

Short aviation history of Latvia

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Aviation Development in Latvia

1670 Latvian blacksmith Zviedris – Johansons builds an air vehicle.

1785 Latvian mechanic E. J. Bīnemanis makes the first air balloons and successfully demonstrates balloon takeoff for two times.

1909 T. Kalups establishes the first aircraft manufacturing factory in Riga.

1910 T. Meinbaums makes an aircraft takeoff for the first time in Riga.

1910 The first powered aircraft flight in Latvia (pilot A. Kuzminskis, flight duration – 56 seconds).

Aviation from 1920 till 1940

1920 K. Viziņš's establishes aero-club „Latvijas Aeroklubs” under his own initiative.

1925 Factory of aircrafts „Christine Backman” is established.

1930 Department of Air Traffic of the Ministry of Transport starts to register civil Latvian aircraft with the sign YL assigned to the Latvian registered aircraft.

1934 The government of Latvia sets the provisions for civil aviation.

1937 USSR air company „Aeroflot” starts its operations.

1940 The USSR takes over civil and military aviation.

Aviation industry of Latvia

20th century is the beginning of aviation industry in Latvia, when T.Kaleps obtains the aircraft similar to that of Wright brothers, and he organizes an exhibition. As a result he starts to show interest in the aviation and he uses his factory "Motors" to design and produce the engines. His most successful design becomes the M-1 engine, which Imperial Russia includes in its Air Force equipment due its safety and economy.

Civil aviation from 1945 till 1991

Board of civil aviation of Latvia, which is subordinated to the USSR ministry of Civil aviation regulates Latvian civil aviation.

The aerodromes Spilve and Rumbula as well as airport „Riga” starting from 1974 are used for business flights. Commercial aviation at this time operates Li –2, IL-12, IL –14, IL –18, TU-104, TU-134, TU-154, AN –24, AN-26, JAK 40 aircraft.

Aviation is extensively used in the works of agricultural chemistry. At that time there are at about 100 agricultural chemistry aerodromes in Latvia, for which the aircraft AN-2 is used.

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Sport aviation comes under DOSAAF subordination and is located at Bauskas, Cēsis, Glūda, Cirava, Langači aerodromes.

Additional information about aviation is found:

[K.Irbīša dzīves un darba gājums](#)

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Brūvelis E. "Latvijas aviācijas vēsture", "Jumava" 2003

Irbītis K. "1904-Of struggle and flight: the history of Latvian aviation", "Canadas Wings, Inc." 1986

<https://www.caa.gov.lv/en/short-aviation-history-latvia>