

**TAKE IT
TO THE
WORLD**

GROW YOUR BUSINESS GLOBALLY

The Baltic States: Language, Culture and Etiquette

Ms Santa Plivča, Senior Market Adviser
British Embassy Riga
Santa.Plivca@fco.gov.uk

June 2010

Similarities

- Climate
- History
- Large urban population
- Membership in EU, WTO, NATO
- The Schengen Zone, EU external border
- Legal system (EU regulations)
- British Chambers of Commerce
- Significant influence from Scandinavia



Differences

- Languages
- Religion – Christian, in Lithuania dominance by Roman Catholics (79%)
- Ethnic groups
- Business and industry concentration
- Currency – LVL, LTL, EEK



Baltic business culture

- Close to western business style and habits
- Reserved behaviour
- Technologically savvy
- Ambitious – hungry to succeed and hard working
- Foreign businesses are well received
- English is the main business language
- Young people at high positions
- Usually quite flat organisations



Differences with the UK

- Expect to sign deals and start business rather quickly
- Lack of promotion and sales skills
- Civil Law and reliance on written contract
- Fast financial transactions
- Different scales – SME in UK may be a big company in the Baltic countries
- Different eating habits



Useful tips

- Follow all normal rules of doing business
- Research before you come
- Do not mix-up with the Balkans
- Be patient
- Straight to the point
- Avoid inappropriate jokes
- Fulfil your promises on time
- Follow-up, follow-up, follow-up





Thank you 😊

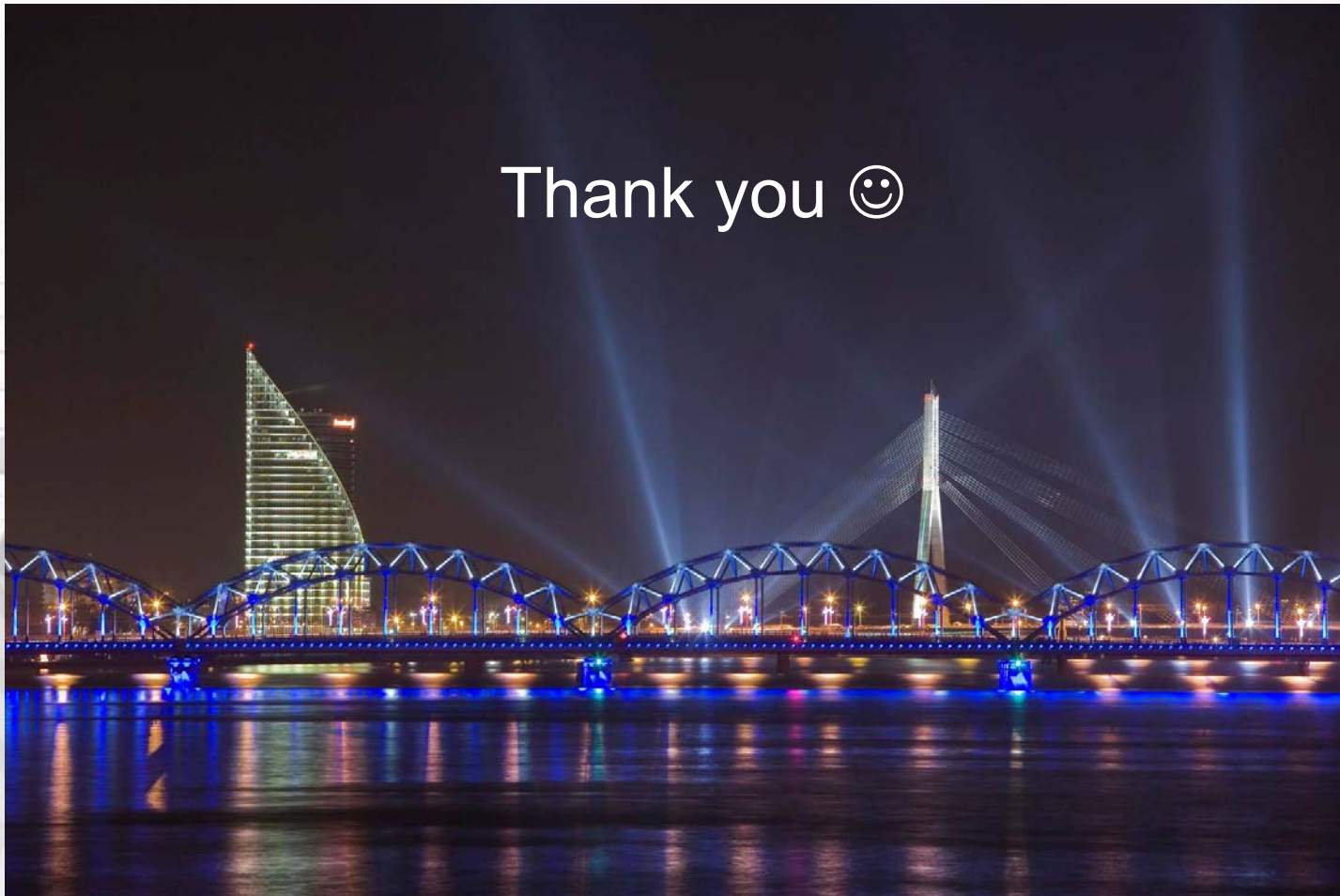


Photo by Imants Urtans
The Latvian Institute