

Annual Balance Sheet

- **Stable Operational Results Ensured**
- **Increased Freight Volume**
- **Unrest and the air travel crisis affect passenger volume**
- **Outlook for 2016**
- **New Holiday Destination: Burgas in Bulgaria**

2015 posed major challenges for Linz Airport and led to a mixed annual balance sheet.

With regards to freight, the airport is expected to register growth again, and with a freight increase of 45,985 tonnes* (+3.54%), it could expand its position as the largest regional freight airport in Austria. As for passenger volume, upheaval in the European air travel industry and crises in important holiday destinations have resulted in diminished demand. In total, 529,785 passengers came through Linz Airport on holiday or business travel.

"2015 showed us how significantly external influences impact our business. The year was marked by strikes, terrorist attacks, and economic problems in destination areas, which also affected us. It was extremely important to respond quickly and to implement measures to ensure the commercial success of our company", said Gerhard Kunesch, CEO of Linz Airport.

Passenger Numbers in Detail

With 529,785 passengers, the total passenger volume at Linz Airport was down 5.61% compared to the volume in 2014. 375,473 passengers (-1.72%) made use of scheduled services and 171,109 passengers (-11.51%) made use of charter services. There were 1,203 passengers on diverted flights.

"Fortunately, the passenger volume of scheduled services remained stable despite the reduction in the frequency of flights to Vienna and the many strikes that occurred. Holiday traffic was our major concern, however. The economic turbulence in Greece and the attacks in Istanbul clearly lowered demand for our two most popular holiday destinations. The attacks in Tunisia and Egypt led to the complete loss of two important target destinations last year. In spite of a very strong year for group tours and the city flights sector of our regional tour operators, it did not compensate for the loss of the volume markets," stated Kunesch.

Outlook for 2016

At present, blue danube airport linz is counting on a stabilization of the situation in the destination areas and a slight increase in demand. Tour operators have booked 230,000 seats to and from Linz for the current year.

The summer flight schedule includes the usual holiday destinations: Egypt (*Hurghada, Sharm El Sheik*), Greece (*Karpathos, Corfu, Kos, Crete/Heraklion, Kalymnos, and Leros (via Kos), Rhodos, Zakynthos*), Croatia (*Brac*), Spain (*Mallorca*), Tunisia (*Enfidha*), Turkey (*Antalya*), and Cyprus (*Lanarca*).

Also, charter flights to Rostock-Laage, offered for the first time last year, are scheduled again this year and a larger aircraft will be operated because of the increased demand.

New to the schedule this year is Bulgaria, with a flight to the city of Burgas on the Black Sea coast. There are also plenty of city trips and round trips, as well as feeder flights for cruises. In addition to the Baltics, regional travel agents offer trips to Albania, Great Britain, France, Ireland, Italy, Croatia, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Russia, and Romania.

That is why CEO Kunesch is very optimistic about the upcoming summer season and 2016 in general.

"Many visitors from the Danube-Moldavia region already utilise our airport to go on holiday. Experience shows that, following a year of moderate demand is a year in which people want to travel. The prerequisite for this is, of course, that the situation in the target areas becomes stable. This is important not only for us as an airport, but also for the many people who earn their living at these holiday destinations and depend on a positive year of tourism.

Furthermore, in order to better compensate for fluctuations in the future, the airport is working intensively with its partners in the tourism industry on an 'internationalisation strategy'."

Commissioner Manfred Grubauer, President of the Board of Directors of the airport and Chairman of the Linz Tourism Association, emphasises that this internationalisation strategy will open up new markets for the airport and the region will profit at the same time from the added value created. *"Last year demonstrated how much Linz Airport depends on the air passengers in the regional tourist sectors. As part of the Danube-Moldavia region, Upper Austria is certainly not an usual holiday destination for air travellers, but the new internationalisation strategy includes the opportunity to focus on specific key markets and to develop them. This will enable blue danube airport linz to acquire new target groups in the medium term and to compensate better for fluctuations."*

* Freight volume: preliminary results

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