the study module begins. By the beginning of January we expect to know calendar for Bachelor module 4 starting 24 January. **Final exams take place at the end of each module for each subject.**

Course outlines (=descriptions/syllabi) can be viewed, without login, on the study portal here Click on the **"i" icon** by each specific course to access an outline in pdf file. If you do not find a course outline, it is in the process of being developed (new course), or updated, reviewed and will become available before the study period/module begins.

LEARNING AGREEMENT

Due to final course selections made after arrival (as class schedules are known shortly before the study module-study period begins), RGSL generally does not require Incoming students to submit signed LA before the arrival.
If your home university requires it, preliminary draft LA can be approved **AFTER November 5th registration deadline**. It can be Online Learning Agreement or your University LA template. By the beginning of January RGSL will ask all incoming students to inform about their study module (6-week study period) **course choices via special online questionnaire**.

ACCOMMODATION

All students have to find their own accommodation, as RGSL does not have its own student housing. From the feedback of previous exchange and full-degree international students we have learned that the most preferred option is to „team-up" with other international students mainly via Facebook to rent an apartment in the city. Feel free to ask RGSL Erasmus coordinator about the location and proximity of your chosen housing address.

Useful contacts for searching accommodation:

- ***Appeltofft-Invest*** www.stabu16.lv RGSL students have reported renting individual rooms for ~EUR 300 and up with all utilities included and have given positive feedback. Contact person **Liene Jaudzema,** e-mail appeltofftinvest@gmail.com
- **Theatre Residence** on Terbatas street 34, Rent ~EUR 300-400 depending on the room. For more information and bookings contact e-mail: zanete.merliva@gmail.com; Tel.: +371 29116762 https://www.studentroomsriga.lv/

- **Valdemara Residence** https://www.facebook.com/valdemararesidence/ - they offer shared student rooms for affordable prices, great central location, 10-minute walking distance from RGSL, exchange students have given rather positive feedback.
- **NEW: IHG - Student Housing, Event and Travel** company providing students with freshly refurbished, fully-equipped apartments or rooms in historic buildings in the central part of the city. Website: www.ihgestate.com // Email: riga.client.manager@ihgestate.com // WhatsApp or call: +371 22 180 398 Instagram: @ihgstudentriga
- **Apartments on Brivibas street 57 (City center)**. Contact person: Dace Gerasimova +371 25551441 (also Whatsapp). You have to join FB group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/821414014625602/
- **NEW** – Student apartaments **SMARTments** - www.smartments.lv **Outside the city centre**, close to green area, ponds and parks, but keep in mind the distance to RGSL location. Address: Indriķa iela 8B. Prices from 300 EUR & up / per month.
- **Check Facebook Group "Bruninieku Community" (**administered by Francesco Cimini) – they rent shared-flats for international students and organize social events to help integrate. Location is approx.30-40 minute walking distance from RGSL.
- **"Duck Republik"** student hostel https://duckrepublik.eu/offer/special-offer/ this is **much farther away from the city center part where RGSL is located**, you will need to take public transportation for about 20 minutes (switch 2 trolley buses), but Autumn 2021 semester exchange students report good conditions and good satisfaction with the place.They opened about three years ago, they offer single and shared rooms. Feedback from students has always been quite good, but the strongest disadvantage is the distance from RGSL and the neighbourhood area where it is located. The price, however, is lower than in the city center.
- *When new suggestions for housing are received, Erasmus coordinator will send it to incoming students as an update info.*

Housing costs in the Old Town Riga will be generally higher than in the rest of central Riga. Shared flats and student rooms outside the Old Town are estimated on average EUR 300-400 per month for a private room (including heating costs, and the internet). **Always, always check** whether the **utilities - water, electricity and especially heating in the winter season** are included in the price or separate, and how much the cost is in the winter. In some buildings central heating can increase the cost by more than 30-40% in winter months. Flats further away from the centre will have lower prices but then you have to factor in time for commuting.

Living costs: the cost for food and daily supplies are estimated at a minimum ~ EUR 300 per month. For travel, cultural events, entertainment you will need additional finances.

Public transportation (bus, tram and trolley-bus): upon arrival in Riga, students will be able to apply for student transportation e-card and buy monthly pass with student discount (EUR 16,00 per month unlimited rides, or EUR 5,40 for 20 rides). **Taxi Bolt** is available as well.

IMPORTANT - MEDICAL INSURANCE

Incoming exchange students must have the European Health Insurance Card and/or private health insurance to cover emergency medical expenses during study period in Latvia. Additional travel and accident insurance with broader coverage is **strongly recommended**. If you need to visit a doctor in Riga, the cost will be around EUR 25-40 per visit. In addition, any tests (blood test, for example) is at additional cost. Same with dentistry services. In general, there are no student discounts for medical services in Latvia.

STUDENT BUDDY NETWORK AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Your name and e-mail address will be shared with RGSL Student Association's Board, in order for their coordinator of international and exchange students be able to offer you a "**Buddy network support**", social and practical assistance. You will be contacted during the summer by the student representatives with an invitation to join social media groups for RGSL exchange students. This group can also be used as a channel to search for available housing and „team-up" as room-mates. RGSL Student Association organizes regular cultural, tourist and social events, and engages incoming students in the student social life.

OTHER USEFUL INFO SOURCES:

- Erasmus Student Network in Riga: ESN Riga | Facebook (to follow events, including student trips in Latvia and abroad)
- Study in Latvia - http://www.studyinlatvia.lv/
- ISIC card http://isic.lv/en

We look forward to welcoming you at RGSL! Stay in touch and let us know of any questions that arise!