Riga International Airport (Latvian: Starptautiskā lidosta "Rīga"; IATA: RIX, ICAO: EVRA) is the international airport of Riga, the capital of Latvia, and the largest airport in the Baltic states with direct flights to 76 destinations as of November 2019. It serves as a hub for airBaltic, SmartLynx Airlines and RAF-Avia, and as one of the base airports for Wizz Air. The Latvian national carrier airBaltic is the largest carrier that serves the airport, followed by Ryanair. The airport is located in the Mārupe Municipality west of Riga, approx. 10 km from its city centre.

Contents

History[edit]

The airport was built in 1973 as an alternative to Spilve Airport, which had become outdated. It is a state-owned joint-stock company, with the owner of all shares being the government of Latvia. The holder of the state capital share is Latvia's Ministry of Transport.[1]

Renovation and modernization of the airport was completed in 2001, coinciding with the 800th anniversary of the founding of the city. In 2006 and 2016, the new north terminal extensions were opened. A maintenance, repair and overhaul facility was opened in the autumn of 2006, to be run as a joint venture between two local companies: Concors and SR-Technik. In 2010, the first dedicated business aviation terminal of the Baltics opened at the airport.[2]

Riga had nonstop flights to the United States between 2005 and 2017. Uzbekistan Airways employed Boeing 767s on a Tashkent-New York City service via the Latvian capital.[3][4] However, once the carrier acquired Boeing 787s and began to fly directly from Uzbekistan to America, it decided to eliminate the Riga-New York City sector.[5]

Facilities[edit]

Terminal[edit]

The airport features a single, two-storey passenger terminal building which has been expanded and upgraded to modern standards several times in recent years. The landside consists of a main hall containing a single row of 36 check-in counters as well as some shops and the security area on the upper floor while the arrivals area, baggage reclaim and some service counters are located on the ground floor below.[6] The airside features departure areas B and C split up into two piers with the former original, smaller boarding area A now only used for some arrivals. Both piers feature overall eight stands with jetbridges plus four walk-boarding stands from the upper level as well as several more gates for bus boarding on their ground levels.[6] The terminal features outlets by Narvesen, Costa Coffee, and TGI Fridays amongst others, as well as a single airport lounge.[6]

Runway[edit]

The airport has a single runway in directions 18/36, which is 3,200 m in length and equipped with ILS CAT II.[7]

Other facilities[edit]

Both airBaltic and the Latvian Civil Aviation Agency maintain their head offices at Riga International Airport.[8]

Airlines and destinations[edit]

Passenger[edit]

The following airlines operate regular scheduled and charter flights to and from Riga:[9]

Airlines	Destinations
Aeroflot	Moscow–Sheremetyevo
airBaltic[10]	Amsterdam, Athens, Barcelona, Berlin, Billund, Brussels, Budapest, Copenhagen, Dublin, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Geneva, Gothenburg, Hamburg, Helsinki, Kaliningrad, Kyiv–Boryspil, Larnaca, Liepāja, Lisbon, London–Gatwick, Madrid, Málaga, Manchester,[11] Milan–Malpensa, Moscow–Sheremetyevo, Munich, Oslo, Palanga, Paris–Charles de Gaulle, Prague, Rome–Fiumicino, Saint Petersburg, Stockholm–Arlanda, Stuttgart, Tallinn, Tbilisi, Tel Aviv, Turku, Vienna, Vilnius, Warsaw–Chopin, Yerevan (begins 1 May 2022), Zürich Seasonal: Aberdeen,[11] Almaty,[11] Baku,[11] Bergen,[11] Catania, Dubai–International,[12] Dubrovnik, Heraklion,[13] Kazan,[11] Kos,[14] Naples,[15] Odessa, Olbia,[11] Palma de Mallorca,[11] Pisa,[16] Reykjavík–Keflavík, Rhodes,[11] Rijeka, Salzburg, Santorini,[17] Split, Stavanger,[11] Tenerife–South,[18] Thessaloniki,[11] Trondheim,[11] Valencia,[19] Venice,[11] Yekaterinburg[11] Seasonal charter: Antalya,[20] Burgas,[20] Corfu,[21]Gran Canaria,[22] Hurghada,[22] Sharm El Sheikh[22]
Finnair	Helsinki
GetJet Airlines	Seasonal charter: Hurghada,[23] Sharm El Sheikh[23]
Israir	Seasonal: Tel Aviv[24]
LOT Polish Airlines	Warsaw–Chopin
Lufthansa	Frankfurt
Norwegian Air Shuttle[25]	Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm–Arlanda, Trondheim

Onur Air Seasonal charter: Antalya[26]

Pobeda Moscow–Sheremetyevo,[27] Moscow–Vnukovo

Ryanair Aarhus (begins 2 November 2021),[28] Barcelona, Beauvais (begins 31 October 2021),[28] Bergamo, Berlin, Bristol (begins 31 October 2021),[28] Budapest (begins 1 November 2021),[28] Charleroi, Cologne/Bonn, Dublin, East Midlands, Edinburgh, Gothenburg (begins 2 November 2021),[28] Hahn, Helsinki (begins 29 October 2021), Kraków (begins 31 October 2021),[28] Kyiv–Boryspil (begins 1 November 2021),[28] Leeds/Bradford (resumes 31 October 2021), London–Stansted, Lviv (begins 31 October 2021),[28] Málaga (begins 2 November 2021),[28] Malta, Manchester, Memmingen (begins 1 November 2021),[28] Newcastle upon Tyne (begins 28 March 2022), Palermo (begins 2 November 2021),[28] Paphos, Prague, Rome–Ciampino (begins 2 November 2021),[28] Sandefjord (begins 31 October 2021),[28] Stockholm–Arlanda (begins 1 November 2021), Treviso, Vienna, Warsaw–Modlin (begins 31 October 2021)[28]

Seasonal: Girona

Scandinavian Airlines Stockholm–Arlanda

SmartLynx Airlines[29] Seasonal charter: Antalya, Burgas, Corfu, Djerba, Enfidha, Funchal, Tenerife–South, Tivat, Varna

Transavia Amsterdam (begins 3 April 2022)[30]

Turkish Airlines Istanbul

Utair Moscow–Vnukovo

Uzbekistan Airways Tashkent

Wizz Air Doncaster/Sheffield, Dortmund, Eindhoven, Kutaisi, Kyiv–Zhuliany, London–Luton, Sandefjord

Cargo[edit]

Airlines Destinations

DHL Aviation Leipzig/Halle, Vilnius[31]

Eleron Airlines Kyiv–Zhuliany[32]

ATRAN Moscow, Guangzhou, Krasnoyarsk[33]

ASL Airlines Belgium Liège[34]

Aviastar-TU Novosibirsk, Hangzhou[35]

RAF-Avia Western Europe, hub

SprintAir Kaunas[36]

Statistics[edit]

Route statistics[edit]

Busiest routes from Riga (2018)[37]

Rank City Passengers Airlines Change vs 2017

1 London 602,067 airBaltic, Ryanair, Wizz Air 4.2%

2 Moscow 562,702 Aeroflot, airBaltic, Utair 14.0%

3 Helsinki 310,469 airBaltic, Finnair 8.5%

4 Oslo 294,082 airBaltic, Norwegian Air Shuttle 9.7%

5 Stockholm 293,704 airBaltic, Norwegian Air Shuttle, Scandinavian 18.8%

6 Frankfurt 279,314 airBaltic, Lufthansa, Ryanair 3.5%

7 Berlin 272,916 airBaltic, Ryanair 10.6%

8 Tallinn 245,516 airBaltic 10.9%
9 Kyiv 230,734 airBaltic, Ukraine International, Wizz Air 36.4%
10 Copenhagen 225,573 airBaltic, Norwegian Air Shuttle 12.8%

Largest airlines[edit]
Largest airlines by passengers [38][39]

Rank	Airline	2018, %	2019, %
1	airBaltic	54.3%	58.5%
2	Ryanair	15.1%	13.4%
3	Wizz Air	8.4%	7.7%
4	Norwegian Air Shuttle	4.2%	3.9%
5	Aeroflot	3.1%	2.8%
6	Lufthansa	2.6%	
7	SmartLynx Airlines	2.5%	
8	Ukraine International Airlines	1.6%	
9	Finnair	1.6%	
10	SAS	1.4%	

Annual passenger numbers[edit]
See source Wikidata query and sources.

Ground transportation[edit]
Bus[edit]
Riga Airport is accessible by bus line 22 and mini bus line 322, operated by Rīgas Satiksme, which runs between Riga city centre and the airport. Moreover, there are international bus connections from the airport to cities in Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Russia and Belarus.
Car[edit]
Riga Airport can be reached by car via the highway P133 which connects the airport with European route E22. The airport has 3 car parking areas, with ~1500 parking spaces, offering both short- and long-term parking.
Rail[edit]
An airport train station is included as part of the Rail Baltica project. A contract for construction design was signed on 20 March 2018.[40]
Incidents and accidents[edit]
On 17 September 2016, an airBaltic Bombardier Dash 8 Q400 NextGen aircraft made an emergency landing on the runway of Riga International Airport without its nose landing gear deployed. The plane was carrying 63 passengers and 4 crew members and was forced to return to Riga International Airport following issues with its front chassis. The runway was closed between 10:26 and 15:55 as a safety precaution following an emergency landing. Seven inbound flights and four outbound flights were cancelled, 17 flights were diverted to Tallinn Airport and Kaunas Airport and others were delayed. The aircraft involved was YL-BAI and the flight BT 641 was scheduled to fly from Riga to Zürich Airport. No injuries were reported.[41][42][43]

On 17 February 2017, a VIM Airlines charter flight to Ufa, Russia slid off the runway during take-off. The aircraft was carrying the Togliatti Lada ice hockey club team, including 40 passengers and 7 crew members. No injuries were reported. The aircraft's engine was damaged as it hit airport equipment.[44] The runway was inspected and closed for three hours after the incident. Flights were diverted to Tallinn Airport and Kaunas Airport and others were delayed.[citation needed]

See also[edit]

List of the busiest airports in Europe

List of largest airports in the Baltic states

List of the busiest airports in the former USSR

List of airports in Latvia

Transportation in Latvia

Rīgas Satiksme (Riga Public Transport)