*Creating our futures*

# ECTP-CEU

**European Council of Spatial Planners**
**Conseil européen des Urbanistes**



# MANIFESTO ON AIRPORTS AND CITIES IN EUROPE

**APPROVED BY THE ECTP-CEU**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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# CONTEXT

*The European Council of Spatial Planners (ECTP-CEU) initiated the debate on the challenge of cities and airports during the 12th European Urban and Regional Planning Award Jury in Madrid and during the Young Planners Workshop in Paris in June 2018.*

*Based on the principles of the Charter of European Planning, approved in Barcelona by the ECTP-CEU in 2013, the increasing importance of the spatial integration of cities, airports and their hinterlands for European territories was put high on the agenda. The Manifesto on Airports and Cities addresses the challenge of the growth in air travel from the perspective of spatial planning which includes policies to achieve sustainable mobility and the efficient use of resources including land and energy.*
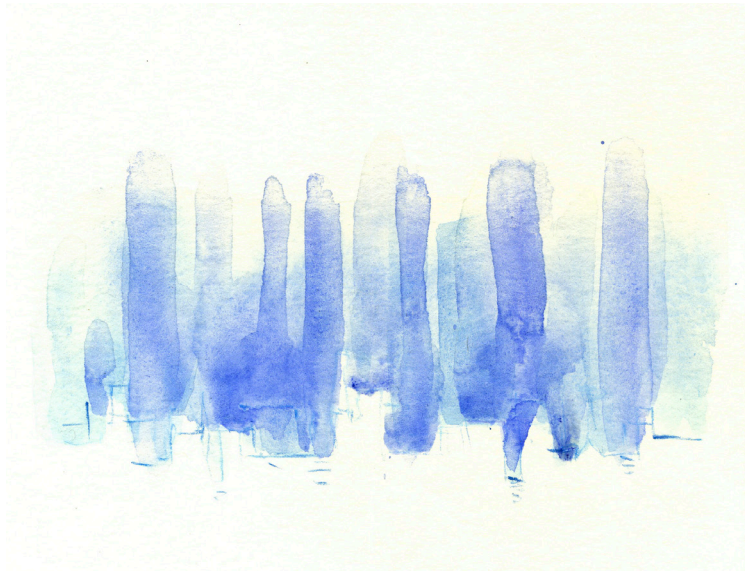
# 1. INTRODUCTION

• The globalisation and liberalisation of our economies has boosted the transport volumes of goods and people around the planet. A long-term prospective approach regarding airport development today is set in a context of considerable growth: by 2030-2035, air traffic is expected to double, from 3.5 billion now to 7 billion passengers around the world.

• The question of growth, together with the effects it has on the territories where the airports are located, has become a central challenge for planning. Starting from the right to live, work and travel in a healthy and safe environment, new developments need to be evaluated, including the limits they wish to establish for the benefit of all.

• The need for spatial integration is very high. In many European territories, the location of airports is fragmented in the open space around one or more major cities, leading to a series of problems and nuisances for both local residents and users.

• Different transport mode systems are becoming more and more integrated, especially related to airports. Urban metro, tram and bus systems are connecting economic, business, residential and leisure centres with airport gateways.

• The climate change and Co2-reduction debates touch the issue of a fair and balanced taxation system with a level playing field for all modes of carbon transport.

• Airports, like railway stations and ports, are no longer merely only functional areas for travellers. They develop their interface with new possibilities for international businesses, culture, leisure, services, both for travellers and for the people living and working around the airport. Beyond its basic technical transfer role for air traffic, the airport today becomes a real city in the city, taking its place in the process of metropolitanisation. They became dynamic peripheral urban poles with a considerable economic value within a larger multipolar setting.

• Within the globalisation process, many airports offer standardised solutions, often without any reference to the specific context and/or cultural identity of the place.

• Airport authorities, whether state, regional, city, or privately owned or managed increasingly have market-oriented strategies. To meet the needs of users and attract them, but also to diversify their revenues and be less dependent on the evolution of air traffic, they engage a diversification of activities on their platform. Employing tens of thousands of workers, many of them around the clock, they attract other users and activities than those directly related to air traffic. Previously a place of passage, the airport becomes a destination in itself.

• With the ongoing diversification of their activities, airport cities are becoming more and more inward-oriented. This, however, does not necessarily mean a better integration with uses in the surrounding environment than that of a conventional functional airport.

# 2.  MANIFESTO

The manifesto on airports and cities in Europe focusses on three aspects: the environment, the integrated planning at the city/metropolitan scale and the European approach. This manifesto addresses spatial planning policies for airports and airport cities. It is acknowledged that many other areas of policy are relevant also. The democratisation of aviation has accelerated the free movement of people, bringing the 500 European cities closer together with an increasing competition between them. Related to airports, a new reflection on the scales of planning between regions, metropolitan areas, cities and their hinterlands must be initiated. Clear objectives, the purpose and the location of intra-European and inter-continental nodes need to be established. This cannot be seen apart from the larger functions in terms of employment, tourism and mobility and the different scales of urban nodes within the polycentric structure of Europe. Differences between global, regional and local airports, connections with high speed and national train stations, and road and waterway networks can bring stronger and more sustainable  development objectives. The planning objectives and partnerships initiated by the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP, 1999) have to be re-initialised and updated.

•        Current and future airport developments will be cutting-edge in terms of sustainability and environmental quality. Energy efficiency, neutral carbon impact, air quality and noise protection are set priorities in all current and future airports developments, situated within an integrated metropolitan sustainability strategy.

•        Logistically, sustainability management plans on renewable energy, water management, construction and renovation will be developed. Airports must be linked to cities and not threaten or reduce the centrality of cities. This can be achieved through proper spatial planning policies in the areas of urban form (e.g. polycentric development or other sustainable forms), integration of all transport modes (e.g. urban metro systems, bus networks) and high-quality design (e.g. good quality public realm).

•        While (international) air travel is likely to increase further in the future, policies for capacity allocation of air transport in international airports must take into account a balanced approach between high speed rail and air travel modes. Transport mode advantages, joint network nodes and regional balances determine which intra-European rail and air connections will be most suitable.

•        High speed rail networks must be designed to optimise connectivity with international air transport, particular long-haul air transport. This can be done by the design of airport multi-modal interchanges minimising time loss and maximising opportunities to use time efficiently.

•        It is recognised that airports are major attractors of urban land use, in particular hotels and office accommodation, and this must be achieved at all times in balance with downtown urban development to achieve complementarity in favour of competition.

•       Car based mobility generated by international airports must be minimised as much as possible. This can best be done by providing optimal connectivity with public transport.

•       Continuous health monitoring is to be introduced around airports, both on noise issues and on air quality issues. Regulations on night flights, landing approach procedures and take-off are all likely to reduce noise and other environmental impacts. Efforts will be uninterruptedly taken, developing new technologies generating less noisy aircrafts, less kerosene consumers, electric power-driven aircrafts, and so on.

•       Airports cannot be developed without an integrated and strategic spatial development and mobility plan of the entire urban/metropolitan area affected by their activities.

•       Strong partnership of all authorities and stakeholders involved in the larger urban/metropolitan airport area must lead to a common strategic spatial development. Spatial planners manage the design process, taking the following aspects on board: governance based on subsidiarity, sustainable land use and landscape quality, growing biodiversity, efficiency of energy and infrastructures, mobility shift towards public transport, pedestrian and two-wheel transport, neutral carbon strategy, cultural diversity, inclusion and poverty reduction.

•       Airports and other long distance transport systems need to be re-organised towards a spatial efficient network, based on the polycentric city structure in Europe and articulated with the different scales of interconnected urban and metropolitan systems. Small and regional airports, important for the territorial integration of remote regions, islands and the outermost regions, deserve specific attention in terms of national and European spatial planning strategies.

# MANIFESTO ON AIRPORTS AND CITIES IN EUROPE

This Manifesto on Airports and Cities in Europe was approved by the 2019 General Assembly of the ECTP-CEU at its Spring meeting in Madrid.

It was prepared after research by the ECTP-CEU Working Group members Dominique Lancrenon and Joris Scheers, the European Urban and Regional Planning Awards jury members and the ECTP-CEU Executive Committee.

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*ECTP-CEU May 2019*