

# The impact of a regional airport – The case of Engadine Airport

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From insight to impact.

# Point of Departure

- Regional airports are confronted with high external costs.
- Passing on high airspace control costs leads to financial disaster.
- Tangible economic effects (direct, indirect, induced) can often explain only a small part of overall regional impact.
- Intangible factors often better illustrate the importance and anchoring of regional airports in the region.



This study highlights various factors relating to Engadine (St. Moritz) Airport that are relevant for the region.

# Content

1. Introduction / theoretical background
2. Research procedure
3. Case Analysis
4. Take-aways

# Introduction / theoretical background

# The Swiss Regional Airports...

...complement regional airports as providers of **public air transport** with direct connections within the country and abroad

...primarily serve **business, tourism and work-related aviation**, enable **training and recreational flying**

...make a **decisive contribution to the attractiveness of their region** and the **establishment of businesses**



# Map of Regional Airports in Switzerland

## Aerodromes with civil air traffic

Status: 30.08.2023



National airport



Regional airport



Airfield



Winter airfield



Water aerodrome



Heliport



Winter heliport



Airfield (civil and military, joint)



Airfield (former military airfield, not yet converted)



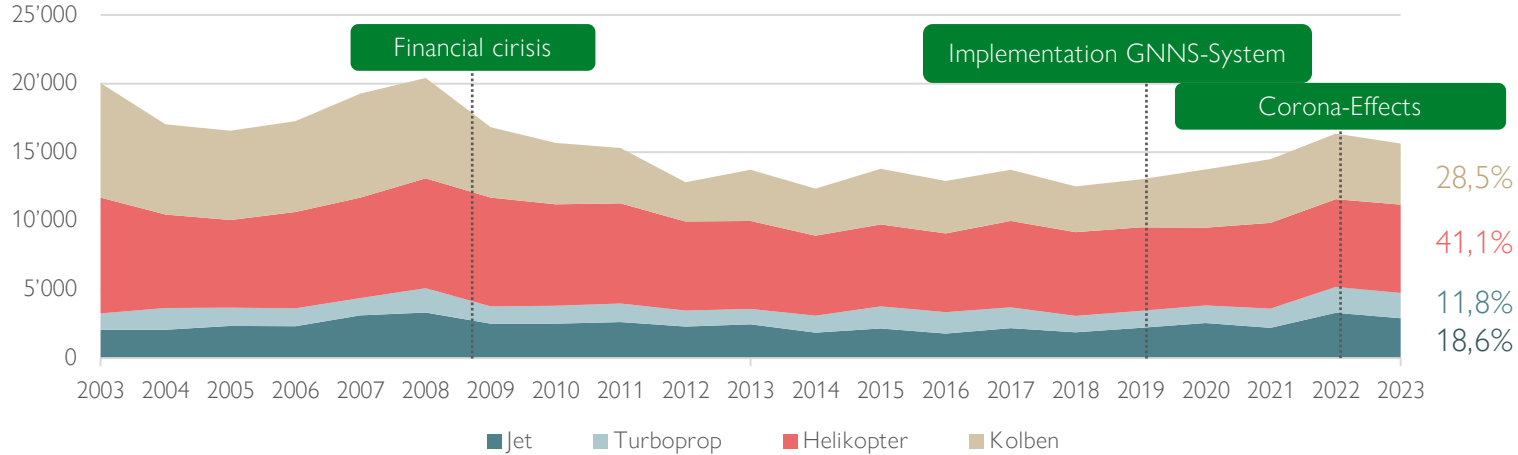
Military airfield with civil use



Military airfield without civil use



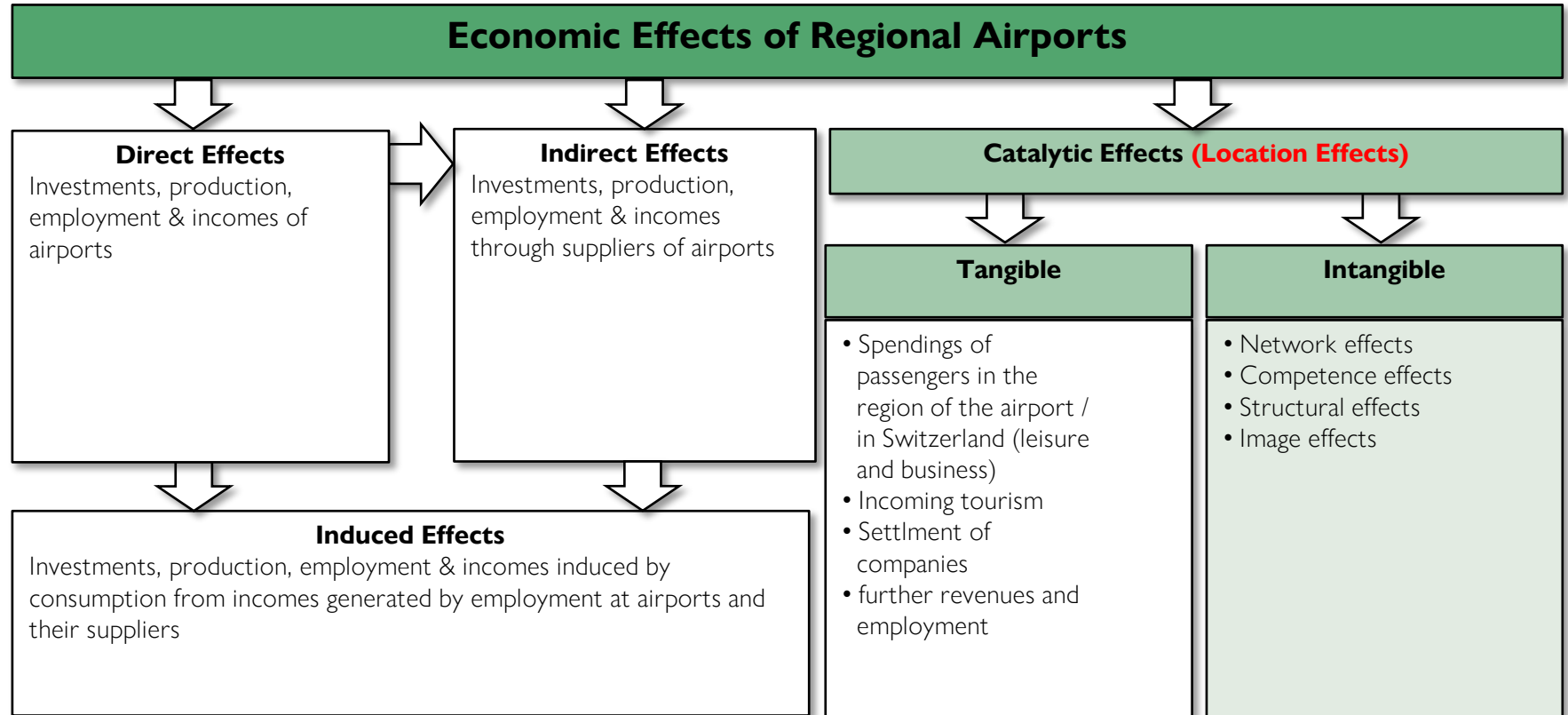
# Development of flight movements by category



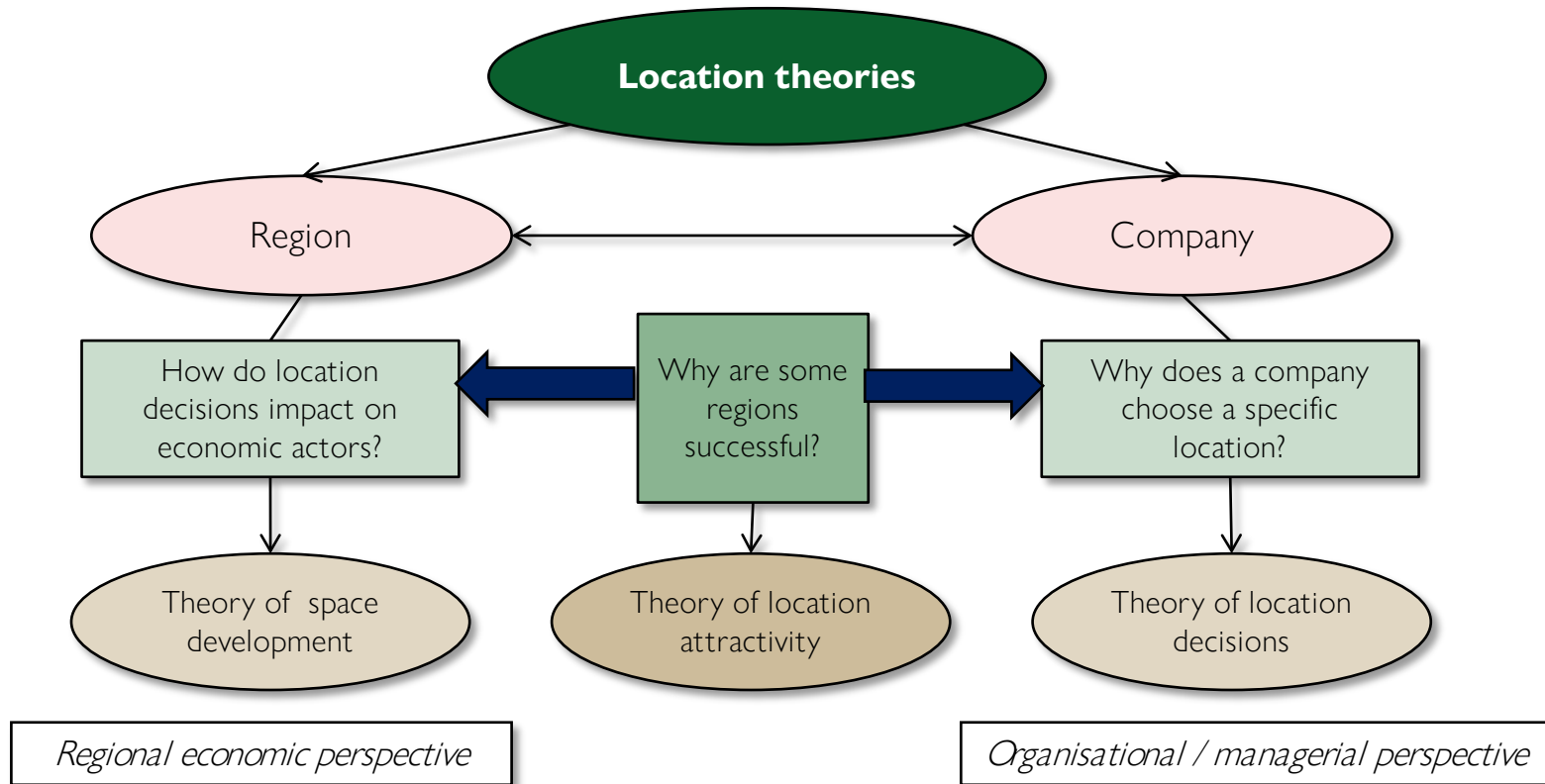
~ 80% of Revenues

28,5%  
41,1%  
11,8%  
18,6%

# Economic Effects



# Catalytic Effects are Location Effects...



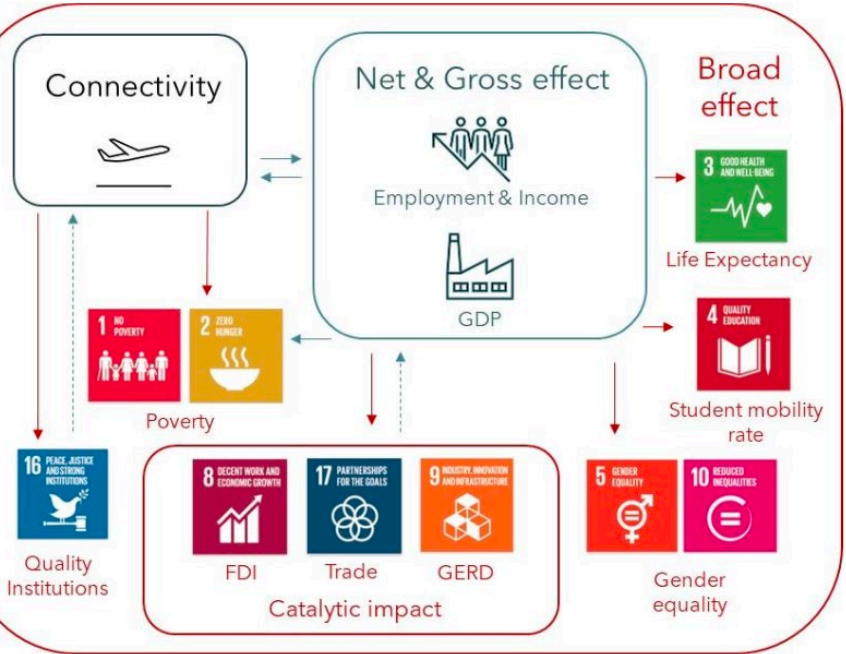
# ... which can be described by Intangible Catalytic Factors

|                              | Factors                               | Examples  |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Intangible catalytic effects | <b>Network factors (ecosystem)</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility of a region (international and national)</li> <li>• Attractivity of the region for companies to settle</li> <li>• Horizontal and vertical integration of regional airports with other companies.</li> <li>• Industry cluster creation (Industries move close to airports)</li> </ul> |
|                              | <b>Competence/ Innovation factors</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education and innovation</li> <li>• Flight education</li> <li>• Leisure- and meeting place (air sports, communities)</li> <li>• Social understanding for aviation</li> </ul>   |
|                              | <b>Structural factors</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Load relieving function of regional airports for national airports</li> <li>• Travel time savings</li> <li>• Complementarity through connections and extended opportunities</li> <li>• Medical supply and reachability</li> </ul>  |
|                              | <b>Image factors</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attractivity of the region for tourism, as a place of living and for settling new companies</li> <li>• Location marketing factor, Premium Events</li> </ul>  |

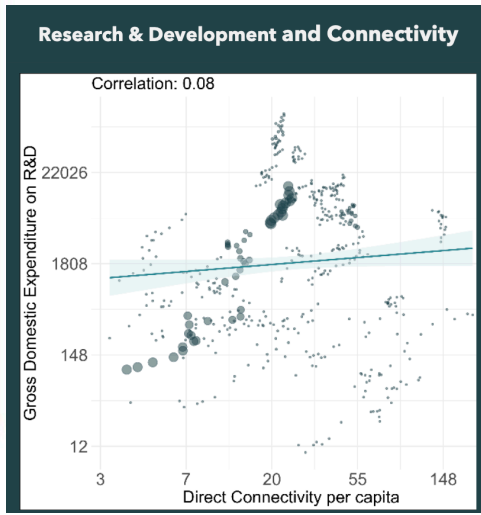
Quelle: Wittmer & Noto (2021)

# Catalytic factors are wider economic impact factors

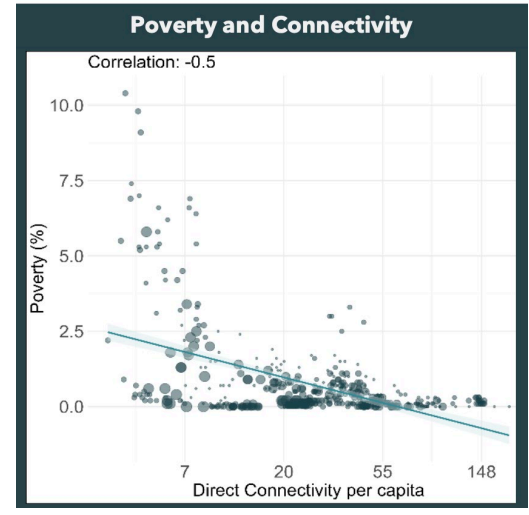
## Connectivity leads to wider societal impacts



Connectivity leads to innovation and development.



Connectivity leads to prosperity.



ACI (2024)

Connectivity leads to jobs and economic potential and positive impacts on different UN Sustainable Development Goals.

# Research procedure

# Procedure – a qualitative approach

- Secondary data analysis (traffic data)
- Literature and document analysis (previous studies)
- In-depth interviews with Airport management
- In-depth interviews with companies at the airport
- In-depth interviews with industry in the catchment area (chambers of commerce and industry, companies, medical providers, schools, etc.)
- In-depth interviews with tourism experts in the catchment area (tourism organizations, hotels)
- In-depth interviews with event organizers
- In-depth interviews with sports organizations
- In-depth interviews with political and economic experts
- In-depth interviews with educational and innovation institutions (universities, schools, flight schools, research institutions)

# Why not quantitative?

- Explorative nature of the study
- Need for creative knowledge gain through individual interviews
- Lack of availability or willingness of stakeholders to provide detailed enough data on a regional level
- Limited quality of available data
- More precision: Quantitative estimations were possible with a precision of 60 % - 80 % only.

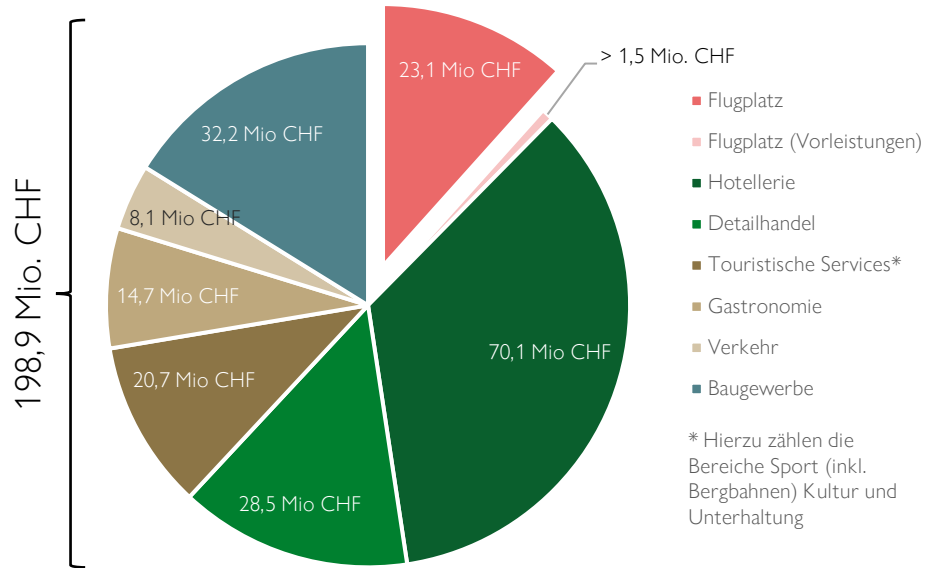


# Case Analysis: Some examples

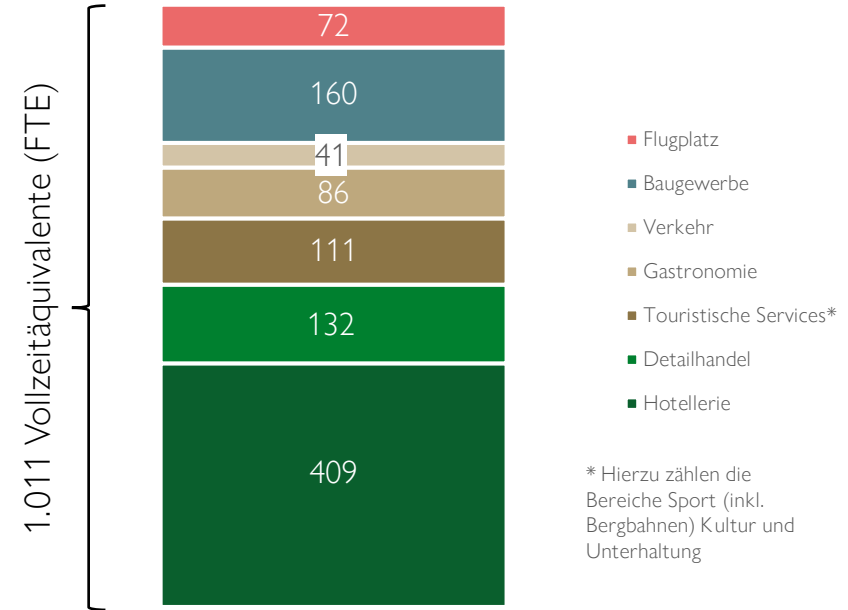


# Central quantitative findings: 87.5 % based on catalytic factors

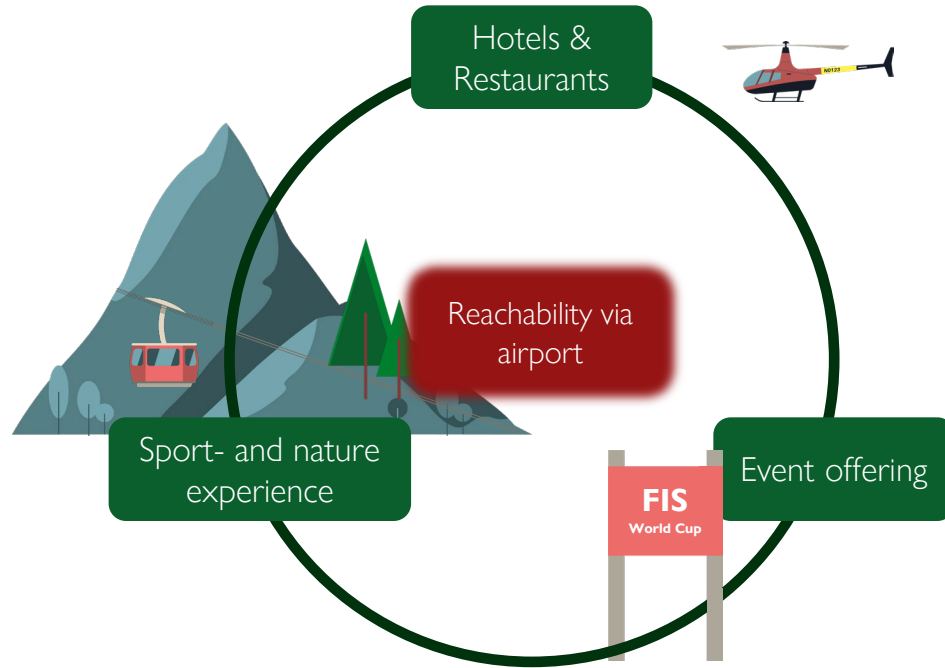
Revenues by industry (2023)



Jobs (FTE) by industry (2023)



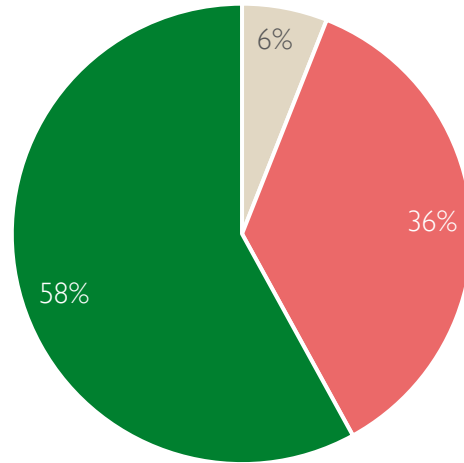
# Intangible catalytic image factors



Relevance of the airport for the integrated tourism products of St. Moritz-Engadin

# Intangible catalytic competence factors

Helicopter operation by category



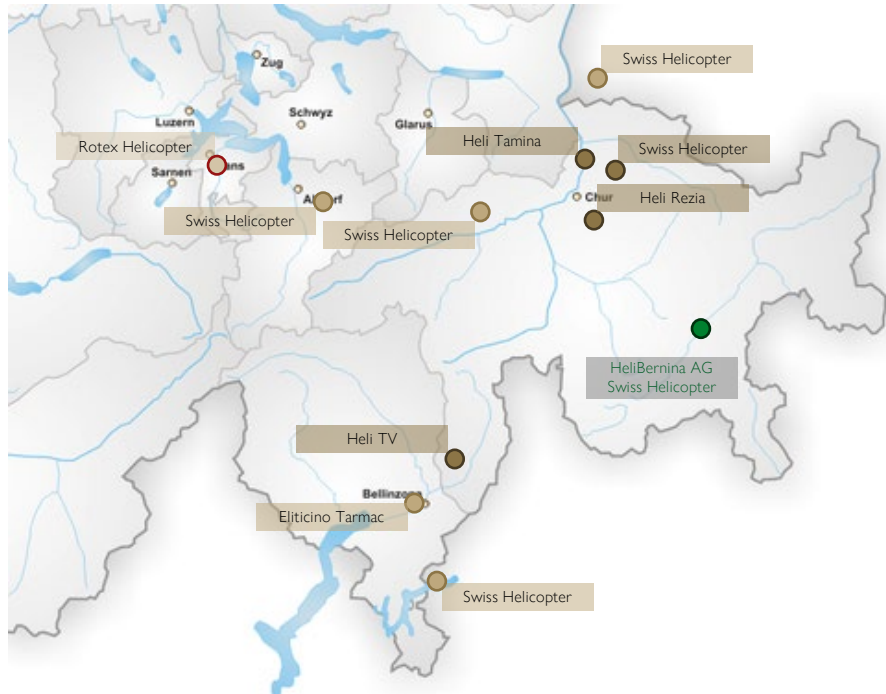
■ Tourismus und Personentransport

■ Rettung und Sondereinsätze

■ Transportflüge und Arbeitseinsätze

Helicopter operation competence in training and operation in challenging environment for rescue, prevention and tourism.

# Intangible catalytic competence factors

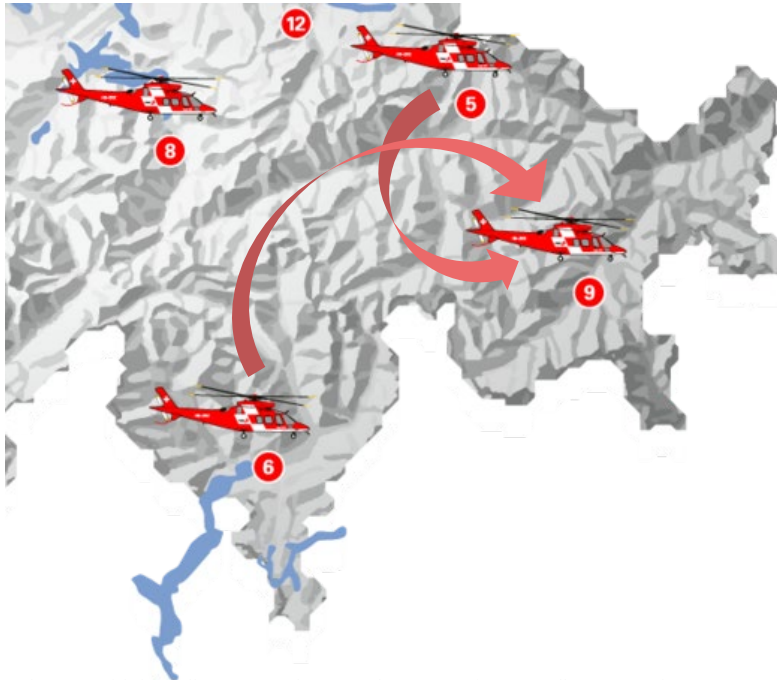


Map: Wikimedia (Creative Commons License)

## Cost savings for helicopter services due to reduced flight time to get there and away:

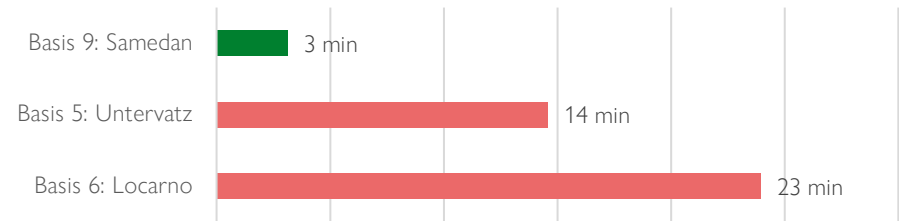
| Case constellation | CHF / flight minute |               |               |
|--------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|
|                    | 42 CHF              | 45 CHF        | 48 CHF        |
| Ideal case         | 1'334'928 CHF       | 1'430'280 CHF | 1'525'632 CHF |
| Preferencial case  | 1'411'646 CHF       | 1'525'632 CHF | 1'613'310 CHF |
| Neutral case       | 1'519'056 CHF       | 1'627'560 CHF | 1'736'064 CHF |
| Negative case      | 1'712'390 CHF       | 1'834'704 CHF | 1'957'017 CHF |

# Intangible catalytic structural factors



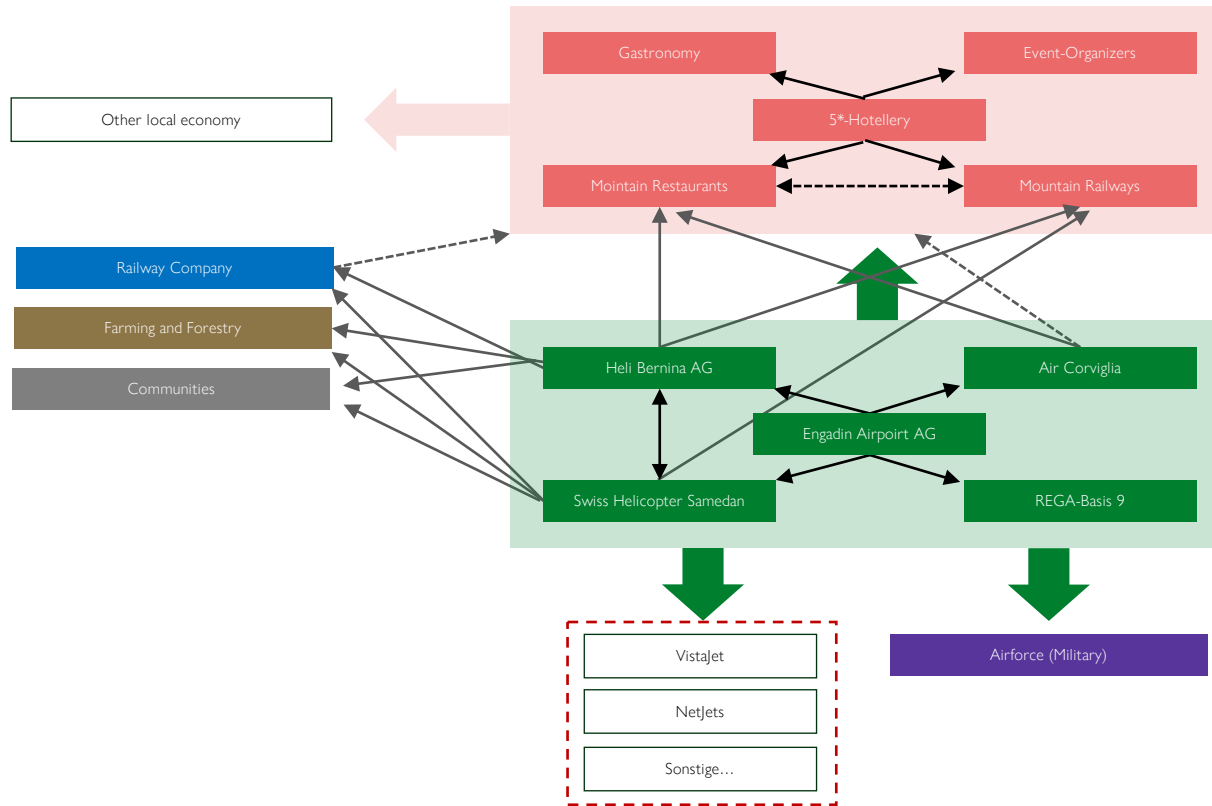
Quelle: REGA (<https://www.rega.ch/im-einsatz/standorte-infrastruktur#einsatzbasen>)

Flight times for emergency patients



In addition, there is cross-financing of the hospitals by guests who fly to Engadin Airport by jet for healthcare. (health tourism)

# Intangible catalytic network / ecosystem factors



# Take-aways

- Quantitative factors and effects are often limited by the quality of available data.
- Qualitative approaches help to gain a better picture of the impact of regional airports for the society.
- Catalytic factors often include Industry, Tourism, Leisure, Medicine and Education/ Innovation
- Catalytic factors can be intangible, qualitative factors.
- When analysing regional airports these wider economic (catalytic) factors are often responsible for the bigger part of the local impact.

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