

Concept note of the joint event on investment climate in the Baltic States

Introduction

The joint Baltic foreign investors event will serve as a platform for discussing investment climates across the three Baltic states and for developing solutions to joint challenges. The discussion will focus on a joint research on investment climates in the Baltic States, conducted by the organisers of the event - [Foreign Investors' Council in Latvia \(FICIL\)](#), [Investors' Forum from Lithuania](#), [Foreign Investors Council in Estonia \(FICE\)](#), [German-Baltic Chamber of Commerce in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania \(AHK\)](#), in collaboration with the [Investment and Development Agency of Latvia](#) and [Stockholm School of Economics in Riga](#).

Given the geopolitical tensions that, to a large extent, affect European and other foreign investors in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the event will emphasize joint challenges, importance of stronger collaboration between the countries, and seek to generate greater support from the European Union to boost investor confidence. Among the key areas of focus are listed:

- Investments in the area of **defence** to stimulate greater security of Europe;
- Support to **research and innovation** for stimulating economic development and investments in times of a crisis.

The event will gather foreign investors that operate in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, alongside policymakers from these countries and representatives from the European Parliament, the European Commission, European Investment Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and NATO.

Aims, format and preparatory work

Aims

The overarching aim of the event is to boost investor confidence in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. For this purpose, the event seeks to stimulate greater support of the European Union and key international stakeholders to the Baltic States and encourage productive collaboration between the national policymakers in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to address common challenges. In addition, the event will highlight business opportunities in the Baltic region to encourage greater investment.

To ensure achievement of the overarching aim, the following specific objectives will be pursued:

- Present the analysis of the investment climates, placing it in the context of previous research in Latvia¹, Lithuania², and Estonia³, conducted based on survey and interview responses of the foreign investors in the respective countries;
- Highlight unique and common challenges and business opportunities in the Baltic region;

¹ FICIL Sentiment Index report

² Investors' Forum Confidence Index report

³ FICE Executive Survey report

- Design recommendations to tackle common challenges, promote collaboration between the Baltic States, and advocate for enhanced EU support in key areas of focus (defence, research and innovation);
- Facilitate discussions that lead to actionable plans and strategies for improving the investment landscape in the Baltic region.

Format

The event will be held onsite in Riga, in English. The formal part of the event will last 4 hours. The expected number of event participants is around 200.

Agenda

09:00 - 09:30 | Registration and welcome coffee

09:30 - 09:45 | Opening of the Event

- **Welcome words and introduction into the topic**

Reinhold Schneider (FICIL chairperson of the Board, CEO of Schwenk Northern Europe) welcomes participants and highlights the FDI trends and economic development of the Baltic States since the beginning of the war in Ukraine (8 min.)

- **Keynote: H.E. President of the Republic of Latvia, Edgars Rinkēvičš**

The President emphasizes importance of regional cooperation, foreign investment, and resilience in the current geopolitical context (5-7 min.)

09:45 - 10:10 | Presentation of research results: Investment Climate in the Baltic States

- **Sentiment Index research results presentation**

Professor Arnis Sauka (Stockholm School of Economics in Riga) presents the comparative analysis of the investment climate across three Baltic States (15 min.)

- **AHK Business Survey presentation**

Florian Schröder (CEO of AHK office in Latvia) presents the research results on investment climate in the Baltic States, in comparison to Eastern Europe (10 min.)

10:10 – 11:00 | Panel Discussion 1: Foreign investors' representatives reflect on investment trends across years and across Baltic States, highlighting key challenges and opportunities

Panel discussion:

- Panelists: Representatives from FICE, FICIL, Investors' Forum in Lithuania, AHK
- Moderator: Professor Arnis Sauka

- Questions: moderator asks questions and allows remarks/questions from the audience. Investors share concrete examples.
- **Discussion topics:**
 - Comparative analysis of investment climates across the three Baltic States across years;
 - Key challenges and opportunities in each country and in the region as a whole;
 - Recommendations for fostering a more favorable investment climate in the Baltic States and messages to the national and European policymakers.

11:00 - 11:15 | Coffee Break and Networking

11:15 – 12:15 | Panel Discussion 2: Stimulating FDI and cooperation in the Baltic States in a new geopolitical reality

- **Keynote: Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, Baiba Braže**

The Minister reflects on collaboration between the three Baltic States (7 min.)

- **Panel discussion:**
 - Panelists: Ministers of Economics and of Foreign Affairs in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, and LIAA director;
 - Moderator: Zlata Elksniņa-Zaščirinska (FICIL vice-chairperson of the Board, Partner at PWC);
 - Questions: moderator asks questions and allows remarks/questions from the audience.
- **Discussion topics:**
 - Reflection on research findings - how governments tackle identified challenges;
 - Key current and upcoming opportunities for investments in the Baltic States and strategies of each Baltic State to stimulate FDI;
 - How geopolitics shaped economic and defence collaboration among the Baltic States. Collaboration prospects to address joint challenges and limitations, and to build synergies in pursuit of opportunities;
 - Reflection on EU support measures to the Baltic States, especially in the areas of defence, research and innovation.

12:15 – 13:15 | Panel Discussion 3: Policy support for boosting investor confidence in the Baltic States in a new geopolitical reality

- **Keynote: Valdis Dombrovskis, European Commissioner for Economy and Productivity, Implementation and Simplification**

The Commissioner highlights key initiatives that are expected to stimulate economic development, productivity and reduction of the administrative burden in the Baltic States (7 min.)

- **Keynote: Thomas Östros, Vice-President of the European Investment Bank**

The Vice-President presents key support instruments of the EIB to the Baltic States (7 min.)

- **Panel discussion:**

- Panelists: Valdis Dombrovskis (European Commissioner for Economy and Productivity, Implementation and Simplification), Jurijs Spiridonovs (Advisor to the Board of Directors at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development), Māris Riekstiņš (Permanent Representative of Latvia to NATO), Andris Sprūds (Minister for Defence of the Republic of Latvia), Thomas Östros (Vice-President of the European Investment Bank);
- Moderator: Reinhold Schneider (FICIL chairperson of the Board, CEO of Schwenk Northern Europe);
- Questions: moderator asks questions and allows remarks/questions from the audience.

- **Discussion topics:**

- Reflection on research results – how can the EU and other key stakeholders contribute to addressing challenges of the foreign investors;
- EU and NATO support measures to the Baltic States, especially in the areas of defence, research and innovation;
- Collaboration between the foreign investors, EU policymakers and key international stakeholders;
- International perspective on investment opportunities in the Baltic States.

13:15 - 13:30 | Closing Remarks: Key takeaways from representatives of FICE, FICIL, Investors' Forum in Lithuania, AHK

13:30 - 16:00 | Lunch and Networking