

The EURO airport near Basel

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand**

Band (Jahr): **65 (1999)**

Heft [5]

PDF erstellt am: **13.09.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-945400>

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THE EURO AIRPORT near BASEL

It's called Basel-Mulhouse and it is two airports in one. It's a French airport for France, a Swiss airport for Switzerland (after Zürich and Geneva), and it is a common airport for a common interest for both Countries. It's built entirely on French territory (next to Basel city), located in the heart of Europe and in the '3-nation- catchment area' of France, Germany and Switzerland. (Germany like France is just a stone-throw away from Basel). So it's the location that is the reason for it's registered trademark "EURO - airport-Basel-Mulhouse-Freiburg". If this sounds a bit confusing to you, then you're forgiven..!

The EURO - airport (to keep the title simple) is starting to burst at the seams. The airport spokesman (according to a Swiss Radio International documentary broadcast recently) says the major problem is that the present Basel-Mulhouse airport terminal is built for a capacity of 1.8 million passengers per year. However, last year (1998) more than 3 million travellers have used the airport. Most of the flights in and out of the airport are run by Swissair's sister company CROSSAIR. - This company is growing so fast that it is planning to build a Y-shaped finger-dock with 25 positions for aircrafts. The terminal building itself will be extended at the same time first on the EU-side and then on the Swiss side to come up to a new capacity of

5 million passengers. Expected costs of expansion are approx. 375 million Swiss Francs. The EURO - airport costs more to run than similar airports, because the infrastructure has to be built for French and Swiss police forces, French and Swiss custom's services for immigration, emigration and goods. Another disadvantage is that there is at the moment no direct rail-link, although railway lines running in and out of Basel are only 1 kilometre away. But Basel does have its plus-points with an expandable area available. In Zürich there are battles going on for every little bit of space. The authorities responsible for the EURO - airport say Basel-Mulhouse offers the fastest connection to and from anywhere in Europe with the shortest transfer times. CROSSAIR the sister company of Swissair calls this the EUROCROSS-service and offers already 42 European connections up to 5 times daily. It looks at its operation as a 'niche-specialty by servicing the European connection to such 'long-haul' flight-destinations as Paris, Frankfurt, London, Amsterdam or Zürich. Despite such good prospects for the EUROCROSS AIRPORT there is opposition against the planned expansion in France, Germany and Switzerland. The Swiss opposition comes mainly from Basel residents affected by the flight path for takeoff which leads directly over the city. A referendum is to be held in Basel about part of the financing of the extension. Should Basel refuse to pay its share

(this is unlikely, since Basel and "Basel-land" the sister Canton, know the value of the airport), then it will have to be paid by federal authorities in Berne, since this is all part of the treaty between France and Switzerland which governs the airport.

REMEMBER ME ??

I'm the person who goes into the restaurant, sits down patiently, and waits while the waitresses do everything but take my order.

I'm the person who goes into a department store and stands quietly while the sales clerks finish their little chit-chat.

I'm the person who drives into a petrol station and never blows the horn, waiting patiently while the attendant finishes reading his magazine.

Yes, you might say I'm a good person - But do you know who else I am??

I'm the person who never comes back,

and it amuses me to see you spending so much money advertising to get me back when I was there in the first place.....

and all you had to do was show me a little courtesy!

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