

Alpine air transport's process of change

vs.

the principles of sustainable transport and spatial development

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1 INTRODUCTION

Despite the controversial debate about road and rail transport air transport has almost been neglected in the mobility discussions in the Alps. This raises the following questions:

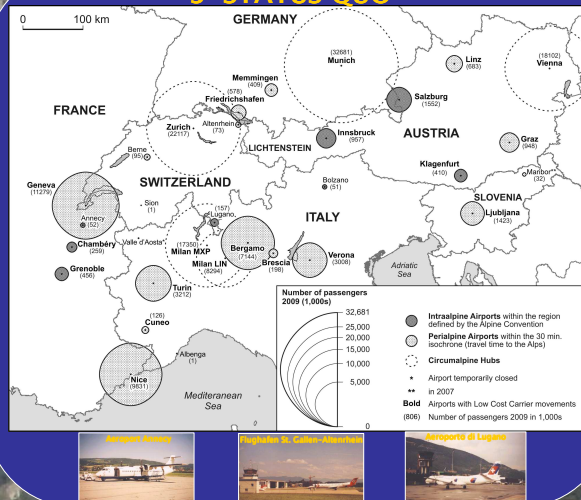
- How should the increasing number of flights to alpine airports (esp. by Low Cost Carriers) be assessed?
- Why do decision makers disregard the need of airport and airlines subsidies and the negative externalities like noise and induced traffic?
- What does this mean in relation to the principles of sustainability and to the Alpine Convention?

2 CHARACTERISTICS OF AIR TRANSPORT IN THE ALPS

- Substantial competitive advantage concerning travel time
- Technical safety problems in a high mountain region
- Weather-induced difficulties
- Amplification of noise emissions due to reflections
- Intermodality problems due to lack of space
- Incoming and outgoing charter flights
- Land consumption in intensively used valleys



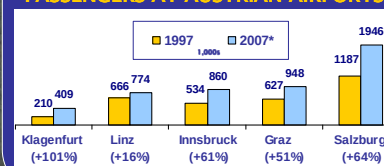
3 STATUS QUO



4 CHANGE AND IMPACTS

SUBPROCESSES	IMPACTS	EXAMPLES
Planned extensions		Berne, Bolzano, Innsbruck
Market entry of Newcomer airports	Regional conflicts	Bolzano, Cuneo, Memmingen
Discussion about civil use of airbases		Buochs, Emmen, Hinterstoisser
Excess demands	Scarceness of slots (temporarily)	Innsbruck, Salzburg
Airline bankruptcies	Ad-hoc cancellations of routes	Graz, Lugano
Dominance of strategic alliances	Monopolization in the airline sector	Austria, Germany, Switzerland
Market entry of regional airlines	Need for subsidies	Berne, Bolzano, Graz, Innsbruck, Lugano
Market entry of Low Cost Carriers	Genesis of traffic and need for subsidies	Bergamo, Grenoble, Innsbruck, Klagfurt, Salzburg, Verona
Airport privatisation	Reduction of local authorities influence	Cuneo

5 EXAMPLE PASSENGERS AT AUSTRIAN AIRPORTS



6 SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

DIMENSION	GOALS	RELEVANCE FOR AIR TRANSPORT
Ecology	Minimisation of ecological loads Natural regeneration ability Economic interchange	Reduction of emissions + needless traffic Optimisation of propulsion technology Volatility abatement, connections to periphery
Economy	Minimal utilisation of resources Commercial efficiency Social equity	Energy conservation, Land consumption Reduction of subsidies Improvement of accessibility + intermodality
Society	Minimisation of social loads Participation of the population	Reduction of aircraft noise Innovative instruments for participation

7 SUSTAINABILITY SCENARIOS FOR ALPINE AIR TRANSPORT

ASPECTS	WORST CASE	REAL CASE	BEST CASE
Traffic growth	strongly exponential	continuation of actual growth rates	stagnation but qualitative growth
Airport extensions	at many airports	at some smaller airports	only to fulfil legal regulations
Newcomer Airports	several	1 or 2 converted airbases	none
Intermodality	dominating individual transport	improved public transport	dominating public transport
Aircraft noise	massive increase by traffic growth	compensation of legal regulations	reduction by voluntary regulations
Participation	reduced	enhanced	substantially enhanced

RESEARCH PROJECT

In April 2011 the author is going to start the research project "Der beschleunigte Wandel des Luftverkehrs im Alpenraum: Raumwirksamkeit und Verhältnis zum Leitbild der nachhaltigen Verkehrs- und Raumentwicklung" at the Georg-August-Universität Göttingen. It is going to be sponsored by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (Ref. BE 3236/3-1).

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