Text consolidated by Valsts valodas centrs (State Language Centre) with amending laws of:

30 November 2015 [shall come into force on 1 January 2016];

23 November 2016 [shall come into force on 1 January 2017];

24 November 2020 [shall come into force on 1 January 2021.

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 Official Publications and Legal Information**

**Section 1. Purpose of the Law**

The purpose of the Law is to ensure the right of private persons to be informed of their rights and duties, regulating the proclamation, publication, and validity of and access to legal acts and official notices binding on them.

**Section 2. Official Gazette *Latvijas Vēstnesis* and Legal Status of the Information Published Therein**

(1) The official gazette *Latvijas Vēstnesis* (hereinafter – the official gazette) is the official gazette of the Republic of Latvia, and the information published therein is an official publication. Information in the official gazette shall be published electronically on the website www.vestnesis.lv in accordance with the procedures laid down in this Law and other laws and regulations.

(2) The official publication shall be publicly reliable and binding. No one can plead not knowing the legal acts or official notices published in the official gazette.

**Section 3. Information to be Published in the Official Gazette**

(1) External laws and regulations as well as other legal acts and official notices shall be published in the official gazette if their publication in this gazette is provided for by external laws and regulations. Binding regulations of local governments shall be published in the official gazette to the extent specified in the law On Local Governments.

(2) Information containing an official secret and restricted access information shall not be published in the official gazette.

(3) If an external regulatory enactment provides for the publication of legal acts of specific type, however, the particular legal act of the relevant type contains an official secret or restricted access information, it shall not be published.

**Section 4. Proclamation and Coming into Force of a Law**

(1) A law shall be proclaimed within the time period specified in the Constitution by publishing it in the official gazette.

(2) If in the cases provided for in the Constitution the Chairperson of the *Saeima* proclaims the law instead of the President, it shall be stated specifically.

(3) The time period for proclamation and the time period for coming into force of a law specified in the Constitution shall be counted from the day following the event that determines the beginning of the time period.

**Section 5. Entering into Effect and Publication of a Decision of the *Saeima***

A decision of the *Saeima* shall enter into effect at the time of taking thereof if another time period for entering into effect has not been specified in the decision itself. A decision of general significance taken by the *Saeima* or information regarding it shall be published in the official gazette.

**Section 6. Coming into Force and Publication of Legal Acts of the President**

A legal act issued by the President shall come into force at the time of signing thereof if it has not been specified otherwise in an external regulatory enactment. A legal act of general significance of the President or information regarding it shall be published in the official gazette.

**Section 7. Proclamation, Publication, and Coming into Force of Legal Acts of the Cabinet and the Prime Minister**

(1) Cabinet regulations, instructions or recommendations shall be proclaimed by publishing them in the official gazette.

(2) Cabinet regulations, instructions or recommendations shall come into force on the day following proclamation thereof if another time period for coming into force thereof has not been specified in the legal act itself. If in accordance with law the Cabinet instructions, recommendations or part thereof have been granted the status of restricted access, the instructions or recommendations shall come into force on the day of issuance thereof if another time period for coming into force thereof has not been specified in the legal act itself.

(3) A protocol decision of a Cabinet meeting shall come into force at the time of taking thereof. An order of the Cabinet and Prime Minister, except for an administrative act, shall come into force at the time of signing thereof.

(4) The minutes of a Cabinet meeting, an order of the Cabinet or Prime Minister shall be published in the official gazette, except for the minutes, order or part thereof in relation to which it is specifically indicated that it should not be published.

**Section 8. Proclamation and Publication of Legal Acts in Extraordinary Cases**

(1) In extraordinary cases the President or accordingly the Chairperson of the *Saeima* is entitled to proclaim a law, reading it on public electronic mass media or, if it is not available, on another electronic mass media upon the choice of the proclaimer. A law thus proclaimed shall be, without delay, published in the official gazette, indicating the way and time of proclamation of the law.

(2) In extraordinary cases, the legal acts of the President, decisions of the *Saeima* as well as legal acts of the Cabinet and Prime Minister may be made known in accordance with the procedures laid down in Paragraph one of this Section.

**Section 9. Application of External Laws and Regulations**

(1) The following hierarchy of the legal force of external laws and regulations shall be complied with in applying laws and regulations:

1) the Constitution;

2) laws;

3) Cabinet regulations;

4) binding regulations of local governments.

(2) External laws and regulations which have been issued by a derived legal person governed by public law in issues of the autonomous competence thereof (an autonomous public legal entity) shall be considered as equivalent to Cabinet regulations in the hierarchy of the legal force, unless specified otherwise by law.

(3) Application of international legal norms binding on Latvia and legal norms of the European Union shall be determined by international agreements and other legal acts.

(4) A regulatory enactment or part thereof shall not have a retrospective effect, except for the cases especially provided for in law.

(5) If the legal grounds for the issuance of the regulatory enactment is repealed (legal norm of a higher legal force on the basis of which another regulatory enactment has been issued), the regulatory enactment or part thereof issued on such basis is also repealed.

(6) If a contradiction is detected between:

1) the legal norms of differing legal force, the legal norm of higher legal force shall be applied;

2) a general and special legal norm of equal legal force, the general legal norm shall be applied insofar as it is not restricted by the special legal norm;

3) legal norms of equivalent legal force, the newest legal norm shall be applied (the date of adopting the legal norm shall be determinant);

4) a newer general legal norm and older special legal norm of equivalent legal force, the older special legal norm shall be applied insofar as the purpose thereof is not in contradiction with the purpose of the newer general legal norm.

**Section 10. Publication of Official Notices**

(1) Entries of public registers, announcements, notifications or information of bodies governed by public law, their officials and private persons shall be published in the official gazette as official notices if official publication thereof is provided for by external laws and regulations.

(2) The President, the Chairperson of the *Saeima*, and the Prime Minister may publish information of general significance in the official gazette.

**Section 11. Submission of Information for Publication**

(1) A provider of information shall ensure that the information submitted for publication conforms to the requirements for the protection of official secret, restricted access information, and personal data.

(2) A body governed by public law shall submit information for publication electronically. If the original of the document to be published is in printed form, the provider of the relevant information shall be responsible for the conformity of the electronically submitted document with the original.

(3) A private person shall submit information for publication in the way indicated in Paragraph two of this Section or in printed form, confirming the content of the document with a signature.

**Section 12. Publication of Information in the Official Gazette**

(1) The official gazette shall be published electronically as a periodical publication, indicating the number of the issue and date of publication.

(2) The publisher of the official gazette shall ensure the conformity of the published information with the submitted information and a possibility of ascertaining the unchangeability of the information published from the time when it was published.

**Section 13. Costs for Ensuring Official Publications and Legal Information**

(1) Costs for ensuring official publications and legal information shall be covered from:

1) State budget subsidies;

2) own revenue of the publisher of the official gazette from economic activity;

3) other financial sources provided for in laws and regulations.

(2) Fee for the services referred to in Section 14, Paragraph two, Clauses 4 and 7 of this Law shall be determined by the executive body of the publisher of the official gazette, without exceeding the cost price for the provision of such services.

[*24 November 2020 /* *See Paragraph 10 of Transitional Provisions*]

**Section 14. Authorities Responsible for the Accessibility of Official Publications and Legal Information and Their Competence**

(1) The Ministry of Justice is the managing (higher) authority in the field of the systematisation of official publications, the information included therein, and accessibility of legal information.

(2) *Valsts sabiedrība ar ierobežotu atbildību “Latvijas Vēstnesis”* [State limited liability company *Latvijas Vēstnesis*] is the official publisher of the Republic of Latvia that implements the State policy in the field of the systematisation of official publication and the information included therein and, by promoting the understanding of private persons of the rights and duties specified in laws and regulations as well as by promoting public participation and the quality of laws and regulations, shall ensure a uniform State, civil society and legal information platform. The State limited liability company *Latvijas Vēstnesis* shall:

1) issue the official gazette *Latvijas Vēstnesis* and ensure the availability thereof on the website www.vestnesis.lv;

2) systematise legal acts and ensure the availability thereof on the website www.likumi.lv;

3) maintain the State and legal information and civic education portal *Cilvēks. Valsts. Likums* [Person. State. Law] on the website www.lvportals.lv;

4) issue the specialised journal of rights policy, application of law, and legal further education *Jurista Vārds* and maintain its website www.juristavards.lv;

5) maintain the Official Publication and Legal Information System and also ensure the archiving of the information included therein;

6) disseminate the State operational information during an emergency situation and in other cases, if necessary;

7) issue printed publications, organise events and perform other necessary activities in order to ensure the fulfilment of the tasks referred to in this Section.

(3) Capital shares of the State limited liability company *Latvijas Vēstnesis* shall be property of the State and they may not be privatised, alienated or otherwise encumbered.

[*24 November 2020*]

**Section 15. Official Publication and Legal Information System**

(1) The Official Publication and Legal Information System is a State information system in which the systematisation of official publications and the information included therein and the processing and availability of legal information is ensured.

(2) The State of Latvia is the owner of the Official Publication and Legal Information System. Manager of the Official Publication and Legal Information System shall be the State limited liability company *Latvijas Vēstnesis*.

[*24 November 2020*]

**Section 16. Systematisation of Legal Acts**

(1) The State limited liability company *Latvijas Vēstnesis* shall ensure systematisation of legal acts on the website www.likumi.lv. The Cabinet shall determine the minimum requirements and procedures for systematisation of legal acts.

(2) The systematised legal acts are not binding. If a contradiction is detected between the systematised legal act and the official publication of legal act, the official publication shall be taken into account.

[*24 November 2020*]

**Section 17. Access to the Official Gazette and Systematised Legal Acts**

(1) The official gazette shall be accessible freely and free of charge in the permanent online mode on the website www.vestnesis.lv.

(2) Legal acts systematised by the State limited liability company *Latvijas Vēstnesis* shall be accessible freely and free of charge on the website www.likumi.lv.

(3) The State shall ensure that anyone may become acquainted with the official gazette and systematised legal acts at State and local government libraries as well as at public Internet access points ensured by the State and local governments free of charge.

(4) Anyone may request that the publisher of the official gazette ensures the preparation of a certified printout of the official publication in printed form for a fee that does not exceed the cost price thereof. Such printout shall be of informative nature.

[*24 November 2020*]

**Section 18. Re-use of Official Publication and Systematised Legal Acts**

(1) Official publication and the legal acts systematised on the website www.likumi.lv shall be available for re-use in accordance with the procedures laid down in the laws and regulations regarding freedom of information. The Cabinet shall determine the fee for the transfer of official publication and the legal acts systematised on the website www.likumi.lv for re-use.

(2) Re-use of information generated as a result of official publication and systematisation thereof shall be organised by the keeper of the Official Publication and Legal Information System. Re-use of the officially published entries of the Enterprise Register shall be ensured by the keeper of the information system of the Enterprise Register.

(3) In reproducing an external regulatory enactment, the conformity thereof with the official publication shall be ensured as well as the date of the official publication and the number of the issue in which the regulatory enactment and amendments thereto, if any, have been published shall be indicated.

[*24 November 2020*]

**Section 19. Preservation of the Official Publications as the National Cultural Heritage**

In order to ensure constant preservation, processing and use of the official publication as the national cultural heritage, the issuer of the official gazette shall, within one working day from the day when the issue was published, transfer it to the Latvian National Library.

[*24 November 2020*]

**Transitional Provisions**

1. With the coming into force of this Law, the law On the Procedures for the Proclamation, Publication, Coming into Force, and Validity of Laws and Other Acts Adopted by the *Saeima*, President and Cabinet (*Latvijas Republikas Saeimas un Ministru Kabineta Ziņotājs*, 1994, No. 13; 2003, No. 8; *Latvijas Vēstnesis*, 2009, No. 205) is repealed.

2. The Cabinet shall, by 1 January 2013, issue the regulations provided for in this Law. Until the day of coming into force of the Cabinet regulations provided for in Section 16, Paragraph one of this Law, Cabinet Regulation No. 279 of 13 April 2004, Regulations Regarding Systematisation of Laws and Regulations, shall be applied, insofar as they are not in contradiction with this Law.

3. [24 November 2020]

4. The coming into force of this Law shall not affect the validity of such official publications which have been published prior to coming into force of this Law. Legal acts which have been officially published prior to coming into force of this Law and are available in electronic form on the website www.vestnesis.lv shall be of informative nature.

5. The numbering of issues of the official newspaper *Latvijas Vēstnesis* shall be retained in the official gazette.

6. Until amendments to such laws and regulations come into force which provide for the proclamation or publication of legal acts and official notices in the newspaper *Valdības Vēstnesis*, the newspaper *Latvijas Vēstnesis* or the official newspaper (gazette), such information shall be published in the official gazette.

7. Until 1 January 2013 the official newspaper *Latvijas Vēstnesis* shall be issued concurrently with the official gazette. If there is a contradiction between an official publication in the official gazette and the official newspaper *Latvijas Vēstnesis*, preference shall be given to the publication in the official newspaper *Latvijas Vēstnesis*.

8. Until the day when euro is introduced in the Republic of Latvia, information regarding the foreign exchange rate specified by the Bank of Latvia on the relevant day in relation to lat shall be published in the official gazette.

9. The Cabinet shall evaluate the safety of and access to the official gazette and shall, by 1 November 2012, submit a report to the *Saeima* about it.

10. If another legal act provides that a specific fee is to be paid for an official publication, such fee shall not be applied after 1 January 2021.

[*24 November 2020*]

11. Amendment to Section 3, Paragraph one of this Law regarding the publication of binding regulations of all local governments in the official gazette *Latvijas Vēstnesis* shall come into force on 1 January 2021. The Cabinet shall, by 1 June 2021, submit the necessary draft laws to the *Saeima* in order to ensure that the laws and regulations governing the activities of local governments conform to this requirement.

[*24 November 2020 /* *The abovementioned amendment shall be included in the wording of the Law on 1 January 2022*]

12. Upon submitting for publication amendments to the binding regulations which are not available on the website www.likumi.lv, the consolidated version of the amended binding regulation shall be concurrently submitted in a format that can be edited and that includes also the amendments submitted for publication.

[*24 November 2020*]

The Law shall come into force on 1 July 2012.

The Law has been adopted by the *Saeima* on 31 May 2012.

President A. Bērziņš

Rīga, 20 June 2012