

**Simplifying Airport Charges in Germany:**  
**Reducing fixed and raising pax charges exemplified**  
**by Berlin Airports and Düsseldorf**

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**ABSTRACT:**

This paper analyzes the recent changes and their effects and outcomes in the charges structure of German airports. Since 2005 airports tend to reintegrate deregulated Central Infrastructure Charges (CI) into § 43 LuftVZO (Air Traffic Licensing Regulations). That is, that the Deregulation of Ground Handling Services (GHS) in 1990 is partly revoked, as CI is a part of GHS. The new structure comprises a higher variability in charges and thus a higher “tax box-effect” (share of passenger related charges).

Berlin Tegel (TXL) and Düsseldorf (DUS) have been the first airports to follow this trend and therefore function as case studies. Both airports were in the position that airlines refused to pay the unregulated charges because they claimed they were too high. Thereupon, airports had to develop a solution that satisfies both, airlines and airports.

The result of the changes in the charges structure show that prices did not increase by much and that volume rebates according to passenger number were established. This development seems to result into a win-win situation for airports and airlines: Airports benefit from rising congestion and less transaction cost of changing CI charges. Additionally they now have predictable earnings because charges are regulated and therefore less likely to be refused to pay by airlines. Airlines, on the other hand, benefit from volume rebates and higher variable charges which reduces their risk.

The aim of our paper is to show that the reintegration of central infrastructure charges into the regulated charges is beneficial for all parties and therefore should be considered at all German airports.

To support our arguments we have evaluated questionnaires which were sent to airlines, airports and the Regulation Directives. This shows that there is a general trend towards “re-regulation” of CI charges.