



Latvian Presidency  
of the Council of the  
European Union

EU2015.LV



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE  
REPUBLIC OF LATVIA



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
REPUBLIC OF LATVIA



# EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

## Rural and Agricultural Advisory Systems: Best Practices and Experience in the Eastern Partnership



Riga, 15 – 16 April 2015



Ltd "Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre"



Latvian Rural Network



Латвийский Центр сельских консультаций и образования

# **LRATC**

## **Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre**

**Development of rural advisory  
system in Latvia: challenges and  
changes**

**Riga, 15-16 April 2015**

**Kaspars Zurins**

## LOCATION OF LATVIA

## МЕСТО НАХОЖДЕНИЕ ЛАТВИИ



Territory: 64.6 sq.km

Population: 2 million

Language: Latvian

Highest elevation: 311.6m

Lowest point: sea level

Internet users: 76 of 100

Retirement age: 62

EU and NATO member since 2004

WTO member since 1999

State language: Latvian, widely used:

Russian, English and German

Территория:

64.6 км<sup>2</sup>

Население:

2,0 миллиона

Язык:

латышский

Высшая точка:

311.6 м

Нижняя точка:

уровень моря

Пользователи интернета:

76 из 100

Пенсионный возраст:

62

Парламентская республика

Член ЕС и НАТО с 2004, ВТО с 1999

Государственный язык: латышский, распространены русский, английский и немецкий



## РИГА – МЕТРОПОЛЬ СЕВЕРНОЙ ЕВРОПЫ

Рига – крупнейший город в Прибалтике

Количество жителей в городах Северной Европы  
(тыс. жителей, включая пригород)  
по данным национальных статистических агентств

Стокгольм 881

**Рига 643**

Осло 613

Копенгаген 608

Хельсинки 559

Вильнюс 537

Таллинн 395

Stockholm

Riga

Oslo

Copenhagen

Helsinki

Vilnius

Tallinn

# #2 В РЕГИОНЕ

Riga is the Metropole of  
Northern Europe

Riga is the biggest city in the  
Baltic countries

Number of residents in the  
north European cities (thou.  
residents, including suburbia)

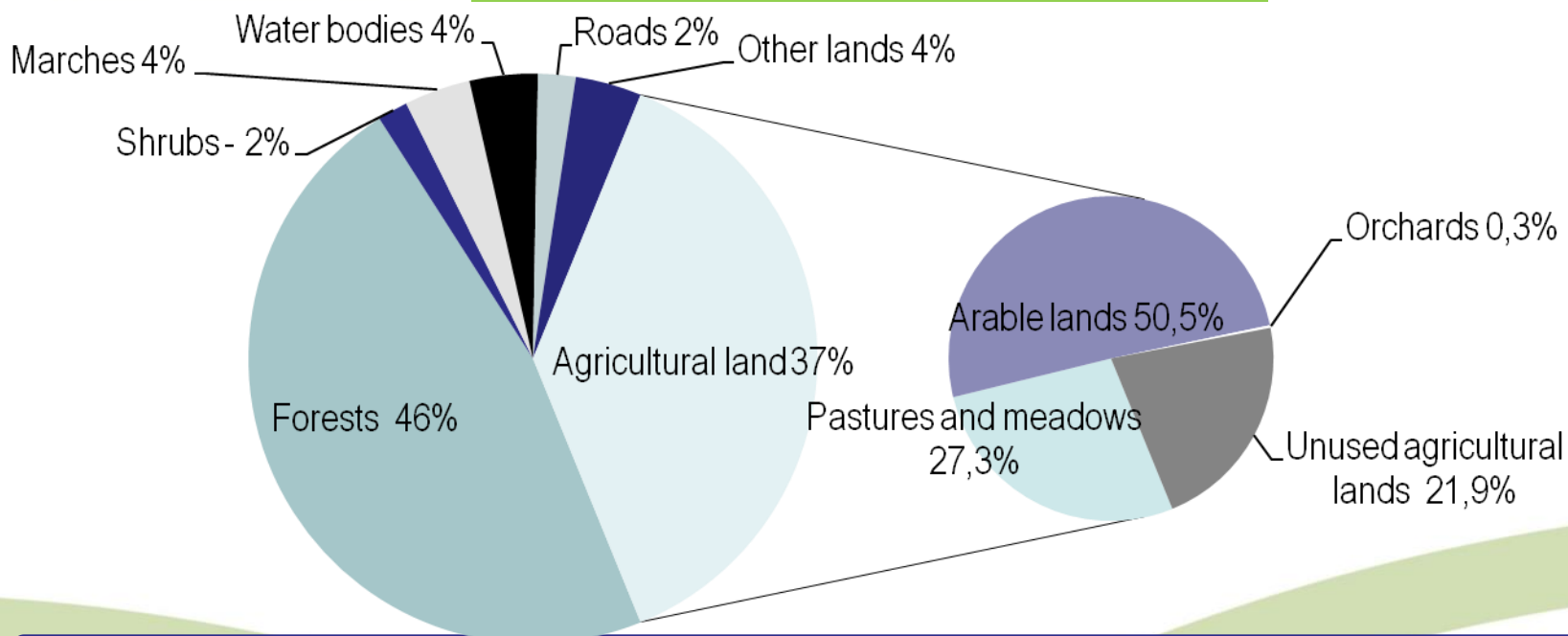
In the region



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# Green Latvia

Total area of Latvia - 64 559 sq.km



69% of the territory of Latvia is green

Latvian agriculture is extensive/conventional in nature. Latvia is No 5 from the end in terms of use of fertilizers, hence, green – organic products are grown in Latvia.

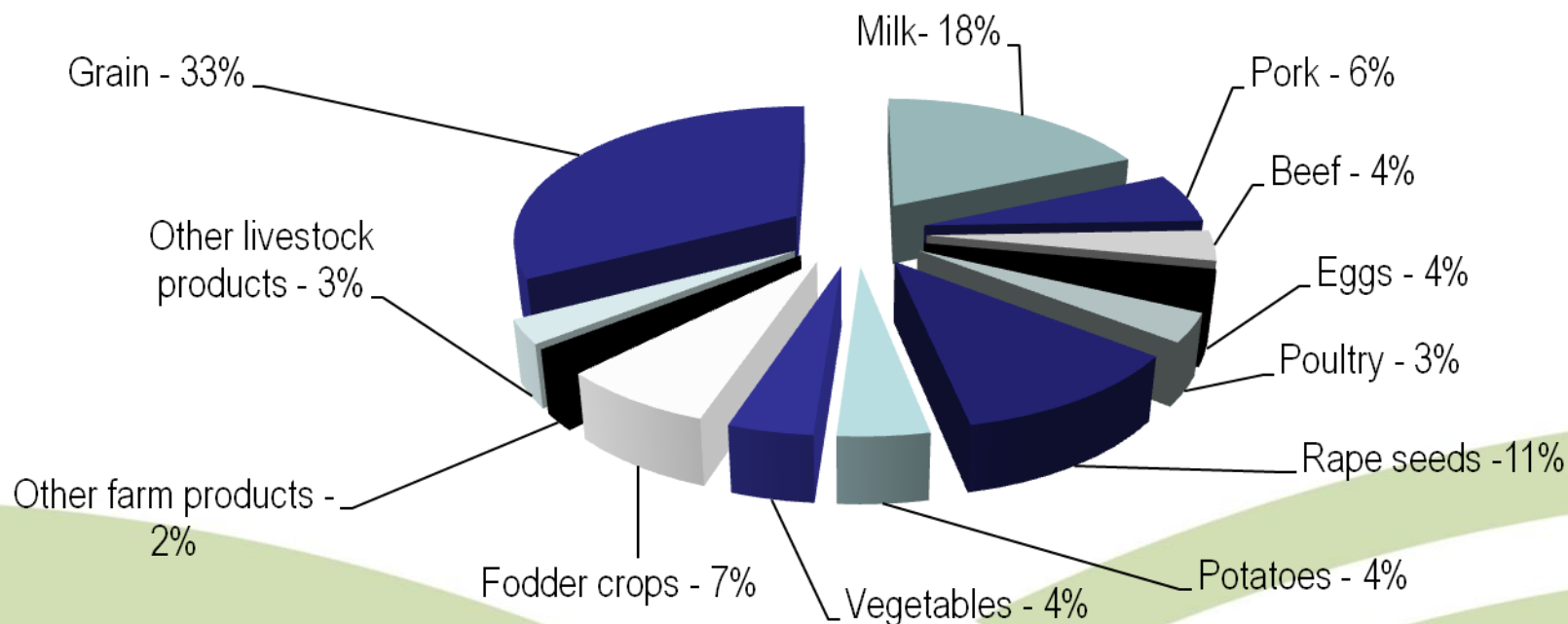
According to the environmental indicators of the Yale Univ. and Univ. of Columbia, Latvia became the 2nd greenest country in the world.



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# Composition of Agricultural Output

Total output in 2012 – 1.6 млрд. USD



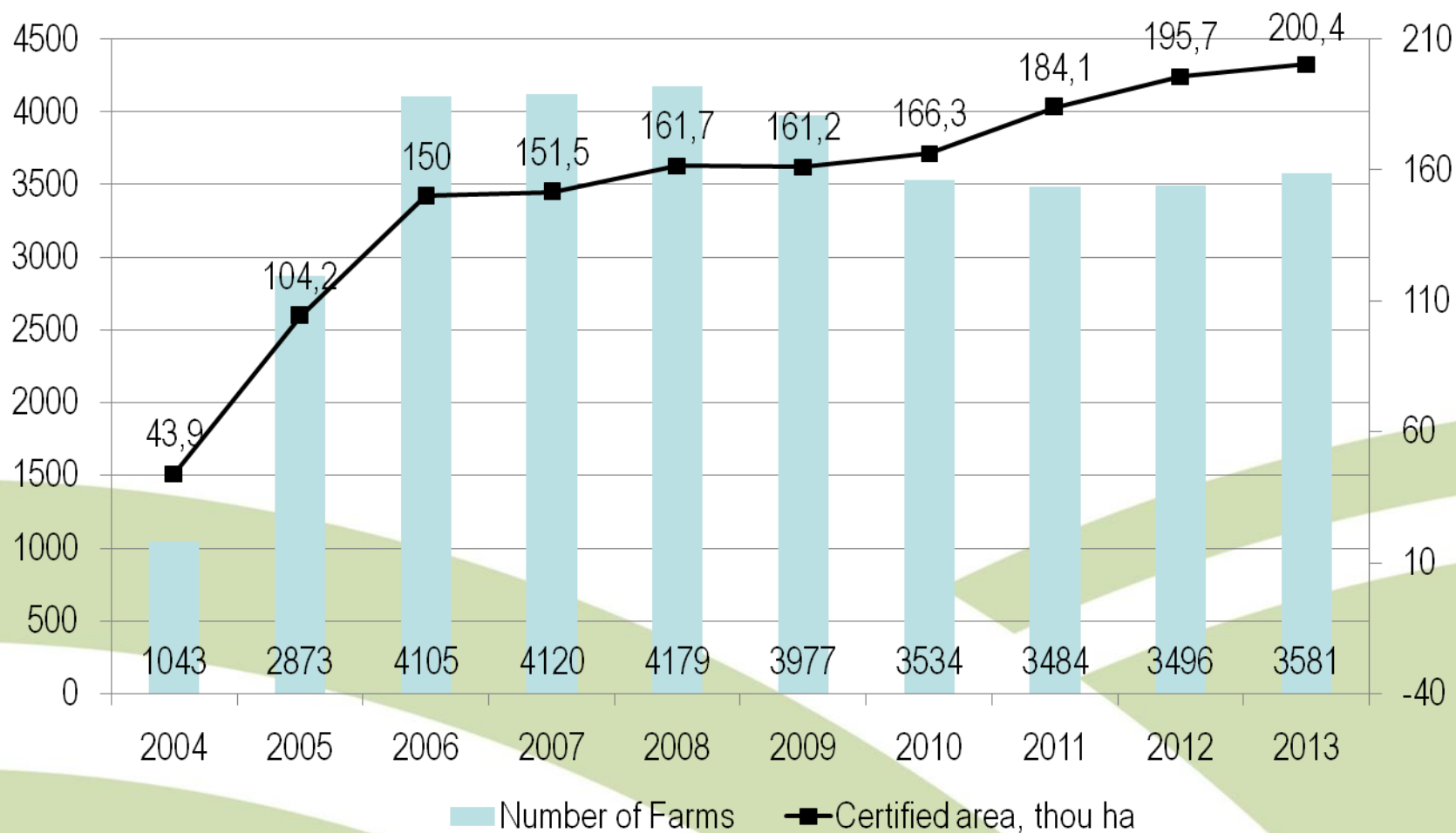
94% Latvian municipalities declared themselves free of GMOs.

16% are fit for cattle farming, vegetation period in Latvia is 5 months, no need for additional feed as pastures are available.



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# Biological Agriculture



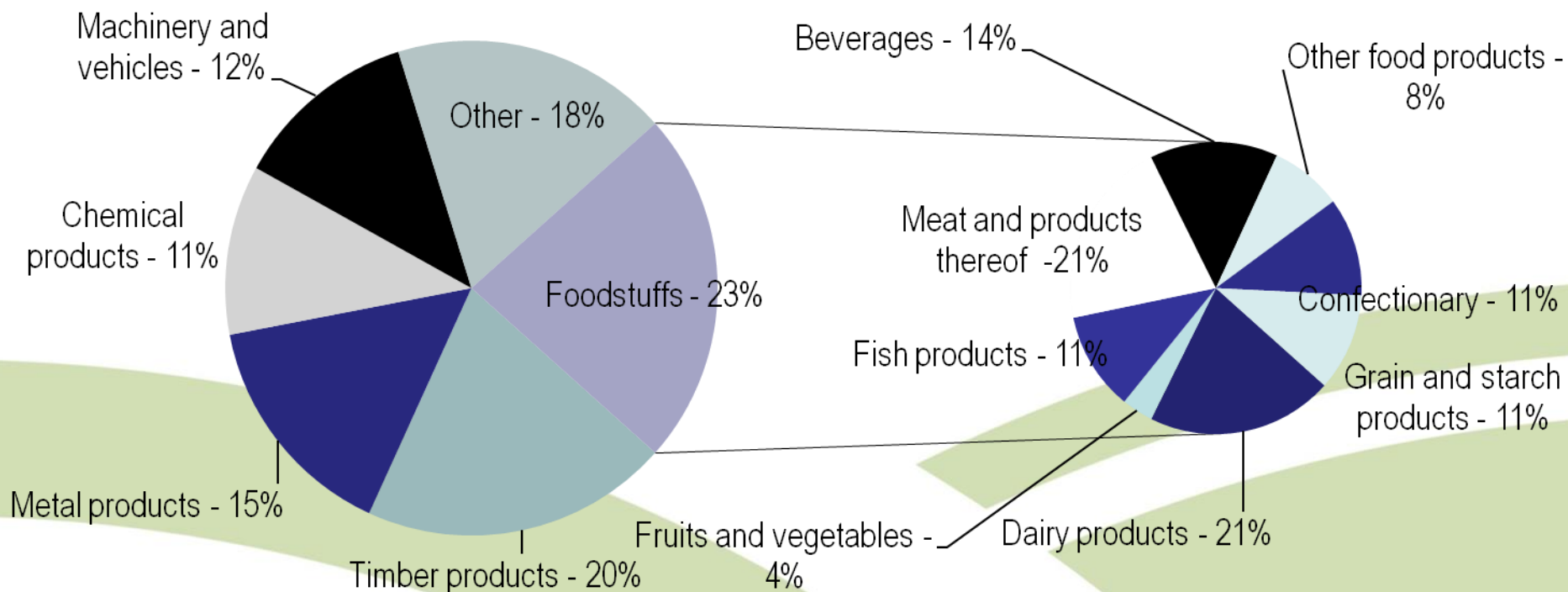


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# Composition of Food Industry

Total number of food producers – 731

Total Output in 2013 - USD 1.9 billion



Quality of food products meet high EU standards.

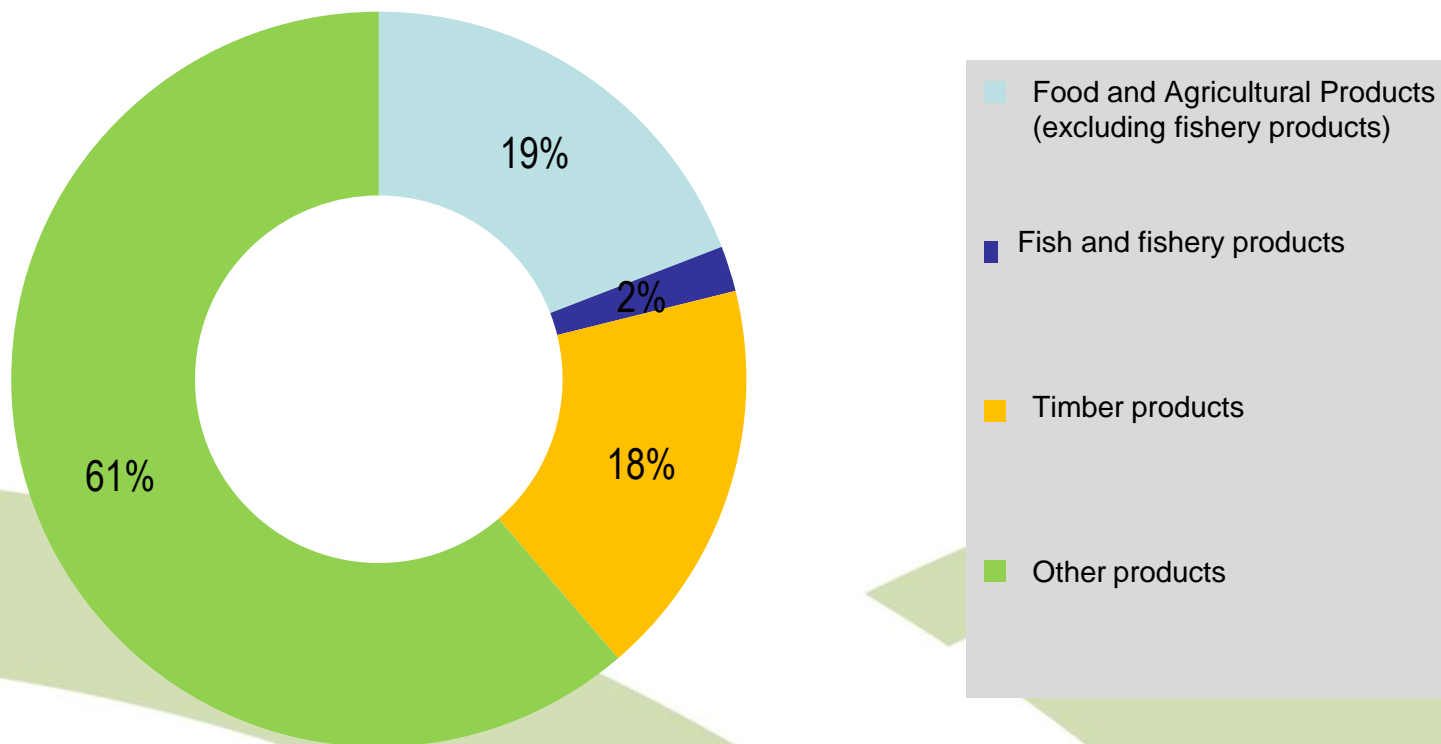




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# Structure of Latvian Exports

Total exports in 2013 - USD 14.8 billion



Share of agriculture in the structure of GDP in 2013 – 1.6%, food industry – 3.1%, fisheries – 0.8%, forestries – 3.2%.



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## *Briefly about LRATC*

Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre (LRATC) was founded on February 1, 1991

<i>1991 – 1997</i>	State budgetary institution
<i>1997 – 2004</i>	Non-profit organization
<i>2004 – onwards</i>	Limited Liability Company

### Company owners:

- 1% of basic assets owned by the LATVIAN FARMERS FEDERATION
- 99% of basic capital is owned by the government

### Structure of the Company:

- National center
- Regional centers – for rural development (26 district bureaus) and for development of services at 26 district bureaus



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# 1991 – 1997

Owner – State budgetary institution

Services:

- Individual purchase and sales services;
- Accounting;
- Individual professional consultations;
- Trainings
- Development projects



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# 1997 – 2004

## Non-profit organization

### Owners:

- 1% of basic capital is owned by the Latvian Farmers' Federation
- 99% of basic capital is owned by the government

### Services:

- Demonstration farms;
- Interest groups;
- Development of services;



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# 2004 – 2015

Limited liability company

Owners:

- 1% of basic capital is owned by the Latvian Farmers' Federation
- 99% of basic capital is owned by the government

Services:

- Rural development;
- Forestry consultations;
- Fishery consultations.





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# Implemented International Projects

- ✓ Improved operation of crop and livestock farming;
- ✓ Rural development;
- ✓ Development of rural tourism;
- ✓ Environmentally-friendly farming.



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# Improved Operation of Crop and Livestock Farming

## Leonardo da Vinci project: Multilingual Programme of Professional Education for Consultants of Biological Agriculture in the Baltic countries

*In collaboration with institutions related to rural development and extension in Lithuania and Estonia*

Project goal – design common programme for training on bioagriculture for the Baltic countries



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# Development of Rural Environment

## **Leonardo da Vinci project: Sharing Experience between Rural Development Experts in the European countries**

Project Goal – gaining new experience related to LEADER practices in other countries and activities of local initiative groups. In the framework of the project many rural development experts visited Netherlands



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## Development of Rural Environment

### INTERREG IIC Project - *European Network of Rural Advisers / RENE*

**Goal of the Project** – facilitate exchange of information, experience, and knowledge about the tools, which facilitate development in the European countries as well as problems in the rural areas. In the framework of the project, LRATC experts visited many activities to share international experience and organized international meetings in Latvia with the institutions related to rural development and extension



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# Development of Rural Environment

## **INTERREG IIIC Active Learning for Identity and Competence of European Rural Areas / ALICERA)**

In collaboration with 7 institutions, which facilitate development in the rural environment (in Austria, France, Latvia, Hungary and Germany).

Project Goal – strengthening link between urban and rural residents and educating urban residents about rural processes. Project implementation in collaboration with Extension centers of Tukums, Jelgava, Limbazi, Valmiera and Valka.

As a result of the project, a network consisting of over 60 sites was created, offering stakeholders introduction into 6 different themes, e.g. “From seed to bread”





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# Development of Rural Tourism

## INTERREG IIIA Project - Development of tourism near the border river Memele/Nemunele) / DETOMENE

In collaboration with:  
Bauss Agricultural Extension Center,  
Lithuanian Agricultural Extension Center,  
Local initiative group of Birj district (Lithuania).

Project goal – facilitate development of tourism and rural areas on the banks of border river Memele/Nemunele and sharing experience between Latvia and Lithuania



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# Environmentally-friendly Farming

## INTERREG IIIC Project Hansa Network for Water Directive

Project goal – facilitate implementation of the main EU Water Directive in the Latvian Agriculture based on the international progress and sharing experience



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# Mission of LRATC

- Facilitate development of agriculture, improving professional and economic knowledge of rural entrepreneurs
- Establishment of advisory centers in all regions of Latvia
- Enhancing competitiveness of the Latvian rural residents in the European Union
- Arranging advanced training and retraining courses for the staff of the institutions subordinated to the Ministry of Agriculture



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# LRATC ADMINISTRATION (11)

**Rural Development**

**Training center (55)  
Forestry advisors  
(35)**

**Agricultural  
advisors**

**26 service centers  
(48)**

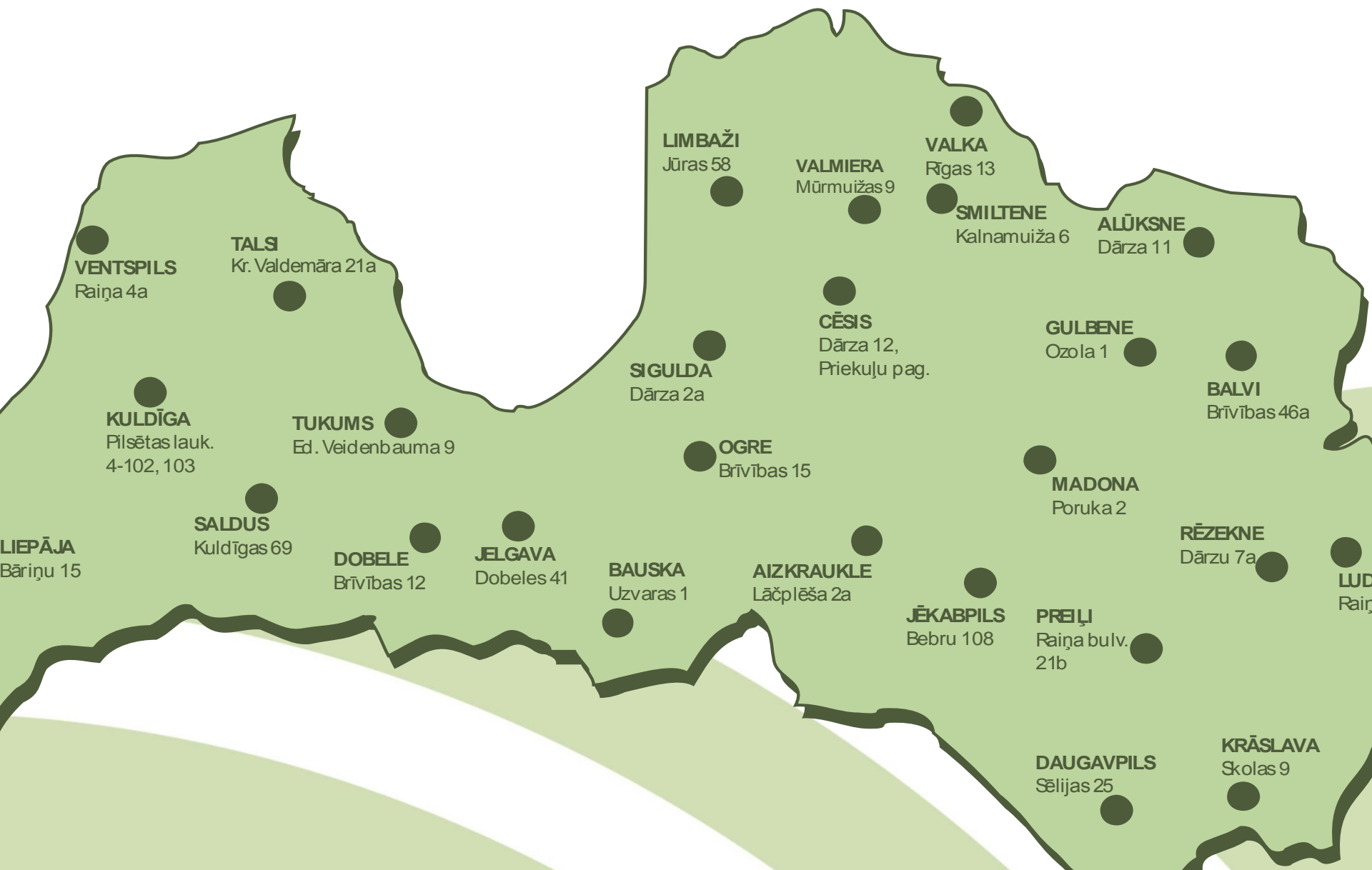
**26 service points  
(197)**

**Advisors in  
municipalities  
(118)**



SIA "Latvijas Lauku konsultāciju un izglītības centrs"

# LRATC







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- In each region of Latvia – rural area development expert





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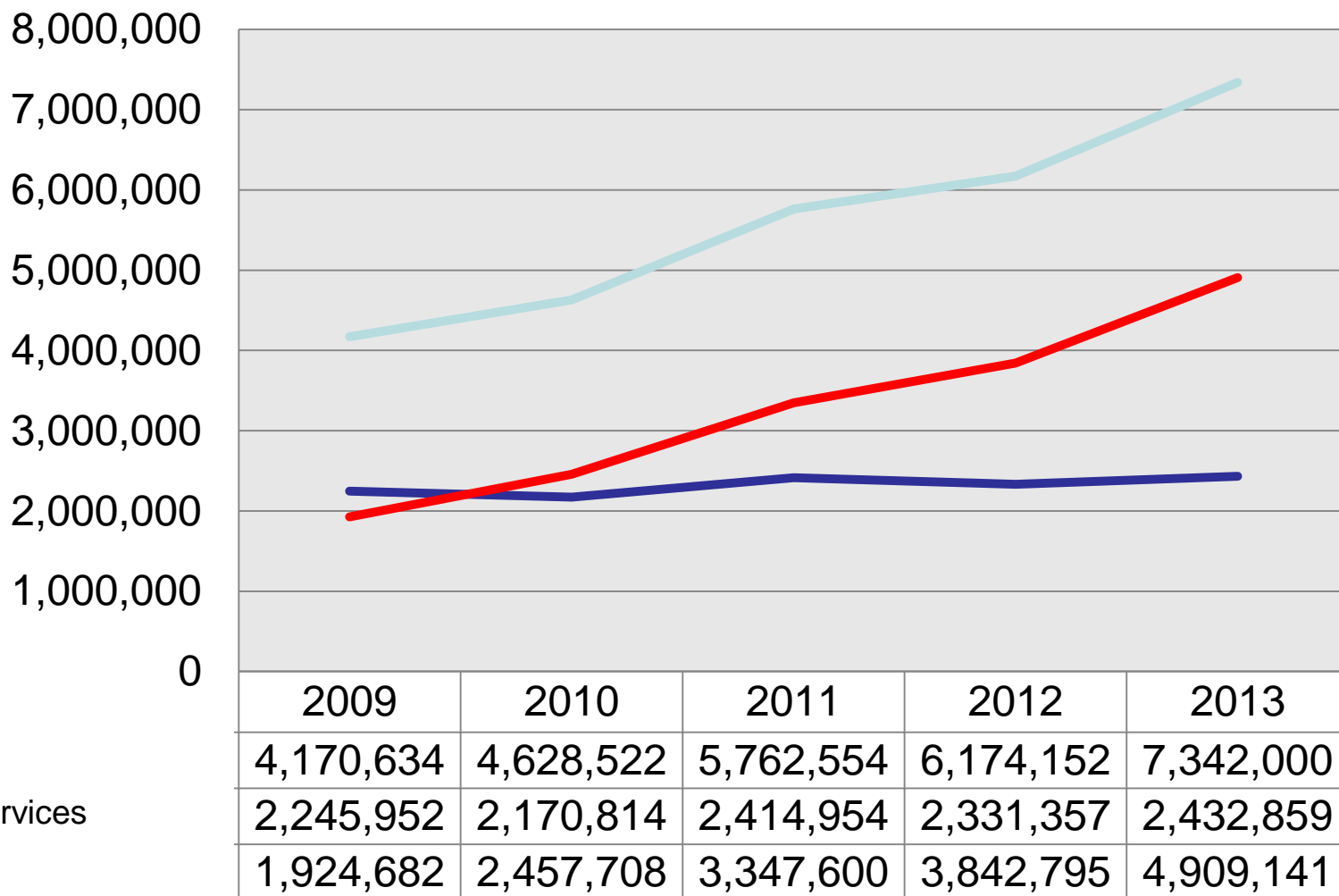
# Work directions




- Accounting and Finance
- Crop farming
- Livestock farming
- Economics
- Information
- Continuous education
- Rural development
- Project and Development
- Forestry
- Fishery



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## Financial Turnover, EUR



	General
	Commercial services
	Public Finance



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# Cooperation

- Organizing courses and seminars;
- Project design and implementation.





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# Thank you for attention!

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