

Title: Lublinek Airport

Country: Poland

Duration: 4'44"

Insert: Reporter: Przemyslaw Lisiecki

Text:

The region of Lodz hosts about three million people. Lodz –the second biggest city in Poland which still hasn't got a genuine airport where passenger planes could carry over 100 people on board. Lublinek –the current airport turned to be too small and now it is being expanded. First the runway will be extended up to two kilometres and one hundred meters. The parking apron and taxing area will be enlarged and restructured. The construction works are taking place on the area of nearly 80 hectares and the total costs 23 million PLN (5,7 million Euro). The whole undertaking is supposed to be completed in April so that the airport could be ready with these parameters in June to receive bigger planes than so far.

Quote: Leszek Krawczyk (Chairman of the Board Lodz Lublinek)

We have assumed that as early as this year we will be able to introduce low-cost air carries which have middle range planes such as Boeings 737 version: 300/400 or even 800. The talks are on the way, there are already initial declarations. Everything depends on whether we will continue improving further infrastructure to receive these airplanes.

Local authorities want the airport to become a port that will provide for at least several connections with the closest neighbours of Poland (Lodz is the main shareholder of the company managing the airport).

Since the 1st January we have had a regular border crossing, there is a Polish border in the airport, there are border guards, custom officers, we are prepared to operate international traffic.

At present there is a Scandinavian carrier Cimberline flying from Lodz to Copenhagen. The inhabitants are only getting aware of the fact that there are such flights in Lodz. The former connection with Cologne in Germany was not successful but this time there are more and more passengers.

Quote: passenger

This connection suits me perfectly and I was so surprised I could come straight to Lodz from Copenhagen, and it takes 15 minutes to get to my friend's place from the airport.

And this is just the beginning, says the Vice-President of Lodz.

Quote: Marek Michalik (Vice-President of Lodz)

I think that finally we will have more than one such a carrier in Lodz. I also hope we will establish a regular connection between Lodz and Warsaw and apart from that, I hope that other airlines, not only the cheap ones, will be able to operate here as well. The air connections, whatever they are, are especially awaited by business people. The time matters for them a lot and now they waste too much time on travelling.

Quote: Johan G. Krone (director of Hampam)

Of course it would be an advantage to fly from Holland directly to Lodz. At this moment we have to fly to Warsaw and drive back by car 120 km.

A director of three factories of BSH concern is of similar opinion. As many as 11 co operators of the company in Lodz and the region are building their plants and they often travel, especially to Germany. They lack good air connections from Lodz.

Quote: Hans Werner Hofer (head of the Factory Lodz Bosch and Siemens)

Cities such as Munich would be very helpful for us and I think not only for us. As a company we frequently go to Munich for instance and to Berlin. However also for the region of Lodz it would be very helpful.

The development of air traffic is also a concern of Polish companies belonging to Business Centre Club.

Quote: Krzysztof T. Borkowski (Business Centre Club in Lodz)

The airport is essential for the entrepreneurs who travel throughout the world more and more. We have one Europe and such connections are necessary. We cannot waste time flying to Warsaw and driving back to Lodz. The distance to the airport often takes more time than a flight to Frankfurt or London. Our contractors also prefer to come directly to Lodz, the more that they usually stay one day only.

Once the extensions of the runway is completed, Centralwings want to initiate regular connection to London first and then in the winter season also to Rome or Paris.

Quote: Piotr Kociolek (President of Centralwings)

We are ready to fly from Lodz. For the time being we have stopped the ticket bookings for one of the flights to London, we are ready to start the Lodz-London connection from 1st August. We will do it with pleasure, not without reason did we decide to set up the company's headquarters in Lodz. The airport development means also the revival in the hotel trade, catering, regional transport and many other new workplaces connected with airport related branches, even in such unusual as falconry.

Quote: Zbigniew Tkacz (falconer)

Once the airport is expanded, you will have a lot to do..

Yes, I will. A big airport is a big area and space and the birds are a serious danger.

It is only the first stage of airport expansion. Lublinek also requires a new port, backrooms and modern equipment. Local authorities of Lodz estimate it will cost approximately 50 million PLN (12,5 million Euro) but it is too much for the local budget. They will seek European Union assets; they may also find an investor who would finance a part of Lublinek expansion. The program of the airport development has been made for the next 20 years. There are the three projects, one of which is to be realized.