

## Project Newsletter #9

Rail4Regions is an Interreg Central Europe project that is aiming at improving the access to the European rail freight networks. Eleven project partners are developing solutions to optimise regional rail lines and access points and create action plans to encourage the uptake of their solutions in regional development plans. On our project website you can learn more about the recently completed pilot actions and the found solutions.

[Visit our Website](#)



### **The Ablachtal Railway Experiences Its Renaissance: A Model Example for the Revival of Rail Freight Transport in Rural Areas**

The Ablachtal Railway (see photo above; (c) Frank von Meißner), located in southwestern Germany between Mengen and Radolfzell, has a turbulent history behind it and is now considered a prime example of

Today, about five pairs of trains per week operate on the Ablachtal Railway for freight transport. On Sundays and public holidays, additional leisure passenger services commissioned by the state of Baden-

successful reactivation of rail freight transport in rural areas.

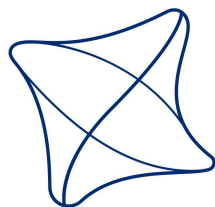
The railway line went through three distinct phases. It was originally conceived for interregional significance, but after the opening along its full length, the line fell short of expectations and gradual closures in the northern section followed from 1954. A turning point came in 1985 with the reconstruction for freight traffic between Mengen and Krauchenwies.

Nevertheless, the traffic volume stayed on a low level and the closing of the line was only averted with a takeover of the ownership through Tego Metall, the most important freight customer. But still recurring closures - due to the poor condition of the line - hindered operations in the following years, and it was not until 2021 that operations were stabilized through another takeover through the neighbouring municipalities.

Württemberg are offered. The success of the Ablachtal Railway is based on several success factors: (i) cost-effective operation of the infrastructure, based on simple standards and lean organization; (ii) . Tourist marketing under the name "Biberbahn", and (iii) Intensive marketing and public relations by a dedicated support association.

These efforts have led to strong identification and support from the local residents and companies. The results are positive effects for tourism and the regional economy, making the Ablachtal Railway an important location factor. The history of the Ablachtal Railway impressively demonstrates how, through community engagement and innovative concepts, a railway line can not only be preserved but also brought back to life. It stands as an example of the possibilities that exist for rail transport in rural areas when all parties pull together.

## Meet our partners: University of Žilina (SK)



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**UNIVERSITY  
OF ŽILINA**

The University of Žilina (UNIZA) is one of the most significant educational institutions in the Central European region. It has a long tradition going back to 1953, with a focus on technical and transport studies. At present, there are about 8,000 students being educated in 196 accredited fields of study. The Faculty of Operation and Economics of Transport (FPEDAS) was founded in 1953 as one of the former faculties of the College of Railways in Prague, the original name of today's University of Žilina. The Department of Railway Transport is a part of the Faculty of Operation and Economics of Transport and Communications. It focuses on teaching and researching the technology, management and economics of transport and transport activities of railway and intermodal transport.



In the Rail4Regions project, UNIZA is responsible for the implementation of activities in Slovakia (with focus on the Žilina Region). UNIZA furthermore contributes with research and investigation of case studies, and promotes the uptake of found solutions in Slovakia.



Links to [UNIZA](#) and [FPEDAS](#).

## Rail4Regions

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