

Central and East European aviation market liberalisation

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A conference held by EastEuroLink in Warsaw gave some insights into how EU accession and market liberalization in CEE has affected local air carriers. The CEE market, it was noted, is one of the most dynamic in the world.

According to Aadu Lee, Secretary General at East European Air Transport Association (EEATA) the moods have gone from optimism in 2004 to dead pessimism in 2007 as only state supported carriers had a chance to make it through the legislative and other changes necessary to accommodate to EU regulations. Many small and medium-sized companies failed to reach compliance with EU rules and stopped their activity. However, even though the figures are looking optimistic, traditional big air carriers might be facing a crisis soon. As Michael Gaebler, CEO of Aviareps, said the only solution for traditional carriers is to radically change management to become more competitive.