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19 May 2005 [shall come into force from 14 June 2005];

16 December 2010 [shall come into force from 1 January 2011];

27 April 2017 [shall come into force from 1 June 2017];

20 September 2018 [shall come into force from 18 October 2018].

If a whole or part of a section has been amended, the date of the amending law appears in square brackets at the end of the section. If a whole section, paragraph or clause has been deleted, the date of the deletion appears in square brackets beside the deleted section, paragraph or clause.

The *Saeima*¹ has adopted and
the President has proclaimed the following law:

Law on Preservation and Protection of the Historic Centre of Riga

Section 1.

The following terms are used in this Law:

1) **cultural and historical value** – a masterpiece of the creative spirit of a human being demonstrating an interaction of significant values of humanity in a specific period of time or location in relation to the development of architecture or technology, monumental art, city planning, landscape design that is directly or materially related to events, living traditions, art or literary works, which has a special universal value and is not less than 25 years of age;

2) **cultural and historical environment** – a location created as a result of intentional activity during the development of humanity if it or individual elements thereof have a historical, scientific, artistic, amenity or other cultural value to be preserved;

3) **transformation of cultural and historical environment** – any technical, constructional, economic activity which results in physical changes to the cultural and historical environment (function, form, colour, individual details, material thereof), as well as another cultural value;

4) **public outdoor space** – streets, boulevards, places, parks, squares, quays, space of blocks, courtyards, which are accessible to the public without restrictions regardless of owners thereof;

5) **spatial planning for the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof** – a document of spatial planning or a set of planning documents drawn up in accordance with the procedures specified in this Law and other regulatory enactments.

Section 2.

The purpose of this Law is to ensure the preservation, protection and qualitative development of the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof.

Section 3.

The task of this Law is to prescribe the status of the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof, the territory thereof, the procedures for the preservation, protection, use, and also implementation of development projects and the requirements for the development of spatial planning of the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof.

¹ The Parliament of the Republic of Latvia

Section 4.

(1) The territory of the historic centre of Riga, the area of which is 438,3 hectares, and the territory of the protection zone of the historic centre of Riga, the area of which is 1574,2 hectares, is a part of the territory of the City of Riga. Boundaries of both referred to territories are specified in accordance with the boundary plan provided for in Annex 1 of this Law and the description of boundaries provided for in Annex 2 of this Law.

(2) The historic centre of Riga is a part of a cultural monument of State significance. The historic centre of Riga is included in the World Heritage List of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. Preservation and protection of the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof shall be regulated by this Law, the law On Protection of Cultural Monuments, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's Convention (1972) Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and other regulatory enactments.

Section 5.

(1) Any activity which may cause destruction or damage of cultural and historical values to be preserved and protected and located in the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof, is prohibited therein.

(2) The following authentic cultural and historical values existing in the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof shall be preserved and protected:

1) the structure of the historic planning (with high quality transformations performed in subsequent years);

2) the panorama and skyline, perspectives of the vistas;

3) the historical build up (particularly – groups of constructions of the Middle Ages, art nouveau and wood), the scale and character thereof;

4) the archaeological cultural layer;

5) the public outdoor space;

6) the system of greenery and green zones;

7) the historical watercourses and water reservoirs;

8) the historical land surfacing (pavements, gravel paths, etc.);

9) the historical elements of amenities.

(3) Transformation of the cultural and historical values to be preserved in the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof shall be admissible if performance of the necessary transformation is the only way to ensure the development of the city and if the transformation does not result in lowering of the cultural and historical value of the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof.

(4) Conversion of such historical residential buildings or re-planning of storeys of such buildings, which results in the irreversible loss of an opportunity to use the respective building for habitation, shall not be admissible in the historic centre of Riga. This provision shall not apply to the first storeys, basements, and semi-basements of historical residential buildings and also residential buildings in courtyards if they are not suitable for living due to the arrangement or disposition thereof.

(5) Modern, high quality architectural and environmental design objects may be created, as well as monuments may be placed in the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof, taking into account the following provisions: the location selected for the object does not contradict with the structure of city planning of the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof; the character, scale, rhythm of the historical group of buildings, the traditional selection of materials and the atmosphere created by architecture is respected; the object blends with the historical environment.

(6) Such transport, engineering communications, and infrastructure transformations are prohibited in the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof due to which the cultural and historical values of historic gardens, parks, and cemeteries are lost irreversibly or the area of such territories is reduced, and also the use of such territories or parts thereof is changed in a way that does not comply with the objective to preserve cultural and historical values. Boundaries of historic gardens, parks, and cemeteries shall be determined by the Administration of National Cultural Heritage.

(7) If a tree forming the system of greenery and green zones dies or is arbitrarily felled in the historic centre of Riga or the protection zone thereof, the land owner has the obligation to plant a new equivalent or more valuable tree within one year. The precise location, species, size and conditions of care of the tree to be planted shall be determined by the authority of the Riga City Council responsible for gardens which shall co-ordinate them with the Administration of National Cultural Heritage. Trees and other plantings, which are applicable to the system of greenery and green zones of the historic centre of Riga, shall be determined in the local plan of the historic centre of Riga following co-ordination with the Administration of National Cultural Heritage.

(8) If a culturally and historically unique, very valuable or valuable building is damaged in such a way that its cultural and historical value has been lost and it cannot be renovated and restored, only a building of the same size and the same building materials may be built in its place, maintaining the existing authentic building elements with cultural and historical value.

[27 April 2017; 20 September 2018]

Section 6.

The territory of the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof, which concurrently is also the territory of the free port of Riga in accordance with the Free Port of Riga Law, shall be built up or otherwise transformed in conformity with the provisions of this Law.

Section 7.

The Cabinet shall issue regulations regarding the preservation, protection, and use of the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof, transformation of the cultural and historical environment, as well as the procedures for the implementation of development projects in specifying the requirements corresponding to the value of the respective cultural and historical environment (hereinafter – the Cabinet Regulations Regarding the Preservation and Protection of the Historic Centre of Riga).

Section 8.

(1) Current and planned (permitted) use of the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof demonstrated in writing and in graphical form, the restrictions on use, the requirements for the preservation of cultural and historical environment and historical values shall be determined by the local plan for the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof (hereinafter – the local plan for the historic centre of Riga).

(2) The requirements, the boundaries of territories and objects specified in the local plan for the historic centre of Riga may be specified more precisely in the detailed plan for city blocks or groups of blocks.

(3) [27 April 2017]

[27 April 2017]

Section 9.

(1) The Riga City Council shall develop and approve the local plan for the historic centre of Riga in the form of binding regulations, taking into account this Law, the Spatial Development Planning Law, Cabinet Regulation Regarding the Preservation and Protection of the Historic Centre of Riga, and other laws and regulations, and also the requirements of the Administration of National Cultural Heritage, recommendations of the Latvian National Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (hereinafter – the Latvian National Commission).

(2) Prior to its approval at the Riga City Council, the draft local plan for the historic centre of Riga shall, be co-ordinated with the Administration of National Cultural Heritage, and if the Administration does not have any objections it shall be promoted for approval at the Riga City Council. Concurrently the draft local plan for the historic centre of Riga shall be sent for examination to the Council for Preservation and Development of Riga Historic Centre.

(3) The Administration of National Cultural Heritage or any other interested person shall propose to the Minister for Environmental Protection and Regional Development the suspension of the binding regulations of the Riga City Council by which the local plan for the historic centre of Riga has been approved if:

1) the requirements specified in the Law regarding the procedures for the development and co-ordination of the local plan for the historic centre of Riga have not been complied with;

2) the local plan for the historic centre of Riga is in contradiction with the provisions of this Law, the law On Protection of Cultural Monuments, the Protection Zone Law or other laws and regulations.

[16 December 2010; 27 April 2017; 20 September 2018]

Section 10.

(1) In order to promote the co-operation between authorities and taking of decisions in issues related to the preservation, protection and development of the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof, a Council for Preservation and Development of Riga Historic Centre (hereinafter – the Council) shall be established, the composition (upon the proposal of the Minister for Culture) and by-laws of which shall be approved by the Cabinet.

(2) The Council shall be a public consultative authority consisting of ten members:

1) The head of the Administration of National Cultural Heritage;

2) an official of the Administration of National Cultural Heritage who is responsible for accounting and researching cultural monuments;

3) an archaeologist or architect of the Administration of National Cultural Heritage;

4) the head of the authority of the Riga City Council responsible for the protection of cultural monuments;

5) an official of the responsible authority of the Riga City Council responsible for the development of the historic centre of Riga;

6) an official of the responsible authority of the Riga City Council responsible for the planning of the City of Riga;

7) a specialist invited by the Minister for Culture;

8) a representative of the Latvian National Commission;

9) a representative of the Latvian Association of Architects;

10) a representative of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development.

(3) Composition of the Council shall be approved for a period of three years. Members of the Council shall elect the Chairperson of the Council from among themselves for a period of three years.

(4) The technical and organisational activity of the Council shall be ensured by the Administration of National Cultural Heritage.
[16 December 2010; 20 September 2018]

Section 11.

The following shall be within the competence of the Council:

1) to promote the development and implementation of the local plan for the historic centre of Riga;

2) to provide an opinion to the Administration of National Cultural Heritage and the responsible authority of the Riga City Council on the developed local plan for the historic centre of Riga or the draft amendments thereto prior to its approval at the Riga City Council;

3) to evaluate the intentions to build new objects, reconstruct or demolish buildings and structures, and also place and restore monuments in the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof and to provide opinions on the impact of the respective intention on the cultural and historical environment to the Administration of National Cultural Heritage and the authority of the Riga City Council responsible for the protection of cultural monuments if any of the aforementioned authorities has requested it. In taking a decision regarding the respective matter, the opinion provided by the Council must be taken into account;

3¹) to provide an opinion on matters related to the boundaries, territory and use thereof of historic gardens, parks, and cemeteries in the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof;

4) to provide an opinion, if the opinions of the Administration of National Cultural Heritage and the authority of the Riga City Council responsible for the protection of cultural monuments differ when examining a matter of the preservation, protection or development of the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof, and if any of the aforementioned authorities has requested it. In taking a decision regarding the respective issue, the opinion provided by the Council shall be taken into account;

5) to propose the respective authorities to control whether the funds which the State or local government authorities gain from renting (leasing) cultural monuments belonging to State or local government and existing in the territory of the historic centre of Riga, as well as other revenues are being used in accordance with the requirements of this Law;

6) to provide an opinion on the draft laws and regulations governing the preservation, protection and development of the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof;

7) to recommend the city blocks and groups of blocks existing in the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof for which a detailed plan should be developed;

8) to propose the examination of other matters related to the preservation, protection and development of the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof in the respective authorities, as well as participate in the examination of such matters and provide opinions thereon.

[27 April 2017; 20 September 2018]

Section 12.

The Council is entitled to receive free of charge the information necessary for deciding on matters within its competence from the State and local government authorities and the author or submitter of the construction intention.

Section 13.

The Council is entitled to receive information regarding the use of the funds which the State or local government authorities gain from renting (leasing) cultural monuments belonging to the State or local government and existing in the territory of the historic centre of Riga, as well as regarding the use of other revenues provided for in this Law from the State and local government authorities free of charge.

Section 14.

Construction of new buildings in the public outdoor space of the historic centre of Riga shall be admissible only following the acquisition of projects in an open call for architectural proposals, and also their public evaluation, receipt of a positive opinion from the Council and co-ordination with the Administration of National Cultural Heritage. The requirement for organising open calls for architectural ideas shall not apply to buildings for temporary use and temporary buildings, and also to the excellent architectural intentions of new buildings whereon a unanimous opinion has been received from the Administration of National Cultural Heritage, Riga City Construction Board, and the Council.

[27 April 2017; 20 September 2018]

Section 15.

Prior to co-ordination of the construction intention, the Administration of National Cultural Heritage in co-operation with the Latvian National Commission shall inform the World Heritage Committee of the intended significant transformations of the cultural and historical environment in the historic centre of Riga and the protection zone thereof that may affect its cultural and historical value. Information shall be provided to the World Heritage Committee as soon as possible in order to ensure the preservation of the historic centre of Riga as the world cultural heritage.

[27 April 2017; 20 September 2018]

Section 16.

Funds, which the State or local government authorities gain from renting (leasing) cultural monuments belonging to the State or local government and existing in the territory of the historic centre of Riga, fines for the damaging and destruction of such cultural monuments, and also compensation of the losses related to such cultural monuments shall be paid into the State or local government basic budget.

[19 May 2005]

Section 17.

[27 April 2017]

Transitional Provisions

1. By 31 December 2003 the Cabinet shall issue the regulations referred to in Section 7 of this Law.

2. Riga City Council shall implement the necessary measures so that the spatial plan for the historic centre of Riga would be developed, accepted and come into effect not later than on 1 July 2004.

[20 September 2018]

3. The Cabinet shall approve the composition of the Council and by-laws thereof within three months after the Law has come into force.

4. Provisions of Section 16 of this Law shall come into force on 1 January 2004.

5. Until coming into effect of the spatial plan for the historic centre of Riga it shall be prohibited to construct new buildings in the public outdoor space of the historic centre of Riga (except in the cases referred to in Paragraph 8 of these Transitional Provisions), demolish historic buildings (except for the buildings in a state of disrepair if they pose a threat to the health or life of people in the public outdoor space), reconstruct buildings and structures, as well as place and restore monuments if it significantly alters the cultural and historical environment.

6. Intentions to construct new buildings, demolish historic buildings, reconstruct buildings and structures, as well as place and restore monuments (hereinafter in this Paragraph and Paragraph 7 of the Transitional Provisions – the construction intention) in the historic centre of Riga, to which the prohibitions referred to in Paragraph 5 of the Transitional Provisions do not apply, shall be examined at the Council until coming into effect of the spatial plan for the historic centre of Riga. The Council is entitled to endorse the construction intention or to request for the necessary corrections to be made and documents of the construction intention to be re-submitted to the Council for examination, or to reject the construction intention. The Council shall examine the submitted proposals not less than once a month. The Council shall take a decision by a majority vote not later than within 30 days after submission of the documents of the construction intention. Decisions taken by the Council shall be available to the public. If the Council rejects the submitted construction intention, implementation of the project shall be suspended until the coming into effect of the spatial plan for the historic centre of Riga or a detailed plan for a city block or a group of blocks of the particular territory.

7. The Council decisions taken in accordance with the procedures specified in Paragraph 6 of these Transitional Provisions shall be sent to the Riga City Council, the Administration of National Cultural Heritage and the author of the construction intention. Decisions may be contested to the Ministry of Culture or appealed to the court in accordance with the procedures specified by the Law.

[20 September 2018]

8. Until coming into effect of the spatial plan for the historic centre of Riga, but in cases where a detailed plan for a city block or a group of blocks should be developed based on the spatial plan for the historic centre of Riga – until coming into effect of the respective detailed plan, the Council shall approve a list of such places of significance to urban planning to be potentially developed, where the construction of new objects in the public outdoor space shall be permitted only following the acquisition of projects in an open call for architectural proposals, and also their public evaluation, examination at the Council and co-ordination with the Administration of National Cultural Heritage.

[20 September 2018]

9. Until coming into effect of the spatial plan for the historic centre of Riga, the Ministry of Culture shall be responsible for the material and financial provision necessary for the performance of tasks delegated to the Council under Paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 of these Transitional Provisions, as well as for legal and useful fulfilment of the tasks in supervising it.

10. Natural persons or legal persons may continue the construction works in the historic centre of Riga, which were legally commenced until coming into force of this Law.

11. Owners of the buildings existing in the historic centre of Riga who have commenced and performed conversion or re-planning of buildings until coming into force of this law, taking into account the procedures specified in laws and regulations, shall, until 1 July 2004, arrange the documentation of buildings according to the type of use of the respective building indicated in documentation of the project.

12. The Administration of National Cultural Heritage shall determine the boundaries of historic gardens, parks, and cemeteries not later than by 31 May 2020. If the transformations of the cultural and historical environment provided for in Section 5, Paragraph six of this Law, which may affect specific historic gardens, parks or cemeteries the boundaries whereof have not yet been determined, are planned within the period until the determination of the historic boundaries in the historic centre of Riga or the protection zone thereof, the Administration of National Cultural Heritage shall determine the relevant boundaries not later than within three months following the receipt of an application from the initiator of the transformations of the cultural and historical environment.

[27 April 2017; 20 September 2018]

13. The Riga City Construction Board shall examine the construction intentions of engineering structures in the territory of gardens, parks, or cemeteries located in the historic centre of Riga or the protection zone thereof for which a construction permit has been issued by 31 May 2017, whereas the building design has not been submitted to endorse compliance with the prescribed design conditions. The Riga City Construction Board shall assess the compliance of intended construction work with the requirements laid down in Section 5, Paragraph six of this Law and shall decide on the necessity to supplement the design conditions included in the construction permit.

[27 April 2017]

This Law has been adopted by the *Saeima* on 29 May 2003.

President

V. Vīķe-Freiberga

Riga, 11 June 2003

Boundary Plan



- Boundaries of the Historic Centre of Riga
- - - - Boundaries of the Protection Zone of the Historic Centre of Riga

Description of the Boundaries

Boundaries of the Historic Centre of Riga

The site of the world cultural heritage – THE HISTORIC CENTRE OF RIGA – shall include the territory, which is bounded by: Hanzas iela, E. Melngaiļa iela, K. Valdemāra iela, Palīdzības iela, A. Briāna iela, Tallinas iela, A. Čaka iela, Matīsa iela, Avotu iela, Lāčplēša iela, E. Birznieka-Upīša iela, Elizabetes iela, Satekles iela, Marijas iela, Gogoļa iela, Turgeņeva iela, Krasta iela, 11. novembra krastmala, Muitas iela, Citadeles iela, the green belt of the City Canal and the territory adjacent to Eksporta iela on the eastern side of Andrejosta.

Boundaries of the Protection Zone of the Historic Centre of Riga

The protection zone of the site of the world cultural heritage – THE HISTORIC CENTRE OF RIGA – shall include the territory, which is bounded by: Salu bridge, turn to Mūkusalas iela, Bieķensalas iela, Jelgavas iela, continuation of the route of Jelgavas iela to Raņķa dambis, Raņķa dambis, southern and western embankment of the Āgenskalna Bay, western embankment of Āzene, western embankment of Zunds, the median of Roņu pond and its extension thereof across the River Daugava to the middle of the Eksportosta mole, from there to the intersection of Eksporta iela and Lugažu iela, Lugažu iela, southern part of the railway branch line of the Port to the intersection with Ganību dambis, the railway branch line of the Port to the south from Bukultu iela to Laktas iela, the railway branch line of the Port to the north from Laktas iela to the intersection with the Saulkrasti–Rīga railway, the Saulkrasti–Rīga railway to the intersection with Lāčplēša iela, Lāčplēša iela, Salu bridge.

If the boundary of the historic centre of Riga or the protection zone thereof in the description is specified on a street, the build-up of the street on the side of this territory and the space of the street until the centre line of the street shall be included in the boundaries of the respective territory.