

Happy Easter and Sunny Spring!

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Please be informed that in Spring 2005,
Sorainen Law Offices are organising a series of
Baltic Business Law Seminars:

- **Project Finance & Public Private Partnership** 17 March, Tallinn
- **Real Estate & Construction** beginning of May, Riga*
- **Litigation & Arbitration** 19 May, Vilnius

*Additional information will be available
on our webpage www.sorainen.com

EUROPEAN UNION

European Works Council in the Baltics

On 11.02.2005, the law implementing Council Directive 94/45/EC on European Works Council entered into force in Estonia. This law also implements Directive 2001/86/EC supplementing the Statute for an European company with regard to the involvement of employees. Directive 94/45/EC on European Works Council has been implemented into Latvian law (since 01.01.2002) and in Lithuania (from 01.05.2004).

Directive 2001/86/EC supplementing the Statute for a European company with regard to the involvement of employees will be implemented by a law in Latvia, which is currently being reviewed by the Parliament. Lithuania has not implemented Directive 2001/86/EC.

The purpose of the Directives is to improve the right to information and to consultation of employees in Community-scale undertakings and Community-scale groups of undertakings through setting up an European Works Council and establishing the procedures for informing and consulting employees.

Community-scale undertaking means any undertaking with at least 1,000 employees within the EU Member States and at least 150 employees in each of at least two Member States. Community-scale group of undertakings means a group of undertakings with the following characteristics:

- at least 1,000 employees within the Member States;
- at least two group undertakings in different Member States; and
- at least one group undertaking with at least 150 employees in one Member State and at least one other group undertaking with at least 150 employees in another Member State.

The central management, or the central management's representative agent, is responsible for creating the conditions and means necessary for the establishment of an European Works Council or an information and consultation procedure. The laws provide for the rules how the employees of each Baltic country are to be elected to the Works Council.

Estonia

Undertakings are obliged to certify the correctness of registration

Latvia

According to the Draft Law the privatisation of state and municipal property should be completed by the end of this year

Lithuania

The Statutes of the Commercial Register have been amended

Sorainen Law Offices

Launch of the first Insurance Baltic Legal Update

The applicability of the local laws depends on various requirements (e.g. if the central management of Community-scale undertaking is situated in the respective country). Please seek legal advice for further information.

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ESTONIA

INSURANCE LAW

The new Insurance Activities Act

The new Insurance Activities Act (*Kindlustustegevuse seadus*) entered into force on 01.01.2005. The main amendments in the new Act compared to the previous Insurance Activities Act relate to regulation of insurers' own funds, transfer of an insurance portfolio, special regime and dissolution of an insurer, insurance mediation and supervision. One of the aims of adoption of the new Act was to bring Estonian law into compliance with Directive 2002/92/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 09.12.2002 on insurance mediation.

Important addition has been made in the regulation of branches of insurers. Although the definition of a branch is given in the Commercial Code (*Äri-seadustik*), according to the Act, also acting in another EEA Member State through insurer's employee or permanent representative (for example, an agent) is considered as acting as a branch. In such case the provisions of right of establishment shall be applied and not the provisions of freedom of services.

The requirements for share capital of insurer have been amended with the new Act. Important amendments have also been made in insurance mediation regulation. According to the Act, also individuals can act as insurance brokers.

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The draft Advertisement Act may prescribe new rules

A workgroup with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications has developed a new draft Advertisement Act. The draft no longer includes the terms "surreptitious, denigratory and offensive advertising". Instead, requirements and prohibitions for contents of advertisements are provided.

Advertising directed at children and exploitation of children in advertisements is also specifically regulated. For instance, advertising directed at children cannot create the impression of a child becoming better or worse than other children through purchasing some goods or using some service.

Advertising cannot ignore the principle of gender equality; it cannot degrade a sex or depict a sex as being dominating or submissive. Additionally, in advertising it is prohibited to depict persons as sexual objects, present indecent nudity or use sexist expressions. For example, according to the explanatory memorandum, pursuant to the draft Act, the "Tiny number. Huge content" advertisement of a car shown in Estonia, where the price of an automobile is advertised via a female bust, will be prohibited. Also, the draft Act will prohibit the television advertisement for a shampoo, where a woman greatly enjoys washing her hair on an airplane, backed up by sounds which can be connected with sexual acts. It is planned that the new Act is to take force on 01.01.2006.

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LAW OF OBLIGATIONS

Your claim may expire on 01.07.2005

The right to require performance of an act (e.g. payment of a debt) from another person expires within the term provided by law (limitation period). After the expiry of the term, the person who is required to perform the act (the obligated person) may refuse to perform the act, relying on the limitation period. The current General Part of the Civil Code Act (*Tsiviilseadustiku üldosa seadus*) entered into force on 01.07.2002. Based on the Act, the limitation period for earlier claims arising from transactions (three years) is calculated from 01.07.2002, because the new limitation period is shorter than the one fixed in the law effective before 01.07.2002. Therefore, the limitation period for a number of claims ends on 01.07.2005, after which it may be impossible to enforce the claims successfully. We recommend to revise your potential contractual claims and consult your lawyer.

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PROPERTY LAW

Building association as a new type of real estate ownership

The Building Association Act entered into force on 01.01.2005. A building association (*hooneühistu*) is a commercial association that owns a real estate for the benefit of its members. This association in principle resembles the Finnish type of housing company (*asunto-osakeyhtiö*). The rights and obligations of the members are related to a specific part of the building enabling an exclusive use of an apartment or office premises. The purpose of the

association may also be the construction of a building after which the building shall be divided into apartment ownerships or rights superficies in apartments. After the division the building association may be terminated.

The association may be formed by at least 5 persons. There may be fewer persons if one is a legal person. The membership in the association is acquired with the notarised transaction and the list of members is public and kept in the non-profit associations and foundations register. The membership in the building association is transferable, inheritable and pledgeable.

A building association shall be liable for its obligations with all of its assets and the members of the association shall not be additionally liable for the obligations of the association

The amount of membership fee is set forth in the articles of association and is a fractional number corresponding to the parts in sole ownership of each member. The consent of all members of a building association is required for dissolution of the building association.

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TAX LAW

Income tax rate and basic exemption changed

The income tax rate for both private individuals and legal entities was lowered from 26% to 24% from 01.01.2005. At the same time the basic exemption for private individuals was increased. The basic annual exemption in 2005 amounts to 20,400 EEK, i.e. approximately 1,300 EUR.

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TRADE LAW

Registration data should be certified

A number of undertakings must be registered with the Register of Economic Activities in Estonia. This requirement has been established, for instance, for undertakings engaged in the areas of wholesale trade, catering and provision of services. All the undertakings registered with the Register of Economic Activities must file a certificate on the correctness of registration by 15.04.2005. This requirement applies to all undertakings if a period longer than three months has passed from their registration or amendment to the registration.

The form of the certificate on the correctness of registration to be filed is available on the website of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications (www.mkm.ee). No state fee is payable on the certification of correct registration.

If an undertaking fails to present the certificate on the correctness of registration, the registration will be suspended and the undertaking will be informed thereof. If no certification is filed after the notification, the registration will be deleted.

Undertakings registered in the area of trade (retail and wholesale trade, catering, provision of services, organisation of trade) must present the form to the rural municipality or city government of the area of the location that made the registration and in Tallinn to the city district government. Undertakings registered in other areas of activity must file the form of the certificate on the correctness of registration to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications.

Additional information:

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Selection of relevant acts and amendments adopted 01.01.2005 - 28.02.2005:

- Act of ratification of the Convention between the Republic of Estonia and the Republic of Turkey for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to taxes on income and its protocol (in force as of 20.02.2005)
- Act of involvement of employees in the activities of community-scale undertaking, group of community-scale undertakings and European company (in force as of 11.02.2005)
- Amendments to the Support of Enterprise and State Loan Guarantees Act (in force as of 27.02.2005)

LATVIA

COMPETITION LAW

Anti-cartel enforcement gaining profile

On 20.12.2004, the Latvian Competition Council (CC) adopted a decision, finding the establishment of a price-fixing cartel amongst the Latvian chicken egg producers in 2002 and 2003. This is one of the few high profile cartel cases in Latvia in 2004. The CC found that one of the largest egg producers in Latvia had suggested other producers to follow its price increase strategy. The investigation revealed that the producers had assembled in several meetings over 2002 and 2003 and had discussed prices and price calculation mechanisms, as well as exchanged pricing information. Another fact indirectly evidencing collusion was the price increase despite oversupply of eggs on the market in the summer of 2002. The CC strongly expressed its position, in line with established practice of the European Court of Justice, that any direct or indirect communication between competitors in the market with the aim of coordinating commercial activity was illegal. Interestingly, the fine imposed on the offending undertakings was substantially reduced by the CC, pursuant to the principle of reasonable application of the law and an evaluation of the economic conditions in the market.

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LABOUR LAW

New guidance for labour disputes

In December 2004, the Supreme Court of Latvia published a collection of case law dealing with employment disputes (*Par likumu piemērošanu, izšķirot tiesās strīdus, kas saistīti ar darba līguma izbeigšanas vai grozīšanu*), which is an important source of information for the correct understanding of a number of provisions of the Labour Law, which has

only been in force since 01.06.2002. The collection has shed interesting light on matters related to dismissals of employees, litigation for reinstatement at work, etc. For example, the Senate now seems to agree that if an employment contract is concluded with a member of a management board or supervisory board of a company in Latvia, the termination of that contract does not require the employer to observe the burdensome requirements of the Labour Law, and effectively that such a contract can be terminated as soon as the board member is suspended from office. Another interesting development is that, contrary to the express wording of the Labour Law, the Senate seems to suggest that if an employment contract contains a clause on restrictions of competition by the employee, the employer can unilaterally withdraw from it only before or upon giving notice of termination to the employee, but not later. Even though some of the court's new approaches still need to withstand the test of time, they should be regarded with due care by employers facing potential employment disputes.

Governmental Regulation No. 101 On Requirements for Competent Institutions and Competent Specialists in Work Safety Matters and Procedure of Competence Evaluation

This Regulation (*Noteikumi par prasībām kompetentām institūcijām un kompetentiem speciālistiem darba aizsardzības jautājumos un kompetences novērtēšanas kārtību*) sets out the qualification and competence standards, which labour safety specialists and labour safety institutions will have to possess in order to be able to conduct internal supervision of the work environment in undertakings, thereby providing work safety services to employers for remuneration. Generally, the rules set higher standards of qualification for specialists and institutions performing work safety services than exist at present, therefore, the Regulation is set to enter into force on 01.01.2006.

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PRIVATISATION LAW

The Completion of Privatisation of State and Municipal Property and Privatisation Voucher Draft Law has been developed

On 18.02.2005, the Completion of Privatisation of State and Municipal Property and Privatisation Voucher Draft Law (*Valsts un pašvaldību īpašuma privatizācijas un privatizācijas sertifikātu izmantošanas pabeigšanas likums*) has been submitted to the Saeima. According to this draft Law the last date for submission of privatisation proposals using privatisation vouchers is planned to be on 30.12.2005. The Law establishes the procedure of completing privatisation

Our Tallinn office has moved!

In the last few years our office has grown and expanded. We owe a great deal of gratitude to our clients and cooperation partners as without you this growth would not be possible. Thus, it is great pleasure to announce the opening of our new Tallinn office effective 7 February 2005.

Please note the address (it remains the same) and new contact numbers of Sorainen Law Offices in Tallinn as below:

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We are looking forward to meeting you in our new office on the seventh floor!

of state and municipal units or land plots related to them, alienation of built-up land plots using property compensation vouchers as means of payment, the procedure of establishing registers of redemption of rural area and town land and further dealing with non-redeemed land, as well as the procedure of completing issue and use of privatisation vouchers and property compensation vouchers. The draft Law is predicted to include further amendments and it will be supplemented with additional legal acts in order to explicitly regulate the completion of privatisation.

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REAL ESTATE LAW

Amendments to the Construction Law stipulate revocation of the licensing procedure and establishment of a register of construction businesses

In Latvia, in order for legal entities to be able to engage in construction activities, they shall obtain a licence in accordance with the procedure established by the Cabinet of Ministers. The ministry responsible for issue of licences has prepared amendments to the Construction Law (*Būvniecības likums*) which stipulates revocation of the licensing procedure and establishment of a register of construction businesses. Thus, it will revoke the non-justified licensing system which has been put in place with a view of protecting a customer from an incompetent or unfair constructor, prohibiting him to be engaged in future construction activities. It is expected that the register of construction businesses will contain the information on a business, personnel employed in construction, information on construction breaches, etc. The data of the register of construction businesses will be publicly available.

Since the planned amendments to the Construction Law have not been adopted by the Latvian Parliament yet, on 01.02.2005, the Cabinet of Ministers has approved Regulations No. 97 Provisional Procedure of Issuing Licences for Construction Activities (*Pagaidu kārtība, kādā izsniedzamas licences uzņēmēj-darbībai (komercdarbībai) būvniecībā*) and thus, the procedure established until now has been maintained that construction activities shall be licensed. Licences issued to legal entities until the day of coming into force of the provisional procedure shall be valid until expiry date shown on a licence.

Amendments regarding spatial planning

On 16.02.2005, the Saeima has adopted the amendments to the Spatial Planning Law (*Teritorijas plānošanas likums*), thus

extending the deadlines set previously for development of national, regional, district and local government spatial planning by 31.12.2006. The amendments to the Law stipulate that a detail planning for certain territories of local governments may be developed based on effective district spatial planning unless a spatial planning of a local government is approved. Such detail planning shall be developed and approved by 31.12.2005. A detail planning being the basis for amending a spatial planning of a local government shall be developed and approved by 01.10.2005. It is expected that the Cabinet of Ministers will issue regulations on the procedure of developing and financing of detail planning.

Legal lien on a lease agreement is not registered with the Land Book

On 08.09.2004, the Supreme Court Senate of Latvia has passed a decision on case no. SKC-575 under which a possibility of registering a pledge of lease rights of real estate with the Land Book in favour of a third party has been rejected, in the particular case for the bank crediting the lessee. Such court decision is based on the fact that lease rights belong to a movable property, the pledge of which is thus not a pledge of an immovable property – mortgage, and thus shall not be registered with the Land Book. The court has admitted that by such pledge of lease rights it would be achieved that lease rights can be alienated and another person might become a user thereof, which contradicts to the provisions of the Latvian Civil Law stipulating that the user cannot alienate usufructuary rights to anybody else, except for the owner. Thus, creditors cannot regard the debtor's lease rights to the immovable property as a sufficient security for covering the debt, because its registration with the Land Book and sale may be interpreted as contrary to the Latvian legal norms.

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Selection of relevant acts and amendments adopted 01.01.2005-28.02.2005:

- The Convention between the Republic of Latvia and the Kingdom of Spain for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to taxes on income and on capital (came into force on 14.12.2004 – Official information No. 41/129-691 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 26.01.2005)

LITHUANIA

COMPANY LAW

Amendments to the Statutes of the Commercial Register have been introduced

On 17.02.2005, the Government adopted Resolution No. 185 amending the Statutes of the Commercial Register (*Dėl Juridinių Asmenų Registro įsteigimo ir Juridinių Asmenų Registro nuostatų patvirtinimo*). The most important changes introduced by the Resolution concern the implementation of the procedure and requirements for registration of European Economic Interest Groupings and European Companies with the Lithuanian Commercial Register, as well as implementation of other EU Directives on company law.

The Resolution establishes that enterprises will be entitled to submit notarized copies or extracts of the documents, except in cases when the original documents will be required by the Statutes (e.g. foundation documents). Previously enterprises were obliged to submit original documents in all cases. Contrarily to the previous version of the Resolution, enterprises will be obliged to submit audit opinions only if the obligation to perform the audit is set forth by the laws or the company's foundation documents, and to submit audit reports only if such requirement is set forth by the laws.

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COMPETITION LAW

Procedure of Filing and Examination of Notifications on Concentration was amended

On 13.01.2005, the Competition Council adopted Resolution No. 1S-4 amending Resolution No. 45 of the Competition Council on Approval of the Procedure of Filing and Examination of Notifications on Concentration and Calculation of Turnover (*Dėl pranešimo apie koncentraciją pateikimo, nagrinėjimo ir bendrųjų pajamų apskaičiavimo tvarkos patvirtinimo*), which entered into force on 30.01.2005. The amendments provide that, on the basis of the Competition Council's request, undertakings will be obliged to notify the Council of the planned or accomplished concentration even if the thresholds of total income prescribed by Article 10 (1) of the Law on Competition are not exceeded, but such concentration would result in formation or strengthening of the dominant position, or restriction of competition in the particular area of activity. The amended Resolution also provides that persons participating in concentration, which results in the increase of the

existing control, are undertakings increasing their control and undertakings, the control of which is increased.

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EMPLOYMENT LAW

The Resolution on the Amount and the Procedure of Payment of Expenses Related to Secondment was amended

On 31.01.2005, the Government adopted Resolution No. 101 amending the Resolution on the Amount and the Procedure of Payment of Expenses Related to Secondment (*Dėl išlaidų, susijusių su tarnybinėmis komandi-ruotėmis, dydžio ir mokėjimo tvarkos*), which entered into force on 02.02.2005. Pursuant to the amended Resolution lesser daily allowances compared to the ones prescribed by the Procedure of Deducting Secondment Expenditure from Profit may be paid to the employee if one of the two criteria is satisfied:

- it is established in the collective agreement, and in case the latter is not concluded – in the employment agreement, but no less than 50 percent of amount of daily allowances, calculated under the Procedure of Deducting Secondment Expenditure from Profit; or

- if the daily allowances to the seconded employee are paid by another person. In this case the amount of daily allowances paid by the sending enterprise could be the difference between the amounts, calculated under the Procedure of Deducting Secondment Expenditure from Profit and the amounts paid by the receiving person.

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TAX LAW

The Rules for Signing an Agreement between the Tax Administrator and the Tax Payer on Tax and Related Amounts were approved

On 30.12.2004, the State Tax Inspectorate approved Order No. VA-210 on Approval of the Rules for Signing an Agreement between the Tax Administrator and the Tax Payer on Tax and Related Amounts (*Mokesčių administratoriaus ir mokesčių mokėtojo susitarimo dėl mokesčio ir su juos susijusių sumų dydžio pasirašymo taisyklės*), establishing the procedure for submitting a proposal on signing of the agreement on tax and related amounts between the tax administrator and the tax payer, for notification of the decision made regarding the proposal and for signing of such agreement. It must be noted that

the tax administrator and a tax payer shall be entitled to sign the agreement only if neither of the parties have sufficient proof for substantiating tax assessment made.

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Estonia has been included into the White List

On 20.01.2005, the Minister of Finance issued Order No. 1K-025 amending the List of Foreign States and Zones, Registered or Otherwise Organised Enterprises whereof are not subject to the provisions of Article 39 of the Law on Profit Tax, and Foreign Business Organization Forms, which are Subject to the Provisions of Article 39 of the Law on Profit Tax (*Dėl užsienio valstybių arba zonų, kuriuose įregistruotiems ar kitaip organizuotiems vienetams netaikomos pelno mokesčio įstatymo 39 straipsnio nuostatos, ir užsienio verslo organizavimo formų, kurioms taikomos pelno mokesčio įstatymo 39 straipsnio nuostatos, sąrašų*). Subsequent to the entering into force of the Order, Lithuanian enterprises, which control enterprises in Estonia, shall not be taxed with the profit tax for the profit gained by the latter enterprises.

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Selection of relevant acts and amendments adopted 01.01.2005-28.02.2005

- The General Director of the Customs Department adopted a resolution amending the Rules for Simplifying in Customs Offices the Performance of Community or General Transit Procedures by Permitting to Use a General Guarantee or Relieving from the Obligation to Present a Guarantee (in force as of 14.01.2005);

- The Head of the State Tax Inspection issued Order No. VA-193 approving the Rules for Recording Amounts Paid by a Taxpayer (in force as of 05.01.2005);

- The Head of the State Labour Inspection issued Order No. 1-7 approving the Description of the Conditions Relating to the Procedure of Establishing Part-Time Work and Length Thereof (in force as of 19.01.2005)

Contributed by Lea Liigus, Katri-Helen Agur, Estonia; Gita Rivdike, Latvia; Tadas Milasius, Lithuania. Edited by Girts Ruda, Latvia.

NEWS IN SORAINEN LAW OFFICES

Recent deals

International pharmaceutical company

We advised the local subsidiary of international pharmaceutical company Vatchem Cyprus in the acquisition of Deleter OÜ, the holding company of the Russian packaging factory. The case was handled by associate partner Toomas Prangli and associate Anne Adamson.

One of the leading advertising companies

One of the leading advertising companies in Europe re-organises its corporate structure in the Baltic countries. The company law team led by partner Karin Madisson and associate Kai Kaljaste provided legal advice and assistance in re-structuring and concluding all related documents.

Property investment fund

Tallinn office has drafted and negotiated a design-build/turnkey target price construction agreement for the development of 10 private houses in Tallinn, Estonia.

One of the world's leading insurance companies

We are assisting one of the world's leading insurance companies in starting its business operations in the Baltic States (including applicability of the insurance terms and conditions to the Latvian and Lithuanian law).

Assistance in heating business acquisition

Riga office assisted one of the largest Lithuanian suppliers of heating energy (E-energija UAB) to acquire heating business (through a lease of assets of a company owned by the municipality) in one of the largest cities of Latvia - Rezekne. The transaction included wide scope of legal advice including, e.g. energy law, municipal law, corporate law, administrative process, banking and finance, insolvency law. Sorainen team was lead by Attorney-at-Law Janis Taukacs.

Advising SAP, a leading global software producer

Riga office has advised SAP Österreich GmbH, member of SAP Group, one of the world's leading software producers, on various

legal matters, including licensing and employment law. The team of lawyers working on the assignments is led by partner Agris Repss.

One of the leading worldwide companies in the areas of heat and cold insulation

Vilnius office assisted one of the leading worldwide companies in the areas of heat and cold insulation in acquisition of the majority interest in one of the leading Lithuanian companies in technical isolation, masonry with fireproof materials and anti-corrosive and chemical protection. The project, led by partner Kestutis Adamonis, included the assistance in negotiation and concluding transaction documents.

Successful Supreme Court decision

Our senior associate Carri Ginter in cooperation with colleagues has successfully advised an auditor in the Estonian National Court (Estonian Supreme Court of Justice) in a case against the Estonian Auditors' Board. The court ruled that the Auditors' Board had unlawfully decided to stay the rights of the client to work as an auditor and obliged her to take an exam. The case involved complex questions regarding administrative law, requirements for motivating discretionary decisions and individuals rights against an administrative body.

Articles

Collaboration with the pan-Baltic newspaper continues in 2005

Due to readers' good feedback, Sorainen Law Offices have been invited to continue their cooperation project with the weekly pan-Baltic newspaper *The Baltic Times* by preparing the column 'Taking Counsel', providing answers to the readers' urgent questions in various areas of law. The following articles have been published during January and February:

Newspaper *The Baltic Times*:

- Lea Liigus: What should be taken into account when starting up a business in the Baltics?
- Rita Svedaite: Security instruments in the Baltics – what are they?
- Brigita Terauda: Protection of design work

- Karin Madisson: Residence requirement for board members abolished in Estonia

- Juhani Siira: Do I have to pay termination indemnity to my commercial agent?

- Elina Cakste-Razna: The new apartment market in the Baltic states

- Ene Soop: Preliminary agreements in real estate transactions in the Baltics

- Tomas Davidonis: What is new in the Lithuanian-Estonian tax regime?

Magazine *Trademark World*:

- Evelin Parn-Lee, Rosa Rotko, Brigita Terauda and Renata Berzanskiene prepared a review on Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania for the article "Nine months later"

Estonian business newspaper *Aripaev*:

- Carri Ginter: EU law helped to remove unnecessary restriction
- Risto Agur: Clarity in squeeze-out regulation

The lawyers of Sorainen Law Offices have prepared the following surveys for The World Bank Group report "Doing Business in 2006: Creating Jobs":

- On Labor and Social Security Law
- On Regulation of Business Entry
- On Legal Rights of Borrowers and Lenders

Latvian business newspaper *Dienas Bizness*:

- Elina Cakste-Razna: Legal aspects of parking lots
- Rudolfs Engelis: New issues in labour disputes

Latvian accountancy newspaper *Gramatvedibas avize*:

- Janis Taukacs and Edgars Koskins comment in the article "The incomes will come out of the shadow".

Latvian newspaper *Latvijas Vestnesis*, annex *Jurista Vards*:

- Anete Rubene: Insurance policy holder right to receive compensation

Paper of the American Chamber of Commerce in Lithuania:

- Renata Berzanskiene: Community Trade Mark

The aforementioned and many other articles written by lawyers of Sorainen Law Offices can be found on our website www.sorainen.com.

Employees

Associate **Sergejs Stacenko** and legal assistant **Janis Bite** have joined the Riga office team. Sergejs has graduated the University of Latvia, Faculty of Law (Mag.iur.) and continues the doctoral studies at this University. His key specialisation area is Property & Construction Law and he is developing Sorainen Law Offices collaboration with Russia. Sergejs is fluent in Latvian, Russian and English. Janis is the last year student at the Faculty of Law of the University of Latvia. He speaks Latvian, English and Russian.

Edgars Briedis, associate at Sorainen Law Offices in Riga, has become a lecturer at the Faculty of Law of the University of Latvia.

Other news

Due to increased business volume in the insurance sector in 2004 Sorainen Law Offices made the decision to strengthen its presence in the legal sector of the insurance market and released **the first semi-annual Insurance Baltic Legal Update (IBLU) in the Baltic States** providing the readers with the latest legal news concerning the insurance market in the Baltic States.

The electronic format of the IBLU is available on the Sorainen Law Offices webpage: www.sorainen.com. For more information on IBLU or insurance related questions please contact Ms Anete Rubene, e-mail: anete.rubene@sorainen.lv.