

# BENCHMARKING OF SELECTED AIRPORTS

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The aim of the paper is to develop a draft of the measures to enhance the performance of the selected airport, based on the use of benchmarking procedures. The airport that wants to thrive and to hold a stable position on the market, must leave from the strategy of short-term local success and must determine the objectives to ensure its existence and prosperity in an environment of uncompromising international competition. Just the existence of such nekompromisného business environment, the emergence of new management methods and practices aimed at improving the business practices of leading to a successful business. The method of benchmarking is among the modern and effective tools of change for the better and is based on the idea of obtaining key information about business competition, subsequently used by companies in order to win or deal with the best one in the industry. The theoretical part of the work is a summary of the available knowledge in the area of benchmarking with the emphasis on the development of the airports. The practical part is focused on the application of the method of benchmarking for the selected airport. The result is a proposal for a solution to improve the performance of the graduation thesis in economic and operational areas. The paper is descriptive and analytical in nature, therefore, it places great emphasis on the section devoted to analysis.

Keywords: Benchmarking, Performance indicators, Financial analysis, analysis of the competition.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The current economic situation is characterized by strong competitive pressures, globalizational processes and constant changes. The airline industry is no exception and as it is one of the most sensitive sectors to the present state of the world's markets. So far, the performance of airports will show in the new cases as unsatisfactory. To prosper by any of these sometime unkind conditions, airports will strive for holding a stable position on the market. To meet this objective, it must try to take advantage of all the available methods, ways and means. Airports live under a strong competitive struggle, so they are trying to find the key success factors of competition. This principle is based on the method of benchmarking. This method is focused on the analysis of selected parameters, or processes in the best companies in the sector, with a view to prepare a procedure to improve on this, or go up to a better level.

The aim of the present paper is to generalize and to clarify the issue of benchmarking with the emphasis on the development of airports and to take stock of the current status of the selected airport using the method of benchmarking, to compare and analyze its operation with competing airports and to develop a proposal to enhance performance. The paper is divided into four main chapters. The introductory part is devoted to taking stock of and covering the available knowledge on the use of benchmarking benchmarking in general terms and in the field of air transport.

The second chapter shows and describes the methodology used and the objective work. In the third part of the work is carried out an analysis of the current state of the selected airport and analysis of potential partners for benchmarking.

The final chapter is devoted to the analysis of the application on the basis of the method of benchmarking and for selected airport presents a proposal to increase and improve the position of performance measures and solutions on the market.

## 2 BASIC DEFINITIONS OF BENCHMARKING

It is now known around the world, many of its constituent parts and approaches aimed at enterprise development. However, there is not one universal and developed in detail the methodology, which would guarantee its development dimensions for each enterprise in the business world. For each undertaking, on the basis of the analysis, it is necessary to design and edit "its own way", if it is to move to the top.<sup>1</sup>

The word comes from two English words: "benchmarking" (working table), "bench mark" (mark, evaluated in sport) and indicates the brand, for example, on a table, while cutting pipes to length. In general it can be said that the benchmark is a point of reference for measuring the different performance characteristics. In corporate practice, indicates a benchmark reference point for measuring performance and benchmarking is a methodical comparison of the best processes and products of the enterprise with the best companies. If we take the example of the sports terminology used and jumping, leaping high as the best ski jumpers on the benchmarking tells us the world.

There are countless definitions of benchmarking. One of the most succinct is the one of Robert c. Campo, which is one of the most prominent personalities in the area, is characterized as a "search for the best practices in business, which led to an excellent result".<sup>2</sup>

### 2.1 Airport Benchmarking

As in other areas of business as well as airports clearly recognize the value of benchmarking. In the global competitive environment, it is generally accepted as a means of benchmarking for the analysis of business performance in order to help the airport, maximising their efficiency. Airports around the world have adopted benchmarking as a management tool to increase the

<sup>1</sup> BEDNÁROVÁ, L. – LIBERKO, I. – WEISS, R. 2009. *Benchmarking v riadení podnikov*. [online]. [cit. 2012-09-02]. Dostupné na internete: <<http://actamont.tuke.sk/pdf/2009/n1/12bednarova.pdf>>

<sup>2</sup> JAKUBÍKOVÁ, D. 2008. *Strategický marketing*. 1. vyd. Praha: Grada Publishing, 2008. 269 s. ISBN 978-80-247-2690-8.

efficiency, improve services and reduce costs. On the other hand, many airports are of opinion that benchmarking is not an exact science and that the comparison of individual airports, holds many of the pitfalls. Comparison of different geographical, economic and organisational characteristics often make it difficult for airports. Because of the inaccurate and erroneous calculations of the airports appear often different and the comparison almost unusable. That is why many airports use an external benchmarking company by way of outsourcing. A method of benchmarking is carried out in the following stages:<sup>3</sup>

1. The selection of activities and areas for comparison.
2. The development of profiles.
3. The design of the data collection and processing.
4. Identifying the best areas.
5. Identification of best practices.
6. The draft strategies for improvement activities.
7. Evaluation of the results of benchmarking

### 3 BENCHMARKING OF AIRPORT M. R. ŠTEFÁNKA – AIRPORT BRATISLAVA

Bratislava airport is the largest civilian airport in the Slovak Republic. It is situated 9 km North-East from the center of the capital city of Bratislava at an altitude of 133 metres above sea-an area of 520 ha. Since 1993, the name of the Slovak diplomat, policy, shall be borne by the airport and General Milan Rastislav Štefanik Airmen scientist.

Airport Bratislava operates in the region, which is dominated by the Vienna Airport (20mil. equipped with passengers per year) and Budapest (7 million passengers per year with). In terms of passenger transport is the basic problem of the fact that after the Division of Czechoslovakia there was no airport in Slovakia to kick off the process of creation and functioning of the domestic airline, which would normally provide the base state and its link with the outside world obslužnosť.<sup>4</sup>

#### 3.1 Partner identificaton for benchmarking

The current state of the airport Bratislava is a reflection of the State of aviation in the Czech Republic, economic reality, options, and capabilities of the population to travel, but it is also due to the many other factors that have signed on to the fact that Bratislava airport is the only airport in the capitals of the EU countries, whose performances are almost entirely

dependent on foreign airlines and at the same time is so close to the main airport of another Member State.<sup>5</sup>

With the M. R. Štefánik airport, the problem is the lack of regular lines, the absence of a national carrier and many other problems, which will be described in more detail in the next chapter. Vienna Airport recorded the largest amount of passengers which is no surprise. As shown in Figure 1. a number of passengers did not ensure a profit which was experienced higher at the Prague Airport, where a comparable profit would be achieved by half of the passengers.

Tab. 1 Comparison of selected data of airports

Airport	Destinat.	Number of passengers	Aircraft moves	Cargo	Net profit mil. EUR
Bratislava	36	1 585 064	25 358	20 529	- 3,74
Krakow	74	3 014 060	32 803	29 800	0,24
Budapešť	94	8 920 653	109 949	106 595	0,08
Praha	133	11 788 629	150 717	143 201	39,50
Viedeň	174	21 100 000	244 611	277 784	31,60

Source: Separated data in table 1 are drawn from the annual reports of each of the airports closed the financial year 2011.

The Krakow Airport has a smaller capacity than the Bratislava Airport but yet three million passengers for the year 2011 handled almost twice the passengers of the Bratislava airport. From the smallest loss of passengers at the time of the airport has been the strongest of the crisis in 2008 and 2009 in Budapest Airport. As can be seen in Figure 1. Bratislava airport is at number 27 in the airport on the last rung of the movement.

The application of Polish airports, as I believe to be inappropriate, since the Warsaw benchmarking partners also base their action on low-cost transport of Krakow was also reflected in the low-cost carriers are relying on Technology may not always pay off. Another reason, which prevents the use of Polish airports for a method of benchmarking is the fact, that do not provide detailed information about your business, so it is not possible to assess the effectiveness of their management.

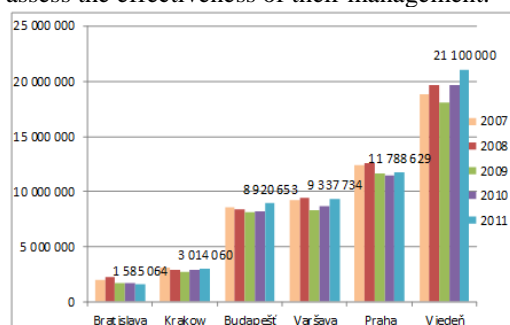


Fig. 1 Overview of passengers movements.

Source: Separated data in table 1 are drawn from the annual reports of each of the airports closed the financial year 2011.

<sup>3</sup> ACI.2004. *Benchmarking to maximise airport efficiency*. [online]. [cit. 2012-12-11]. Dostupné na internete: <[http://www.aci.aero/aci/aci/file/Press%20Releases/Airport%20Benchmarking%20to%20Maximize%20Efficiency\\_final.pdf](http://www.aci.aero/aci/aci/file/Press%20Releases/Airport%20Benchmarking%20to%20Maximize%20Efficiency_final.pdf)>

<sup>4</sup> LETISKO M. R. ŠTEFÁNKA – AIRPORT BRATISLAVA. 2012. *Výročná správa 2011*. [online]. [cit. 2012-01-21]. Dostupné na internete: <http://www.bts.aero/downloads/rocne-spravy/rocna-sprava-2011.pdf>>

<sup>5</sup> MINISTERSTVO DOPRAVY, VÝSTAVBY A REGIONÁLNEHO ROZVOJA SR. 2012. *Návrh zámerov ďalšieho rozvoja Letiska Bratislava a malých letísk*. [online]. [cit. 2012-11-12]. Dostupné na internete: <<https://www.justice.gov.sk/FAttachment/vlastny%2520material-mpk.rtf>>

From all airports managed by the Bratislava airport is an airport in only on the opposite side, which achieves excellent results and Havel Airport compared to almost double the number of passengers to the airport Vienna, which failed to produce a net profit, as the Prague Airport.

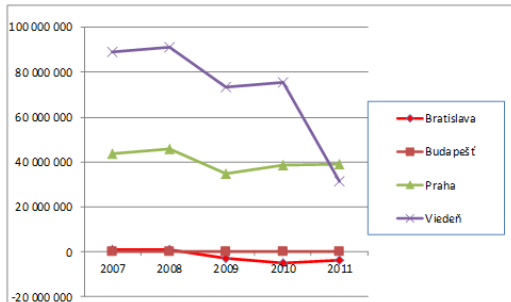


Fig. 2 The development of profit each of the airports (v mil. EUR)

Source: Prepared based on data drawn from the annual reports of individual airports.

The biggest advantage is the fact that Vienna Airport offers direct connections with almost the whole world, because it handles more than 20 million passengers per year. Passengers are often willing to for comfortable transport from point a to point, no lengthy transfers are often willing to pay the price of the ticket three times larger. Whereas, however, a suitable partner for a method of benchmarking the performance of comparable undertakings must be IMP, Vienna Airport with almost eleven times a greater number of potential benchmarking partners odbavených passengers between cannot be assigned. Another reason, which prevents the use of just the airport Vienna Airport, in spite of the fact that many passengers did not produce sufficient profit and najpočetnejšiemu profit drops sharply on an annual basis.

Budapest Airport is able to maintain a relatively stable while the volume of passengers, but not for a longer period failed to achieve a favorable outcome management, as well as 70% of the low-cost transport, because it is made up of airport transport as a suitable partner can't take advantage of. Václav Havel is a modern rapidly developing airport as it was confirmed by the fact that the 2011 awarded Eagle Award from the World Association IATA for the most developing one. This year, international air port handles 11 to 12 million passengers and achieved net profits in excess of the value of 34 million euros, making it the most successful entities well ahead of Vienna, in the most appropriate and benchmark partner for the Bratislava Airport.

### 3.2 The analysis of the areas for improvement

The most important part of the process is to compare and analyse the key areas of benchmarkingového the benchmarkingového partner in order to increase the performance of the airport Milan Rastislav Štefánik Airport Bratislava, a.s. – BTS.

The current status of the Bratislava and Prague Airport, where trojmiliónovou loss and barely cleared by Bratislava with a million and a half passengers, with 12 million passengers per year and reaching Prague cleared

the net profits exceeding the value of € 39 million is indeed food for thought. How is it possible that between the two, almost 20 years ago today that difference is equivalent to? What makes Prague Airport? What steps led to the current success on the market? Just looking for the answer to these questions, by applying the method of benchmarking in the next part of the work.

On the basis of a comparison of the Bratislava Airport with the best airport in the sector, in our case, the airport will be in the fourth chapter in the Havel, draft measures to improve performance in the following areas:

- Financial area.
- Operational performance.
- Management of human resources.

#### 3.2.1 Economic area

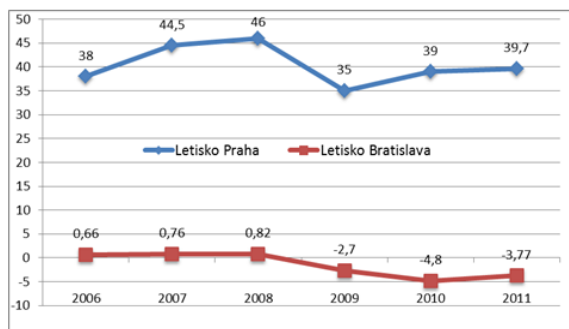
M. r. Štefánik airport did not show that the number of passengers to reach a net profit for the fourth accounting period. The following table shows the comparison of the financial ratios of individual airports. It is possible to see that Prague Airport attains better results in terms of liquidity, profitability and activity.

Tab. 2 Comparing financial ratios M. R. Štefánik Airport and Václav Havel, Prague

2011	Indicator	Airport Bratislava	Airport Praha
Liquidity	Instant liquidity	0,22	4,49
	Swiftly the liquidity	0,47	5,57
	Current liquidity	0,50	5,63
Profitability	Profitability of sales	-15,10 %	26%
	Return on total capital	-1,90 %	2%
	Return on equity	-2,30 %	4%
Indebtedness	The total indebtedness	17%	21%
	The rate of indebtedness	16 %	20%
	The degree of self-financing	83 %	79%
	Interest cover	-22	6,5
Activity	Asset turnover	0,07	0,14
	Commitment of total assets	12,60	6,8

Source: Processed on the basis of annual reports by M. R. Štefánik airport and Václav Havel in Prague.

The development of profit both airports was heavily influenced by the world economic recession, however, while for the Prague Airport that meant profit slump to 35 million eur for the third year by the Bratislava airport. Václav Havel is a modern rapidly developing airport facilities, as is confirmed by the fact that the 2011 awarded Eagle Award from the World Association IATA for the most developing airport. On the basis of their economic results achieved is considered one of the most successful companies in the airport industry.



**Fig. 3 Comparison of the development of profit (in EUR mil.)**  
**Source:** Processed on basis of the annual activity reports of M. R. Štefánik airport, and Václav Havel in Prague.

### 3.2.2 The area of operational performance

Prague Airport has a major advantage in comparison with the airport in Bratislava, and the fact that Prague is Vienna International Airport, next to which the competition is huge, has a significantly denser network of lines for business' leaders, is an efficient transit to the airport and some surrounding countries is served by *spádovo*. Undoubted advantage in favour of Prague, Czech Airlines is also the presence of the national carrier, which are at the same time the airline with the highest number of transported passengers and also the Czech airline Travel Service.

In 2011, the Airport has undergone m. r. Štefánik airport in Bratislava (Slovakia) 1 585 064 passengers. In comparison with the previous year, this represents less than 5% year over year decline in performance level. In spite of the fact that in some European countries the demand for air transport is growing again in 2011 could not yet return to boom times. Conversely, Prague Airport recorded for the year 2011 11.8 million passengers, which is an increase of 2.5%. In the long term, however, so far neither the airport fails to achieve such operational performances, as in the period of greatest growth from 2009. While the development of *odbavených* passengers annually in proportion to the decrease in the airport Bratislava, Prague 2010 rebounding and the volume of passengers is growing.

The structure of the low-cost and network carriers at the Airport Prague can be regarded as healthy balanced model. 69% of the market share of network carriers to the airport means a steady source of low-cost carriers and 31% percentage increase market competition and at the same time keeps the level of airfares on a balanced level. Irish low-cost airline Ryanair for 2011 into ninety-percent of the total volume of traffic of the airport of Bratislava.

Bratislava airport is a regional airport with a significant share of the low-cost characterized as transport. This fact in itself is not a negative, but it is necessary to notice, that such an objective classification of certain specific requirements, that the airport itself is not able to meet the airport and the functioning of the market is very unstable.

### 3.2.3 The area of human resource management

Effective management of human resources is one of the fundamental pillars of a successful construction company and a significant proportion of output management. The basic task of the society should be the efficient use of human resources, to the maximum extent in order to meet business objectives. M. r. Štefánik airport is employed to 31. December 2011, which is about one hundred employees, compared with the same period of the preceding year less employee.

Employment at the Prague Airport is declining by about one hundred people each year. This relatively fast pace is due to the new management, which aims to reduce costs and remove excessive jobs. Another reason is the transition from full-time workers to other forms of labour relations. Anyway, it is an important and stable employer in the region of Prague Airport, which currently employs 1,900 employees and more than 15 000 people employed by companies operating at the airport.

**Tab. 3 The comparison of selected indicators from the effective management of human resources**

	Airport Bratislava	Airport Praha
The number of passengers per employee	2 552	6 205
Revenues per employee in €	45 700	97 650
The average gross monthly income per employee in €	913,45	2 330,30

**Source:** Processed on the basis of annual reports by m. r. Štefánik airport and Václav Havel in Prague.

The indicators listed in table 3, the differences in the effective management of human resources, point to *priepastnom*. While the Prague Airport handles per year per employee, and the employee's total revenue per passenger 6205 nearly one hundred thousand Euros a year, an average of barely 2,500 passengers and revenues do not exceed the cleared Bratislava or Prague's half of the proceeds.

The average salary is just *priepastná*, the resulting average salaries of employees of the Prague Airport is quite high, because the wages of top managers, which are counted on the basis of the favourable performance of the airport paid generous fees. Nevertheless, there are also for the order's employees to the region above average salaries.

## 4 DESIGN SOLUTIONS AND MEASURES TO ENHANCE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE M. R. ŠTEFÁNIK AIRPORT – AIRPORT BRATISLAVA, A.S.

The key factors that led to the current state of the airports where the Airport is making a lot of profits and becomes the most successful airport, one of Europe's medium, and there are already the fourth year with a loss of Bratislava airport and barely one and a half million passengers pass through them, are as follows:

1. Bratislava airport is facing the impact of the airport nekonkurovatelnému. The fact that it is not so important as the International Airport near Prague, Vienna, allowed the development of air transport in the region and the catchment area.

2. Apart from the Czech Republic, in Slovakia, the absence of the presence of the national carrier. Through the CSA and its Alliance partners will become a major air hub for the Prague Airport, Central and Eastern Europe.

3. the impact of the economic situation and purchasing power of the population of the Slovak Republic on air transport demand.

In the next section will be based on the best operator in the corrective measures in the various areas that can be recommended by the Bratislava airport to increase its efficiency and strengthen its position in the market. I am aware of how, and in what way to take in the future will be the airport Bratislava airport, those shareholders must decide, however, must work primarily with facts, which are based on the economic reality of the current development of European air transport.

#### 4.1 The increase of operational performance

On the basis of the successful model of the Prague Airport is an airport in the area to increase operational performance featured the following:

##### 1. Attracting new routes.

To attract new routes it is necessary:

- a) reduction of airport charges,
- b) financial incentives,
- c) a massive marketing support services, advertising in the catchment area,
- d) an attractive incentive program
- e) direct financial support lines,
- f) direct financial support lines,
- g) aircrew accommodation costs,
- h) reimbursement of costs for the operation of offices and other infrastructure needed for the operation of the airport, including the cost of airline employees.

##### 2. Create a successful national carrier.

The success of Prague is to a large extent, the national air carrier CSA, which brought more than 50% of the volume of passengers at the airport and from the Prague Airport in cooperation with the partners of the Alliance have created a transfer by the node. The establishment and successful operation of the airlines, however, is a process that is long term and requires considerable financial resources. The air carrier must offer such a product, which will be of interest. In the current state of air transport carrier should focus on flights to Eastern Europe, in particular Russia and deal with the idea of creating a changeover point of the nodes between Europe and Asia, where markets are developing rapidly and have a strong potential.

##### 3. The construction of a cargo terminal and the necessary infrastructure.

In the Slovak Republic are currently produces on average the most cars per capita, and Slovakia is

considered to be a "superpower" of the car. Prague Airport has two terminals, but nevertheless does not have such an advantage. Thanks to its convenient location and availability, it could be the future of Bratislava airport focused just on air freight. However, the missing cargo terminal at the airport, which could become an essential element for the creation of the international prekladišťa of air cargo.

#### 4.2 Economic area

Bratislava airport is economically unsuccessful company, already the fourth place with the loss of the accounting period, and it is not enough to finance the investment development. It should also be noted that the resulting loss is caused by a large property and it can be attributed to the depreciation of the Terminal. Apart from Bratislava Airport, airport of Václav Havel's net profits moving over the value of 34 million euros. The answer to the question asked is how it makes you more successful competitor benchmarking system. According to the model of the airport Václav Havel, is proposed following:

1. Change the system of airport charges according to the model of Prague. As mentioned in the previous chapters, the Prague Airport is a more effective system prior to the cost, and it can get a greater share of revenue from the airport.

2. Introduction of controlling and reporting. Prague Airport has seen a significant reduction in costs, and increased after the introduction of controlling parameters of profitability of the company. Controlling and reporting of the airport would be focused on the resources of the business and the Government of the Slovak republic, the primary objective of controlling would directly at the airport of Bratislava would be the Elimination of inefficient management of resources, which is very significant for the State enterprises in many cases.

3. Paying more attention to each activity. In the structure of revenues airports tended to total revenue of Prague Airport, is the fact that the share of revenue from each part of stronger activity. A larger share of these revenues is due to a broad-based portfolio of services. The airport also has benefits for the lease of commercial premises.

4. The introduction of periodic inspection of financial indicators with the financial analysis that will allow the company to identify weak areas in the company.

5. Increase the value of indicators of liquidity between the recommended values may reduce the profitability of liquidity management – incorrect.

#### 4.3 The area of human resource management

In the area of human resources management would ensure the necessary number of competent should be the goal of any organization and high performance employees who are qualified to provide high performance for the long term in accordance with the strategic objectives of the organization. As mentioned in the



previous chapters set out the difference in the effective management of human resources between the airports is abysmal. Despite the decrease in the volume of traffic the airport maintains a relatively stable number of jobs, which is reflected to the final cost. Bratislava airport is based on benchmarkingového research in a given area featured the following:

1. The introduction of the staff ensure the effective number of employees and the structure by means of controlling-personnel indicators and benchmarks, which will reduce personnel costs and increase business performance.

2. To make optimum use of the working time.

3. The use of incentives in the development of employee performance and change of compensation of employees, productivity and performance by the company.

4. Evaluation of the individual performance of employees on the basis of the staff and its controlling parameters.

Tab. 4 The summary of the proposals

Operational performance	Economic area	Management of human resources
Attracting new routes	Change the system of airport charges	The introduction of HR controlling
Create a successful national carrier	The introduction of controlling and reporting	Individual performance evaluation
The construction of a cargo terminal	A greater focus on the activities of the non-avionics	Changing remuneration system

Source: Custom processing

## 5 CONCLUSION

The area is currently experiencing one of the biggest in civil aviation history, modern crises. Airports are trying to continue to thrive despite challenging market conditions and to take a stable position. A modern airport needs to be in terms of the global market mechanism, capable of meeting the needs and desires of customers an attractive airport and to meet the social needs of their employees. There is a need to make use of all the material, technical, operational working perfectly (i) the financial resources of the enterprise. To succeed in an environment of harsh international competition requires the use of all available resources, tools, and methods by which the airport will be able to increase your business performance. One of the modern tools aimed at the preparation of the procedure to improve the level of the best competitor in the industry, it is just a method of benchmarking.

Presented the work was focused on the possibility of increasing the performance of the selected airport, with the use of modern methods of benchmarking. The analysis of the proposed solutions is useful for increasing performance, the operation the M.R. Štefánik Airport – Airport Bratislava. The basis for future growth of the economic and operational indicators is attracting new routes. It should be noted that the increase in the volume of traffic would not be a benefit only for the

airport, but will affect the development of the entire region. This process will not be completed without attractive fees scheme, which requires the support and cooperation of all the competent bodies.

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