

January 2020

Düsseldorf Airport and its Significance for the Region

All over the world, large airports are catalysts for regional growth. They mean quick access to the local economy for the world's most important markets and metropolises. They create a network of economic zones and the foundation for business development. Many industries and foreign investors assign airport proximity a major priority when selecting a business location – and the entire area benefits. Düsseldorf Airport is the most important airport in Germany's most important economic region. It gives the area an infrastructure focal point, which helps internal development and external exposure. The following overview shows the inter-connectedness of the airport, which – with 25.5 million passengers – is North-Rhine Westphalia's (NRW) and the region's largest.

The Location

Düsseldorf Airport and the region are geographically located in Europe's center and in the industrial heart of Germany. Nearly all European centers are reachable within 1.5 hours of flight time. The region's population is comparable to that of two other major European centers, London and Paris, and offers enormous market potential. The Rhine-Ruhr Region is the third-largest economic center in Europe.¹ Almost 150 million people live in a 500 km radius of Düsseldorf. That is equal to one-third of all consumers and 45 percent of buying power in the European Union (EU).²

¹ Source: Eurostat

² Source: NRW Invest

NRW is one of the world's most significant trade show locations. More than 60 major industry trade shows attract about six million people each year. Of Messe Düsseldorf's (Düsseldorf Trade Shows) 50 events, 24 are the world's leading trade shows in their industries, e.g., "drupa" for printing technology, "K" for plastics and rubber, "MEDICA" and "REHACARE INTERNATIONAL" for the medical industry, and "boot" for water sports.

The Economic Significance

Sixteen of Germany's highest revenue-generating corporations have their headquarters in NRW, making it a center of the German economy. Among them are nine of the 30 DAX companies, including Eon, Henkel, Metro, Bayer, Thyssen Krupp, and RWE. Not only large corporations value the German federal state with the highest population to conduct business from here, but also about 765,000 small and medium-sized businesses are located in NRW. Moreover, about 15,000 foreign companies from some of the main investor countries conduct their Germany and Europe activities from here, among them 3M, BP, Ericsson, Ford, LG Electronics, QVC, Sanyo, Toyota, and Vodafone³.

Air traffic has a positive effect on the labor market and facilitates economic growth. Surveys show that companies located in the region of an airport feel a great affinity towards the airport⁴. Düsseldorf's success in bringing top companies to the area – such as SAP, Mitsubishi Electric, E-Plus or Esprit – is related to the airport's proximity. An extensive offering of direct routes to main business and other destinations is a criterion for German and foreign companies settling here. Düsseldorf Airport helps create a targeted network of economic zones – e.g., through intercontinental air traffic with non-stop connections to New York, Atlanta, Chicago, Dubai, Tokyo, and Abu

³ Source: NRW Invest, 2014

⁴ Source: Ifo-Institute 2013

Dhabi. More than 110 weekly long-haul flights to 25 intercontinental destinations connect NRW to the world.

At the same time, Düsseldorf Airport is an important economic factor for the government district Düsseldorf and NRW. Businesses at the airport receive shipments and services worth two billion euro each year. Services at Düsseldorf Airport generate tax revenue of 846.9 million euro annually. Its gross value added is about 3.4 billion euro.⁵

The airport is not just a first-rate location for passenger traffic, but also for cargo. At the center of one of the largest export nations in the world, it brings proximity to customers and production, as well as an optimal connection to the highway system – ideal conditions for the logistical economy. The cargo center connects the region's potential to the entire world through first-rate logistical services.

The Significance for the Labor Market

Both passenger and cargo revenue have increased significantly over the past years. This had a positive effect on employment and value added services. The number of jobs at the airport increased by more than 30 percent from 2005 to 2012. Currently, there are 20,300 jobs and 208 companies. Indirectly, the numbers are even larger, because the total economic output of the airport involves about 56,700 jobs – directly, indirectly, and induced.⁶

The Traffic Infrastructure

At Düsseldorf Airport, passengers can travel to 200 destinations worldwide on 70 airlines ranging from classic airline carriers to low-cost carriers to 5-star airlines. Düsseldorf Airport offers a large array of

⁵ Source: Survey Prof. Klophaus, ZFL 2012

⁶ Source: Survey Prof. Klophaus, ZFL 2012

flights, from high-quality business connections to intercontinental destinations to classic vacation spots. In this way, Düsseldorf Airport is a full-range supplier among airports: Düsseldorf opens up NRW; the airport is the gateway for NRW.

The selection of air travel options is complemented by outstanding land-bound connections. Düsseldorf Airport is an example of the evolution of airports to “traffic ports” – a hub for a region’s various transportation options. At Düsseldorf Airport, wings and rail merge, air and rail traffic are connected. A sound intermodality – the interconnection of various traffic systems – is a significant benefit to the location.

The “Düsseldorf Airport” train station connects the airport to the long distance train system of Germany Railways (Deutsche Bahn) and is located on one of the most heavily used train routes in Germany. More than 350 trains stop there daily – from Inter City Express (ICE) to trams. The station is located at the center of German railway hubs and connections to the Ruhr area. In addition to the 350 stops, there are 50 trams a day at the underground tram station. Many places in the catchment area offer passengers hourly non-stop rides to the airport and back. “Seamless travel” is a concept the airport continuously pursues, making sure it’s easy for passengers to switch from one form of transportation to another. Right at the “Düsseldorf Airport” train station, there is a SkyTrain – a cable car which takes passengers to the terminal in no time.

At Düsseldorf Airport, the idea of intermodality doesn’t end with train arrivals. The airport is located at the intersection of important traffic routes, such as Highway (Autobahn) A 3, A 52 or A 44, and has its own highway exit. Moreover, many passengers from the Netherlands and Belgium take advantage of the airport’s great accessibility.

The Business Park Düsseldorf Airport City

Düsseldorf Airport is the basis for business in the Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan area. The Düsseldorf Airport City underpins this. On one of the best accessible sites of the German Economic Area an attractive office and business park will be built on 23 hectares until the year 2018. The overall concept was developed by the airport in cooperation with the architectural firm JSK, which was responsible for the new building of the terminal, too. It includes the creation of some 230,000 sq. m. of gross floor space on building plots that allow the realization of buildings with 4,500 up to 30,000 square meters.

The real property company Flughafen Düsseldorf Immobilien GmbH, a subsidiary of Flughafen Düsseldorf GmbH, has acquired the site and is also in charge of the development, the planning and the opening up of the entire area. The building plots are sold to investors who conduct the realization of the building, too. The anchor project, the state capital's first Maritim Hotel, which is also the biggest convention hotel of North Rhine-Westphalia and is directly connected to the terminal, was opened at the end of 2007. The Verein Deutscher Ingenieure (VDI) as well as the Porsche Centre and other companies have settled here. The developments are processing as planned. Early 2015, the Flughafen Düsseldorf GmbH occupied its brand new headquarters in the Airport City. 500 employees haven been working in a modern and highly comfortable environment ever since.

Düsseldorf Airport – for the Region and Country

Düsseldorf Airport delivers the kind of infrastructure for the region that facilitates its progress and growth. In NRW, this task takes on a particular meaning. The Rhine-Ruhr region is undergoing continued structural changes – moving from coal and steel industry to new business and economic segments. The airport supports this process

and eases the switch to new branches of economy. After all, a powerful transportation infrastructure is critical to people's mobility, economic integration in a merging Europe, and international market competition.