

# The Latvian government imposes restrictions on air traffic with Belarus

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In response to the actions of the Belarussian authorities in intercepting and landing a civilian passenger aircraft of airline Ryanair from the European Union forcibly at the Minsk airport, when assessing the information available to the aviation safety authorities and responding to the initiative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, today, May 25, the Latvian government introduced restrictions on the issuance of flight permits to air carriers registered in Belarus and thus to enter Latvian airspace and use Latvian airports. The rights of Latvian aircraft are also restricted for using Belarussian airspace and airports. The decision takes effect immediately.

The government decision also stipulates that the Latvian airports shall not service aircraft of other countries that use Belarussian airspace on their flight route.

It means that the Ministry of Transport will suspend the flight permit for the Belarussian airline Belavia and shall not issue non-scheduled flight permits to Belarussian carriers. The airBaltic route permit to Minsk will also be suspended.

The Civil Aviation Agency has carried out a risk assessment of Belarussian airspace and has identified it as unsafe for flights of civil aircraft.

“This is an unprecedented case in the history of civil aviation and a violation of the Convention on International Civil Aviation. It endangered the safety of passengers, crew, and aircraft. I am pleased that the EU Council assessed the accident in exactly the same way yesterday; its recommendations align with the Latvian government's position. Our decisions are coordinated and reasoned,” emphasised Minister of Transport Tālis Linkaits.

The government order instructed the Civil Aviation Agency to conduct a safety assessment of flights in Belarussian airspace by submitting a report to the Ministry of Transport.

The government order will remain in force until the CAA makes a decision on airspace safety in the Republic of Belarus for flights after the assessment.

<https://www.sam.gov.lv/en/article/latvian-government-imposes-restrictions-air-traffic-belarus>