



# RIGA AVIATION FORUM BRINGS TOGETHER BALTIC AND EUROPEAN INDUSTRY LEADERS AND EXPERTS

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**Riga Aviation Forum will take place on 3 of October at the ATTA Centre in Riga. This prestigious conference will bring together more than 300 top European and Baltic aviation leaders, executives, and industry experts from the most influential companies in the field. This year, Baltics' most important aviation conference will unite industry executives, experts, and decision-makers for hard-talk discussions and panel sessions, addressing key challenges and trends in the aviation sector across the Baltics, Europe, and globally.**

Global aviation trends will be highlighted by Catrin Mattsson, Baltic and Nordic Regional Manager of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), Serkan Captan, Board Member of the Airports Council International Europe and Munish Khurana, Senior Manager of the Eurocontrol European Green Sky Directorate.

One of the main talks will focus on future scenarios for aviation in a climate-neutral world and will feature Juriaan Kellermann, Head of Fokker Next Gen, and Hervé Morvan, Head of Future Platforms at Rolls Royce, Ivan Berazhny, Senior Lecturer at the Haaga-Helia University of Applied

Sciences, Finland, and Daniel Froehly, Business Development Director at SITA, a leading air traffic communications and information technology company. The discussion will be moderated by Daniel Koerhuis, a Policy Officer for European Investments at the European Commission, representing the Netherlands.

The forum will also bring together the airport executives of all three Baltic States and the Netherlands. Laila Odiņa, Chairperson of the Board of Riga Airport; Simonas Bartkus, CEO of Lithuanian Airports; Riivo Tuvike, CEO of Tallinn Airport; and Meiltje de Groot, Head of Groningen Eelde Airport, will assess the future development prospects of regional airports. They will discuss how these airports are evolving from air hubs into new socio-economic centers during a panel discussion featuring airport executives. The discussion will be moderated by David Feldman, owner of international airport development consultancy Exambela.

A keynote interview with Martin Gauss, CEO of airBaltic, and Richard Maslen, Head of Analysis at CAPA, will discuss airBaltic's role in enhancing Baltic connectivity, its expansion plans to operate 100 aircraft by 2030, and the potential IPO. The conversation will highlight airBaltic's contribution in shaping the region as a key aviation hub, focusing on efficiency, sustainability, and innovation to boost both regional and international competitiveness.

A hard-talk discussion among executives of Baltic aviation industry associations, officials and companies will seek answers to questions related to the opportunities and challenges of the Baltic region's competitiveness in the context of aviation industry development. The discussion will be attended by Artūrs Kokars, Head of Aviation Department, Ministry of Transport of Latvia, Orijana Mašale, Chairperson of the Board, Lithuanian Civil Aviation Association CAVIA, Jaan Tamm, Head of the Estonian Aviation Cluster, Zigmars Vestfēls, Head of the Latvian Aviation Association, Edvinas Demenius, CEO of the SmartLynx Airlines and Florian Kruse, CEO at EVIA AERO.

The second half of the day will be dedicated to parallel discussion sessions on issues of importance to the aviation industry, such as education and employment, the development of air cargo and the transition to greener and climate-friendly technologies, transport and groundhandling equipment.

The discussion on ground handling challenges will feature Mete Erna, Head of international ground handling company Havas, alongside Vytautas Žekavičius from Baltic Ground Services (BGS), Indrek Nolvak from AS Tallinn Airport GH, and Linas Vaškys from Litcargus—leaders of the top ground handling companies in Lithuania and Estonia.

Education and employment issues will be discussed by Ivars Pavasars, Head of RIX Academy, Kristaps Lapsa, Head of airBaltic Training, Ilmārs Blumbergs, Associate Professor and Senior Researcher at Riga Technical University, Deimantė Žilinskienė, Director of the School of Business Innovation and Communication at Vilnius Kazimieras Simonavicius University, and Iluta Savicka, Associate Lecturer at the Estonian Aviation Academy.

The session on air cargo development perspectives in the Baltic region will feature Arvīds Mauriņš, Head of Baltic Cargo Centre Latvia; Maarten Van As, Head of Air Cargo Netherlands; Dmitrijs Voroncovs, Head of Cargo Operations at SmartLynx Airlines; Andrius Antanaitis, Head of Business Development Europe at Strike Aviation Group; and Valter Veidler, Head of Cargo Operations at Ospentos International.

This year's Forum will feature a special event: a reception of the 50th Anniversary of RIX Riga Airport.

In addition to the official programme, the Riga Aviation Forum will provide extensive networking opportunities and feature the RAF EXPO, an exhibition showcasing aviation industry companies. Entrepreneurs from the aviation sector and other industries across the three Baltic States, along with representatives from European and international aviation institutions and organizations, will also participate in the Forum. More information about the Forum and the full event programme is available here: [www.raf.aero](http://www.raf.aero).

Riga Aviation Forum is organized by the Latvian Aviation Association. The Forum is supported by TAV Airports, RIX Riga Airport, SITA, Havas, airBaltic, ATU Duty Free, Cakes & Bakes, Latvijas Gaisa satiksme, Airo Catering Services, TAV Operational Services, Media Port, Fokker NextGen, Baltic Cargo Hub, Hampton by Hilton Riga Airport and Smartlynx.

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