

Jan - Apr 2025 | Issue 13

ABSL LATVIA NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE ABSL LATVIA

Time flies — and here we are in May 2025!

Let's take a moment to reflect on everything that's happened between January and April and unpack the highlights from the first four months of the year.

We kicked off 2025 by distributing our guest lecture portfolio to universities across Latvia, continuing this impactful initiative that connects industry experts with the next generation of professionals. Within our own community, we kept the momentum going by sharing knowledge through events, webinars, and informal exchanges of best practices.

In March, we held our Annual General Meeting, where we welcomed two new board members and re-elected two current members for another two-year term.

We also made strong progress on our annual industry report, launching a comprehensive survey and beginning data analysis to ensure meaningful insights are on the way. On top of that, we were thrilled to welcome two new members into the ABSL Latvia community!

And of course, we celebrated the achievements of our industry — from awards to friendly competitions that showcased the talent and dedication within our network.

In this newsletter, we'll dive into all that's unfolded across the ABSL Latvia community over the past four months.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Let's continue driving progress and innovation in our sector — together.



INDUSTRY RECOGNITION

Latvia Recognized at the CEE Business Services Awards 2025

This March, Latvia's Global Business Services and IT sector took the spotlight on the international stage at the Central Eastern European Business Services Summit & Awards 2025, held in Warsaw.

The event brought together industry leaders from across the region to celebrate excellence, innovation, and growth — and we're proud to reflect on the recognition received by Latvia-based companies and our capital city.

Congratulations to this year's award winners:

- GoCardless – Most Vibrant Employer – Latvia
- Tech Mahindra – Most Promising New-entrant 'Business Services' Investor
- Riga – Most Dynamically Developing City

These achievements underscore Latvia's growing reputation as a key destination for international investment, innovation, and talent in the GBS and IT sectors.

A big thank you to all who represented Latvia at the summit — and congratulations once again to the winners and nominees for showcasing the strength and momentum of our industry on the European stage.



INDUSTRY RECOGNITION

GBS Industry Shines Bright at the 2024 TOP Employer Awards



The GBS sector continues to set the standard for excellence — and this year's TOP Employer awards were no exception!

For an impressive fifth year in a row, Circle K Business Centre earned the title of Best Employer 2024 in the Global Business Services industry. This recognition, based on employee votes and presented by Alma Career Latvia, reflects the company's unwavering commitment to workplace culture, engagement, and employee well-being.

We also extend our heartfelt congratulations to two more industry leaders:

- MSC Shared Service Center Riga for winning "TOP Employer – Growth of the Year", highlighting their remarkable development and investment in talent.
- SEB for securing second place in "TOP Employer – Top-of-Mind", proving their strong brand presence and reputation among employees in Latvia.



These accolades are a powerful testament to the GBS industry's continued strength, innovation, and people-first approach. We're proud to see our community recognized for creating meaningful, future-ready workplaces.

INDUSTRY RECOGNITION

ABSL Latvia Volleyball Tournament 2025

This spring, the ABSL Latvia Beach Volleyball Tournament 2025 brought together 24 incredible teams from across our member community for three evenings of friendly competition, connection, and high-energy play.

From the first serve to the final spike, the tournament was a celebration of teamwork, determination, and the shared spirit that defines our industry. Over two rounds of qualifiers and a high-stakes final, teams gave it their all — pushing limits, cheering each other on, and turning the court into a space of pure motivation.

After two weeks of strong matchups, the top 16 teams advanced to the finals — and the energy was electric.

This year's top 3 teams:

- 🥇 First Place – Atea Global Services
- 🥈 Second Place – If Insurance
- 🥉 Third Place – SEB Global Services

We also proudly recognized two Best Players of the 2025 Tournament:

- 🏆 Katrīna Lukstiņa, SEB Global Services
- 🏆 Kristers Dinsbergs, SEB Global Services

Thank you to all players and supporters who made this tournament such a success. Your energy, spirit, and sportsmanship created unforgettable memories — both on and off the court.

We're already looking forward to the ABSL Latvia Volleyball Tournament 2026 — see you next year for even more action!



KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE PLATFORM

Sharing Insights from Latvia's Largest Career Education Survey

At the end of January, ABSL Latvia members had the pleasure of hearing from Zane Čulkstēna, who presented the results of Latvia's largest career education survey to date. Conducted in late 2024, the survey gathered insights from over 6,000 students aged 15–19 across high schools and vocational education institutions throughout the country.

The session provided valuable perspective on how young people in Latvia view their future study and career paths — including their awareness of and interest in the Global Business Services (GBS) sector.

In addition to sharing key data points, Zane also introduced several EU-supported programs aimed at enhancing youth engagement in career development, especially within STEM fields. She encouraged companies from our industry to actively participate and help shape the next generation's understanding of their career opportunities.

The event also shed light on the Latvian Education Accelerator — a project initiated by the World Economic Forum and active in Latvia since 2023. This initiative brings together government, employers, and civil society to co-create strategies that will prepare a competitive workforce for the future. Over the coming years, several new initiatives will be introduced in schools, in close cooperation with the public sector and employers.

Together, these efforts are designed to support well-informed career choices and strengthen Latvia's talent pipeline — a mission closely aligned with ABSL Latvia's goals.



KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE PLATFORM

Optimizing Talent Management for the Digital Tech Era

On February 5, ABSL Latvia, in collaboration with EPAM Systems, hosted an insightful seminar titled “Optimizing Talent Management for the Digital Tech Era.” The session was led by Artak Oganessian, Senior Director of Business Development at EPAM Lithuania, and took place at EPAM's Riga office.

The event explored how leading companies like EPAM are embracing AI-driven insights, digital footprints, and continuous learning to drive innovation and support employee growth in today's tech-driven work environments.

Key takeaways included:

- Innovative strategies for managing modern, tech-oriented workforces
- How EPAM leverages AI to analyze employees' digital footprints to support career growth
- The value of continuous learning in building a culture of excellence
- Techniques for unlocking the full potential of digitally native employees

We extend a warm thank you to EPAM Systems for hosting and to Artak Oganessian for sharing his expertise and real-world examples. Thank you as well to everyone who participated and contributed to the lively discussion!



KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE PLATFORM

Exploring the Future of Finance and Automation in GBS

In April, ABSL Latvia partnered with AICPA & CIMA and clearBox to deliver two insightful online sessions focused on the evolving finance landscape and automation opportunities within Global Business Services (GBS). These webinars attracted a strong turnout from our community and offered highly relevant, practical insights.

Future of Finance 2.0 with Piotr Głowacki, AICPA & CIMA

This session explored the ongoing transformation of the finance function within GBS and the key trends shaping its future. Piotr shared valuable perspectives on:

- The evolution and maturity of GBS finance teams
- The driving forces behind change in finance operations
- How organizations are adapting to digital transformation and new business demands

Automation Opportunities in Finance Processes with Alexander Ilkun, CGMA, Founder of clearBox

Alex delivered a hands-on session showcasing automation tools that are revolutionizing finance processes. He walked participants through real-world applications of:

- Robotic Process Automation (Automation Anywhere)
- Workflow Automation (Power Automate)
- Data Transformation (Alteryx)
- Data Visualization (Power BI)
- Generative AI (ChatGPT)
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With over 16 years of experience in Treasury and Accounting, Alex shared practical ways to reduce manual workload, enhance data quality, and enable smarter decision-making across finance teams.

A big thank you to AICPA & CIMA, clearBox, and both speakers for their contributions — and to everyone who joined us to stay ahead of the curve in finance and automation!



ONLINE WEBINARS



Future of Finance 2.0

Piotr Glowacki
AICPA & CIMA

April 14th, 2025

Automation Opportunities in Finance Processes

Alexander Ilkun
ClearBox

April 29th, 2025



OTHER NEWS FROM ABSL LATVIA

Annual General Meeting 2025

In March, ABSL Latvia held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) — a moment to reflect on our collective achievements over the past year and to shape the direction of the year ahead.

During the meeting, we were proud to welcome four new board members who will contribute their expertise and vision over the next two years. Please join us in congratulating:

- Alesja Kircenko – SEB Global Services Riga
- Ieva Zirne – Circle K Business Centre
- Evija Celma – Roche Services & Solutions Riga
- Peteris Dalins – GoCardless

Their leadership will help guide ABSL Latvia as we continue to grow, collaborate, and elevate the GBS and IT community across the country.

We were also honored to host Fredis Bikovs, Director of the Riga Investment and Tourism Agency, who delivered a thought-provoking presentation on Riga's international positioning strategy. He shared how the city is actively working to attract global attention, foster sustainable growth, and support the business ecosystem that makes Riga a dynamic hub for innovation.

The AGM was not just a formal milestone — it was a meaningful reminder of the strength of our community, the importance of collaboration, and the shared ambition that drives us forward.



OTHER NEWS FROM ABSL LATVIA

SSE Riga Joins as a Strategic Partner

We are delighted to welcome SSE Riga as a Strategic Partner of ABSL Latvia!

Since 1994, SSE Riga Executive Education has been delivering top-tier learning experiences through both open and tailor-made programs for organizations of all sizes. As part of the Stockholm School of Economics (SSE) Group, SSE Riga is recognized by the Financial Times as one of Europe's leading providers of executive education — and proudly holds the #1 ranking in the Nordic and Baltic region.

SSE Riga's commitment to professional development and excellence in education aligns closely with ABSL Latvia's mission to grow a forward-looking, knowledge-driven industry.

We're excited to collaborate on initiatives that empower leaders, develop talent, and shape the future of business services in Latvia.

NEW STRATEGIC PARTNER



NEW MEMBER



Arvato Systems Latvia Joins ABSL Latvia

We're thrilled to welcome Arvato Systems Latvia as the newest member of the ABSL Latvia community!

Since entering the Latvian market in 2017, Arvato Systems has built a strong presence by delivering a wide range of IT services — including application and cloud solution management, consulting for system development and implementation, and the full support and operation of IT systems. Their innovative approach helps global clients succeed on their digital transformation journeys.

With over 180 professionals from more than 20 nationalities, Arvato Systems Latvia brings a rich blend of perspectives and technical expertise. The company also stands out in the IT sector for its strong focus on employee well-being, continuous learning, and a commitment to gender diversity — with women making up 40% of the team.

We're excited to collaborate and share knowledge with such a forward-thinking and inclusive organization. Welcome aboard!

NEWS FROM ABSL LATVIA MEMBERS

If Insurance News



Successful IT Trainee Program in Latvia

In February, we launched the latest edition of our IT Trainee program for developers. It gained significant attention - over 700 candidates applied (a large jump from 180 last time), with only 10 selected to join. We have been running this program for 12 times, and the growing number of applications signals a rising demand for hands-on learning opportunities in IT. When speaking with candidates, we found that 56% see limited practical experience and the lack of junior positions as the biggest hurdles in launching their careers. As an employer, If recognizes its role in addressing these challenges, which is why we are committed to offering not just theoretical knowledge, but real-world experience and meaningful career opportunities within our company. With the first phase of the program completed, several of our trainees will join development teams in May to contribute to real-life projects.

New Personal Accident product

Learning from the global market insights and the experience of our Nordic peers, our tech teams have invested a lot of time in developing a new Personal Accident insurance product that has been recently launched for Latvian customers in our microservices architecture system. In close collaboration with our business colleagues, we have used the latest tools and technologies to build a solution with many useful features. These include flexible coverage choices, possibility to insure multiple persons in one go, convenient multi-payment options and a user-friendly online shopping experience, built in line with the latest trends and accessibility best practices. This marks another step forward in our broader digitalization journey in the Baltics, with improvements to motor products also underway.

Stronger Tech Community across borders

We've increased our community building activities across the If Group. Building on the experience gained in the Baltics over the years, a dedicated tech communication and employee experience hub is now established in Riga. It now coordinates local activities and engagement across all countries to break silos and improve collaborations across teams and business areas within our tech community of 1500 colleagues.

NEWS FROM ABSL LATVIA MEMBERS

From Awards to Events: MSC Shared Service Center Riga's Eventful Quarter

TOP Employer award

Out of 1,700 companies featured in this year's "Top Employer" rankings, MSC Shared Service Center Riga has proudly secured 7th place in the Top-of-Mind category — earning us the special title "Growth of the Year"! The company has climbed an incredible 28 places compared to last year — a huge leap that reflects our growing recognition and the strength of our brand. We are proud of our team's dedication and hard work, which have made this achievement possible.



Various internal trainings

During this quarter a range of internal training sessions were led, dedicated to diverse topics, from leadership development to technical and project management skill sharpening. The positive feedback from participants highlights the value of these learning opportunities.



International Women's Day

Celebrating International Women's Day was a highlight of this quarter. This year's gentlemen serenaded the ladies with a selection of songs, presented roses and a hand cream to ladies, adding a little extra care to the day. The celebration wrapped up with some delicious sweets and quality time spent together — laughter, smiles, and great company made it a truly memorable day.



NEWS FROM ABSL LATVIA MEMBERS

From Awards to Events: MSC Shared Service Center Riga's Eventful Quarter

Season of Career Events at universities

This quarter has been bustling with a series of career events – BA School of Business and Finance, Turība University and the busiest RTU Career Day. MSC Shared Service Center Riga has also participated in the Icebreakers '25 - Festival of Business Opportunities, organized by the University of Latvia, sharing knowledge and promoting the company's hottest vacancies for the students.



Shadow Day record

This year's National Shadow Day at MSC Shared Service Center Riga set a record for participation for the company. Pupils from 8th to 12th form from various schools across Latvia discovered professions that seemed the most engaging for them, engaged with hands-on experience of real daily work tasks, played an interactive Kahoot quiz and experiences the shipping world in MSC Virtual Reality.



NEWS FROM ABSL LATVIA MEMBERS

Promoting Wellness and Celebrating Success at Tietoevry Latvia

The first quarter of 2025 at Tietoevry Latvia has been full of employee appreciation, collaboration, and teamwork. Through various initiatives focused on well-being and engagement, we continue to strengthen our community and celebrate the people who drive our success.

April: Physical health month

As part of Tietoevry's commitment to employee well-being, a physical health month was launched in April. This has been a tradition for years already. Throughout the month, employees were invited to attend a series of sessions delivered by health and wellness specialists, offering valuable insights into maintaining an active and balanced lifestyle. This year the topics of lectures include heart health, running and marathon preparation tips, mindful eating and nutrition, conscious breathing and movement for energy.

Building on the spirit of collaboration, Tietoevry took part in the annual step challenge. Last year, the collective effort of the employees made it possible to walk more than twice around the world! This friendly competition connects Tietoevry employees across the whole Baltics, fostering team spirit, motivation, and a culture of healthy living.



Celebrating excellence: CBS Employee of the Year awards

Q1 also brought the opportunity to celebrate achievements at the Tietoevry Latvia Corporate Business Services Employee of the Year awards ceremony. This event recognizes individuals who have demonstrated exceptional dedication, teamwork, and impact within the CBS community.

"It's an honor to work alongside such dedicated and talented individuals. Our CBS teams bring their unique skills and collaboration to everything they do. That's what makes us successful. The CBS Employee of the Year awards are more than recognition. They are a celebration of the people who go above and beyond every day. I'm incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together and excited for what's ahead!" - [Ilona Valdmane], Head of Shared Finance Operations, Tietoevry Latvia

Tietoevry congratulates all nominees and award recipients, and thank every team member for their invaluable contributions. Tietoevry remains committed to fostering a workplace where well-being, recognition, and collaboration are not just initiatives, but a part of who they are.

NEWS FROM ABSL LATVIA MEMBERS

Creating Space to Grow: DNB Latvia Invests in Workplace and Well-being

DNB Latvia continues with office expansion project. This construction project, set to be completed in 2025, is a strategic move to ensure DNB continues to provide an efficient and conducive work environment that supports company's goals.

With the arrival of spring, DNB has launched several initiatives aimed at promoting the health and professional development of DNB employees. One of these is a collaborative project with the Latvian University to evaluate impact of ergonomics and psychosocial risks on the performance of office workers. This project aims to educate on the health risks associated with office work and the importance of ergonomics in maintaining productivity and well-being. In addition, several activities organized to encourage fully understanding and using ergonomic office furniture and promoting the use of office stretch areas.

Another impactful activity implemented to educate employees about civil protection in Latvia where topics like civil protection system in Latvia, how to get involved, what to have in 72-hour bag and what to do in different unexpected situations were part of the training. Trainings aimed to be more prepared and efficient in many different situations.



NEWS FROM ABSL LATVIA MEMBERS

EPAM Latvia Updates: Collaboration, Innovation, and Local-Global Impact

This winter and spring, EPAM Latvia has focused on fostering collaboration, driving innovation, and sharing expertise across both local and global landscapes. While we continue to strengthen our presence in Latvia's tech ecosystem, we are also celebrating global achievements that highlight the exceptional talent and dedication of our teams around the world.

Strengthening Our Presence and Driving Innovation in the Region

In Latvia, our team has been building strong partnerships with regional counterparts, creating opportunities to enhance collaboration and deliver top-tier solutions. These partnerships allow us to explore new possibilities in key areas such as AI and offer seamless solutions that empower our clients to adapt and thrive in today's rapidly evolving digital landscape.

A key part of these efforts was our expanded partnership with AWS, which brought advanced AI capabilities to businesses. By leveraging services like Amazon Bedrock platform designed for building scalable AI solutions – we helped companies modernize faster and more efficiently. With tools like EPAM AI/Run™, which fully integrated with AWS technologies, clients were able to create tailored AI solutions to automate workflows, simplify infrastructure upgrades, and seamlessly transition applications to the cloud. This approach reduced complexity, saved time, and delivered faster results across industries.

In the first half of the year, we concentrated on providing solutions that help businesses transform their capabilities and unlock new growth opportunities. By integrating strategic consultancy with advanced technologies, we're reinforcing our presence regionally while demonstrating our ability to tackle complex challenges.

Growing Responsibly with a Commitment to Sustainability

We are proud to announce that EPAM Latvia has been recognized with the Silver Award in the Sustainability Index for 2024, an accolade that evaluates businesses' sustainability efforts and helps guide improvements.

We are very grateful and honored to have a team that makes such achievements possible and prioritizes sustainability goals. This recognition inspires us to continue integrating sustainability into the way we work, setting an example for responsible growth while contributing to a better future.

Sharing Knowledge and Building Talent Locally

At EPAM, we believe that knowledge-sharing and community engagement are fundamental to supporting Latvia's growth as a tech hub. In the first half of the year, our experts delivered guest lectures at leading universities across the country, offering students valuable insights into topics such as digital transformation and strategic business processes.

We also actively participated in events like Riga's DevClub.lv, where EPAMers shared expertise on topics ranging from AI advancements to overcoming challenges with legacy systems. These gatherings spark meaningful conversations, foster collaboration, and help us deepen connections within the broader tech community.

Additionally, EPAM Campus introduced its free, expert-led SAP Development training program, designed to equip participants with high-demand skills to transform complex business processes. If you're eager to gain expertise in this area, we encourage you to apply today.

NEWS FROM ABSL LATVIA MEMBERS

EPAM Latvia Updates: Collaboration, Innovation, and Local-Global Impact

Celebrating Local and Global Success

This year, EPAM has been recognized with several prestigious awards that highlight both our global impact and the values we bring to our work in Latvia.

EPAM was recently named a **Top IT Vendor** for the third consecutive year in **Whitelane Research's 2025 Nordic IT Sourcing Study**. This recognition reflects our leadership in key areas, such as **Account Management Quality** and **Business Transformation**, and highlights our ability to deliver exceptional service within the European market.

Earlier in the year, EPAM earned the **Silver ERC & Corporate Initiative of the Year Award by Women in Tech** for our global female-led hackathon, "Unveiling Bias: Forging Inclusive AI Solutions for Tomorrow." This initiative brought together more than 130 participants from over 30 countries to tackle bias in AI and create inclusive solutions. The award celebrates the power of women-led innovation and reflects our commitment to driving meaningful change in the tech industry.

EPAM was also ranked **#25 on Glassdoor's Top 100 Best Places to Work for 2024**. This achievement underscores our commitment to creating an environment where employees can pursue opportunities to learn, develop innovative initiatives, and contribute to projects that make a difference.

Lastly, we were proud to receive the **Google Cloud Industry Solutions Partner of the Year Award (2025) for Oil and Gas** – a recognition of our ability to create impactful, tailored solutions that drive innovation and value for clients in this sector.

These achievements are a testament to our global teams' incredible dedication and expertise. For EPAM Latvia, they serve as a source of inspiration to innovate further and strengthen local contributions.



A Vision for Continued Growth and Collaboration

As we look to the future, EPAM Latvia remains committed to fostering innovation, collaborating with businesses locally and internationally, and supporting talented individuals in shaping the next wave of technological advancements.

By combining our global expertise with insights into local needs, we strive to create transformative solutions that empower clients and communities alike. Together, we're building a foundation for sustained growth, meaningful progress, and opportunities to make a lasting impact.

NEWS FROM ABSL LATVIA MEMBERS

SSE Riga executive education programmes and courses

15% ABSL partner discount for all SSE Riga executive education programmes and courses!

We invite all ABSL members to explore SSE Riga's Executive Education programmes—designed to equip leaders with the skills needed to thrive in today's fast-changing business landscape. Whether you're looking to enhance strategic thinking, embrace digital transformation, or lead with greater impact, our hands-on, high-impact courses offer the tools to drive success. Join us and take your leadership to the next level.

AI in Action, May 29

This course is designed for professionals seeking to explore practical uses of AI and automation in work and daily life. It helps enhance digital skills and optimize workflows, with no technical background needed. Just bring curiosity and a desire to stay ahead in an AI-driven world.

<https://www.sseriga.edu/ai-action>

Effective Manager Programme, September 25

This six-module program helps managers build essential skills in leadership, productivity, wellbeing, and decision-making. Led by expert faculty, it explores how technology, AI, and influence strategies can boost team engagement and organizational success. Gain the tools to become a more effective, motivating leader.

<https://www.sseriga.edu/effective-manager-programme>

SSE Riga Executive Education

- **AI in Action**
- **Effective Manager**
- **Data Leadership**
- **Advanced Management**



Data Leadership Programme, October 17

In today's data-driven world, many analysts spend more time fixing data than analyzing it, slowing progress. This 8-day hands-on program helps professionals become effective data leaders, shifting focus to insight generation and strategic impact. Participants will learn to leverage data for organizational success through enhanced analytics and leadership skills.

<https://www.sseriga.edu/data-leadership-programme>

Advanced Management Programme, October 30

The Advanced Management Programme is designed for C-suite leaders seeking to elevate their strategic, high-performance, and self-aware leadership skills. It fosters innovation, adaptability, and sustainability as competitive advantages, while addressing challenges unique to senior leaders in the Baltic region. With insights on digital transformation and evolving workforce dynamics, participants gain tools to lead confidently in a fast-changing world.

NEWS FROM ABSL LATVIA MEMBERS

Updates from the Latvian Education Accelerator

Companies are making a great impact in ensuring youth are ready for the future labour market!

The company application period for the State Employment Agency's student summer employment program has recently closed and we are pleased to report that together we have managed to secure almost 14,000 vacancies, which is 34% more than last year, in 950 companies compared to 708 companies last year. This is a grand step towards a better understanding of career planning among high school students. Thank you for submitting your vacancies!

Meanwhile, the STEM Extended Experience program, organised by the Ministry of Education and Science and the State Educational Development Agency is about to take off this fall and companies are already prepping. Join the informative webinars on May 12 and 13 and find out more about the program, activities, funding, and other topics of interest. Apply now [Here](#)

Latvijas Izglītības akselerators



And here's another exciting piece of news - Nākotnes darbs (Future of Jobs) portal will undergo final touch-ups in the coming weeks and will be fully completed by mid-May. The portal allows young people the opportunity to understand their strengths, match them with the professions available in the Latvian job market, as well as see what are the skill requirements are to succeed. The primary target audience for the tool are youngsters of secondary school age and career counselors, but there are no restrictions as to who can use it. Visit the portal - www.nakotnesdarbs.lv.

If you are not yet a member of the Latvian Education Accelerator but would like to get involved, please contact us at:
beta.konosonoka@erda.lv and/or
emija.luse@erda.lv.

Participation in the accelerator is neither legally nor financially binding, but definitely serves as a source of gratification that we have made a difference together!