

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear colleagues,

It's my great pleasure and my great honour to say a few words, on behalf of the ANIMA consortium, as a welcome address. Today, thanks to the European Commission and to its Innovation & Networks Executive Agency, we are going to talk about the "aviation noise perception after the COVID-19 crisis".

Are we really after? I don't know. What I know however, what we are all knowing, is that civil aviation is by nature one of the most globalized industries. And as such, it is one of those which have been the most violently impacted. Some companies that were undoubtedly robust are now on the brink of defaulting and require governmental support. European States, as well as the European Union, launched massive recovery plans, amounting at whole to hundreds of billions of euros. And a substantial part of this support is directed toward aeronautics and air transport. This is not by chance; this is because our economies at large, our societies at large are fully dependent on rapid, flexible and affordable worldwide transport.

Of course, this model is challenged and it was challenged far before the COVID-19 crisis. The globalized model is rightfully considered as too voracious in non-renewable resources, unsustainable and socially inequitable. In this regard, let me emphasize that the COVID-19 crisis is probably not a regrettable accident; it is subsequent to our globalized model. We had several previous weaker signals, from the avian influenza in 2007 to the swine flu in 2009 and to the unpronounceable Eyjafjallajökull volcanic eruption in 2010. Each time, the crisis has been more impactful because our world has been more globalized. By contrast, let me recall that the first identified occurrence of Ebola epidemics, in 1976, remained strictly local because it occurred in then-remote and isolated places of Sudan and Zaire. Yet, we probably don't know what will be the global impact of the COVID-19 and even less its impact on air transport. That's why we are very pleased to welcome David Marsh from Eurocontrol who is going to introduce us with some sound considerations and simulations on the various possible scenarios for the forthcoming air traffic.

Let me now say a few words about ANIMA. ANIMA is a project dedicated to aviation noise impact and to related annoyance. It is supported by the INEA and it gathers 22 partners from 11 European countries. It started in 2017 and will last 4 years with the initial objective of "*developing new methodologies, approaches and tools to manage and mitigate the impact of aviation noise, enhancing the capability to respond to the growing traffic demand*". At the time being traffic has collapsed but, for this very reason, lessons learnt from ANIMA may be considered as more relevant than ever; more relevant because we clearly need something else, something more than "business as usual". What are these major outcomes of ANIMA?

On the one hand, we are developing toolsets endeavouring to complement the traditional noise metrics which are widespread and useful for regulation purposes. We complement them by some annoyance indicators which would certainly be more useful to describe the discomfort felt by airports neighbouring communities. That's really a challenging task because engineers' metrics and objective figures are so easy to use, so easy to measure, so easy to compare. But how to compare the difficulty for learning endured by some children? How to assess how far green spaces are compensating a loud environment? How to evaluate the detriment of lowering real estate prices or the anomalous rate of strokes? Many questions remain and, for instance, we still don't know if there is any connection between short term annoyance and long term exhaustion.

On the other hand, we are developing a so-called Best Practice Portal which will provide to airports and authorities some recipes on what to do, what for, and what to avoid. These recipes grounded on comprehensive reviews of scientific literature and on interviews are being exemplified, which means that they are being tested and validated by and with airports. What are these core recipes? I wouldn't like to cannibalize the forthcoming intervention of Roalt Aalmoes from NLR and of Professor Paul Hooper for MMU, both involved in ANIMA. But clearly, the central point is that words of communities must be heard. They must be at the core and at the root of any subsequent intervention. Top-down decisions are often ineffective because they bypass the true concerns of unheard average citizens. It is therefore needed to foster dialogue between all the stakeholders, from communities to airports and that why the next interventions of Dirk Breedveld, Representative of the Rotterdam community, of Roel van der Bolt from the Municipality of Rotterdam and from Desiree Breedveld & Steven van der Kleij, Representatives of the Rotterdam Den Haag Airport are so much expected and welcome. Dialogue is supposed to lead to some consensus and balance between various interests and Roalt and Paul will certainly detail how to shape such dialogues in order to reach consensus that would be fair and acceptable to all.

In this landscape, the COVID-19 crisis may be seen not only as a disaster but also as a kind of opportunity. We may— if we want, if we are collectively courageous enough – reset and reshape the air transport system according to some new paradigms that would provide neighbours with respite and at least with some consensus on the rationale and on the modalities of air transport. Objectively speaking, compared to road, compared to railways, compared to buildings heating, air transport is completely marginal in terms of environmental and societal impact. This is not my opinion; this is a key-feature evidenced by the yearly European Environmental Report. Though, the 2020 edition of this very same report highlights an aircraft on its cover. This is a clear illustration of the deep unthought symbolic impact of air transport and of the subsequent high expectations public opinions may have on it.

In this regard the ANIMA approach of deriving consensus on noise and annoyance from genuine dialogue between all parties may be extended to many more concerns. The European Commission is now engaged in the Green Deal with a strong political momentum toward decarbonisation of our economies. I'm sure that Mickael Kyriakopoulos and Philippe Lenne will touch upon the issue. The ANIMA approach could certainly be derived for easing such a new world that will necessarily come, whether we like it or not. In this respect let me remind, as a matter of conclusion, that a brand new world emerged in the 14<sup>th</sup> century after the second plague pandemics, better known as the Black Death. The peasantry was so deeply devastated that survivors enjoyed wider labour fields, more tools and higher wages, eventually leading to the end of serfdom and to the beginning of the Renaissance. We may lament of the COVID-19 crisis. We must also try to turn it into an opportunity.

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