

22 May 2017



To the attention of the

Transport and Communications Committee

&

Environment Committee of the Parliament of Finland

Re: Concerning the future of the Helsinki-Malmi Airport

Helsinki-Malmi Airport has been placed on the list of the 7 Most Endangered heritage sites in Europe in 2016. This programme, initiated by Europa Nostra, together with the European Investment Bank Institute, draws attention to the most endangered heritage sites in Europe. An expert mission of Europa Nostra, who visited and inspected the airport in June 2016, came to several conclusions. One of these conclusions being that closing down this jewel of Modernist aviation architecture from the 1930s, one of the last three still-functioning pre-Second World War airports in Europe, would not be in line with the international reputation that Finland enjoys in respect to heritage preservation. Another important conclusion of the expert mission was – in flying over Malmi Airport and its immediate surroundings themselves in a small plane – that the proposed building of 25,000 units of social housing could be more suitably realised in other nearby areas of Helsinki instead of on Malmi Airport's runways.

Europa Nostra is the pan-European federation of heritage NGOs supported by a wide network of public bodies, private companies and individuals, originating from more than 40 countries in Europe. The organisation is the true voice of civil society committed to safeguarding and promoting Europe's cultural and natural heritage. It is today recognised as the most representative heritage network in Europe.

Europa Nostra, after having held its Annual Congress in Turku on 11-15 May, calls on the Finnish authorities concerned, namely the Transport and Communications Committee of the Parliament of Finland, the Environment Committee of the Parliament of Finland as well as the Helsinki City Council, to save the Helsinki-Malmi Airport in its full historical, architectural and environmental context.

A high-level delegation of Europa Nostra Congress participants actually flew from Turku to Malmi Airport in a vintage DC-3 on 15 May to inspect matters on the ground. We remain convinced that this airport has an outstanding heritage value as a fully functioning airport. This means, that the aim should not only be to save the building while giving them an alternative use, but rather to save the ensemble composed of the airport buildings and the airport landscape of the flying field with all of its runways.

**The Voice of
Cultural Heritage
in Europe**

**La Voix du
patrimoine culturel
en Europe**

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We fully support the citizens' law initiative Lex-Malmi, which was put forward with the aim of protecting the Airport and its aviation use, and which is currently under discussion by the Parliament of Finland. In the light of this citizens' initiative, the 400 participants in Europa Nostra's Annual Congress in Turku, urge the Helsinki City Council to fully recognise and deploy the tremendous cultural, environmental *and* commercial value of the Helsinki-Malmi Airport as a functional whole, and thus to end as soon as possible the present intentional strangling of the airport's operations.

Europa Nostra has chosen to have its Annual Congress this year in Turku to coincide with, and as a homage to, the celebration of Finland's centenary of independence. The "grand finale" of the Congress was the European Heritage Awards Ceremony on 15 May in St. Michael's Church in Turku. This ceremony was co-hosted by Tibor Navracsics, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport and Maestro Plácido Domingo, President of Europa Nostra.

The Congress has been organised by the team of Europa Nostra Finland and with the invaluable support of the City of Turku, the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Education and Culture, the University of Turku and the Åbo Akademi University as well as the Turku University Foundation, the Åbo Akademi University Foundation and numerous other public and private partners from Finland.

During the Congress, Europa Nostra Finland also organised a public Forum entitled "Sharing Heritage – Citizens participating in decision-making", which ended with the adoption of the Turku Manifesto stressing the importance of adequate involvement of citizens and civil society organisations in decision-making, at all levels of governance, with regard to heritage conservation and management. We very much hope that the main principles contained in our Turku Manifesto will be duly implemented in the decision-making process related to the future of the Helsinki-Malmi Airport.

Europa Nostra's European Heritage Congress 2017 in Turku was held under the patronage of His Excellency the President of Finland, Sauli Niinistö.

Thanking you in advance for taking our appeal into due consideration and for taking the necessary steps to ensure the future of the Helsinki-Malmi Airport as a historic and perfectly functioning airport of which Helsinki, Finland and Europe can be proud of,

Yours sincerely,



Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović
Secretary General
Europa Nostra



Tapani Mustonen
President
Europa Nostra Finland

CC : **Helsinki City Council**