



# STRENGTHENING LEADING POSITION IN BALTIC MARKET - SMARTLYNX AIRLINES

News / Airlines



**This week, Latvia oldest operating carrier SmartLynx Airlines marks its 30th anniversary. In the summer season, the airline plans to have about 60 airplanes, becoming the largest air fleet operator in the Baltic states. SmartLynx Airlines actually operates 33 airplanes, in April three more will be delivered, and the other 22 will be delivered gradually by the end of the summer season. The company's fleet consists of Airbus A320 (25), A330-300 (6), and A321 (4) aircraft. There are two other Airbus A321F air cargo jets, and in April the company will receive the first Boeing 737 MAX.**

**“We expect that in relation to the fleet size, this year we will be ahead the world's largest names in aviation, but we will be able to speak about it in more detail when we have received all the aircraft. The experience obtained during the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis helped us to continue sustainable development so that we could mark our 30th anniversary with a record-high number of airplanes. As our fleet is expanding, the number of our employees is also increasing – we have already 300 employees in our Riga office, and by the end of the year we plan to fill in 40 more vacancies. We hope to see our next anniversary as the largest Latvian employer in aviation,” said SmartLynx Airlines head**

**Zygimantas Surintas.**

## **Developing new business directions during crisis**

The pandemic is called the most severe crisis in the aviation history, however, despite the sudden strike, SmartLynx Airlines during this time has not only managed to maintain its operations, but also develop new business directions. The air cargo fleet has been expanded significantly, and air cargo transportation will be one of the company's main strategic directions also in the future. The airline announced on opening fleet service centre SmartLynx Technik in Riga and Tallinn. Meanwhile, two geographically significant players - Royal Air Maroc in Morocco and Air Peace in Nigeria were added to the client portfolio for full-service ACMI aircraft lease services.

The company's subsidiary SmartLynx Malta announced on a significant step, signing a partnership agreement with DHL Express, providing that the two recently refurbished cargo jets Airbus A321-200 will join the DHL European air fleet. The company during the pandemic has managed to keep and maintain cooperation with the largest partners from the pre-pandemic period, such as EasyJet, TUI and Jet2.

## **Development plans not only in Europe, but also in other continents**

As the company's head says, the main strategic direction of SmartLynx Airlines will be to strengthen the airline's leading position as a trustworthy passenger and air cargo carrier not only in Europe, but also in other continents.

“Aviation in our latitude is a very seasonal business, and the summer season usually is the busiest one. In order to make the business profitable throughout the year, we are looking for new markets with different seasonality, for example, we have started development in Africa, Latin America, the US. Expansion in off-season markets usually takes place in the cargo segment, thus, diversifying our product portfolio and reducing risks, said Surintas.

At present, the main business share of SmartLynx Airlines is organization of passenger charter flights to different resorts and special destinations. A large business share is related with leasing the company's jets, services and staff to those airlines who wish to expand their range of services.

SmartLynx Airlines long-term clients include EasyJet, TUI, Jet2. Recently such companies as DHL, Qatar Airlines, Air Peace, Royal Air Morocco, and others have joined the client portfolio.

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