

# Forest Industry

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With forests covering more than 50 % of the country's territory (almost double the world average), Latvia is one of the most forested EU member states. Over the last 80 years, the forested area has doubled while standing volume has increased 3.8 times, reaching 668 million cubic metres.

According to National Forest Inventory (NFI) data from 2014, the majority of Latvia's forest cover consists of deciduous trees, 55 % of total woodland.

About 49 % of forests are owned by the state and managed by state stock company *Latvijas Valsts Meži* (Latvian State Forests)

The relatively good health of Latvian forests compared with world averages gives them a substantial advantage. Furthermore, the area of regenerated forest is increasing. In 2018, a total area of 41 121 ha of forest was regenerated, of which 36 % was in State-owned forests and 64 % in private-sector forests.

More than 50 % of Latvian forests, including all State-owned forests, are certified in accordance with the PEFC system, and 50 companies in Latvia have obtained certification of their delivery chains from the same system. About 302 forest-sector enterprises and forest owners have certified their timber chain-of-custody systems according to FSC requirements and the amount of forestland that has been certified on the basis of FSC requirements exceeds 1 million hectares.

## FOREIGN TRADE

The forestry industry has always been Latvia's export leader. Exports of wood and its products was the most significant export sector in 2018, comprising 21 % of total export value. About 71 % of forestry-sector output is exported.

The foreign trade balance of the Latvian woodworking industry is positive, having reached EUR 1.7 billion in 2018. In 2018, the value of forest product exports was EUR 2.6 billion, 17 % higher than in 2017. In 2018, the value of forest products import was EUR 939 million.

Sawn wood, fuel wood, and roundwood had the biggest shares of export value, totalling EUR 735 million, EUR 351 million and EUR 298 million respectively.

The main export destinations traditionally are EU countries: the United Kingdom, Estonia, Germany and Sweden.

Latvia has one of the highest investment rates in Europe in wood and wood products and the most competitive labor force. Within the subsector, builders' carpentry has the highest investment rate. Recently, significant investments have also been made in the production of particle board, OSB.

[Latvian companies in industry](#)

[Database of Latvian exporters](#)

### Additional information at:

Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia: [www.csb.gov.lv](http://www.csb.gov.lv)

Ministry of Agriculture: [www.zm.gov.lv](http://www.zm.gov.lv)

Latvian Wood Industry Portal: [www.latvianwood.lv](http://www.latvianwood.lv)

JSC Latvijas Valsts Meži (Latvia's State Forests): [www.lvm.lv](http://www.lvm.lv)

Latvia State Forest Service: [www.vmd.gov.lv](http://www.vmd.gov.lv)

<https://www.liaa.gov.lv/en/trade/industries/forest>