

CHAMBERS EUROPE 2017

International legal directory Chambers and Partners has released the latest edition of its most extensive guide, Chambers Europe 2017. The guide covers 53 jurisdictions across Europe in addition coverage on a Europe-wide and CEE-wide scale.

Chambers guides are the culmination of thousands of in-depth interviews by the largest research team of its kind and are trusted world-wide to objectively rank the world's best lawyers and law firms.

Chambers Europe recognizes Primus as a leading firm in the Baltic legal market ranking it among TOP 3 law firms in the Baltic States. Primus lawyers are also highly ranked in different practice areas.

Banking & Finance

According to Chambers Europe, banking and finance practice in Primus Estonian office is described as "well-regarded practice which goes up in the rankings following sustained positive feedback. Advises on a range of financing transactions, with experience in such areas as acquisition, project and real estate finance. Noted for recent involvement in IPO mandates. Acts for lenders and borrowers and is particularly popular with Scandinavian and Baltic banks."

Sources note the team's activity on deals: *"strong in transactional work."*

Partner **Ermo Kosk** is noted for his *"pragmatic approach,"* and described as *"easy to work with."* He is involved in financing transactions and debt restructuring matters.

Partner **Gerli Kilusk** is described as *"a hard-working practitioner"*.

As reported by Chambers, Primus Latvia has a "flourishing practice with a solid reputation for financial restructurings and insolvencies, covering debt-related matters. Boasts strong regulatory know-how and is often instructed on the financing of complex transactions. Clients include major banks and corporates from a range of sectors, notably energy. Also handles market entry issues for financial institutions."

Sources appreciate the client service, saying: *"The lawyers are precise and efficient and we are very happy."*

Another quote from the client says: *"The team has good experience in the fields required and everything is correctly handled and on time."*

Partner **Sintija Radionova** is noted for her *"restructuring and insolvency work and also advises on a range of transactional and regulatory banking and finance issues. She is noted for her thorough approach: "She always tries to get to the bottom of every question."*

Corporate / Commercial

Corporate practice team of Primus in Estonia is characterized as "well-regarded group, advising clients on M&A deals and restructuring instructions, including on cross-border cases. Supports local and international clients in general corporate matters."

One client notes: *"We have a good opinion of them. We know what to expect and they always stick to it."*

Other sources recognise that Primus *"has a really good corporate and commercial team."*

Partner **Ermo Kosk** is described as a lawyer who *"has experience of advising clients on a range of corporate and commercial mandates."*

Partner **Gerli Kilusk** is described as *"handling the full spectrum of complex and day-to-day corporate and commercial mandates."*

Primus Latvian corporate practice team is described as "well-respected team gaining increasing recognition for expertise in large M&A transactions. Also consults on general corporate and tax issues, including market entry and corporate governance, and has experience of cross-border reorganisations. Client base features big domestic corporates and international clients. The establishment of a Lithuanian office boosts the firm's Baltic-wide presence."

Clients say: *"They provide a good quality of service - I liked the speed of drafting agreements and solving issues."*

One international client appreciates their communication skills, explaining: *"Their communication was very friendly but at the same time professional and supportive. These legal things are quite new for me; they helped to explain the situation and they were patient with my questions."*

Partner **Zane Eglīte-Fogele** is recommended for M&A transactions and general corporate advice: *"She is one of the best lawyers in tough negotiations: she is rather diplomatic and good at explaining deal breakers."*

Partner **Sintija Radionova** is recommended by one of the clients saying: *"She always tries to get to the very bottom of the question."*

In Lithuania Primus lawyers "assist with corporate, M&A, real estate, commercial and restructuring matters. Recently active in life sciences, financial services and ICT. Advice a number of Estonian clients on their businesses in Lithuania."

One client lists *"availability, wide experience and high quality"* as Primus's key strengths.

Managing partner **Robert Juodka** is known for *"his strong experience in cross-border work involving Estonia."* He is a native speaker of Estonian and chair of the Estonian Chamber of Commerce in Lithuania. Clients praise his management and organisational skills.

Dispute Resolution

As reported by Chambers, Primus Estonia "reputable team rises in the rankings following a solid track record in disputes over a number of years. Gains recognition for its market-leading expertise in international arbitration. Also active in a range of civil and administrative proceedings, including competition and insolvency cases. Regularly instructed in disputes pertaining to construction, energy and banking and finance sectors. Represents a number of public institutions and corporates."

Clients are impressed by their case preparation, saying: *"They had good knowledge of the basics of the case so they did their homework very well in the early stages, which was impressive. It was good to see lawyers who go the extra mile and make the effort to understand the economic context and the details of a very difficult case."*

The team is described as *"impressive, very fast, precise and very reliable with good legal expertise. The co-operation worked very smoothly. They were accurate and immediately able to get into the matter - they got a quick grasp of the case and provided clear advice, which was very nice for us."*

Partner **Anton Sigal** attracts positive feedback from clients, who appreciate his good interpersonal skills and *"very solution-oriented and straight-to-the-point"* approach. He acts on some of the biggest international arbitration cases in the Estonian market and also handles financial and public procurement disputes."

According to Chambers Europe, dispute resolution practice in Primus Latvian office is described as *"respectable practice which handles a high volume of debt recovery and insolvency-related cases. Also regularly advises on tax, contractual and corporate disputes. Recent focus includes matters related to the protection of honour and dignity, and white-collar crimes. Acts for a range of local and regional clients and boasts a significant track record in the logistics and transport industry."*

Primus client service is described saying: *"They are very helpful and services are provided in the agreed terms, even earlier and with the necessary care. They also respond very fast."*

Another client praises Primus expertise and approach: *"They are able to cover almost all legal spheres. They always see and dig into the issue very deeply and with the right attitude."*

Partner **Sintija Radionova** is noted as a key contact for clients.

Primus in Lithuania "strengthened by the merger between VARUL, Lithuania and Primus in Estonia and Latvia in April 2016, has significant experience in restructuring and insolvency, as well as contentious employment matters. Also specialises in sport litigation and arbitration, and shareholder disputes."

Primus's team inspires confidence in clients: *"The team gives an impression that they are very confident in what they are doing. This gives a sense of being sure that the cases will be handled in the best interest of*

the client." Another client says: "We felt their assurance and confidence in the case. I believed we would win and we did."

Clients also speak about the firm's quality and strategic thinking: *"The dispute resolution team has its own style and approach to matters, distinguished by strategic planning and quality execution."*

Partner **Marius Devyžis** is recognized as a lawyer, who *"acts on a broad range of litigation matters and has practical expertise in sports litigation issues "I think he is a very good speaker in court,"* says a source. Another adds: *"He looks three steps ahead and has a clear plan."*

Employment

Primus Latvia employment practice team is described as "notable employment team handling a range of contentious and advisory instructions. Broad offering covers the employment aspects of market entry and exit of international companies, including mass redundancies and collective work agreements. Provides general regulatory support, including in dealings with board members. Represents a core clientele of large domestic and regional companies."

Clients appreciate the team's speed and client-oriented approach, saying: *"Everything was handled correctly and on time."*

Partner **Sintija Radionova** is particularly known for her experience of representing clients in employment disputes and also advises on non-contentious issues, including employment agreements and matters relating to business reorganisations.

Real Estate

Primus Estonian real estate practice team is described as a "proficient real estate and construction department, recognised for its handling of transactional mandates. Frequently advises Estonian and international investors, funds and developers on a range of matters, including complex financing, planning, leasing, development projects and construction issues."

Partner **Ermo Kosk** is recognized as a head of real estate department who *"regularly handles real estate transactions, and has strong M&A expertise. He is well respected among market commentators, who describe him as "a pleasure to work with; he understands the market well and is constructive in negotiations."*

According to Chambers Europe, Primus in Latvia is a "popular choice for domestic clients, active on a spectrum of real estate and construction matters. Experienced in construction and development projects and often instructed on due diligence and lease-related matters. Supports clients with real estate transactions, advising on share deals and acquisitions of land. Notable track record of serving clients in the energy and aviation sectors."

Clients commend the firm's business-oriented approach, saying: *"The firm is result-oriented and business-minded and sees the whole picture,"* while another adds: *"The team finds a solution to each problem."*

Sources also note that the firm is client-focused and "easy to work with."

Partners **Laura Zalāna** and **Kristīne Gaigule-Šāvēja** are noted as key contacts for the firm.

Tax

Primus Latvian tax practice team is described as an "active tax group representing domestic brands, international companies and private individuals. Boasts solid general advisory and regulatory expertise, advising on tax structuring, tax due diligence and the tax aspects of share options. Additionally represents clients in tax disputes."

Sources note the firm's responsiveness and attention to detail.

Partner **Ingūna Ābele** is noted as a key contact for clients.

