

# National Library of Latvia

Location: Riga, Latvia

Architect: Gunnar Birkerts Architects, Inc.

Size: 500,000 square feet

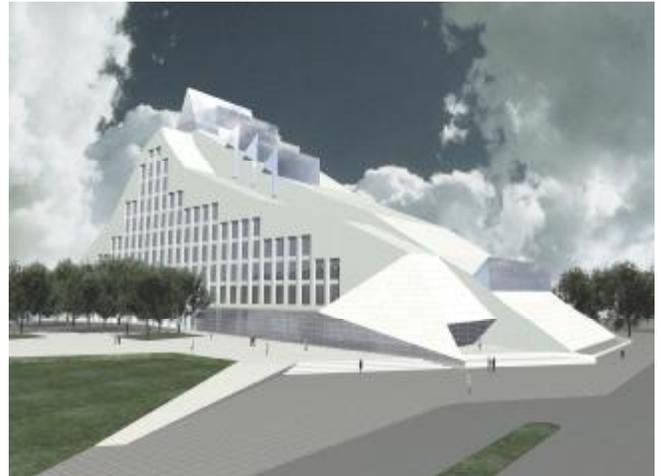
Scope of Work: IT, multimedia, security, acoustics

Completion: 2010 (approximate)

## Description:

The National Library of Latvia, designed by Latvian-born architect Gunnar Birkerts, is destined to be an architectural symbol for Latvia as well as a multifunctional information center. Aside from literature stacks, the 14-story structure includes conference facilities, a 350-seat auditorium, language laboratories, digitization studios, an internet café, research facilities, and exhibition space.

Working as members of an international design team spread across multiple time zones, Shen Milsom & Wilke's global presence enabled full coordination across all disciplines.



All of the library's services are fully computerized and linked to an electronic catalogue. A sophisticated data network--wired and wireless—and Voice over IP telephony will service the library. This infrastructure provides free and easy access to the library's services, especially its substantial digital collections. Networked multimedia systems throughout the building are designed to be monitored from a central location. As a result, any problems that occur are easy to find and repair.

The National Library of Latvia is the country's principal library. As such, it serves as the legal depository of all Latvian publications, including a collection of 5.1 million documents in 60 languages. It houses extensive collections of books, magazines, historical documents, and audio and video recordings. It has an active digitization program and harvests and preserves Latvian web pages.

The Music Library includes 45,000 audiovisual recordings, while the record library contains multimedia works. Shen Milsom & Wilke will design display systems for listening and viewing at the library.

It also has ancient and rare publications that date back to the 15th century, including Martin Luther's catechism, "Enchiridion". Security is, therefore, an important consideration. Shen Milsom & Wilke used crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) measures to protect the space. These include maximizing visibility of people, parking areas and building entrances; the use of landscape systems to clearly define property lines; and using of structural and design elements to discourage access to private areas. Electronic measures are likely to include access control, surveillance cameras, and other means to protect valuable items.