

Project Outline: Airport charges

(1) Responsible: Jürgen Müller (project manager), Barbu Marius, Peter Schröder, Markus Dinse, Ulrike Hinz, Wolszczak Grzegorz, Onur Cobanlio

(2) Project duration: Open

(3) Project description: The heterogeneity of airport charges system at the German airports shows that a national comparison of the airport charges structure represents a great challenge. Some airports have adopted fixed charges per flight operations, however majority of them have divided their charges into fixed, start and regional charges, variable passenger charges as well as temporary charges of aircrafts.

The goal of this subproject is to develop a consistent benchmarking for airport charges suitable for international comparisons. Additionally, the project will research upon the effects of the liberalisation and deregulation of air traffic on the airport charges system. Did they develop a more efficient approach for airports or did they shift the risk from airlines to airports?

Furthermore, the political economy concept of welfare will be considered. Is there in the current charges system an optimal allocation of resources or should this aspect of the system be reformed?

(4) Objectives and research questions: We focus in our research on the benchmark of German airport charges respectively on taxes and their regulation, using the following research questions. How are German airport charges structured and decided upon? And which consequences and efficiency aspects arise from it (also for passengers, infrastructure, costs and airport charges). Furthermore, we want to see to what extent did the liberalisation process affect the level and structure of airport charges.



(5) Methods: For a time series analysis of the airport charges structure we will use data coming from German and selected regional airports as of 1990 until today. For an international comparison, in addition to this data, data from other European airports from UK, France and Italy will be considered. This field research will reflect the structure of the regulated charges (in Germany §43 LuftVG (German law on air traffic)) as well as of the charges of the central infrastructure. The collection of data from German airports will succeed only as a result of the cooperation with the airports, German Federal Airports Association (ADV), German Airline Association (BDF), as well as with the Aeronautical Information Service Centre (DFS).

(6) Preliminary results: We discovered that the structure of charges changed for Germany airports. One dimension of this change is reflected by the share between variable and fixed charges; another by the increasing heterogeneity of central infrastructure charges, having as extreme case the Düsseldorf Airport, where actually these disappeared. However, these changes are in accordance with the general trends at international level.