



# Media Handbook

**3 – 4 June 2008**

**Riga, Latvia**

# BSRBF

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## BALTIC SEA REGION BUSINESS FORUM

Acknowledging the importance of promoting the region's competitiveness and the need to strengthen collaboration and dialogue among business leaders and government representatives, Latvia is hosting **The Baltic Sea Region Business Forum (BSRBF) on the 3rd and 4th of June in Riga**. The forum, organized back to back with the 7th Baltic Sea States Summit concluding Latvia's presidency of The Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), will discuss such important topics as **energy, finance & banking and transport & logistics**.

On the morning of the 4<sup>th</sup> of June, all the visiting Heads of Governments will join the business leaders at the Business Forum and will share their vision of the region's development. European Commissioners on EU energy and transport issues have also been invited to participate in the session. The discussion will be complemented by remarks and questions from business leaders and investors.

Topics to be discussed:

**Energy in the Baltic Sea Region** - with the presence of the EU Energy Commissioner, Mr. Andris Piebalgs, and leading regional politicians and business community representatives, a wide range of core topics will be discussed including, security of energy supply, demand and infrastructure, future perspectives and potentials for renewable energy and diversification of primary resources.

**Future Challenges and Perspectives for the Baltic Sea Region in the Global Finance Market** - a plenary session, moderated by the Governor of the Bank of Latvia Mr. Ilmars Rimsevics, will be devoted to exchanging views among leading professionals in this field

**The Competitiveness of the Baltic Sea Region in global Eurasia transport corridors** - plenary session of the business forum on June 4th, moderated by the Minister of Transport of Latvia, Mr. Ainars Slesers, will be devoted to the exchange of views between leading regional politicians and the business community about a wide range of core topics. This will include prospects for development of competitive multimodal services, maritime cargo transport and new inland transport corridors, future cargo flows and their distribution, trends in the container cargo market, development projects for the region's sea-ports, airports and cargo terminals, logistic centers and value added services.

## PROGRAMME

### 2 June

**Great Guild, Amatu iela 6**

**19.00** Formal reception for Forum participants, invited guests, and accredited media representatives. Photo and video opportunities available.

### 3 June

**Reval Hotel Latvija, Elizabetes iela 55**

**10.00** Official opening of the Baltic Sea Region Business Forum

**11.30** Plenary Session: "East and West – Energy Resources in the Baltic Sea Region. Security of Energy Supply, Demand, and Infrastructure"

**13.30** Lunch, Address by the Prime Minister of Denmark, H.E. Anders Fogh Rasmussen

**15.00** Plenary Session: "Renewable and alternative energy resources: future perspectives and potential for renewable energy resources in the region. Diversification of primary resources."

**Congress Centre, Kr. Valdemara iela 5**

**19.00** Formal reception for Forum participants, invited guests, and accredited media representatives. Photo and video opportunities available.

### 4 June

**Reval Hotel Latvija, Elizabetes iela 55**

**8.00** Vision of the Future in the Baltic Sea Region – Prime Ministers' discussion

**10.00** Plenary Session: "The Global Financial Market – Future Challenges and Perspectives in the Baltic Sea Region".

**13.30** Plenary Session: "Transport and Logistics: Strengthening the Competitiveness of the Baltic Sea Region (BJR) within the Global Eurasian Transport Corridors".

**16.00** Baltic Sea Region Business Forum: Closing Session and cocktails

## **MEDIA ACCREDITATION**

Accredited members of the mass media will have the opportunity of attending all official events at the Baltic Sea Region Business Forum. Accreditation may be arranged via the Forum's official website [www.bsrbf.com](http://www.bsrbf.com) – media section.

We request that all interested members of the mass media arrange accreditation in good time for the Forum.

## **EVENT VENUES**

### **REVAL HOTEL LATVIJA**

*Elizabetes iela 55*

The 27-floor *Reval Hotel Latvija* is not only home to the largest conference and event centre in Latvia, but is also one of the largest centres of its type in the Baltics and all northern Europe. Riga's business zone, its most popular tourism sites, its museums, theatres and cultural institutions, are all readily accessible, either by taxi or even on foot.

### **THE GREAT GUILD**

*Amatu iela 6*

The Great Guild is one of the most ancient public buildings in the Baltics; its origins may be found in the distant 14<sup>th</sup> century. The Great Guild has historically been open for cultural, public and social events. The historic building has recently been renovated and is presently the permanent home of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra.

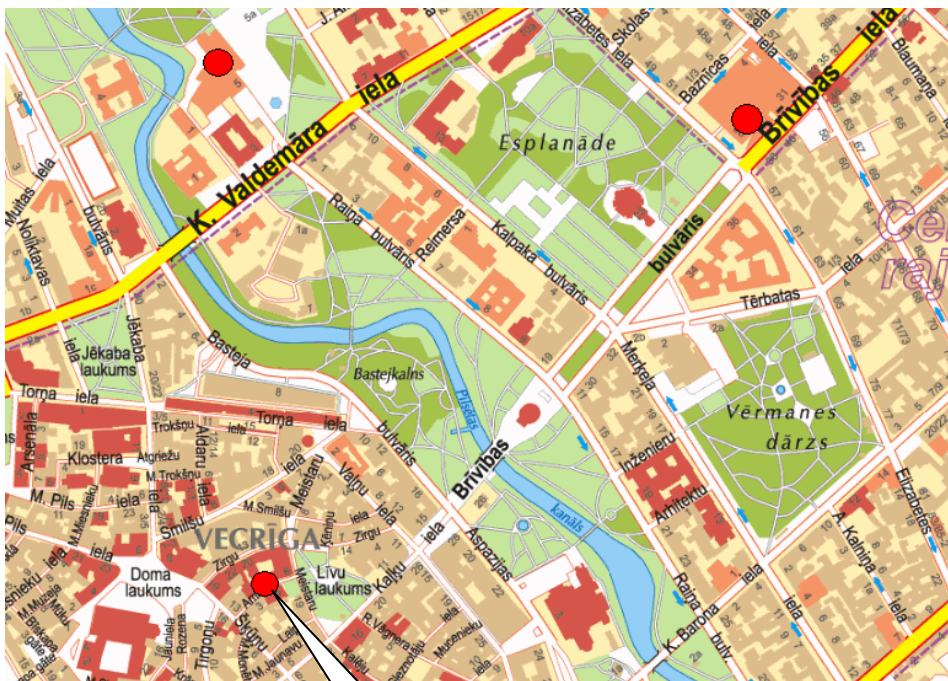
### **CONGRESS CENTRE**

*Kr. Valdemara iela 5*

The Riga Congress Centre has been chosen as the venue for prestigious events in recent years by several hundred event organisers. Each year, concerts, seminars, international conferences, exhibitions, film screenings, and other events, take place here.

Congress  
Centre

Reval Hotel  
Latvija



The Great Guild

## PRESS CENTRE

The Press Centre, from which members of the mass media can obtain accreditation cards and all necessary information, and where they may also work while Forum events are in progress, is located in the **Reval Hotel Latvija Conference Centre**.

### Press Centre working hours:

Monday, 2 June	14:00 – 22:00
Tuesday, 3 June	7:00 – 22:00
Wednesday, 4 June	7:00 – 19:00

To receive an Accreditation Card, we will request production of a document confirming personal identification! The Accreditation Card for the entire duration of the Forum, including evening events, must be clearly visible on your clothing. If you lose your Accreditation Card, or find an Accreditation Card lost by some other person, please inform staff at the Press Centre immediately.

### Work stations and technical facilities

50 work stations with internet access will be available during the Forum, of which 15 will each be equipped with desk-top computer, webcam, and printer. Essential office equipment is available at the Press Centre including copiers and printers. The Forum Plenary sessions will be broadcast live in the Press Centre, and journalists will have the choice of sitting in the actual room where a Forum event is taking place, or viewing the addresses and discussions from within the Press Centre.

During the Forum, journalists will have access to rooms for interviews with individual Forum speakers and participants. Should you wish to interview a participant, please inform Press Centre staff, who will endeavour to comply with your request by organising the required interview in the shortest possible time.

### Press Briefings

After each Plenary Session at the Forum, a summary press briefing will be held nearby, led by a discussion moderator and attended by several Forum participants. All accredited journalists are kindly welcome to attend these briefings.

### Photo/video opportunities

During the formal receptions held as part of the Forum, photo/video opportunities will be provided. At the reception to be held in the Congress Centre on the evening of 3 June, a group photograph of Forum participants is to be taken; accredited members of the media may also take advantage of this opportunity.

### Documents and electronic materials for media requirements

Documents and official photographs taken at Forum events will be available free of charge at the Press Centre, by downloading from the internet website of the Baltic Sea Region Business Forum ([www.bsrbf.com](http://www.bsrbf.com)).

These materials are intended only for use in news broadcasts and publications, the work of the press services, or for informing the public. Use of the materials for commercial or advertising purposes, or for personal benefit, is prohibited.

Processing of photographic materials (films etc) will not be available from the Press Centre.

### Catering at the Press centre

On 3 and 4 June, media representatives at the Press Centre will be offered free drinks and light snacks. Members of the media will also be provided with lunch.

*NB! The Baltic Sea Region Business Forum is being held as part of the Baltic Sea States Summit. If you also wish to attend events at the Summit, we invite you to obtain more detailed information and a Journalist Accreditation Form from the Latvian Foreign Ministry website <http://www.am.gov.lv/lv/cbss/samits/>.*

## **INFORMATION ABOUT LATVIA AND RIGA**

The republic of Latvia, one of the three Baltic States, was founded on 18 November 1918, and in the period between the two World Wars, it experienced great economic growth; during the 1930s, Latvian food export goods were the most highly regarded in all of Europe. Latvia renewed its national independence after the end of the Soviet occupation regime in 1991, and since that time, it has experienced rapid economic growth, and has joined several globally important co-operation organisations including the European Union, NATO etc., and thanks largely to the determined efforts of former Latvian President Vaira Vike-Freiberga, has achieved its recognition and purpose in the world's political arena.

Since ancient times, the territory of Latvia has for geographical and political reasons been central to relations between North-western Europe, Central Europe and Eastern Europe, and nowadays – in relations between the European Union and Russia.

### Data about Latvia

Total area	64 589 km <sup>2</sup>
Population	2.27 million
Official language	Latvian (one of the most ancient Indo-European languages – it is unlike either the Slavic or Germanic language groups; its only relative is the Lithuanian language)
Capital city	Riga (almost 800 000 inhabitants)

Neighbouring countries

Estonia, Russia, Belarus  
and Lithuania

System of government

The state of Latvia is a parliamentary republic, into whose legislature (the *Saeima*), 100 members ("Deputies") are elected every four years.

The Saeima elects a State President for a term of four years, and the President, in turn, nominates a candidate for the post of Prime Minister, and also performs representative functions



Photo: Uldis Vilks, from materials of the Latvian Institute

The Latvian capital city of Riga was founded in 1201, and at the beginning of the new millennium it celebrated its 800-year anniversary. By the Middle Ages, Riga and its harbour in its geographically favourable location became a strategically important place, desirable to various major powers. For a significant period of time it was also a fully-fledged member of the German-led Hanseatic Union.

With the founding of the independent state of Latvia in 1918, Riga, in which important institutions and public activities were concentrated at that time, became its capital city. At present almost half the population of Latvia live in Riga, and the national legislature and executive branch of government are located here, as well as all the major institutions of state administration.

Riga's 800 year ancient history and latest development trends befitting a modern city mark the charming and astonishing contrasts in the city's face – living side by side are the Old Town's buildings dating from the Middle Ages, church towers, and buildings in the Art Nouveau style in the Quiet Centre, the ascetic architecture of the 1930s, and wooden buildings which may be seen on the way from the city centre to the Airport. These historical treasures have also been highly valued by UNESCO experts, who have included Riga's centre on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Riga is also the cultural centre of Latvia; not only does it contain around 50 different museums, but the Latvian National Opera is also located here, with soloists who are currently performing in numerous world renowned opera theatres, and various theatres, whose guest performances have achieved success in the major cities of Europe etc.

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### Transport from Airport

The Riga International Airport is located 13 km from the Riga city centre.

Travel to the Riga city centre:

- By taxi – cost is around 10 - 12 LVL (15 - 17 EUR);
- by *Airport Express* bus, which departs from Riga International Airport for the *Reval Hotel Latvija* from 5:00 to 0:00, every 30 mins. Tickets may be purchased from the driver for 3LVL (4.50 EUR);
- by public transport bus No. 22 or No. 22a; ticket price 0.50 LVL (0.71 EUR).

### Hotels

Hotels are located within 5–10 minutes' walk from the Forum venue. Nearby hotels are indicated for your convenience on the Riga map. During the Forum it will be possible to move about the city freely, except for individual zones in the Old Town, which will be partly or completely zoned off during the Baltic Sea Region Heads of Government Summit which is taking place at the same time.

### LIST OF HOTELS:

#### **REVAL HOTEL LATVIJA**

Elizabetes 55, LV-1010 Riga, Latvija

Tel: +371 6777 2222

Fax: +371 6777 2221

e-mail: [latvija.sales@revalhotels.com](mailto:latvija.sales@revalhotels.com)

#### **REVAL HOTEL RIDZENE**

Reimersa 1, LV-1050 Riga, Latvia

Tel: +371 6732 4433

Fax: +371 6732 2600

e-mail: [ridzene@revalhotels.com](mailto:ridzene@revalhotels.com)

## REVAL HOTEL ELIZABETE

Elizabetes 71/73, LV-1010, Riga

Tel.: +371 67772345

### HOTEL LOCATION GUIDE



### Entry into Latvia, visas

Latvia is a member state of the Schengen Zone. When entering Latvia, EU citizens require a valid personal identification document; a visa is not required.

Citizens of other countries may obtain information about entering Latvia and the requirement for a visa from:  
<http://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/service/>

### **Embassies: contact information**

Embassy of the Kingdom of Denmark  
Pils iela 11, Riga  
Phone +371 6722 6210

Embassy of the Republic of Estonia  
Skolas iela 13, Riga  
Phone. +371 6781 2020

Consulate-General of the Republic of Iceland  
Kr. Valdemara iela 21, Riga  
Phone +371 6703 5383

Embassy of the Russian Federation  
Antonijas iela 2, Riga  
Phone +371 6733 2151

Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania  
Rupniecibas iela 24, Riga  
Phone +371 6732 1519

Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway  
Zirgu iela 14, Riga  
Phone +371 6781 4100

Embassy of the Republic of Poland  
Mednieku iela 6b  
Phone +371 6703 1500

Embassy of the Republic of Finland  
Kalpaka bulvaris 1, Riga  
Phone +371 6707 8800

Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany  
Raina bulvaris 13, Riga  
Phone +371 6708 5100

Embassy of the Kingdom of Sweden  
A. Pumpura iela 8, Riga  
Phone +371 6768 6600

### Latvian time

Standard time in Latvia is GMT/UTC + 2 hours.

### Electricity and power points

Standard voltage in Latvia is 220V; electrical outlets have 2 round contacts. Appliances which operate at other voltages, with different contacts, will require adaptors. Members of the media will need to supply such adaptors themselves. If required, adaptors may also be purchased in Riga.

### Smoking

Latvian legislation stipulates that smoking is prohibited in public areas, including the Press Centre. Nevertheless, a specially equipped smoking area is available in the *Reval Hotel Latvija* Conference Centre.

### Currency and banking services

Latvia's official unit of currency is the Latvian **Lat** (LVL).

The majority of businesses in Riga (including hotels and restaurants) will accept most well-known credit cards; the relevant institution can provide more detailed information.

Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) are available throughout Riga, and will accept most well-known credit cards, as well as debit cards authorised for international use.

*LVL denominations (1 lat = 100 santimes):*

LVL banknotes: 5, 10, 20, 50, 100 and 500

LVL coins: 1 and 2 lat coins; 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 and 50 santime coins

*Exchange rate:*

1 EUR = 0.7028 LVL (fixed rate)

1 USD = approx 0.4530 LVL (variable rate)

### Telecommunications

International (outside Latvia's borders) numbers may be called from fixed telephone lines and also from mobile phones:

### **00 (international connection) + country code + Phone number**

To call a fixed or mobile telephone number from a fixed or mobile phone **within** Latvia, dial the local number without the country code.

### **Useful contacts**

112 main switchboard for emergencies

01 Fire brigade

02 Police

03 Ambulance

1188

1180 – General information services

1189

### **USEFUL INTERNET ADDRESSES**

**[www.bsrbf.lv](http://www.bsrbf.lv)** – Baltic Sea Region Business Forum official website

Republic of Latvia Cabinet of Ministers – [www.mk.gov.lv](http://www.mk.gov.lv)

Latvian Ministry of Economics – [www.em.gov.lv](http://www.em.gov.lv)

Latvian Ministry of Transport – [www.sm.gov.lv](http://www.sm.gov.lv)

Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs - [www.mfa.gov.lv](http://www.mfa.gov.lv)

Bank of Latvia – [www.bank.lv](http://www.bank.lv)

Investment and Development Agency of Latvia – [www.liaa.gov.lv](http://www.liaa.gov.lv)

Latvian Institute – [www.li.gov.lv](http://www.li.gov.lv)

Latvian Tourism Portal – [www.latviatourism.lv](http://www.latviatourism.lv)

### **Additional information:**

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