



## FINANCING AND DEBT

- ◆ **The Bank of Latvia so far has purchased EUR 6.889 billion worth of Latvian and supranational securities under the European Central Bank's Public Sector Purchase Program.** In March 2017, the Bank of Latvia bought securities for EUR 6.4 million. (RĪGA, Apr 13, Bank of Latvia)

## BANKING SECTOR

- ◆ **The Latvian government upheld the bill proposed by the Finance Ministry to restrict financial transactions by high-risk customers in the Latvian finance sector.** The Cabinet of Ministers upheld the draft amendments to the Law on Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism aimed at strengthening the Latvian finance system by reducing the number of risky transactions with high-risk customers that meet the definition of a shell company. The bill is also intended to increase the exchange of information between the financial institutions and the law enforcement agencies. The bill has been labeled as urgent which means that it would take effect on the very next day after its promulgation. The Latvian parliament is yet to vote on adoption of the proposed legislative amendments. (RĪGA, Apr 10, BNS)

## MACROECONOMICS

- ◆ **During the first two months of this year Latvia exported EUR 1.892 billion worth of goods, up 14.8 % or EUR 244 million against the same period last year, while Latvian imports grew 8.2 % or EUR 164.2 million to EUR 2.178 billion.** In February 2018, Latvian exports dropped 2.7 % from January 2018 but rose 11.6 % against February 2017 to EUR 932.694 million. Imports were up 0.1 % from January 2018 and rose 8.4 % against February 2017 to EUR 1.089 billion. (RĪGA, Apr 9, [CSB](#))
- ◆ **The average level of consumer prices in Latvia in March this year rose 1.2 % from February 2018, while they rose 2.2 % compared to March 2017.** During the last 12 months, consumer prices rose 2.6 % against the previous 12-month period. In March, the greatest pressure on the consumer price changes was put by the growth in prices of clothing and footwear, alcoholic beverages and tobacco products, goods and services related to recreation and culture, goods and services related to transport, as well as drop in prices of food and non-alcoholic beverages. (RĪGA, Apr 10, [CSB](#))
- ◆ **At the end of March 2017, the registered unemployment rate in Latvia was 8.3 %.** In March this year, Latvia's registered unemployment rate was down to 7 %, decreasing by 0.1 percentage point from February, according to the information released by the State Employment Agency. (RĪGA, Apr 10, BNS/ State Employment Agency)
- ◆ **Latvia's current account of the balance of payments had a surplus of EUR 138 million in January-February this year or by 66.5 % more than in the respective period in 2017,** the Bank of Latvia said. (RĪGA, Apr 11, BNS/ Bank of Latvia)
- ◆ **In February 2017, Latvia showed the steepest industrial output growth in the European Union as compared to the same month a year ago.** In Latvia, industrial output increased by 8.7 % against February 2016. (RĪGA, Apr 12, [Eurostat](#))

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