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REPORT

on the future of regional airports and air services in the EU
(2011/2196(INI))

Committee on Transport and Tourism

Rapporteur: Philip Bradbourn

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on the future of regional airports and air services in the EU

(2011/2196(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the communication from the Commission entitled ‘An action plan for airport capacity, efficiency and safety in Europe’ (COM(2006)0819),
 - having regard to the communication from the Commission entitled ‘Community guidelines on financing of airports and start-up aid to airlines departing from regional airports’ (2005/C 312/01),
 - having regard to the communication from the Commission entitled ‘The EU and its neighbouring regions: a renewed approach to transport cooperation’ (COM(2011)0415),
 - having regard to its resolution of 24 March 2011 on transport applications of Global Navigation Satellite Systems – short- and medium-term EU policy¹,
 - having regard to the Commission White Paper entitled ‘Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system’ (COM(2011)0144),
 - having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Transport and Tourism and the opinion of the Committee on Regional Development (A7-0094/2012),
- A. whereas there is currently no universally accepted definition for the term ‘regional airport’; whereas airports whose principal catchment area is a capital city are not included in the purview of this report; whereas it is suggested that regional airports, i.e. ‘non-hub’ airports, should be subdivided into major and minor airports, on the basis of the types of links provided by such airports, passenger volume and links with major cities and major airports, and whereas the Commission is urged to set common criteria in order to facilitate a proper definition of ‘regional airport’ that takes into account all of the above mentioned elements; whereas, however, ‘regional air service’ should be defined as a flight departing from and/or landing at a regional airport;
- B. whereas regional aviation, like other modes of transport, is a key enabler in citizens’ mobility; whereas improved connectivity and efficient inter-modal mobility can contribute considerably to better access to the regions, to business, tourism and the development of

¹ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0250.

related services, and to the spread of economic prosperity;

- C. whereas the unequal material status of citizens, and the different levels of infrastructure development, result in disparities in the opportunity to use regional flight connections in the Member States;
- D. whereas the connectivity offered by aviation to citizens and businesses in EU regions, and in particular in inaccessible regions and islands, is extremely important and helps ensure the economic viability of such areas; whereas Europe's airports provide a large network of 150 000 city pairs;
- E. whereas a considerable number of regional airports are confronted by an airline with a virtual monopoly which can exploit this position to exert pressure by making more and more demands on the airport concerned and on local and/or regional authorities, inter alia with regard to airport charges and aviation safety levies;
- F. whereas airport retail sales have decreased markedly due to the introduction of restrictive policies for hand-luggage by some airlines; whereas the impact of the 'one bag' rule applied by the companies, in particular the low-cost airlines, which operate mainly in such airports, as well as other cost-cutting measures, has made travelling more difficult, bringing about a dramatic decline in ground-based retail sales of almost 70 % for some regional airports; whereas one third of retail profits in airports goes towards subsidising airlines by offsetting landing charges;
- G. whereas the Spanish Government has expressly prohibited airlines from applying the 'one bag' rule when departing from Spanish airports;
- H. acknowledges that major airports in some Member States are experiencing a capacity crunch;
- I. notes that the financial and sovereign debt crisis has substantially changed the conditions for airport financing in the EU, especially at 'non-hub' airports;
- J. whereas the construction of new regional airports should be based on a cost-benefit analysis;
- K. whereas investments from the public sector in the reforming of airports should display a certain relationship between the amount of money spent and the number of passengers using the infrastructure;

Economics of regional air services

- 1. Underlines the need for a public service obligation for air services of economic and public interest, especially those connecting remote regions, islands and the outermost regions, given their remoteness and physical and natural characteristics, in order to ensure their full accessibility and territorial integration; stresses that existing public service obligations

should be maintained; believes that such services would not be economically viable without public money; stresses the importance of making the outermost regions more competitive and of promoting their integration with other regions so as to close the economic gap separating them from the rest of Europe;

2. Believes that it is desirable to avoid a proliferation of regional airports, and notes that the development of regional airports should be targeted in order to avoid the creation of unused or not efficiently used airport infrastructures which would result in an economic burden for the responsible authorities; maintains, on the contrary, that existing links should be strengthened, especially in areas (islands, for example) suffering from geographical handicaps; welcomes, therefore, any initiative aimed at developing the role of public transport, including road transport, in promoting links; Stresses that public funding for regional airports should be compatible with Articles 106 and 107 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, relating to state aid; believes that provision should be made for a system of penalties to be applied to airlines which move out of regional airports in receipt of funding before the appointed date;
3. Asks the Commission to review decision 2012/21/EU on the application of Article 106(2), by means of which the threshold for which an airport can receive state aid without having to notify the Commission was decreased to 200 000 passengers per year, bearing in mind the Community Guidelines (2005/C312/01) which state that an airport can become cost-efficient with a traffic of over 500 000 passengers per year;
4. Takes the view that regional airports, on account of their environmental and economic impact, should be properly supported by national and regional authorities, be subject to local and regional consultation, and – on the basis of cost-benefit analyses – be considered eligible to apply for financing under EU funds, as well as other EU-funded financial engineering instruments within the new programming framework; recommends that the Commission take into consideration the opportunities offered by regional airports as part of the European central transport network;
5. Calls for the criteria on obtaining subsidies and public funding to be strictly defined and transparent;
6. Calls on the Commission to take a balanced approach in future revisions of aviation guidelines in order to provide for a socially and economically viable development of regional air services, taking into consideration the development of the infrastructure needed to ensure intermodality while also ensuring accessibility to those services for EU citizens and taking into account the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality;
7. Calls on the Commission, in supporting the development of regional airports and the construction of new regional airports (especially in countries whose national airports are situated in remote areas), to pay particular regard to the balanced territorial development of regions corresponding to levels I and II of the Nomenclature of Territorial Statistical Units (NUTS) in order to ensure innovation and competitiveness in regions which are a long way from the capital city and do not enjoy good transport access, and to facilitate the development of real economic and transport hubs;
8. Stresses that adequate development of regional airports contributes to parallel

development of the tourist system, which is a vitally important area for many European regions;

9. Notes that tourism is demonstrating its resilience to the economic crisis, and that special attention must be paid to any economic policy aspect or decision likely to support or advance tourism, such as air transport and airport infrastructure projects;
10. Stresses that some regional airports are operational only during mass tourism seasons, which often poses an added problem of organisation, involves higher unit costs, etc.; calls on the Commission to take account of the specific nature and problems of these seasonal regional airports when adopting new legislation for the sector;
11. Underlines that regional airports are becoming more and more important for charter airlines as well as for low-cost carriers; stresses that the main rationale today for charter airlines is as long-haul operators to holiday destinations, with an inferior seat pitch and in-flight service compared with scheduled legacy airlines, often from regional airports that cannot support a scheduled service and flying beyond the competitive reach of low-cost airlines with their short-haul aircraft; recalls that narrow-body aircraft are favoured on short-haul routes, especially where network carriers are feeding hubs from regional airports and by low-cost carriers (LCCs);
12. Calls on the Commission to guarantee the correct application of European and national legislation on airlines' social conditions and terms of employment, so that staff employed at a regional airport do not become victims of social dumping and so that fair competition and a level playing field can be ensured in the aviation sector; calls for airport staff to benefit from decent contractual terms, with particular reference to airports in which most of the traffic is accounted for by low-cost airlines;
13. Expresses concern that certain practices of low-cost airlines, which often operate from regional airports, lead to poorer quality of service for passengers and a deterioration in working conditions; given the current aggressive business practice of some low-cost airlines operating from regional airports to take advantage of their dominant position, and given that commercial activities are a major source of income for regional airports, is concerned by 'one-bag' and other restrictions to the cabin baggage allowance imposed by certain airlines; takes the view that these practices represent a breach of competition law, and believes that these restrictions may constitute an abuse of a carrier's position; calls, therefore, on the Member States to set common upper limits to be imposed on airlines with regard to such restrictions and considers that any checks relating to luggage weight restrictions and size should be made before arrival at the departure gate;
14. Calls for airport retail purchases to be treated as 'essential items', as is currently the case for items such as coats; applauds Spain's decision to outlaw practices mentioned in paragraph 13 within its territory¹, and calls on the Commission to look into introducing a similar measure for all air services originating from Europe;
15. Considers that goods transport is a positive factor for regional airports which can further

¹ Law 1/2011 (4 March 2011) establishing the State Programme for Civil Aviation Safety, amending Law 21/2003 on Air Navigation Safety (7 July 2003).

development and jobs, not least through the establishment of related ground services and of businesses linked to regional airports; calls on the Commission to draw up a strategy that will promote goods transport and facilitate cooperation between neighbouring regional airports;

16. Urges the Member State authorities to propose plans to develop existing regional airports and make them more efficient;
17. Believes that regional airports should not be enhancing tools for public deficits and should generally be economically sustainable in the mid term;

Environment and innovation

18. Urges the Commission and Member States to speed up the development of the Joint Undertaking to develop the new generation European air traffic management system (SESAR), the Clean Sky initiative and the enforcement of Single European Sky legislation as a matter of urgency; notes that, with the work of SESAR and the important role of the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service (EGNOS), regional airports will profit from projects such as remote towers, speed and congestion management and improved operational procedures;
19. Acknowledges that capacity management is not the same at 'slot coordinated' airports as at 'slot non-coordinated' airports; is of the opinion that there is plenty of spare capacity to be utilised at many regional airports and that, by using that spare capacity, congestion and stacking at major airports can be reduced and the environmental impact limited; recognises that good connections between main airports and nearby regional airports can help to reduce congestion;
20. Highlights the role of regional airports in acting as a mainspring for the development of innovation clusters by diminishing location costs for start-ups, especially in geographically remote regions;
21. Calls on the Member States and regional and local authorities to take account of, in addition to economic and financial considerations, environmental, territorial, geological and meteorological factors, and of other rational criteria when deciding where to locate airports and whenever regional airport facilities need to be renovated or expanded; underlines, at the same time, the importance of using and modernising existing structures before building new ones;

Congestion and multimodality

22. Notes that recent studies state that European regions are losing direct links to some of the most congested airports, and is disappointed that studies conducted by the European Commission deal only with major airports; suggests, therefore, that the scope of any future studies be extended to regional airports and, in the interim, encourages the Member States and the Commission to promote connections between regional airports and main airports in the Member States, helping to boost the economy in the areas around regional airports while also offering one solution to the problem of air-traffic congestion in Europe;

23. Urges all parties and institutions involved in the revision of Regulation (EEC) No 95/93 (as amended by Regulation (EC) No 793/2004) to focus on delivering new capacity at airports rather than pricing regional air services out of the market; considers it essential for regional airports to have access to hubs, and takes the view that this must be considered during the revision of Regulation (EEC) No 95/93, especially in the context of the plans for secondary trading of slots and the envisaged gradual introduction of other market mechanisms, including primary trading, that could result in a severing of links between regional airports and major hubs;
24. Calls on the Commission to take a rational approach to the administrative and legal regulation of slot management at regional airports, the lack of which could restrict the network; calls on the Commission, given that major hub airports are close to maximum capacity, to draw up a strategy for the allocation of regional airport slots in order to attract new airlines, and promote competition, decongestion of major airports and the development of regional airports;
25. Regrets that regional airports situated away from urban centres are often not adequately connected to the transport network on the ground; calls for Member States to develop their intermodal policies and to invest in these strategically important intermodal connections, for example connections with the rail network, as the interlinking of regional airports with other parts of the transport network, including other airports, will lead to greater use of regional airports when hub airports are suffering capacity bottlenecks;
26. Points out that the lack of decisive action to increase the accessibility of regional airports by means of appropriate communication with urban centres, including through transport infrastructure investments, is restricting the economic and social development of the regions;
27. Notes the need for better integration between modes of transport; urges the Commission to come forward with a communication encouraging industry to develop multi-modal through-ticketing between the rail and air sector; points to the fact that schemes of this kind are already in operation in certain Member States and hence urges all parties to exchange best practice in this field;
28. Notes the urgent need to guarantee airport capacity in the European Union so as not to lose competitiveness by comparison with other regions experiencing growth, and thus prevent traffic from shifting to neighbouring regions; takes the view that regional airports can help reduce congestion at Europe's main airports and allow them to maintain a leading position;
29. Believes that the network development plans of the rail and road sector should take the location of airports into account, with the aim of including airports in the ground transport networks being built; notes the need to develop regional airport networks based on integrated connections with the major airports in order to improve the mobility of people and to streamline goods transport;
30. Points out that a well-developed network of regional airports will also improve passenger safety, by ensuring, among other things, that a network of emergency or alternative airports is available in the event of a deterioration in the weather or other circumstances;

31. Considers it vital to incorporate freight transport specialisation as an essential element that will contribute to the planning of the airport map, and to optimise the use of available infrastructure; points out that appropriate use of this principle, together with the appropriate handling of slots to segment passenger and freight transport, should help to avoid saturation at main airports; highlights the important role played by regional airports in this strategy;

The trans-European transport network (TEN-T)

32. Takes the view that the role played by regional airports is vital for territorial cohesion and social and economic development in the regions, especially in regions where other forms of transport are lacking; calls, therefore, for regional airports to be taken into account in the future trans-European transport network policy; Furthermore, strongly believes that major regional airports with consistent year-round traffic, which make a demonstrable contribution to economic development, revitalisation of industry and employment in their region, should be included in the planning deliberations for the TEN-T Network, especially those with high-volume connectivity with third countries and intra-European traffic, and which contribute to the multimodal character of transport in their region, and those regional airports which can serve to relieve bottlenecks;
33. Emphasises that regional airports in trans-border regions which are located in close proximity to each other should demonstrate cooperation and coordination in the use of existing capacities as a precondition for EU co-financing by TEN-T, cohesion and regional funds;
34. Believes that, as part of the TEN-T, regional airports could play a leading role in the creation of a wider European Common Aviation Area covering 1 billion people in the EU and neighbouring countries, in line with the Commission communication (COM(2011)0415);
35. Regrets that the Commission has not paid attention to the request from Parliament and the Council in Article 10(4) of Decision 884/2004/EC for regional airports to be connected to the network, especially in view of the need for air transport services to Europe's regions to be ensured alongside the development of rail services, as air transport can in certain circumstances reach further and serve thinner markets more efficiently in terms of time, cost and environmental impact; highlights, therefore, the great importance of connecting rail – especially high-speed and long-distance rail – services to airports;
36. Believes that a broader inclusion of airports in the new TEN-T guidelines will facilitate access to private financing for airport infrastructure projects and send a positive signal to capital markets; calls on the Commission, during its review of the TEN-T, to recognise the vital link between regional air services and economic regeneration;

Security

37. Notes that the cost of implementing security measures at smaller regional airports is proportionally higher than at major airports, which benefit from economies of scale;

believes, however, that any proposal concerning the financing of security measures must not distort competition between airports or groups of airports;

38. Recalls that the EU directive on airport charges⁴ only covers airports with more than 5 million passengers and/or the biggest airport in each EU Member State; believes that an assessment of the impact on small and medium-sized airports should form a core part of any review of the relevant directives;
39. Urges the Council to adopt a position on aviation security charges, and believes that more stringent security measures should be paid out of general taxation by the Member State concerned, as aviation security is a matter of national security; stresses that similar rules should apply for all other transport modes in order to ensure fair competition.
40. Acknowledges the need for reliable LAG (liquids, aerosols and gels) screening equipment that ensures a high degree of probability of detection of a wide range of liquid explosives, and urges the Commission to consider the consequences for regional airports of adhering to future requirements for LAG screening;
41. Draws attention to the impact of the new regulations for air cargo, with specific reference to the fact that many regional airports rely on cargo traffic; urges the Member States and the Commission to study the economic consequences of these regulations, with a view to ensuring that freight forwarders do not move their operations outside the EU;

Transparency

42. Suggests that companies must offer, to all residents of all EU states, a credit or debit card payment option which would be free of charge, and further recommends that such a card should have no monthly or administration charges associated with it, even if offered by a company separate to the airline, and that, where airlines have a large majority of their passengers paying an extra charge related to payment, this charge should be outlawed and considered an unavoidable charge, and therefore included as part of the headline price;
43. Points out that, while in some aircraft the stowage can be limited, there are no common guidelines for hand or hold baggage size or weight on EU flights; suggests that the Commission encourage industry to set common upper limits for restrictions, as this would give passengers greater certainty when travelling; believes that, for such an arrangement to work in a global market, the ICAO must be involved in this process;
44. Notes that some airlines charge fees for check-in baggage which often seem disproportionately high, and calls on the Commission, with regard to the practices set out in point 13 and to fair and transparent pricing policy, to investigate this practice;
45. Suggests that the amount chargeable by airlines for excess and overweight baggage should be capped;

Accessibility

46. Calls on the companies responsible for the management of regional airports to make the necessary structural alterations to accommodate disabled people, so as to enable them to

access the various airport areas without assistance and to use all services without difficulty;

47. Stresses that, thanks to the small size of their terminals, compactness and organisation, regional airports represent added value for passengers with reduced mobility, passengers travelling with their families, etc.; calls on the Commission, airports and other stakeholders to take the design and construction of terminals that are more accessible and welcoming for passengers as their example;
48. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Regional airports and air services are not only essential as transport nodes, helping to facilitate the smooth running of the EU's single market by moving people and goods between regions, but they are also essential as generators of economic growth in their own right. Together they expand the horizon of traditional trading routes and provide a significant boost to the cities and regions that they serve. Given the importance of these infrastructures and services to people living outside major urban areas and to the EU as a whole, your Rapporteur is greatly concerned that when proposing legislation in the field of aviation, there is a tendency by the European Commission to focus attentions on major 'hub airports'. In this report I have presented recommendations that seek to redress this balance and bring attention to the manner in which regional airports and air services have often been unintentionally, yet disproportionately, affected by some EU legislation. I have also opened for discussion, policy options that if adopted by the Commission could improve the operational and economic efficiency of regional airports and air services as well as improve the experience of passengers using these facilities and services.

I have already stated in my introduction that regional airports make a major economic contribution to society and as such, I have found it striking how difficult it is to find a single, coherent definition as to what constitutes a regional airport. I have spoken with the Commission as well as Industry stakeholders and yet, I have been offered many inadequate, contradictory and often competing definitions. If the Commission is to ensure that it addresses the needs of the EU's many regional airports in the future, then I believe that it needs a clear, concrete, coherent and precise definition for regional airports. There are very many regional airports scattered across the EU and they differ greatly in size, the services they provide, the markets they serve and the air services that serve their airports. For this reason, definitions that simply set an arbitrary passenger threshold or include any airports outside of capital cities/regions will prove inadequate. Given that no adequate definition currently exists, your Rapporteur has chosen for the purpose of this report to offer a simple, broad definition in which a regional airport is defined as any "non-hub" airport (regardless of passenger throughput) and regional air service as an air service that departs and/or lands at a regional airport.

Aviation is an industry of small margins and as such it is vital that we create an EU aviation area that is strong, competitive and economically viable. This is especially true at a regional level where the margins can be smallest. In addition to the economic barriers we are confronted with, we also face obstacles related to aviation's impact on the environment, congestion, security, as well as a need to better define its essential contribution to the EU transport network. As such, your Rapporteur has tried to touch on all of these key areas and address not only regional aviation specific issues, but also means by which regional aviation can play a role in creating a more efficient EU aviation area as a whole. For example, I believe that those regional airports that are currently running below capacity could conceivably serve as congestion relievers to some heavily congested hub airports, especially for regional services. If implemented properly, this could lead to less congestion and more environmental efficiency. Similarly, in dealing with slots, I would call on the Commission to pay special attention to regional airports and air services as they risk being priced out of the market in the face of greater consolidation amongst major airports, airlines and airline

alliances. An uncompetitive and monopolistic market place would not only be extremely harmful to regional aviation but also to EU citizens who would be faced with less choice and rising prices.

I have also called for the Commission and Member States to speed up the development of SESAR and the Single European Sky as a matter of urgency, as their completion could lead to huge economic and environment savings brought about by greater efficiency as well as allowing some smaller regional airports to benefit from SESAR projects such as remote towers. Furthermore I believe that greater efficiencies could be brought to the EU Transport area by including some major regional airports into the TEN-T core network. Indeed I strongly believe that regional air services need to be seen as an integral part of the network rather than peripheral to the TEN-T network. Your Rapporteur believes that by better integrating our regional airports into the transport network we can encourage industry to bring additional benefits for EU citizens, such as developing multi-modal through ticketing between the rail and air sectors of a journey.

Lastly, I have tried to deal with issues surrounding transparency which can impact greatly on the experience of passengers, but also on the freedom of regional airports to choose a revenue rich economic model. This report aims to tackle practices by certain low cost carriers' such as the well publicised practice of adding certain unavoidable charges onto the headline price of their air tickets, or imposing extremely strict and onerous "one bag" rules which can seriously threaten the viability of retail sales as a source of airport revenue for regional airports that have often negotiated competitive landing charges in order to attract airlines.

In conclusion, I strongly believe that European regional airports and air services need to be considered as key elements in creating an efficient and well functioning EU transport network that facilitates trade and ensures mobility for a greater number of people. Regional aviation can play a vital role in ensuring that free movement in the EU is a reality not only for people living in major capital cities but also for EU citizens living outside of these areas, ensuring that these cities and regions enjoy not only the benefits brought about by greater mobility but also by generating tourism, providing access to new markets and by attracting greater inward economic investment.

6.2.2012

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

for the Committee on Transport and Tourism

on the future of regional airports and air services in the EU
(2011/2196(INI))

Rapporteur: Giommara Uggias

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Regional Development calls on the Committee on Transport and Tourism, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Stresses the importance of regional airports in the context of air transport and their important role in contributing to territorial, economic and social cohesion, both within the Member States and throughout the Union, by connecting regions; points out that existing public service obligations should be maintained, and that any such obligations agreed in the future should be justified by the need to guarantee the accessibility and territorial continuity of regions, such as the outermost regions, peripheral or island regions, and central areas not lying on the main transport routes, given that suitable air transport links would enable them to cope with their inherent geographical handicaps; notes that priority should be given to improving intermodality in order to achieve this objective; favours the option of concluding partnership agreements backed by national and regional authorities and airlines; notes the importance of airports, which are sometimes the only effective link between a region and the rest of Europe; stresses that regional airports are also needed in the least developed regions of Europe, which lack strong road or rail networks; believes, therefore, that proper connections to the regions should be provided; notes that, in the context of the current economic crisis and efforts at fiscal consolidation, the right balance should be struck between each airport's need to be competitive and balance its books and the social and regional needs that must be met;
2. Takes the view that irrational proliferation of further regional airports would run counter to efficiency and sustainability criteria; maintains, on the contrary, that existing links should be strengthened, especially in areas (islands, for example) suffering from geographical handicaps; welcomes, therefore, any initiative aimed at developing the role of public transport, including road transport, in promoting links;

3. Calls on the Commission, Member States and regional authorities to take account of the fact that good air transport connections are important for developing the local economy and tourism, attracting investors and ensuring the rapid transportation of passengers and goods; recognises the importance of regional airports in improving mobility and interregional connectivity, and in helping to make regions more attractive; notes that tourism is demonstrating its resilience to the economic crisis, and that special attention must be paid to any economic policy aspect or decision likely to support or advance tourism, such as air transport and airport infrastructure projects;
4. Highlights the role of regional airports in acting as a mainspring for the development of innovation clusters by diminishing location costs for start-ups, especially in geographically remote regions;
5. Notes the economic importance of regional airports for regional economic growth and job creation, particularly in less developed or disadvantaged regions; stresses, in that connection, the need to exploit the potential for green jobs more effectively; regrets, however, the high number of insecure jobs in the sector, and maintains that staff working at the airports proper or for companies providing services there or for airlines operating there must enjoy the necessary decent contractual terms and pay rates, and that the working conditions of airport staff must be respected, with provision for minimum standards of protection, which frequently do not exist where low-cost airlines account for the bulk of the traffic;
6. Calls on the Member States and regional and local authorities to take account, in addition to economic and financial considerations, of environmental, territorial, geological and meteorological factors and of other rational criteria when deciding where to locate airports, and whenever regional airport facilities need to be renovated or expanded; underlines, at the same time, the importance of using and modernising existing structures before building new ones; points out that the development of air transport must take account of the objectives set out in the EU 2020 Strategy; recommends, accordingly, that airports achieve a 30% reduction in CO₂ emissions from air transport throughout EU airspace by 2020;
7. Considers it particularly important to employ intermodal transport solutions where possible; takes the view, therefore, that, given the current state of technological progress in this field, rail or collective road transport links to airports should be developed, as they offer an ideal way of incorporating airports into national and European transport networks as well as easing the capacity problems of those airports; believes that better connections between regional airports and surrounding towns by means of local rail or tram services could be environmentally beneficial and help to rationalise regional transport as a whole; asks that the particular situation of some regions, in which the development of intermodality is affected by their physical and natural characteristics, should not be neglected; recognises the possible contribution of regional airports to easing passenger transport congestion, thereby relieving overcrowded airports, and to the diversification of air transport routes; urges the Member State authorities to propose plans to develop existing regional airports and make them more efficient;
8. Takes the view that regional airports, on account of their environmental and economic

impact, should be properly supported by national and regional authorities, be subject to local and regional consultation, and – on the basis of cost-benefit analyses – be considered eligible to apply for financing under EU funds, as well as other EU-funded financial engineering instruments within the new programming framework; recommends that the Commission take into consideration the opportunities offered by regional airports as part of the European central transport network;

9. Takes the view that the development of regional airports should be taken into account in the context of actions under the territorial cooperation objective in order to promote balance among the regions in terms of access to airports and the coordinated development of a network of transport links, with a view to territorial cohesion;
10. Calls on the Member States and regional and local authorities to ensure that, in accordance with a specific territorial assessment giving due weight to cross-border cooperation, airports are included in regional spatial development plans and taken into account in regional development strategies – particularly in connection with integrated sustainable mobility plans – and, where appropriate, in existing and future macro-regional strategies; invites the Member State authorities to consider the importance of regional airports in the context of negotiating their future operational programmes;
11. Points out the importance of drawing up, planning and implementing joint cross-border strategies relating to development and access to airport infrastructure; highlights the importance of European territorial cooperation in achieving these coordinated strategies, and the urgency of certain cross-border investments; calls for all macro-regional coordination to include an in-depth study of transport integration – in particular as regards air transport – as part of its strategy, in order to achieve genuine social and territorial cohesion;
12. Stresses the importance making the outermost regions more competitive and promoting their integration with other regions so as to close the economic gap separating them from the rest of Europe;

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	26.1.2012
Result of final vote	+: 41 -: 1 0: 3
Members present for the final vote	François Alfonsi, Luís Paulo Alves, Catherine Bearder, Victor Boştinaru, John Bufton, Alain Cadec, Salvatore Caronna, Francesco De Angelis, Tamás Deutsch, Rosa Estaràs Ferragut, Brice Hortefeux, Danuta Maria Hübner, Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova, Vincenzo Iovine, María Irigoyen Pérez, Seán Kelly, Constanze Angela Krehl, Petru Constantin Luhan, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Ramona Nicole Mănescu, Riikka Manner, Iosif Matula, Erminia Mazzoni, Ana Miranda, Jens Nilsson, Lambert van Nistelrooij, Jan Olbrycht, Wojciech Michał Olejniczak, Younous Omarjee, Markus Pieper, Monika Smolková, Georgios Stavrakakis, Nuno Teixeira, Michail Tremopoulos, Oldřich Vlasák, Kerstin Westphal, Hermann Winkler, Joachim Zeller
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Evgeni Kirilov, Lena Kolarska-Bobińska, James Nicholson, Ivari Padar, Heide Rühle, Giommara Uggias
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Julie Girling

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	27.3.2012
Result of final vote	+: 39 -: 3 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Magdi Cristiano Allam, Georges Bach, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Philip Bradbourn, Antonio Cancian, Michael Cramer, Philippe De Backer, Luis de Grandes Pascual, Christine De Veyrac, Saïd El Khadraoui, Ismail Ertug, Carlo Fidanza, Knut Fleckenstein, Jacqueline Foster, Mathieu Grosch, Jim Higgins, Dieter-Lebrecht Koch, Georgios Koumoutsakos, Werner Kuhn, Jörg Leichtfried, Eva Lichtenberger, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Gesine Meissner, Hubert Pirker, David-Maria Sassoli, Vilja Savisaar-Toomast, Olga Sehnalová, Debora Serracchiani, Brian Simpson, Keith Taylor, Silvia-Adriana Țicău, Giommara Uggias, Thomas Ulmer, Peter van Dalen, Dominique Vlasto, Artur Zasada, Roberts Zīle
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Spyros Danellis, Eider Gardiazábal Rubial, Alfreds Rubiks, Janusz Władysław Zemke
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Petri Sarvamaa