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Autor: [s.n.]
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EuroAirport Basel-Mulhouse-Freiburg

EuroAirport Basel-Mulhouse-Freiburg is an international airport 6 km northwest of Basel, 22 km southeast of Mulhouse (France), and 70 km south of Freiburg (Germany). It is located in France, on the administrative territory of the commune of Saint-Louis near the Swiss and German borders. It handled 4,270,000 passengers in 2007.

EuroAirport Basel-Mulhouse-Freiburg

Basel-Mulhouse-Freiburg is one of the few airports in the world operated jointly by two countries, France and Switzerland. The headquarters of operations are located in Blotzheim, France. The airport is located completely on French soil, and the airport has a Swiss customs area connected to Basel by a border road. The airport is operated on an agreement established in 1946 where the three countries Switzerland, Germany and France are granted access to the airport without any customs or other border restrictions.

Plans for the construction of a joint Swiss-French airport started in the 1930s, but were stopped by the Second World War.

In 1946, talks were re-opened and it was agreed that an airport would be built at Blotzheim, 4 kilometres north of the city. France would provide the land, and the Swiss canton of Basel-Stadt would provide the construction costs. Construction began on 8 March 1946 and a provisional airport with a 1,200-metre runway was officially opened on 8 May 1946.

Between autumn 1951 and spring 1953, the east-west runway was extended to 1,600 metres and the "Zollfreistrasse" was constructed allowing access from Basel to the departure terminal without passing through French border controls.

The first enlargement project was approved by referendum in Basel in 1960 and over the following decades the terminals and runways were continually extended. The north-south runway was extended further to 3,900 metres in 1972. In 1984, an annual total of 1 million passengers was reached.

In 1987, the official name was changed to "Euro-Airport Basel-Mulhouse-Freiburg". The decision was made to enlarge the terminals again with a new Y-finger dock.

The airline Crossair was based at Basel and was the largest airline. Following the Swissair bankruptcy in 2001, and the transformation of Crossair into Swiss International Air Lines, the number of flights from Basel fell and the new terminal was initially underused. In 2004 the low cost carrier EasyJet opened a base at Basel and the passenger totals rose again, reaching 4 million in 2006.

from the internet

Day of rest for cars

Vehicles were banned from many roads around Basel one Sunday in a cross-border event intended to bring together the region's inhabitants.

The so-called SlowUp event – where people can walk, cycle or skate on car-free roads – was held on a 60km route along the River Rhine. It involved five border crossings and seven river crossings and looped through Switzerland, Germany and France.

Celebrating its tenth anniversary, the slowUp concept has attracted half a million people last year alone.

The theme of the Basel event portrayed the region's multicultural and multilingual diversity: "gemeinsam en route – ensemble unterwegs" to promote movement and contacts beyond the borders. Other aims were to promote regional tourism and to encourage physical exercise. And it was also about making people happy for the day.

Made possible by various national sponsors, slowUp is free, non-commercial and colourful: from high-wheel bicycle acrobats to flower-clad prams there are few rules, as long as participants use their own muscle power. Wheelchair users are also welcome.

Bringing together young and old, families and individuals, fitness freaks and couch potatoes, slowUp is – as the name says – all about slowing down our hectic lifestyle and increasing pleasure. There are recreational stopping points where various stands sell food and beverages.

Many communities in Switzerland have expressed interest in holding such car-free days, but they are quite a challenge for the organisers, especially in cities.

Participants are encouraged to travel to the route by bicycle, skates or public transport, as slowUp is intended to be environmentally friendly.

from swissinfo