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Four new ARC members at successful Annual General Meeting in Madrid

Airport Regions Conference successfully held its Annual General Meeting in Madrid, Spain on 27-28 November 2008. The meeting was very well organized by the hosts, the City of Madrid. The AGM unanimously approved four new members: Rotterdam in Holland, Uusima/Helsinki in Finland, Brandenburg/Berlin in Germany and the Swedish Association on Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR).

More than 60 participants representing over 20 European regions participated in the Madrid meeting.

It was obvious that ARC is moving forward in its position as a fundamental European stakeholder in airport-related matters. ARC has taken an active stand on several European issues in 2008. There have also been several occasions where ARC has met representatives from the Commission and the aviation industry.

The long awaited European Observatory on Airport Capacity was finally launched in November. ARC is represented in the Observatory and is appointed to develop the airport accessibility work package.

- This is a major challenge for our organisation. It provides at the same time an important platform for our networking and lobbying activities, says Anne Devitt, ARC President.

The ARC project development is moving forward. The EU funded Airport Regions E-learning Academy, the AIREA project, has come half way. The project Quality of Life in Airport Regions is aiming to find measures that need to be taken in order to improve the quality of life of inhabitants living nearby an airport. The ARC Mediation Competence Centre in Vienna has built a website for collecting information on airport mediation and participative planning.

The Climate Change and Surface Access project is focusing on how to have an influence in the area of climate change, especially related to airport accessibility and public transport. In relation to this, the meeting also approved an ARC position on climate change.

- ARC shall take active part in project development and support the lead partners. Projects are the fundament for sharing best practises in airport regions, says Bengt Christensson, ARC Secretary General.

The meeting also focused on an Open Skies project initiative that has been discussed with Washington Airport Task Force. This discussion will continue in 2009.

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