

# Exchange

**Newsletter for Aviation Campaigners across Europe**

**No 11**

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## **HUNDREDS ATTEND EUROPEAN CAMPAIGNERS' CONFERENCE**



Over 250 people from six countries across Europe attended the European Aviation Campaigners' Conference in Attaching near Munich towards the end of June. There were important speeches on noise, air pollution, climate change and the subsidies the aviation industry receives. The conference also heard about the inspiring protests taking place in Frankfurt and Nantes. There were workshops on campaigning, including one on direct action. And of course, the conference heard about the way that new runways were stopped at both Heathrow and in Munich.

**“This could be the conference which starts a Europe-wide movement to tame the aviation industry”**

# Time to Tame the Aviation Industry



Relaxing Bavarian-style

The conference agreed that action needed to be taken to tame the aviation industry. It agreed that campaign groups across Europe needed to work together. Over the next year we will plan demonstrations and other events. The two main campaigns will be to end night flights and to end the subsidies which the aviation industry enjoys. The conference drew up the Attaching Manifesto – the main points are below.

## The Conference demands radical action

“The Conference agreed to call on the European Parliament and our national parliaments to support:

- an end to night flights, so that each airport has 8 hours free of planes;
- an end to the tax-free fuel for airlines and an end to exemptions from sales taxes, such as Value Added Tax (VAT);
- a reduction in all subsidies received by the aviation industry;
- active measures to reduce the impact of noise on residents;
- no additional airport capacity in Europe;
- transfer of short-distance flights to rail.

### The full manifesto:

<http://www.planestupid-germany.de/en/home-en/105-attachinger-manifesto.html>



Munich campaigners believe that they can kill off the threat of a 3<sup>rd</sup> runway for good if the ruling CSU (conservatives) and FDP (liberals) coalition lose the regional elections in Bavaria on 15<sup>th</sup> September - the only parties backing a new runway. They are sending Burger Willie into action! Burger Willie is an action hero who will make sure that the voice of the people who voted against a 3<sup>rd</sup> runway in a referendum last year is not forgotten. Burger Willie is asking people not to vote CSU or FDP. He will appear on posters, badges and videos all over Bavaria.

## Aviation Tax-Breaks cost Europe €40 billion a Year

A new study has found that tax-breaks given to the aviation industry cost the EU almost 40 billion euros each year. The report, from the Brussels-based environmental lobby group Transport and Environment (T &E), showed €32 billion a year is lost due to the airlines' exemption from paying fuel taxes, while another €7.1bn goes missing because of VAT exemptions on international flight tickets.

The study can be found at <http://m.euractiv.com/details.php?aid=529546>

## EU Consults on State-Aid to Aviation Industry

The EU has issued a consultation paper on the question of state aid to the aviation industry. At present the EU gives money to some airports to help them pay for new infrastructure. It also can provide money to airlines to start up new services. It wants to reduce the overall amount of money it gives but it still proposes to provide around €3 billion a year.

The consultation paper is at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2013\\_aviation\\_guidelines/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2013_aviation_guidelines/index_en.html)

**ACTION!** This is a great opportunity for all of us to make our voices heard. We can argue that state aid should cease. It is also a chance for us to argue that the tax-breaks should also come to an end.

Comments should be sent by 25 September 2013 to: [Stateaidgreffe@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Stateaidgreffe@ec.europa.eu)

## An Inspiring Conference

A personal view from John Stewart



The Munich Conference was inspiring. We all realized we are not alone. There are thousands of people across Europe fighting airports. We can work together, exchange ideas, and support each other. We learnt we need to be radical if we are to tame the aviation industry. Some groups, like Plane Stupid, will take direct action. Other will not. But we all know we won't win by being nice! I want to thank Helga

Stiegelmeier, Florian Sperk and all the people of Attaching and Freising for putting together a great conference. And for LUSH, the cosmetics firm, for the generous grant which enabled so many people to attend the conference.



## 40,000 Demonstrate against Proposed Nantes Airport



Watch a video of the protest  
<http://youtu.be/1xOcuWoBXvU>

Earlier this year up to 40,000 people formed a human chain around the site of the proposed new airport at Notre-Dames-des-Landes outside Nantes in western France. Local campaigners were joined by people from across Europe. The French Government is under intense pressure to drop the project. Support “committees” have been set up in 200 towns and cities in France and Belgium. These are groups which lobby and demonstrate in their own areas in support of the Nantes campaigners. And the campaigners won an important legal ruling which said that the Government will need to carry out a very detailed environmental study before it could go ahead with the project. The campaigners feel they may be on the verge of a famous victory.



Support stickers appearing on the London Underground

### Geneva Petition

Campaigners in Geneva are asking people to sign a petition against further growth at the airport. In recent years the growth of low-cost airlines, particularly Easyjet, has brought noise problems. **Action:** You can sign the petition here: [Sign the petition](#)

## The Protests Continue in Germany

On 7<sup>th</sup> September there will be a major protest against the construction of Schönefeld Airport in **Berlin**. See <http://www.bvbb-ev.de/> for details. And, of course, the weekly protests against the 4<sup>th</sup> runway in **Frankfurt** continue. The theme of the latest one was ‘A Summer Feast’....in the terminal!



## Will the UK build an airport in the sea?

There has been a lot in the European media about the fact that the UK might build a new airport in the North Sea. The Mayor of London is in favour. But it is unlikely to happen. It would cost around 130 billion euros. And it would mean Heathrow would be closed down. Governments would be reluctant to close Heathrow down as 76,000 people work at the airport and over 100,000 more jobs are linked to the airport.

Last year the UK Government set up an Airports Commission to look and see if more airport expansion was needed and to suggest the best place for it to take place. At the moment organizations which want expansion are sending their plans to the Commission. The Commission will come out with a final report in Summer 2015. It may recommend expansion at some airports. The Government would then need to decide whether to accept the recommendations. Heathrow campaigners remain confident that, if the Government did bring back plans for a third runway, they can defeat them again.

- <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/jul/22/britain-building-runways-for-ghost-planes> The British environmentalist George Monbiot argues that no more expansion is needed as the demand for air travel in Europe will start to fall.

## Let us have your news

Let us know what is happening at your airports. Send us information about events you are holding or campaigns you are doing. Also, if you would like to join the aviation campaigners' Google group, let me know: [johnstewart2@btconnect.com](mailto:johnstewart2@btconnect.com)