

Exchange

Newsletter for Aviation Campaigners across Europe

No 14

June 2014

FRANKFURT: 100 NOT OUT!



Up to **5,000 people** occupied the terminal of Frankfurt Airport on 19th May. It was the **100th week** that they were in the terminal in protest against the flight path changes that were brought in when the 4th runway was opened in October 2011. To mark the 100th occasion the German protesters were joined by campaigners from the UK and the Netherlands. Check out this video of the protest: <http://youtu.be/JTYWrijQHSJ4> And watch this great short video of the campaigners theme song, *Die Landebahn muss weg (the runway must go)*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPL-GnmTia0>. You will find yourself singing the song!

What next for Frankfurt?

The Frankfurt campaigners have made history. Never before have protests lasted so long *after* a runway has opened. They have achieved a lot. There are now no night flights between 23.00 and 05.00. That may soon be extended to 06.00. They changed the Government of the region: the CDU (the Conservatives), which supported the runway, has been forced to share power with the Greens. The new Government is looking at measures to cut the number of flights on the new runway. It is also less likely a 3rd terminal will be built. But the campaigners have not yet achieved their main aim of closing the 4th runway. They are now debating their next steps. Some are beginning to take direct action. Earlier this year Plane Stupid Rhein-Main was formed. Others are keen to start talking with the politicians. Everybody continues to suffer the constant noise of the aircraft overhead. Their lives changed forever the day the fourth runway opened. But, whatever happens in the future, they have changed aviation campaigning forever. Both the aviation industry and governments across Europe are watching this titanic struggle between the campaigners and their opponents.



European Elections Who will vote to tame aviation?

taming aviation

Taming Aviation will be launching its petition calling for fair taxation on aviation and an end to night flights in Brussels in the autumn.

Over 100 citizens' groups from across Europe have joined Taming Aviation. During 2014 and 2015 Taming Aviation will be inviting environmental groups to join to create a European grassroots movement calling for change.

- To join Taming Aviation, go to <http://www.tamingaviation.eu/>

A new European Parliament has been elected. Before the election Taming Aviation, the European-wide movement of citizens aimed at taming the aviation industry (<http://www.tamingaviation.eu/>), wrote to all the key candidates standing in the European election asking if they would support taxation on aviation fuel, VAT on tickets and an end to night flights. During the next few months Taming Aviation will make contact with the newly-elected members of the European Parliament.

Action: All campaigners now need to find out which of the members of the European Parliament from our countries will support us in our aims to curb aviation expansion.

Nantes Protest Weekend

Last year **20,000 people** came to the annual protest weekend at Notre-Dames-des-Landes in protest against the proposed new airport for Nantes. This year's protest weekend takes place on 5th and 6th July as the local community continues its long-running battle to stop the new airport. They are supported by over 200 organisations across France and Belgium. **To find out more about the weekend** : <http://www.acipa-ndl.fr/>

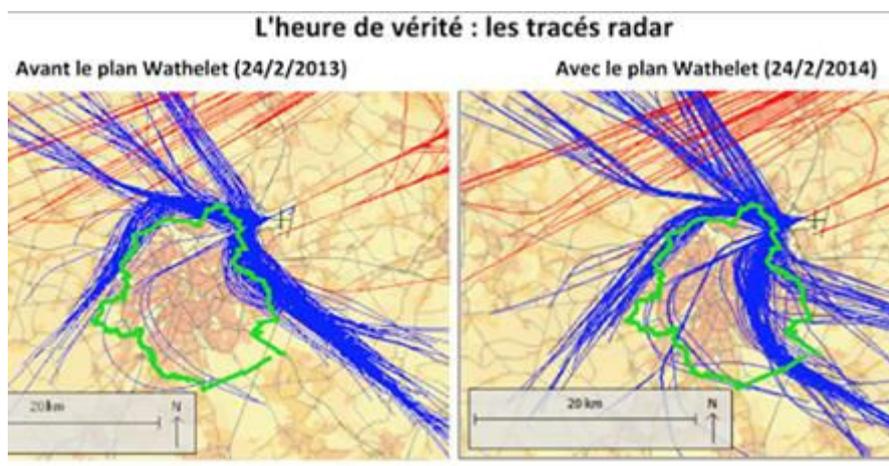
Come and visit us!

This year for the first time campaigners from the rest of Europe will have their own tent in the main festival area as part of the protest weekend. People from Germany, Belgium and Britain will be in the tent to show our support for the Nantes campaigners. We will also be planting a tree in the nearby woods to show our support.

- If you are at the protest weekend, come and visit us in the Airportwatch Europe tent.



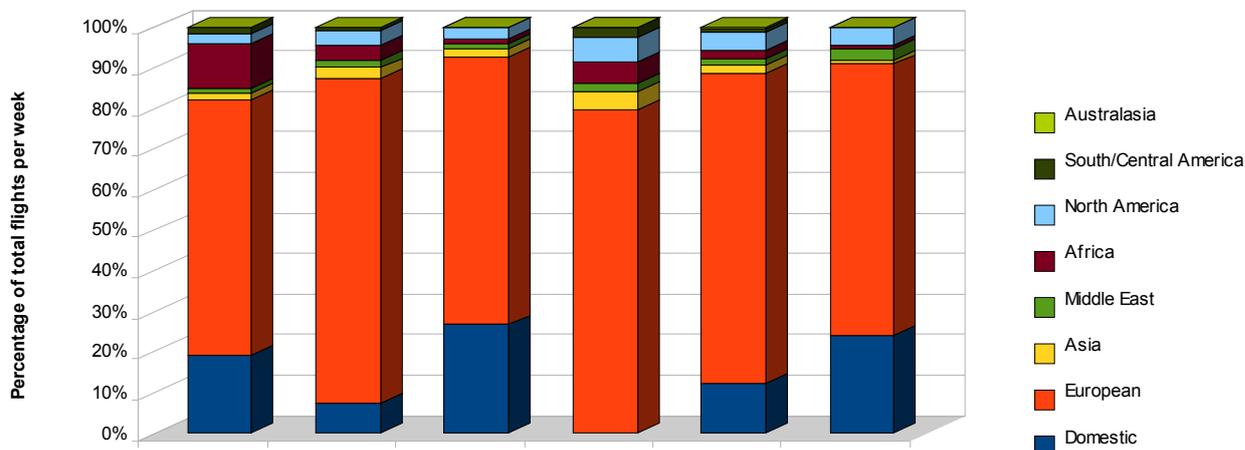
Dispute over Flight Paths in Brussels



There is a major dispute in Belgium over the question of flight paths at Brussels Airport. The flight paths were changed earlier this year. As you can see from the maps above, before February most of the flight paths avoided the city of Brussels. However this meant that they were concentrated in the areas just outside the city. Some of these places are heavily populated. In order to ease the noise in these areas the authorities spread the flight paths over a wider area. This has caused big protests in parts of Brussels. The pattern is now similar to what it was about 15 years ago.

WHO NEEDS MORE RUNWAYS?

Percentage spread of flights from European hubs



This graph is dramatic. It shows that the big majority of flights using Europe's airports are within Europe. Many of these trips would transfer to trains if the cost of rail travel was less and if travelling by plane within Europe was more expensive. At present both rail and air travel is subsidised. There is a much stronger case to subsidise rail as trains cause less climate emissions and, with some exceptions, less noise. There is no case to subsidise air which is one of the dirtiest and noisiest ways to travel. Flying has an important role to play in the world. But its main function should be to connect people across continents. If more trips within Europe were switched to rail, it would free up space at our airports to allow for more inter-continental flights without the need to build new runways. The chart above is taken from a report published by AirportWatch and WWF-UK in 2011: http://www.aef.org.uk/downloads/Business_Connectivity_Report_August2011.pdf

Airportwatch Europe

There are a number of useful organizations in Europe campaigning for a more sustainable approach to aviation. They include:

Transport & Environment (T &E): the Brussels-based lobby group campaigning for smarter, greener transport in Europe www.transportenvironment.org/;

UECNA: the body representing a number of airport campaign groups lobbying the EU on noise issues www.uecna.eu

Taming Aviation: the citizens-based grassroots body lobbying the EU for a night flight ban and fair taxes on aviation.

Is there a need for another organisation?

Airportwatch Europe is not a new organisation. It is simply a network which aims to provide a link between the other activities which are taking place at both a grassroots and EU level. More details of the network in the next edition of *Exchange*.

Exchange is compiled by John Stewart - johnstewart2@btconnect.com – on behalf of Airportwatch Europe

