**Trade unions call on companies not to lay off employees**

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The Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia (LBAS) calls on companies to be far-seeing and not to lay off large numbers of employees.

LBAS President Egils Baldzens: “before business representatives make any decisions - on firing, unpaid leaves or downtime - these issues should be discussed with trade unions”.

He said that airBaltic's decision to fire a large number of employees had been a rushed decision. "This step had to be discussed with the trade union and an agreement had to be reached on solutions," he said.

Baldzens said that right now people, including qualified specialists, may not leave the country, but after the state of emergency ends, people will be motivated to leave Latvia and look for new and better works. He said that Latvia may not afford to lose more people, especially after the state of emergency is over that the country will have to recover competitiveness.

He said that in the government's support to business, balance should be observed - money should be distributed fairly among the large, medium and small businesses, not forgetting self-employed people.