

August 2022 | Issue 8

NEWSLETTER

ABSL LATVIA OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BY JĀNIS ATSLENS

The first half of 2022 has been very active and busy for the GBS industry in Latvia. Companies plan and implement geographical expansion, increase the volume of services and employees, and introduce new technologies. The problems that the industry has faced to a lesser extent before are starting to emerge even more sharply - the availability of labor, the availability of employee training programs for certain industries, as well as the global phenomenon - the endeavor to return employees back to the work environment after remote work, which we all had to experience during the Covid-19 pandemic and strict restrictions in Latvia. GBS industry have been able to overcome the biggest challenges and accept that the Covid-19 virus will be present for a long time, which will also require attention and creative solutions in the future. Companies have worked very hard on the transformation of their workplaces so that they meet the epidemiological requirements, great emphasis is placed on the well-being of employees and the desire to return to a work environment where our employees share their knowledge, create company culture, collaborate and jointly create new ideas that might not be possible to create individually

During the April ABSL Latvia held its Annual General Meeting in person, first such event since the autumn of 2021. The members of the Association discussed issues important to the industry, which concern the promotion of the competitiveness of Latvia's image, the availability of labor, and the enhancement of the talents of current and future employees. During the Annual General Meeting two new board members were elected: Vladislavs Sorokins (Independent expert, previously allnex GBS Director) and Rodion Shirayev (Managing Director of MSC Mediterranean Shipping Company Shared Service Center Riga). Now the board is functioning on full capacity with the new members joining existing ones: Alesja Kircenko (SEB Global Services), Ieva Zirne, (Circle K Business Centre), Kim Leandersson (Cognizant Latvia), Lelde Lipska (Cabot Latvia), Ieva Aizvakara (Atea Global Services).



Building Recognition of the Industry

During the first half of 2022, ABSL Latvia got two publications. Appearing on media is a great way to build recognition of the industry. Please find below all three publications.

The first publication was all about GSB industry in Latvia and its high value added benefits for the Latvian economy as whole. ABSL Latvia Chairperson of the Board Alesja Kircenko and Executive director Janis Atslens gave their views on the topic.

"For the GBS industry in Latvia, the 2021 passed in the shadow of the global pandemic. However, in general, we cannot call it bad or unsuccessful, because our industry is one of the few that - despite the challenges of the pandemic - has continued to expand," Alesja Kircenko, Deputy Head of SEB Global Services, chairperson of the board of ABSL Latvia.

Janis Atslens, Executive director of ABSL Latvia, also says that the past year, in contrast to 2020, has brought stability: "We have been able to overcome the biggest challenges and accept that the Covid-19 virus will be present for a long time, which will also require attention and creative solutions in the future."



You can find full interview here:
<https://www.delfi.lv/a/53914345>

Another ABSL publication appeared in delfi.lv section Personality in Business: Alesja Kircenko, Head of ABSL Latvia, Deputy Head of SEB Global Services in Riga.

SEB Global Services' new office building "Gustavs" is currently under construction in Teika. The company will move to it at the beginning of next year. "It is clear that remote work will continue after the pandemic, so the office must become a place where people want to go. A cool office becomes an 'extra' offered by the employer. Our goal is to create one of the most modern and inspiring offices in Riga," says Alesja Kircenko.

You can find full interview here:
<https://www.delfi.lv/a/54266060>



ABSL Latvia provides a knowledge-exchange platform

Throughout the first half of the 2022, ABSL Latvia organized five webinars. In addition to that, several informal knowledge-exchange calls were held. Please find more detailed information below about each event organized during the third quarter.

FINANCE CLUB - "UPDATE ON TAXATION MATTERS AS OF JANUARY 1"

On January 10 ABSL Latvia organized the Finance Club webinar "Update on taxation matters as of January 1, 2022", where we raised the topic of changes in various aspects of business related taxes. Our guest speaker was experts in tax and finance from strategic partner Deloitte: Rudite Eglaja and Aija Klavinska.

To keep FINANCE CLUB active and alive you are welcome to suggest topics for knowledge exchange webinars and apply to become one of the speakers by sharing your organization's case study.

ABSL Latvia strives to improve and strengthen the platform for knowledge exchange. Industry involvement is crucial to define the most important topics to discuss in every single thematic club. We kindly ask our members to be active and come up with potential topics for the webinars as well as participate as active speakers. Thanks to all those who are doing that already!

Update on taxation matters as of January 1, 2022



Rudite Eglaja



Aija Klavinska

Deloitte.

Register now!
January 10, 2022
11:00-12:30
MS Teams platform



ABSL Latvia provides a knowledge-exchange platform

HR CLUB

"Working on public holidays & overtime - Legal aspects"

On February 4, ABSL Latvia organized a webinar "Working on public holidays & overtime - Legal aspects", which has become a hot topic for many of ABSL members since they represent global companies that work worldwide servicing several locations from Riga and Latvia, and have to ensure services even during Latvian holidays.



**WORKING ON
PUBLIC HOLIDAYS &
OVERTIME - LEGAL
ASPECTS**

Māris Paipa
Attorney at Law

Deloitte.

Register now!
February 4, 2022
11:00-12:30
MS Teams platform



**RESEARCH ON
BURNOUT RISKS OF IT
INDUSTRY
SPECIALISTS,
TOPICAL ISSUES OF IT
STAFF SELECTION**

Krišjānis Freibergs
Supervisor, head of the IT
recruitment agency
TalentHub

Register now!
March 21
10:00-11:30
MS Teams platform



HR CLUB

"Research on burnout risks of IT industry specialists, topical issues of IT staff selection"

On March 21, ABSL Latvia organized a HR CLUB webinar in which Head of the TalentHub, supervisor, Krisjanis Freibergs, explained more about the latest trends and challenges in the selection of IT industry specialists, as well as how to address the risks of professional burnout of industry specialists.

To keep HR CLUB active and alive you are welcome to suggest topics for knowledge exchange webinars and apply to become one of the speakers by sharing your organization's case study.

ABSL Latvia provides a knowledge-exchange platform

ABSL Latvia webinar: "Office market highlights and activities – What can be expected in the near future?"

On April 27, ABSL Latvia in cooperation with strategic partner Colliers organized a webinar "Office market highlights and activities – What can be expected in the near future?". During the presentation and discussion Partner & Director of Brokerage Department at Colliers Mr. Eriks Bergmans, explained in more details about the latest trends and challenges in the Baltic, East and North European office market scene.



OFFICE MARKET HIGHLIGHTS AND ACTIVITIES - WHAT CAN BE EXPECTED IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

Eriks Bergmans
Partner | Director
Brokerage Department



Register now!

April 27

12:00-13:30

MS Teams platform



ABSL Latvia webinar:
"Machines that understand emotions."

MACHINES THAT UNDERSTAND EMOTIONS

Dr. Evalds Urtans
CEO/CTO

asya

Register now!
May 27

11:00-12:30

MS Teams platform



On May 27, ABSL Latvia organized a webinar in which HDr. Evalds Urtans, CEO/CTO of ASYA, introduced ABSL members with the latest trends and challenges in the use of artificial intelligence in the provision of various services, emotion detections systems and other interesting technological aspects.

Building Strong Ties with Higher Education Institutions

In the middle of July, just in time to catch the new study year, ABSL Latvia announced a call to industry professionals willing to become guest lecturers. The existing guest lecture portfolio consists of 25 different guest lecture offers. The most active experts for the previous academic year were coming from two organizations MSC Shared Service center and SEB Global Services, which, by the way, are highly chosen by higher education institutions.

The updated guest lecture portfolio will be sent at the end of August to the following universities – the University of Latvia, Riga Technical University, BA School of Business and Finance, RISEBA, Riga Business School, Riga Stradins University.

If your organization is not yet participation in the guest lecturers program, we encourage you to rethink the approach, because the initiative as such is a great opportunity to raise recognition of the industry among last year students. By organizing 49 guest lectures (autumn 2021/spring 2022) **we reached 903 business administration students.**

This is the outcome or that many people will be more educated about the industry, which leads to a higher chance that they will actually choose to develop their careers in the Business Services industry. ABSL Latvia believes that there should be additional motivational instruments coming from the employer's side to actually facilitate the initiative as such, especially experts' (employees') willingness and eagerness to be a part of this initiative.



ABSL recommends managers of business service centers or other responsible parties (could be HR department) to take an active part in promoting internally the guest lecture initiative as such and somehow award those employees or experts who have given the largest number of guest lectures within a specific period of time. It is obvious that every time when the guest lecturer struggles to choose a date from the list of dates given by the university, we are losing credibility in the eyes of higher education institutions, therefore it is highly important that every guest lecturer is motivated, replies promptly, thus allowing the association to have a smooth dialog with universities.

For any inquires about guest lectures and how they are helping both the industry and your organization, please, do not hesitate to contact ABSL Latvia executive director Janis Atslens - janis.atslens@absl.lv

What are the associations' future plans?

The board of ABSL Latvia has reviewed association's priorities, main activities and tasks for the near future. The association will concentrate more strongly on the Awareness of the Industry, Knowledge sharing & Networking within its members, and Talent attraction issues, to help its member to grow and develop.

ABSL Latvia has proposed discussions with several universities e.g. (BA School of Business and Finance, Transport and Telecommunication Institute, University of Latvia) about possibility of an in-depth cooperation program for the students in areas of: Practical finance A-Z, Customer service & communication, IT tools & automation. The proposed program is still in early stages and will be communicated both with the universities and within the industry.

During the turn of Q3 and Q4 ABSL Latvia plans to organize more actively both live events - and webinars for its members given the fact of ending of summer vacation period and everybody returning back to their work stations. At the September we will start with the Executive club meeting with LIAA director Kaspars Rožaklins, to discuss cooperation and any concerns by the industry. Such regular meetings with key stakeholders in government sector are planned to help enhance ABSL Latvia awareness and leverage its lobbying capacities.

We would like to use the opportunity again and remind everyone about the opportunity to participate in ABSL Latvia's guest lecturer program, which provides an excellent opportunity for members' to access the student audience, promote awareness of their organization and the entire industry as a whole.

We would also be grateful for highlighting any topics important to members that would be worthy of discussion in any of the ABSL Latvia clubs: Finance, HR, Procurement, Customer Service. Do not hesitate in contacting ABSL Latvia by writing to janis.atlens@absl.lv

