

# Lawyers in Latvia

NJORD Latvia is one of few international law firms in Latvian legal market. Our office in Riga is renowned for successfully assisting well-known local clients, along with top international companies – with Nordic and Russian clients especially known to place the team as their first choice. For global clients, we function as a gateway to the entire Nordic/Baltic region, where each of our five offices acts as a one-stop shop from where we regularly perform or coordinate legal services across borders.

Our lawyers in Riga particularly excel in litigation, IP, corporate/commercial, real estate, employment and immigration.

## Litigation

We offer a full litigation service covering civil, administrative and criminal law (white collar crimes). We are frequently recommended and hired exclusively as litigation specialists.

1. Our team is highly skilled at assisting clients with insurance disputes, with sustained experience in representing both insurer and insured companies. Recent highlights of this work include:

- representation of COFACE in a 1.5 million EUR insurance compensation dispute linked to violations of an insurance contract;
- providing litigation counsel for Kuehne + Nagel against IF Insurance concerning the regress claim damages according to the CMR insurance

2. NJORD is regularly sought out for complex IP disputes and we have both attorneys-at-law, and trademark and design attorneys in the team, which makes us stand out amongst our Latvian law firms. Recent examples of our IP litigation mandates include:

- assisting Ecolab Inc. with a trademark dispute against SIA LD STELS, one of the biggest importers of Russian cosmetics in the European Union;
- advising AbeBooks Inc. (a subsidiary of Amazon Inc.) on a copyright infringement dispute.

3. Another principal area of expertise amongst the department's lawyers in Riga is shipping and transport disputes, with experience representing clients in litigation matters. Last year's highlights include:

- acting for OLA Overseas Liner Agencies AB on a 1 million EUR lawsuit against a former Latvian subagent
- representing Kuehne + Nagel in a 2 million EUR reimbursement of damages litigation

4. NJORD also habitually advises clients in disputes related to insolvency proceedings, with experience acting both for companies and private individuals. Recent mandates include:

- The firm has been providing legal services in Latvia to a number of insolvent PNB bank's clients, with regards to the refund of funds following the bank's insolvency in September 2019.
- during the last couple of months, the firm has been assisting a number of ABLV bank's (in liquidation) clients, with regards to the refund of funds following the decision on bank's liquidation in 2018

5. Our criminal law (white collar crime) practice is developing at a high rate. In particular, we cover cases relating to proceeds from crime, money laundering, white-collar crimes and IP infringements. Our attorneys assist clients on all stages of investigation and court proceedings. Our attorneys have extensive knowledge of the principles, methods and practices of national courts, prosecution offices and law enforcement institutions.

Our key client sectors:

NJORD provides legal services in Latvia to top Latvian companies, along with major international players (more than a half of our clients are foreign companies), from a large variety of sectors, such as:

Bridge construction (e.g.: Tilsta UAB), e-commerce (e.g.: AbeBooks and LITRES GLOBAL S.A), , healthcare technology (e.g.: Ecolab, ECI Packaging Limited), insurance (e.g.: COFACE), shipping (e.g.: OLA Overseas Liner Agencies, Yang Ming), technology (e.g.: ADOBE Systems Inc.), telecommunications (e.g.: NORDLINE COMMUNICATIONS) and transport and logistics (e.g.: Kuehne + Nagel).

## IP

Our IP team provides all-round counsel and assists entrepreneurs, companies, and government bodies with selecting, protecting, commercializing, and defending their intellectual property rights, concerning:

- Trademarks
- Designs
- Copyrights
- Company and domain names.

We have exceptional expertise in trademarks, handling filing, trademark licensing and trademark protection mandates—such as representation in opposition proceedings and anticounterfeiting. Most notably:

- NJORD is responsible for all trademark filing work for Amazon in Latvia, as well as representation in all of its oppositions in Latvia too;
- we are representing Ecolab in a major trademark litigation case against a Latvian company;
- Our lawyers in Riga are engaged in a number of opposition proceedings against Grigorijs Holding SIA, a Latvian company—registered Michael Gleissner, sometimes called ‘an infamous troll’ of trademarks. We represent Amazon, Pegasus Business Intelligence and Features Analytics, amongst others;
- the department’s lawyers are also active in anticounterfeiting, acting as customs representatives of some of the world’s most important brands belonging to Tommy Hilfiger, The Muppets Studio, LLC, Daniel Wellington, SanDisk LLC, Lucasfilm Ltd. LLC, Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche Aktiengesellschaft, Rapala VMC Oyj, Disney Enterprises, Inc., H-D U.S.A., LLC, etc.

The team is highly skilled at providing both non-contentious and contentious advice on all IP rights, regularly acting on major mandates.

NJORD has both attorneys-at-law and trademark and design attorneys, which provides a unique depth to the team that not many other law firms in Latvia can boast of. Furthermore, we have one of the largest IP teams in Latvia.

Industry sector expertise:

NJORD provides legal services in Latvia to a wide range of clients with their IP mandates, from individuals within the fashion industry and minor companies in the set-up phase to major national and global groups of companies with world-famous brands. Industry sectors that the department has recently advised clients from vary widely and include:

e-commerce (e.g.: Amazon Technologies, AbeBooks), entertainment (e.g.: Disney Enterprises), healthcare technology (e.g.: Ecolab), luxury watch brands (e.g.: Daniel Wellington), glass repair and replacement (e.g.: Belron), retail (e.g.: Alteus), software (e.g.: Features Analytics, Pegasus Business Intelligence), information technology (e.g.: Vide Infra Group) and fashion (e.g.: Natalia Chabelnique, Tommy Hilfiger), amongst others.

## CORPORATE/COMMERCIAL

The firm’s Corporate/Commercial department provides full legal service in Latvia covering contractual and corporate matters, along with related disputes when necessary. The lawyers in Riga are able to advise clients in Latvian, English and Russian, and maintain strong international links with other law firms outside of the Baltics as well (for example, we recently worked with Norton Rose Fulbright in Italy, and the rest of the NJORD network, providing legal services in Latvia to EuropAssistance with a pan-European project.

Key types of work:

1. Our lawyers in Riga handle the whole gamut of corporate matters for local and international players, including corporate governance, restructuring, development of group structures, franchising, maintenance of shareholder registers, legal due diligence, drafting commercial contracts and other supporting day-to-day activities. Matters handled within this sphere include
  - assisting X Infotech with corporate governance and the drafting of minutes of the shareholders and board’s meetings
  - providing restructuring advice to Park Hotel Kemeru in order to comply with local banking rules for carrying out 20 million EUR restoration by non-resident stakeholders.

Due to the recent amendments to the AML law of Latvia followed by the new requirements on disclosure of the ultimate beneficiary owners (UBO) affecting all entities registered in the Commercial register of Latvia, NJORD has been actively advising both old and new clients on the topic.

2. Our team of lawyers in Latvia handle a significant array of M&A work, including cross-border mergers and intricate high-value acquisitions. Recent highlights include:

- advising Train Factory Holding on an 11 million EUR indirect property complex acquisition, involving the formation of a limited partnership
- acting for Marine Trans Logistic on its cross-border merger with a Bulgarian entity.

3. NJORD is particularly skilled at assisting foreign investors entering and exiting the Latvian market with strategic advisory provided at all stages of the process. Examples of work linked to this include:

- advising UK-based 3S Money Club on registering a representative office that is not a Latvian tax payer;
- assisting Estonian firm Lab73 with its 60% share purchase agreement of a Latvian weather forecasting portal;
- advising OG Baltics SIA on entering into the Latvia market.

We aim to act as a one-stop shop for our corporate clients and take a multidisciplinary approach, with our lawyers offering extra knowledge in other areas too, such as IP, Dispute Resolution, Employment, Real Estate and Tax, which enables us to provide an efficient and optimal service for our clients.

Key client sectors:

NJORD advises top Latvian and international companies, and even when performing work for an entity registered in Latvia, in more than 80% of cases we provide advice for the entity's foreign shareholders/executives. Our clients are active in a variety of industries, including:

e-banking (e.g.: 3s Money Club), financial (e.g.: Train Factory Holding), fitness (e.g.: Fit PEOPLE), glass repair and replacement (e.g.: Belron International), infrastructure (e.g.: COMSA), insurance (e.g.: Europ Assistance), hospitality (e.g.: Park Hotel Kemeri), logistics (e.g.: Marine Trans Logistic), telecommunications (e.g.: OG Baltics), technology (e.g.: X Infotech), travel (e.g.: BALTIC TRAVEL GROUP), water treatment systems (e.g.: LT Aqua) and web design (e.g.: Lab73).

## EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION

1. The team has a wealth of experience advising clients on drafting employment contracts, concerning both the establishment and termination of employment relations – employee dismissals are particularly important to clients, because incorrectly executed or unjustified dismissals can result in long litigations and substantial loss of means, along with significant damage to reputation. NJORD therefore steps in to determine opportunities and grounds of termination of employment relations, and drafts full set of documents, starting from stage of requests to an employee. Recent examples of our work in this sphere include:

- advice given to The British School of Latvia “King’s College” on the establishment and termination of employment relations
- the review of employment agreements for Oriflame Poland, with special attention given to regulatory enactments, as well as drafting the template of agreement on termination of employment contract.

2. NJORD stands out among Latvian law firms in advising foreign companies and private individuals entering or already active in the Latvian market, with all their employment needs, from employment documents and residence and work permits, to tax issues. Recent highlights in this area include:

- providing legal services to The Royal Danish Embassy of Latvia on the compliance of their employment contracts with Latvian law, including the Staff Rules of the Embassy
- advising Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Latvia on various employment issues, like revising the employment contracts, providing with legal opinions etc.
- advising Lloyd’s Register EMEA on employment relationships establishing, changing and termination
- co-operating with Austrian law firm DORDA to provide advice to foreigners on EU immigration issues, related to the establishment of employment relations and obtaining residence and work permits, including EU blue cards – we have seen a recent surge in advisory linked to the complete procedure of hiring foreign nationals from non-EU countries, including necessary procedures involving the employment agency, processing of necessary documents by the employing company and the potential employee; we predict to continue seeing more of this type of work in the near future.

3. The team of lawyers in Latvia regularly advises clients on the implementation and compliance of GDPR regulations, including whistleblower programs and cloud services, with recent work including:

- carrying out a full GDPR compliance audit for Deniels, Ltd
- providing regulatory advice to Sitoo AB, a cloud-based cash register point of sale platform provider.

4. If need be, NJORD team of lawyers in Riga is highly equipped to deal with employment disputes, including the protection of a company’s know-how and litigation related to a misuse of business secrets. Our recent work for “Taxify LV” (Bolt taxi) involved dispute resolution with the employees and other employment issues.

Key client sectors:

NJORD provides legal services in Latvia to top Latvian companies, along with important international players established in or entering Latvia, from a large variety of sectors, such as:

construction (e.g.: Gokstadhus), cosmetics (e.g.: Oriflame Poland), destination management (Baltic Travel Group), diplomatic missions (e.g.: The Royal Danish Embassy of Latvia), e-banking (e.g.: 3S Money Club), education (e.g.: The British School of Latvia “King’s College”), finance (Marsh Limited), fitness (e.g.: Fit People), iGaming (e.g.: Betssongroup), retail (e.g.: Deniels, Ltd), ride sharing (e.g. Bolt taxi) and technology (e.g.: Lokalise).



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