

History

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Significant dates in the history of the Republic of Latvia

2 December 1917 – Declaration to Foreign Countries and Nations was adopted in Valka, by which, having regard to the principle of the right of peoples to self-determination, the Latvian Provisional National Council declared that Latvia was an autonomous state unit, its internal and external system would be decided by its Constitutional Assembly and a popular plebiscite.

18 November 1918 – At the solemn meeting at the Latvian National Theatre, the Latvian National Council proclaimed the establishment of the Republic of Latvia, also approving the interim government of Latvia under the leadership of Kārlis Ulmanis.

1 May 1920 – The first elected parliament of Latvia, the Constitutional Assembly began its work by a formal session. Its convocation was envisaged as early as the end of 1918, but the Latvian War of Independence delayed it. The Chairperson of the Latvian National Council Jānis Čakste was elected as Chairperson of the Constitutional Assembly.

11 August 1920 – A peace treaty between Latvia and Soviet Russia was signed, finishing the Latvian War of Independence. The peace treaty recognised the independence, self-support, and sovereignty of the state of Latvia opening the way to Latvia's recognition *de iure*.

26 January 1921 – the Allied Supreme War Council, which included Britain, France, Italy, Belgium, and Japan, recognised Latvia as a sovereign state *de iure*.

5 October 1939 – The Republic of Latvia and the USSR signed the Mutual Assistance Treaty, which provided for the stationing of Red Army troops in Western Latvia.

17 June 1940 – The Latvian government acceded to the ultimatum presented a day before, and the Red Army troops crossed the border, occupying Latvia and starting its annexation to the USSR. The independence of the Republic of Latvia is *de facto* discontinued.

June 1941 – May 1945 – Latvia was occupied by Nazi Germany.

23 August 1989 – The Baltic Way, a unique peaceful mass demonstration, when more than a million people joined their hands to form a human chain spanning about 600 km across the three Baltic States. The demonstration was timed to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Non-Aggression Treaty between Germany and the Soviet Union and its secret additional protocols in 1939, which had divided spheres of influence in Eastern Europe and led to the occupation and annexation of the Baltic States.

4 May 1990 – The Latvian SSR Supreme Council adopted the “Declaration on the Restoration of the Independence of the Republic of Latvia”, which proclaimed the restoration of the Republic of Latvia founded on 18 November 1918 and set a transition period for the implementation of the declaration.

21 August 1991 – After the unsuccessful attempt at a *coup d'état* in the USSR, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia passed the Law “On the National Status of the Republic of Latvia”, restoring Latvia's independence *de facto*.

29 March 2004 – Latvia becomes a member state of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

1 May 2004 – Latvia joins the European Union.

1 January 2014 – Latvia joins euro area and changes over from its national currency to common European currency, the euro.

1 July 2016 – Latvia becomes the official member of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

18 November 2018 – Latvia marks its centenary in a 5-year celebration from 2017 to 2021.

26 January 2021 – Latvia celebrates the centenary of its international *de iure* recognition.

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