

PANEL 2: AVIATION LANDSCAPES

Airports and cityscapes

Over the last three decades, airports have developed beyond their original function as aviation structures into important infrastructure focal points for urban and suburban development and modern service and trade centers. Until the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, there was a significant upsurge in growth within the airport sector, owing to increased investment activity compared to the wider metropolitan area. This growth was in parallel with the expanding aviation industry. Given these current multiple crises, airports and their surrounding areas are facing new challenges.

The question now is how and why the specific function of the airport within the polycentric metropolis has changed, and what shifts in roles and weightings have taken place. We will explore the opportunities and risks posed by disruptive change when it comes to the strategic development, conversion and reuse of airports. We will also examine the potential for the climate-neutral networking of airports with different levels of urban infrastructure.



Dr. Johanna Sonnenburg is an associate urban researcher at the Center for Metropolitan Studies at TU Berlin. She is also a strategy consultant and coach. Johanna studied architecture in Berlin and Edinburgh and completed her doctorate in 2013 in Germany and the USA on the topic of airports as a source of inspiration for urban regions. In 2009, Johanna founded the urban policy think tank “Think

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