The SLR station Riga started as a visual satellite observing site in 1957 when the first satellite "Sputnik-1" was launched. The first Sputnik-1 observation was done in November 13, 1957. Later satellite tracking methods were changed to photographic, then to laser. The first SLR measurements were made in 1971/1972 within the frame of the "InterKosmos" program. The SLR systems LD-1 and LD-2 mechanical and optical parts were assembled in the Optical-Mechanical factory in Riga, and tested at the Satellite Tracking Station. The first exemplar of "InterKosmos" LD-1 SLR system was assembled and tested in Riga and installed in Helwan, Egypt in 1972/3 for regular satellite tracking. Finally in 1987 the permanent SLR system LS-105 was installed on the monument which previously hosted a Carl-Zeiss Jena SBG satellite photographic camera. After testing, the second produced, and first unit of the regular production series TPL(LS-105) telescope, was installed and is still in operation. In 1996/97 the SLR system ULIS-630 was operated: total 39 passes, including 14 Lagesos.

First pass milestones:
- Lageos-1 September 9, 1987
- Etalon-1 March 19, 1989
- Etalon-2 October 24, 1989
- Lageos-67 December 24, 1992
- Glonas-35 August 11, 1995
- Glonas-63 August 25, 1995
- GPS-35 September 5, 1995
- GPS-36 October 4, 1995

Other milestones:
- Operation of the ULIS-630 system in Riga, 1996/97.
- Collocation with MTLRS – from August 5 to October 4, 1991
- Riga Station joins EUROLAS after 1991
- First daylight tracking in March 3, 1996: ERS-1, ERS-2, GFZ-1

Hardware development: many different SLR systems has been designed, prototyped and in some cases field-tested since the 80's