Improvement of CE regions' accessibility through air transport interconnectivity

**Funding:** European  
**Duration:** Mar 2010 - Feb 2013  
**Status:** Complete with results

**Background & policy context:**

Accessibility is an essential factor for improving competiveness and a necessary precondition for economic development and growth. Free movement of people, goods and information increases efficiency and improves the development prospects for the regions. However, compared to Western Europe the majority of Central Europe suffers from significant accessibility deficits.

This accessibility gap is reflected by significantly higher travel times as well as poor intermodal and intermodal links – with detrimental effects on business settlements, regional-economic development, and tourist attractiveness. The idea for the CHAMPIONS project was born about two years ago due to the decision to have the UEFA Football Championship 2012 organised in the Ukraine and in Poland. This decision put a focus on the weak accessibility of many airport regions in the Central Europe Programme area by means of air transport.

**Objectives:**

CHAMPIONS’ aim is to strengthen the cohesion of regions in Central Europe through a better accessibility by air transport on the one hand and innovative and sustainable solutions for public transport on the other hand. Missing interconnectivity between air and public transport can be a reason for the lack of accessibility of regions or cities and a low share of sustainable public transport.

13 participating regions, airports and institutes from 7 countries, including the Ukraine, which face similar challenges in terms of accessibility, interconnectivity and public transport services, have therefore joined to find accessibility solutions to foster business and tourism activities in their regions.

**Parent Programmes:**  
INTERREG IVB - INTERREG IV - Transnational programmes

**Funding type:** Public (EU)  
**Other programmes:** 2007 - 2013 Central Europe

**Partners:**

Poznan Lawica Airport Ltd./Municipality of Wroclaw/Marshall Office of Lower Silesia/Pannon Business Network PBN/Trieste International Airport/Ostrava Airport, a.s/University of Information, Technology and Management Rzeszow/Thüringer Institut für Akademische Weiterbildung e.V. / EPC Thueringen/Chamber of Commerce Erfurt/Azienda Provinciale Trasporti S.P.A./General Department of Industry and Infrastructure Development, Lviv Regional State Administration/Lviv Airport

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**Key Results:**

The CENTRAL EUROPE project CHAMPIONS aims to improve Central Europe regions’ accessibility and
interconnectivity by strengthening the Central European and international accessibility through long-distance links (air), the interconnectivity through passengers information systems and the regional accessibility of public transport (rail, bus).

The project comprises in total thirteen partners from Poland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Czech Republic and the Ukraine.

The specific objectives of the CHAMPIONS project have three dimensions:

1. Strengthening the Central European and international accessibility through long-distance links (air),
2. Improving the interconnectivity through passengers information systems,
3. Fostering the regional accessibility of public transport (rail, bus).

By improving the long distance accessibility of the involved regions, the regional attraction for the business community, as well as for the tourist community shall be increased. As a result there shall be more flight connections and a better accessibility, leading to positive regional economic effects.

A case study on “Regional Economic Justification of Public Service Obligations” is in process and shall provide arguments to provide regional support for otherwise commercially non viable new routes to the benefit of regional accessibility. An "Air Accessibility Guide", which will be finished in autumn 2012 shall summarize the procedures how to develop new flight connections. The development of information infrastructure (Passenger Information Systems and Equipment) will be essential to achieve the full integration of national and regional markets as well as balanced and sustainable development. Finally the preparation works on pilot investments at the airports of Poznan and Wroclaw started on the base of the results of pre-Investment Studies for Interconnectivity.

One of the most important outputs of the fifth period was the Information day, held in Poznan in March 2012. The focus of this Information Day, which was an event with more than 80 high level participants from policy, economy and science, was on presenting results of the project achieved so far as well as different views on improvement of Air and Public Transport Accessibility. The Information Day was big success for the CHAMPIONS project as the public learned about the CHAMPIONS project and the project partners learned from other experts familiar with airport and public transport issues.

**STRIA Roadmaps:** Smart mobility and services  
**Transport mode:** Multimodal transport  
**Transport sectors:** Passenger transport, Freight transport  
**Transport policies:** Societal/Economic issues, Environmental/Emissions  
**Geo-spatial type:** Network corridors