

## SPEAKERS AND MODERATORS OF THE CONFERENCE

### OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE



**Ilmārs Rimšēvičs** has been the Governor of Latvijas Banka since 2001. Previously, he served as Deputy Governor of Latvijas Banka. In his capacity as Governor of Latvijas Banka he is a Member of the Governing Council of the European Central Bank since 2014 and a Member of the General Council of the European Central Bank since 2004. In the 1990s, he was the Chairman of the Board of Latvijas Banka. He is the Governor of the IMF for the Republic of Latvia, and previously he was the Alternate Governor.

Ilmārs Rimšēvičs holds an MBA from Clarkson University (USA) and a Bachelor's degree in economics and international trade relations from Riga Technical University.

### KEYNOTE SPEECH



**Andrea Bassanini** is Senior Economist in the Jobs and Income Division of the Directorate of Employment, Labour and Social Affairs of the OECD and, since 2017, Editor of the OECD Employment Outlook. Previously he worked as project leader for several OECD projects, including the re-evaluation of the OECD Jobs Strategy and many reports, including on competition and labour markets, workplace training, labour market discrimination, employment protection legislation, labour contracts as well as gross job flows and productivity. He was also responsible for the OECD database on Employment Protection Legislation from 2012 to 2019. Andrea Bassanini is also a Research Fellow at IZA, Bonn. Previously he was Associate Professor of Economics at the University of Paris Nord and held visiting research positions at the universities

of Paris Pantheon-Assas, Evry and Stanford and at the IIASA in Vienna.

Andrea Bassanini holds a PhD in economics from the University "La Sapienza" of Rome and a Master's degree from the University of Oxford.

### PANEL DISCUSSION I. PERSPECTIVES AND POLICIES TO RAISE RESILIENCE OF LABOUR MARKETS IN THE BALTIC COUNTRIES



Moderator **Mārtiņš Kazāks** is a Member of the Council of Latvijas Banka as of August 2018. From 2014 until 2018, he was a Member of the Fiscal Council of Latvia. From 2006 to 2011, he was a Member of the Strategic Analysis Commission under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Latvia. Since 2005, Mārtiņš Kazāks was the Chief Economist of Swedbank AS in Latvia, and since 2010, also the Deputy Chief Economist of the Swedbank Group. Mārtiņš Kazāks has lectured at the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga (1996–2008), the University of London, Riga Stradiņš University and Riga Business School.

Mārtiņš Kazāks holds a PhD in economics (2005) and a Master's degree in economics (with distinction; 1997) from the University of London, Diploma in economics from the University of Cambridge (1996) and a Bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Latvia (1995).

## OPENING PRESENTATION



**Uldis Rutkaste** is Head of the Monetary Policy Department of Latvijas Banka. His responsibilities, inter alia, include leading macroeconomic analysis and research at Latvijas Banka, preparation of economic and monetary policy proposals and participation in the policy debate with Latvian and international institutions. Uldis Rutkaste started his career at Latvijas Banka in 2002 as an Economist of the Monetary Policy Department and was later promoted to the positions of the Senior Economist and Chief Economist as well as the Adviser in Economics to the Governor of Latvijas Banka. Prior to his employment at Latvijas Banka, he worked at the Ministry of Economics of the Republic of Latvia. From 2013 until 2015, Uldis Rutkaste worked for the International Monetary Fund as Senior Adviser to the Executive Director of the Nordic-Baltic Constituency of the IMF.

Uldis Rutkaste holds a Master's degree in economics from the University of Latvia and a Diploma in European studies from the University of Southern Denmark, Odense.

## DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS



**Ülo Kaasik** has been the Deputy Governor of Eesti Pank since 2011. He is responsible for preparing monetary policy decisions and leading economic research, financial accounting and reporting. He is also responsible for the information technology working environment and for coordinating the collection and disclosure of statistics. Ülo Kaasik started his career at Eesti Pank in 1999 as Analyst. He was an Adviser to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Estonia on economic matters (2003–2005). Later he held the position of the Head of the Economic Policy Office (2005–2007) and the Head of Economics Department (2007–2011) of Eesti Pank. He is a Member of both the Estonian and Latvian Fiscal Discipline Councils.

Ülo Kaasik holds a Master's degree in economics from the Tallinn Technical University (2003) and a Bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Tartu (1999).



**Evita Simsone** is the Director of the State Employment Agency (SEA) of Latvia. She was the Head of the SEA's Cēsis office from 2005 up to the beginning of 2016 and the Chairperson of the Council of the SEA office heads in 2014 and 2015. Evita Simsone was appointed Deputy Director of the SEA in 2016. She is a Member of the Board of the European network of Public Employment Services (PES) as of 2016 and was elected First Vice Chair of the PES network in 2017.

Evita Simsone has obtained a B.Soc.Sc. degree in psychology from Riga Teacher Training and Educational Management Academy and holds a Quality Management System Internal Auditor's certificate. She has extensive professional knowledge in the fields of increasing employment and reducing unemployment.



**Borja Gracia** studied economics in Warwick and Yale universities and joined the International Monetary Fund in 2005. He is a Senior Economist and has divided his time between the Fiscal Affairs and European Departments covering a great variety of countries in the Middle East, Central Asia, Latin America, North Africa and Europe. Since 2017, he is the Mission Chief for Lithuania. Prior to this position, he was a Special Assistant to the Director of the European Department.



**Andris Vanags** is the Chairman of the Board of AS SAKRET HOLDINGS. Based on his long-term experience in the construction and building materials industry, in 2003 he and his associates acquired a SAKRET licence, founding a company well known today in Northern Europe and with plants also in Lithuania and Estonia. Andris Vanags has been Adviser to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Latvia, he is a Member of the Board of the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Chairman of the Council of CERTUS (policy think tank) and Member of the Advisory Board of Turība University, Riga Technical University (RTU) and RTU Faculty of Materials Science and Applied Chemistry.

Andris Vanags holds a PhD in business administration from Turība University.

## PANEL DISCUSSION II. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, AUTOMATION AND THE FUTURE OF WORK: A CHALLENGE OR AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE BALTIC STATES?



Moderator **Andris Strazds** has been the Adviser to the International Relations and Communication Department of Latvijas Banka since 2014. Currently he is also a Member of the European Council on Foreign Relations and part-time faculty member at the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga. Prior to his work at Latvijas Banka, he was Chief Economist at the Latvian Branch of Nordea Bank Finland Plc. and Transactions Manager at PricewaterhouseCoopers Ltd.

Andris Strazds holds a Master's degree in international economics and business from the Stockholm School of Economics.

## OPENING PRESENTATION



**Anders Sørensen** is Professor of Empirical Economics at the Department of Economics, Copenhagen Business School since 2010. His main research interest is in economics of innovation and entrepreneurship, human capital, firm performance as well as empirical economics. He is the Director of Copenhagen Business School Centre for Innovation. Previously he was an Assistant Professor at Johns Hopkins University, the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Washington DC, USA (2002–2004) and an Associate Professor at Copenhagen Business School (2004–2010). He was a Member of the Danish Productivity Commission (2012–2014).

Anders Sørensen holds a PhD in economics from Copenhagen Business School (1997) and a Master's degree in economics from the University of Aarhus, Denmark (1993). During his doctoral studies he was a visiting graduate student at the University of California, Berkeley.



## DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS



**Meri Obstbaum** is the Head of Forecasting Division at Suomen Pankki – Finlands Bank as of November 2018. Prior to her role as Head of Forecasting, she was the Senior Advisor both at Suomen Pankki – Finlands Bank and at the Finnish Ministry of Finance. Meri Obstbaum covered a wide range of areas, including analysis of the macroeconomics of the labour market and wage formation, macroeconomic modelling, forecasting as well as fiscal and structural policy preparation. She has published several articles on different labour market themes, including the ageing of the workforce and labour market polarisation. She was the President of the Finnish Economic Association (2016–2017) and acts currently as a visiting lecturer in macroeconomic theory at the University of Helsinki.

Meri Obstbaum holds a PhD in economics from the Aalto University in Helsinki.



**Maksims Jegorovs** is an IT professional and expert with notable experience in international IT projects. He has been active in the industry since 1997, and since 2007 he is the Head of the Latvian branch of Accenture (IT company; the largest exporter of IT software and services). He is also a founder of the Start (IT) project (free programming software for comprehensive schools). Maksims Jegorovs has been awarded the Cross of Recognition (2018; Grade III). He is a Member of the Advisory Board of Riga Technical University and Chairman of the Foundation for an Open Society DOTS.

Maksims Jegorovs has graduated from the Faculty of Computer Science of the University of Latvia and is an Honorary Member of the University of Latvia and President of the Alumni Association of the Faculty of Computer Science of the University of Latvia.



**Ignas Mačeika** has been heading the SBA Group Treasury Department since 2018. He started his career at SEB bank in Lithuania where he worked with international financial institutions and major corporate clients. From 2008 to 2010, he continued his career at SEB bank's headquarters in Stockholm in the Large Corporate Department. Back in Lithuania, he covered large Lithuanian and foreign capital corporate clients in advisory and financing fields. Between 2014 and 2017, Ignas Mačeika headed the Large Corporate Banking Division of Nordea Bank in Lithuania and was a Member of the Bank's Credit Committee. During his career in the finance sector, Ignas Mačeika gained valuable experience in the areas of corporate governance, transaction structuring and risk management, including expertise in the real estate segment.

Ignas Mačeika holds a Master's degree in finance law from the Mykolas Romeris University (with exchange year at the University of Bergen; 2006) and a Bachelor's degree in law and management from the Mykolas Romeris University (2004).