

Exchange

Newsletter for Aviation Campaigners across Europe

No 7
2012

August

Victory in Munich!



Campaigners celebrate their great victory in stopping a 3rd runway at Munich Airport. On 17th June the people of Munich voted in a referendum by 54% to 45% against the plans for a 3rd runway. It was an astonishing result for the campaigners. Earlier this year the authorities were confident they would win the referendum. The result is even more astonishing as the people who would be affected by the 3rd runway were not allowed to vote as they live outside the city boundary. The result shows what high-profile, creative campaigning, based on sound arguments, can achieve. The result is binding for one year. Therefore the campaign continues. A successful Climate Camp was held earlier this month. But this result is a major setback for the authorities.



International Protest against Nantes Airport



People came from across Europe to support the campaigners in their long-running battle to stop a new airport being built outside Nantes in South-West France. The enterprising campaigners hosted the European Forum against Useless Projects to coincide with their annual July protest: <http://forum-gpii-2012-ndl.blogspot.fr/>. The forum is part of the European Social Forum. Regular readers will know that earlier this year farmers went on a 28 day hunger strike in protest against their land being seized to make way for the proposed airport. The hunger strike was successful because the authorities agreed that the land would not be taken until all the legal challenges to the airport proposals have been heard. This is expected to take two years. For more details of the campaign: <http://acipa.free.fr/>.



Politicians under Pressure in Frankfurt

Politicians are feeling the pressure of the huge, weekly protests that have been taking place in Frankfurt since the 4th terminal opened in October. Already a partial night flight ban has been introduced. And now the CDU, the ruling political party in the

area, has proposed flights numbers are limited on the 4th runway. It may be pre-election talk (elections are due next year) but it is an important victory for the campaigners that the CDU feels it has to start saying these things. The airport has also mounted a huge PR exercise to promote the airport. Never before has Europe seen a campaign like this from residents. Thousands of ordinary residents protesting at least once a week for nearly a year about the impact of a new runway. The residents will not go away. They will not live with a plane flying over their homes every 90 seconds. The airport and the politicians are faced with a huge problem. There is no sign they know what to do about it.

Victory in Italy!

Campaigners have defeated plans to build an airport outside Siena in Northern Italy. The airport would have ruined a very beautiful and peaceful part of Tuscany. At present there is only a small airfield in the area, just used by a very small number of flights. Great work by the campaigners exposed the corruption behind the plans for an airport. Now the courts are bringing criminal prosecution charges against 14 of the people involved with the plans to build the airport. They include the ex-president of the Siena-based MPS Bank and president of Italian Bankers Association, the chief executive of the airport and Corinne Namblard of the Luxembourg based Galaxy Fund SARL (the majority shareholder after the privatisation). The airport will now not be built. Congratulations to the campaigners! Their 5 year campaign was 100% successful.

Protests Continue in Berlin

Major protests continue against the new Brandenburg Airport which is due to open on the outskirts of Berlin in March 2013. The airport will be an extension of the existing Schonfeld Airport and will replace Tegel and Tempelhof airports. Campaigners are concerned that the new flight paths which will mean high noise levels for local residents.

Comment

In each of our countries we are told that, if we do not build a new runway or a new airport, expansion will take place in another European country. The truth is different. This newsletter shows that it is becoming very difficult for the authorities to build a new runway or a new airport anywhere in Western Europe. Campaigners defeated plans at Heathrow, Munich and Siena. The authorities are facing major battles at Nantes and Berlin. And, of course, the 4th runway at Frankfurt has resulted in an unprecedented protest. Each campaign is a little different. But the issues are the same: climate change; noise; destruction of both communities and people's land. We are learning from each other. And we are winning!

Where we have been much less successful is in stopping the steady growth in the number of flights at existing airports. Some airports, such as Heathrow and Schiphol, have a limit on the number of flights that can use them. But these limits are very high: 480,000 a year at Heathrow and over 500,000 a year at Schiphol. Most other airports have no limit. Our big challenge is to limit, and indeed reduce, the number of flights using existing airports. Without a reduction, the noise levels experienced by local communities will remain far too high and the problem of climate change will become worse.

Maybe the best place for us to start is night flights. They cause local communities huge problems. Most of them are unnecessary. And we would have a lot of support from the general public and from many politicians. What about a Europe-wide campaign to ban night flights?

EU Noise Directive

The European Commission is consulting on its Environmental Noise Directive through an on-line questionnaire. It can be found here: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/noise_en.htm. The closing date is 25th September 2012.

Tell us your news!

Each newsletter will have a section about what is happening in the different campaigns in the different countries around Europe.

- Let us know what is happening at your airports
- Send us information about events you are holding or campaigns you are doing
- Tell us about your successes.....and failures!
- Make this newsletter a real exchange of information

Also send your material to the UECNA website:
www.uecna.eu email JP Pago on jp.pago@free.fr

Campaigning and Information Sheets
UECNA has published short campaigning and briefing sheets to assist organizations with their campaigning:
<http://www.uecna.eu/sip.php?article161>

If you want to be able to track the flight paths in your area, UECNA can help.
Look at www.dflde.de or email Horst Weise on mail@DFLD.de

Two very useful websites:

- Transport and Environment (T & E): <http://www.transportenvironment.org/>
- European Environmental Bureau (EEB): <http://www.eeb.org/>

UECNA On-line Library

UECNA is setting up an online library where we can all access reports, campaign materials and useful information. We all have a lot of material that would be useful for other campaigners. Email me if you want to put anything on to the online library.

Two sites which show you whether your airport and the airlines using it is losing or gaining passengers:

<http://www.anna.aero/european-airline-traffic-trends/>

<http://www.anna.aero/european-airport-traffic-trends/>

If you have videos you want to share, email them to johnstewart2@btconnect.com

This newsletter has been published by UECNA. We are a network of airport community campaign groups across Europe. Our main concern is the noise for residents living around the airports and under the flight paths. We have regular meetings, organize conferences and take part in marches, demonstrations and other visible activities. We also lobby the European Parliament and the European Commission. To find out more visit our website: www.uecna.eu If your group is interested in joining UECNA, email johnstewart2@btconnect.com