



ARC



AIRPORT REGIONS CONFERENCE

The role of Airport Regions in Europe

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President Airport Regions Conference



Anne Devitt

ARC The Airport Regions Conference represents the interests of communities living and working around international airports in Europe. We represent today 29 regions and cities with about 100 million European citizens from 15 countries.

Our members, cities, regions and local authorities, experience and manage the benefits and impacts of an expanding and changing aviation industry. Over the past 10 years we have drawn on the expertise within our member organisations to share best practice in spatial planning, economic development, environmental mitigation and transport systems at airports. These published studies are a valued resource for those planning for increased activity at their airport.

Employment, congestion, land use and airport expansion, noise, night flights, emissions and fuel tax are among the pressing matters concerning our communities. The ARC has established a dialogue with the organisations representing airlines, airports and the aircraft industry. As a recognised stakeholder on behalf of the communities around airports, we present their concerns and lobby to ensure that the growth occurring in the air and on the ground is sustainable for the communities most directly affected by it.

During my presidency I have strengthened ARC links with the European Commission responsible for transport, environment and

the regions. I have emphasised the essential role that an international airport plays in the economy of its region and how access to the major airports from new member states is crucial to their economic growth in accordance with the Lisbon Strategy. To ensure that airports and the aviation industry can continue to benefit our communities, it is essential that the environmental impacts of noise, traffic congestion and air emissions are controlled and mitigated. Within the ARC member organisations we have the expertise and best practice, which the European Commission can call on to supply information for their deliberations and decisions.

We are anxious to share our knowledge, experience and network with all players, whether in the aviation business or influenced by it, to ensure the sustainable growth and development of our regions and communities.

Airport regions will be focal points for a dynamic Europe in the 21st century and for the wellbeing of our citizens.

Anne Devitt, President Airport Regions Conference

The role of Airport Regions in Europe

Economic growth and innovation

The Lisbon Strategy, the economic reform agenda for Europe, is designed to make the European Union "the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world". However, growth rates are lower than expected and the number of new jobs is not sufficient. The European leaders therefore adopted the idea of putting growth and employment at the heart of the Lisbon Strategy.

Airport regions are the economic prime movers of the 21st century. ***They are often major political, financial and research centres*** and well placed to reinvigorate the Lisbon strategy by creating new jobs and growth on a regional and national scale. New dynamics often start in airport regions. Attracting business development, new airlines or freight increase employment rates and regional competitiveness and actively involve local players. These dynamics make airport regions the real owners of the goals of the Lisbon process.

Airport regions provide infrastructure for economic development. Airports link European regions with each other and the rest of the world. Hence, airport regions foster economic and social cohesion and support the development of the internal market, as



well as Europe's capacity to be competitive on global markets.

Regional and local authorities have a key role in developing their region. ***Airlines, airports and regional authorities are all players in realising economic development and job creation.*** In some airport regions the problem is to match employment and unemployed, while in others the economy is overheated.

Within the European single market, economic activities must be governed by fair competition. European guidelines on state aid will help regions to understand when and how they can support air transport to enhance regional development. Regional authorities have the responsibility of applying state aid regulations and aid should be granted under fair conditions for all.

Bringing Europe together

The European Union's cohesion policy aims at diminishing disparities between European regions. It is also necessary to bring the peripheral regions in Europe closer to each other and to the central parts of Europe.

European regions develop closer links by means of more and better connections. A dense, integrated transport network is



essential for the development of European regions. Thus, transport is vital for the cohesion policy as well as for the Lisbon strategy. Well-functioning and integrated air and land transport systems will enable peripheral regions in new member states to integrate with other European regions. ***Multimodal structures in Europe need to be developed, including all modes of transport.*** The Trans-European Transport Network has to incorporate air transport, as well as other modes of transport, as a key element in a successful cohesion policy. It will enable even remote regions to attract and develop new economic activities. ***Ideally, people should be able to travel to and from major economic, politic and research centres in one day.***

The method of allocating airport slots is under debate. At present, airlines buy slots following a system of historical rights, called grand father rights. The introduction of market mechanisms for slot allocation is being discussed. This means, for example, that airlines flying from peripheral regions may be able to buy slots that suit business hours at major airports and that new airlines have a better chance to buy slots at big airports. Market





mechanisms may lead to more efficient use of the existing capacity at airports and increase the accessibility of peripheral regions. Before a new system of slot allocation is in place, the questions of who can buy and trade slots, and how, need to be answered. This new system should also take into account the necessity of bringing European regions closer together.

Environmental concern

The European Union's Gothenburg strategy is part of the Lisbon strategy and requires economic development to be sustainable. The European economy should become the most energy efficient economy in the world. Aviation noise is a serious discomfort for citizens close to major international airports. The bigger the airport, the bigger the noise problem. This situation is of great concern to all Europeans living close to airports. Without effective noise abatement, flight procedures and insulation programmes, combined with proper mitigation measures for people living around the major airports, ***noise disturbance will restrain airport capacity and hence could hold back results for both the Lisbon strategy and the cohesion policy.***

Flying at night is probably the most likely issue to bring the

aviation industry and the surrounding community into conflict.

The main concern is to balance the economic importance of the airport and the nuisance it causes to citizens. ARC members are involved in the assessment and management of aviation noise under European rules, so it is important for the European Commission to become familiar with the situation in airport regions. As a member of the Noise Steering Group and the Working Group on Airport Noise, the ARC supplies information about noise issues in airport regions. Gaseous emissions from aviation are increasingly contributing to global warming, which causes climate change. Discussions have started on how to slow down this process. One solution may be the incorporation of aviation in the Emissions Trading Scheme. Another measure under debate is environmental charges or taxes on kerosene. The ARC participates actively in the debate on aviation and climate change. After all, ***airport regions accommodate the aviation industry and are also affected by emissions from traffic to and from the airport.***

To combat the negative effects of air transport, a lot could be gained from more efficiency in air traffic management. By harmonising air traffic management under the European Single Sky, air transport could operate more effectively. 

The spatial dimension

For airport regions ***spatial planning is one of the key elements in supporting the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies and the cohesion policy.*** The ARC represents over 100 million European citizens through its members. The positive and negative effects of air transport are a traditional concern of ARC members. These effects increasingly have a local and a European dimension.

Air transport will continue to grow substantially. At the same time the industry is changing. Market liberalisation drives aviation businesses to cheaper locations and mergers between carriers become more frequent. Furthermore, regional airports become more and more popular with new airlines. EU environment policy on noise, air quality, ground water and natural habitat needs to be taken into account when regional authorities issue permits for building plans, as well as European safety rules. These policies determine the expansion of airports, housing and locations for industry and business. ***All this brings a European dimension to regional competence in planning for airport capacity, airport development, infrastructure and environmental effects.***

Development of the Trans-European Transport Networks will improve connections and widen travel options for the customer. Arriving from an intercontinental flight, passengers should be able

to continue their journey by high speed train. ***A multimodal approach including airports and high speed trains is important,*** as it may replace short haul flights and release capacity when there is a dense network of high speed trains in place.

The airport in its physical context was one of the issues when the ARC started in 1994. Since then, experts have met regularly to exchange knowledge and best practices. They discuss how to develop an airport in relation to its surroundings, how people could travel to the airport, how several airports within one region co-operate or what it means for a region when flight frequency increases. These questions are all part of regional competence and relate to the spatial planning aspects of a major international airport in a region. 

***European policies influence airport regions,
and airport regions should influence European policies.***

ARC publications

- *Low Cost Airlines, A Regional Affair* (2004)
- *Airport Dynamics. Towards Airport Systems* (2003)
- *Air Freight and Airport Regions* (2003)
- *Assessment of Good Practices on Environmental Issues* (2002)
- *From Airport to Airport City* (2001)
- *Future Trends in Airport related Employment* (2000)
- *Promoting Public Transport at Airports* (1999)
- *Regions and Airports Partners for Sustainable Prosperity* (1999)
- *Airport Accessibility by Land Transport* (1996)
- *Harmonisation of Airport and Aviation Regulations in the European Union* (1996)
- *Europe, Citizens and the Regions*
- Sixth Airport Regions Conference: (Proceedings 2004)
- *Regiones Aeroportuarias: ante el reto de desarrollo sostenible*
- Fifth Airport Regions Conference: (Proceedings 2002)
- *Regions Help Airports Fly*
- Fourth Airport Regions Conference (Proceedings 2000)
- *Local and Regional Governments and Airport Privatisation*
- Third Airport Regions Conference (Proceedings 1998)
- Second Airport Regions Conference (Proceedings 1996)
- First Airport Regions Conference (Proceedings 1994)



MAJOR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT / MEMBER REGION

Amsterdam Schiphol Airport / City of Amsterdam, Province
of Noord-Holland, City of Haarlem-mermeer

Arad Airport / Arad County Council

Athens International Airport / Prefecture of Eastern Attica

Barcelona Airport / Barcelona Regional, Generalitat
de Catalunya, El Prat de Llobregat

Brussels Airport Zaventem / Flanders Region

Dublin Airport / Fingal County Council

Düsseldorf International / Land Nordrhein Westfalen

Frankfurt Airport / Planungsverband Frankfurt, Rhein-Main

Glasgow Airport / Renfrewshire County Council

Gran Canaria Airports / Gobierno de Canarias

Göteborg Landvetter Airport / Göteborg Region

Helsinki Vantaa International Airport / City of Vantaa

London Gatwick / West Sussex County Council

London Heathrow / London Borough of Hounslow,
Surrey County Council

Milan Malpensa Airport / Regione Lombardia

Munich Airport International / Land Bavaria

Oslo Airport / Romerike

Palma de Mallorca Airport / Consell de Mallorca

Prague Airport Ruzyne / A.V.A.R.

Roissy, Charles de Gaulle / IAURIF-Île de France

Stockholm Arlanda Airport / Stockholm Malar Region

Tallinn Airport / City of Tallinn

Targu Mures Airport / Mures County Council

Vienna International Airport / City of Vienna

Zürich Airport / City of Zürich



ARC Brussels Representation

West Sweden, Rue du Luxembourg 3

B-1000 Brussels, Belgium

Tel: +32 2 501 0835, Fax: +32 2 504 0842

Email: s.de.groot@westsweden.se, www.airportregions.org