WHERE WILL THE AIRPORT LAND?
A NARRATIVE ABOUT THE LOCATIVE
UNCERTAINTY OF THE NEW LISBON AIRPORT[1]

ONDE ATERRA O AEROPORTO? NARRATIVA ACERCA
DA INCERTEZA LOCATIVA DO NOVO AEROPORTO DE LISBOA

Jorge Gonçalves

jorgemgoncalves@tecnico.ulisboa.pt

Investigador do CESUR – Instituto Superior Técnico, Lisboa

Susana Marreiros

susana.marreiros@ist.utl.pt

Bolseira de Investigação do CESUR – Instituto Superior Técnico, Lisboa

ABSTRACT/RESUMO

It is an established fact that an airport can be an instrument for development on a national and regional scale while having significant repercussions on the local level. It is equally true that it is an enormous investment wrapped in great project complexity. The specific case of the New Lisbon Airport (NLA) is a good example to prove these assumptions, and can also be considered a paradigm for a particular way of thinking about the territory.

Thus, the NLA must be perceived as a heavy infrastructure and a complex process in its materialisation and also in the shock waves that it generates in the territory. However, to these obvious observations should be added other less neutral issues, regarding technical and political aspects. Those issues were the ones that disturbed (and still disturb) the NLA process. The political matters are related to the asymmetry on public investment between Northern and Southern Portugal, which the Northern social and economic actors consider to be a reinforcement to the already existent distributive inequities. It is not just about the sum involved but also about the opportunity costs, as the basis of the discussion is the priority given to the NLA project. Regarding the technical aspects, the need for the airport has never been clearly proven, the chosen locations were never a unanimous decision, and the type of airport to implement was never consensual.

É consensual a ideia de que um aeroporto pode ser um instrumento para o desenvolvimento à escala nacional e regional, ao mesmo tempo que traz repercussões significativas ao nível local. É igualmente verdade que se trata de um enorme investimento e que o envolve uma enorme complexidade projetual. O caso concreto do novo Aeroporto de Lisboa (NAL) é um bom exemplo para comprovar mais uma vez estes pressupostos, mas também pode ser considerado como paradigma de um modo particular de pensar o território.

Assim, o NAL deve ser visto como uma infraestrutura pesada e um processo complexo na sua caracterização mas também nas ondas de choque que gera no território. Contudo, a estas observações óbvias deve acrescentar-se um outro conjunto de questões bem menos referidas de caráter técnico mas também político, acabando por ser as que perturbavam (e perturbam) mais o processo. As questões políticas relacionam-se com as assimetrias do investimento público entre o Norte e o Sul do País, reforçando, no entender dos atores sociais e económicos do Norte, as injustiças distributivas já existentes. Não se trata apenas dos montantes envolvidos, mas também dos custos de oportunidade associados, já que na base da discussão está o grau de prioridade conferido a este projeto. Do lado das questões técnicas, desde o início que nunca ficou claramente comprovada a necessida-

All of this complexity and tension has been portrayed in very diverse ways by the media, either through news articles, reports, debates, analyses or opinion pieces. The complex relations that this paper aims to describe are based on the collection, processing and systematisation of journalistic material published between 2007 and 2012, available through Google© News, and a posterior analysis combining that information with the decision-making documents identifiable through the *Diário da República* editions.

The NLA story hasn't ended yet. There is a constant deepening of its complexity (ANA was privatised, the NLA was suspended, studies were made to materialise the "Portela+1" solution) and its implications on the territory and the communities (plans that are suspended, reconsidered or restarted, preventive measures, agreements with the Action Program for the West and Tagus Flatlands 2008-2017 of around 2 billion euro, etc.).

This research helped to demonstrate that even for an investment that implicates an enormous financial effort and delicate consequences on land-use planning, decisional drifts are a reality. The territory, regional development and technical matters are moved to the background in a process that is juggled between the published opinions and the politics's (in)decision.

de do aeroporto; nunca foram unânimes as implantações selecionadas; nunca se consensualizou o tipo de aeroporto.

Toda esta complexidade e esta tensão foram sendo retratadas das mais diversas formas nos *media*, através de notícias, reportagens, debates, análises e artigos de opinião. As relações complexas que este *paper* pretende descrever baseiam-se apenas na recolha e no tratamento do material jornalístico publicado entre 2007 e 2012, acessível no Google© News, e no seu posterior cruzamento com as várias tomadas de decisão política possíveis de identificar através das edições do *Diário da República.*

O processo ainda não estancou, quer no aprofundamento da sua complexidade (a ANA foi privatizada, o NAL suspenso, desenvolveram-se estudos para concretizar a solução Portela+1, etc.), quer nas suas implicações nos territórios e nas comunidades (planos que são suspensos, revistos e voltam à forma inicial, medidas preventivas, acordos como o Programa de Ação para o Oeste e a Lezíria do Tejo 2008--2017 na ordem dos dois mil milhões, etc.)

A pesquisa serviu para demonstrar que, mesmo para um investimento que envolve um enorme esforço financeiro e delicadas consequências no ordenamento do território, a deriva decisional é a regra, ficando o território, o desenvolvimento regional e até as questões técnicas secundarizados num processo que se esgrime essencialmente entre a opinião publicada e a (in)decisão política.

Keywords: Locative Uncertainty, Lisbon, New Airport, Media, Non-Decision Costs

JEL Codes: R38, R42, R53, R58

Palavras-chave: Incerteza Locativa, Lisboa, Novo Aeroporto, *Media*, Custos da Não-Decisão

Códigos JEL: R38, R42, R53, R58

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. PURPOSE

The main purpose of this paper is to give an overview of the recent NLA history (2007-2012) as it was portrayed in the media and intersect that with the airport legislation released during the same time slot. This way, it is shown that uncertainty is part of public works, even when they represent large investments whose progress should be more focused on the territory's development rather than the published opinions or political hesitations.

1.2. METHODOLOGY

Through research and compilation of journalistic material published between 2007 and 2012, as well as an indexation of all the decision-making documents published during that period, a database was created in order to develop this study.

The e-clipping process was possible through Google© News. The titles and subtitles were the main elements considered, and the full article was also used in a few cases

where there was some dubiety on the theme of the article. The gathered material totalizes 259 news pieces that were chronologically sequenced and organized in six analysis groups: Ota: Alcochete; Portela+1; Locative Uncertainty; Delays; Miscellaneous.

FIGURE 1. RESEARCH/ANALYSIS STEPS PLAN.
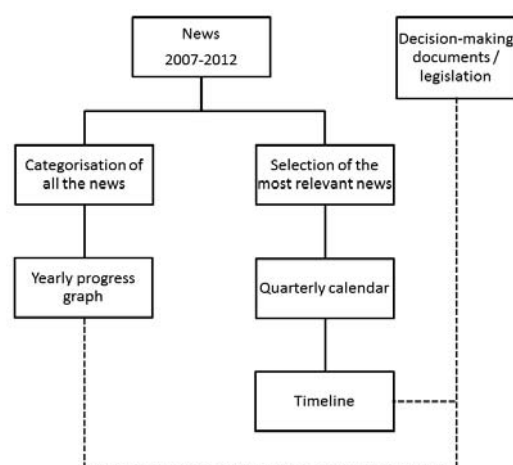
The media sequence was then articulated with the published decision-making documents, in order to compare and reflect on the evolution of the production of the two types of documents.

The methodological sequence of research/analysis steps is represented in the following plan:

The main limitations to this methodology are related to the uncontrolled universe of the news pieces. However, the large amount of articles gathered helps to mitigate any eventual gap.

1.3. SPOTIA – THE PROJECT

This paper was created under the SPOTIA[1] Project (Sustainable Spatial Policy Orientations and Territorial Impact Assessment – Contribution to Portuguese Context).

The main goal of this project is to study the Portuguese plans and programs and assess how they intervene in territorial development, analyzing them within the mainland regions and through three different case studies: the New Lisbon Airport (NLA); the Portuguese high-speed rail (HSR) and the EFMA (Multiple-Purpose Undertaking of Alqueva); a project linked to the Alqueva Dam.

There are eight tasks within SPOTIA (see Figure 2). The first three tasks feature theoretical analysis of land use management and policies. Tasks 4, 5 and 6 are directly related to the case studies. Task 7 structures all the inputs from previous tasks and Task 8 synthesizes the whole project.

FIGURE 2. PROJECT TASKS PLAN.
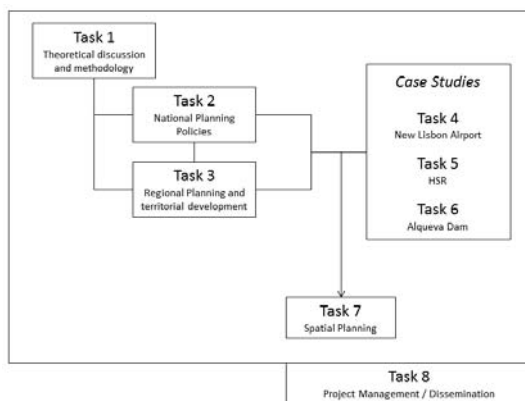
There are several participating institutions in this project. The principal contractor is Instituto de Geografia e Ordenamento do Território da Universidade de Lisboa (IGOT). The research team at Instituto Superior Técnico was assigned to examine the NLA case study. Thus, the production of this paper was one of the outputs of the work developed.

When the SPOTIA project started, in 2010, the construction of the new airport was a given. Then, when it was postponed indefinitely, the approach towards the NLA case study had to change. The questions asked in the analysis went from a "when" to an "if" thematic.

2. THE DECISION: COMPLEXITY AND RISK

The decision on the construction and location of large-scale infrastructures and facilities is currently one of the most complex responsibilities that regional and national governments have to face. The complexity results not only from the fact that today there are more decisions to be made, which is why Reese-Schafer (2000) and Shimank (2005) speak of a decision society, but also from the expectation that the decisions will be made on a rational basis or, to put it another way, in a way that illustrates the risk of a bad decision and its consequences (Shon, 1967).

According to Innerarity (2009), one can identify three dimensions to this decision process complexity: a social dimension, which results from interdependencies between the various social stakeholders, meaning that a decision can end up interacting with other decisions and having not always foreseeable consequences, such as conflicts or the disruption of expectations. Insecurity of the decision process can arise from this lack of knowledge; a knowledge dimension, associated with the excess or insufficiency of information, which, in either case, can lead to ambiguities and contradictions that question the solidity of the decision; and a temporal dimension that has to do with the limited time frame for the decision making process. Time constraints almost always play a role in the decision process and can be deemed responsible for less informed or less responsible decisions, given that a rational process may be restricted when deadlines are tight.

These dimensions, individually or together, can contribute to generating decision externalities which, at worst, can inhibit the decision process, even if it is in a hidden or indirect way. A decision can thus be a "non-decision", a simulacrum of a decision or an effective decision. A "non-decision" is the product of a persistent and irremediable lack of decision making as to the action to be taken or of a deliberate option to not do anything that would generate more negative externalities than advantages. However, in some cases, the costs of a "non-decision" may not be fully taken into account. A decision simulacrum leads to the emergence of positions that may have a lot of conviction behind them but end up not being realised because the simulacrum is then forgotten or because it is changed in the meantime (perhaps to other simulacra) or because, with the passage of time, it becomes inconvenient or not well adapted. There is also the possibility of a decision that will lead to consequential actions, but only with time delays that can be quite considerable. Here, impositions by supranational institutions may play an important role, such as the Euro-

pean Union or entities on which the State may depend for a number of reasons, including financial ones.

2.1. DECISION COMPLEXITY AND THE NEW LISBON AIRPORT

The decision process for large-scale infrastructures, such as an international airport, is illustrative of this discussion of decision complexity. In the case of such large infrastructures, one can also factor in the spatial consequences. The aforementioned dimensions to decision complexity can be applied to the New Lisbon Airport (NLA) process and help to throw light on a troubled course over decades.

The social dimension crystallises the political, institutional, economic and financial tensions that have always been present in the process, as we will see further on. Political, due to the expected impact on the planned location, on the site of the abandoned facility and on other places that are affected by a new facility that has a potentially structuring effect in terms of regional and national development. As a result of the decision one can expect new dynamics to emerge in some places and new weaknesses in other, which will lead to reactions from political stakeholders. Institutional, on account of the diversity of visions present in the central and regional governments as a result of differing sectoral and territorial positions. Economic, due to the transfer of the airport from its current location in Lisbon to another site in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area, requiring a reconfiguration of the direct and indirect economic system and the system created by the new airport. The public works as a bringer of employment and economic development also play a role in the tensions generated here. And financial – due to the opportunity costs it may result in and the long-term commitments it requires, the decision to build and locate the new airport brings significant risks with it, as the financial dependence of countries with very volatile financial markets does not leave a large security margin. For the above reasons, taking the responsibility for a decision of this type is much more difficult.

In the case of the NLA, the knowledge dimension has been one of the most vulnerable because the insufficiency or inconsistency of the technical arguments – be they in favour of the new facility or for a certain location – has not generated solid confidence amongst all stakeholders. One only has to recall the varying capacity constraints for the current airport in terms of passengers and aircraft parking (systematically resolved with physical extensions and better parking management), the (constantly increasing) costs involved or even the location decision itself, in which various decisions were taken without there being a clear supremacy of one option over the others.

Finally, the time dimension, in which the time frames and deadlines are shortened (or extended), depending on the dates presented for the exhaustion of capacity of the existing infrastructure or the possibilities for community funding. However, the sovereign debt crisis makes it nec-

essary to review all these priorities, meaning that this dimension may be relegated in importance.

3. THE AIRPORT AS A CATALYST FOR…

3.1. … THE ECONOMY

According to Cejas (2006), the quality of service that passengers receive at an airport (both at arrival and departure) is an important indicator of satisfaction, and tourists take that into account when globally evaluating their stay. Therefore, an airport with good facilities is more likely to attract more people.

Every airport has a maximum capacity, a specific amount of traffic that it can endure while keeping its service quality and scheduled duties. What happens then when an "old" airport is about to reach its maximum capacity, i.e. when the demand grows in a way that cannot be fulfilled by the current supply? The price of using the almost saturated airport would increase, thus preventing a rise on demand. This can be achieved by resorting to a "peak hour" surcharge. Not only it helps stabilize the demand at certain periods but also brings in extra profit for the airport (Zhang & Zhang, 2001).

The economic dimension of an airport in a city like Lisbon has the potential to be strengthened through more features. For instance, there is a strong possibility to increase the passengers' demand through the airport's capacity of being a hub, allowing for travels between continents and countries. Lisbon is a fundamental airport in which concerns????? the connection to South America, particularly Brazil, and also to African countries such as Angola, Mozambique and Cape Verde.

The economic expression is also related to the airport's potential for air cargo regarding, for example, parking slots and relation to surrounding logistics areas. Nowadays, the knowledge about this dimension continues to deepen with the concept of Aerotropolis (Correia and Silva, 2013).

3.2. … EMPLOYMENT

Research has proven that employment is influenced by airline traffic. According to Brueckner (2003), an increase of 10% in passenger enplanements generates a 1% increase in employment in service-related businesses. Furthermore, a study in the Netherlands showed that the Amsterdam Schiphol airport's growth between 1987 and 1998 generated an additional 42000 jobs in 1998 (Hakfoort & Rietveld, 2001).

The employment increase caused by a new airport (or the expansion/renovation of an old one) does not happen in only one way. As Ergas and Felsenstein (2012) explain, there are direct demand effects and derived demand effects. Direct demand effects are related to the direct results within the airport sector, mainly employment and profit generated by the airport. Derived demand effects are about the indirect results or "second round effects", for example, hotel investment and job creation outside the airport, etc.

3.3. … REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The impacts generated by an airport infrastructure in the territory, economy and employment are always high and not often fully analysed on a first approach.

It is important to consider the territory. The extensive space consumption of an airport demands for a selective location, free of preexistences and environmental/ecological constraints. Related to this direct space consumption there are the consequences related to access, logistics/business areas and complementary infrastructures (parkings, hotels, theme parks…).

The effects on regional development can result from the increment of all those dimensions – increase of passengers, businesses, accessibilities… There is also real estate growth in the urban expansion areas designed to accommodate employees and companies as well as the touristic buildings.

Thus, we can summarise the airport's consequences by considering that the transportation of people and goods generates a first phase appearance of support structures such as business, accessibility, real estate and infrastructures. Later, complementary effects are expected to emerge in the economic activities that can take advantage from an airport, such as agriculture and tourism.

4. CONTEXTUALIZATION AND CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE NLA

4.1. THE LISBON METROPOLITAN AREA (LMA)

The LMA is the area of the Lisbon NUTS II. This region has an area of 3001,9 km² and it is divided by the Tagus River into two NUTS III, which have 9 municipalities each (see Figure 3). Amadora, Cascais, Lisboa, Loures, Mafra, Odivelas, Oeiras, Sintra and Vila Franca de Xira constitute the Greater Lisbon NUTS III, on the North bank of the Tagus River. Alcochete, Almada, Barreiro, Moita, Montijo, Palmela, Sesimbra, Setúbal and Seixal make the Setúbal Peninsula NUTS III, in the Southern side of the river.

FIGURE 3. THE LISBON METROPOLITAN AREA (LMA) AND ITS MUNICIPALITIES
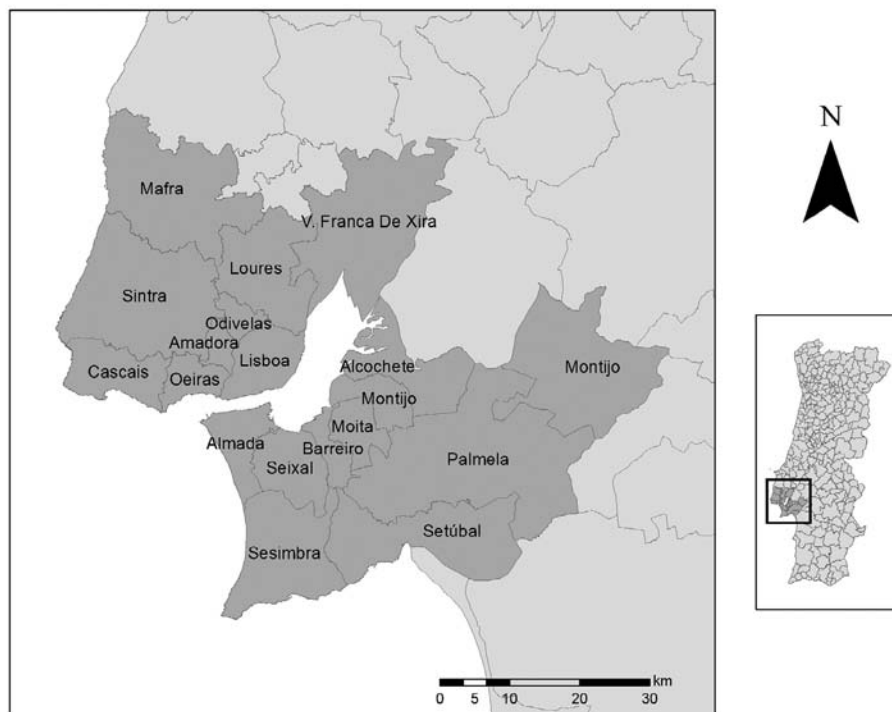
The number of inhabitants in the regions to the south of Lisbon rapidly increased in the second half of the 20th century. This growth and expansion happened mainly due to the construction of two bridges connecting the Lisbon municipality to the southern side of the Tagus riverbank: the 25 de Abril bridge (opened in 1966) and the Vasco da Gama bridge (opened in 1998). According to the 2011 Census, the LMA has 2.821.876 dwellers, which means a 6% increase in population since 2001 and represents 28% of the mainland Portugal inhabitants.

4.2. LISBON AND ITS AIRPORT BACKGROUND HISTORY

Lisbon has been the capital of Portugal for over 750 years, and its central location in the country and good port accessibility have contributed to consolidate its status as the biggest and most important city in Portugal. Throughout the years, new and better accesses were created to/from and around the city. With the constant growth and promising development of aviation and after the use of a few landing fields, the Lisbon City Hall agreed upon the construction of a national

airport. Julião *et al.* (1988) narrate that after over four years of constructions, the Lisbon Airport opened in October 1942, in the area of Portela de Sacavém. The selection of this location was based on two main factors: proximity to the city centre and proximity to the riverside – the latter being a characteristic whose relevance faded throughout the subsequent years as seaplanes lost popularity over "ordinary" planes.

Only one year after its opening, the Lisbon Airport was subject to an expansion plan, and it has had several renovation/expansion works since then.

The first talks about a new airport for Lisbon are not as recent as they might seem: it was the year of 1958 when the Ministry of Public Works first mentioned the possibility of a new location for the capital's airport.

The options selected by the GNAL (Office for the New Lisbon Airport) in 1972 consisted of areas to the South of the Tagus river such as Alcochete, Fonte da Telha, Montijo, Portela, Porto Alto and Rio Frio. Another location had been talked about since the 1960s, but didn't get much emphasis until the early 1980s: Ota, an area in the Northern side of the riverbank, about 50 km from Lisbon. This option was perceived as the best one for several years.

4.3. TIME SLOT FOR THIS RESEARCH: THE LATE YEARS

As time passed by, some alternatives for the New Lisbon Airport (NLA) were discarded, others were more highlighted, and thus the uncertainty remained as the clearest fact.

One side of the discussion defended that Ota was the best option, and this location was a certainty for several years. However, the questions about Alcochete kept increasing, and they started to jeopardise the option previously taken for granted.

The government decided that this "new" option should be studied and compared with Ota. Therefore, it was requested that the LNEC (National Laboratory of Civil Engineering) would develop a comparative analysis of the two locations to identify which one would present less costs and more benefits. On the one hand, Ota had better accessibility but it required heavy earthworks. On the other hand, Alcochete's overall costs were slightly lower despite it being located in an ecologically sensitive area.

In early 2008, the LNEC report concluded that Alcochete would be the most appropriate location for the new airport. However, even after this official confirmation was made by the government, the NLA continued to be on the public eye for a while.

Another option that gained popularity in recent years was Portela+1. This alternative refused the construction of a new airport and the closing of the Portela airport. Instead, it supported an apparently more low-budget option: the maintenance of Portela and the use of an air-base in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area as a secondary airport for low-cost companies. Some of the debated locations were Sintra, Alverca and Montijo (see Figure 4).

This paper focuses on those latest developments on the NLA history: the period between 2007 and 2012. That time was a particularly volatile one and it generated some of the most controversial advances and retreats regarding this issue, and also the most intense media coverage this topic has had before or since then.

FIGURE 4. AIRPORT/AIRFIELD INFRASTRUCTURES IN THE LMA AND ITS SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES
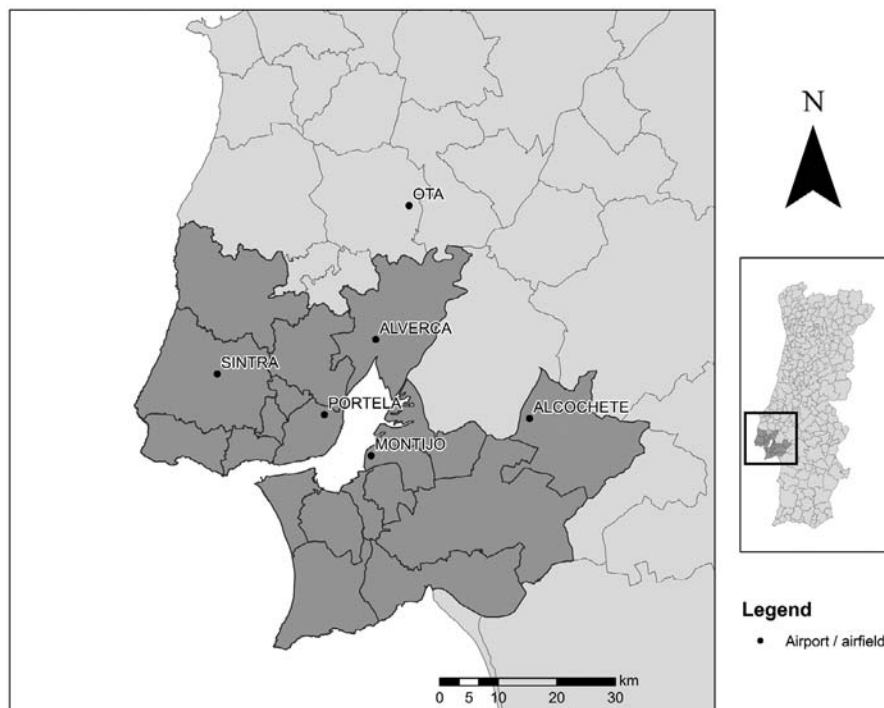
4.4. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MEDIA TO UNDERSTAND THE LOCATIVE UNCERTAINTY OF THE NLA

News articles contain within them a series of characteristics that should be taken into consideration throughout this analysis. Sousa (2001) explains that news narrate specific situations as they happened, which means they are not always 100% objective, especially if we consider the philosophical and epistemological notion according to which objectivity is the total appropriation of a certain object of knowledge by the individual who knows it.

Even when a news article mentions that a certain infrastructure will cost X million euro, it is well known that public works budgets are never fully agreed on by every technician involved, and they also change as time goes by. Moreover, the speech used in news is not neutral and the choice of words plays a defining role in the interpretation of the article.

5. APPLYING THE METHODOLOGY

5.1. COLLECTING AND ORGANIZING THE DATA

The first step was to collect as much relevant information as possible.

It was decided that the best way to analyse the evolution of the NLA history would be through news articles and a few other media writings such as reports, debates, analyses and opinion pieces. Those texts narrate the timeline of events, decisions, advances and retreats and also all the controversy attached to such a large-scale undertaking.

In order to compile the articles, an online research was done through the news search engine Google News. With the purpose of gathering the most important texts, a custom time range was set: every week from 1st January 2007 to 31st December 2012 was searched separately, so that no crucial developments would get lost in the creation of the chronology. The keywords used in the search were "novo aeroporto Lisboa" (new Lisbon airport).

5.2. CLASSIFYING THE NEWS

After the comprehensive search and compilation of 259 articles, each of the items collected was classified into a category, according to which theme was more highlighted in the headline (or in the intro, when the headline itself did not provide enough information). This was made with the purpose of creating an evolution graph, showing which kind of news was more relevant on each year.

Besides, it was decided that a timeline should be created. It was necessary to summarise the information in order to understand the yearly evolution more clearly, thus having a stronger knowledge of "the big picture". To achieve this, the more relevant articles were selected while the less important ones were discarded. The criteria for this selection was based on the importance that the reported information had in the history of the NLA, and it was decided *a*

priori that editorials and most news solely based in opinions were to be put aside.

6. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

The Google© News search outputs presented several news that were discarded from the beginning because they did not have anything to do with the NLA itself (e.g. news about unrelated infra-structures or investments in which the costs were compared to those of the NLA).

6.1. A PERMANENT UNCERTAINTY REGARDING THE NLA

In order to create the evolution graph – with the locative variations and legal reactions – it was necessary to categorise each of the 259 news articles, as described on 4.2. The six categories created were Ota, Alcochete, Portela+1, Locative Uncertainty, Delays and Miscellaneous. Each article was associated with one category (see Table 1). With this classification, the analysis of the evolution was possible, comparing the percentage of each category of news throughout the years.

TABLE 1. YEARLY AMOUNT OF NEWS ARTICLES FOR EACH OF THE DEFINED CATEGORIES

	Ota	Alcochete	Portela+1	Locative uncertainty	Delays	Miscellaneous	Total
2007	16	15	3	10	4	16	64
2008	5	19	0	2	0	15	41
2009	0	15	0	1	2	19	37
2010	1	24	0	0	11	30	66
2011	1	3	2	0	11	14	31
2012	0	2	6	0	1	8	17

The Miscellaneous category was ignored for further analysis, as it had opinion articles and news that were irrelevant for the analysis of the NLA progress.

The diagram above is a very good way to represent the different types of news, because the evolutions and differences between each year reflect the recent history of the NLA:

- In 2007 it is visible how there is a certain balance between the news that highlighted Ota and the ones that highlighted Alcochete. *The locative uncertainty was more present than it would be in all the following years.* 2007 was a year of studies and assumptions.
- During 2008, *the Ota option lost some relevance* in the total amount of news that were released. This was the year of the decision as to where the NLA would be

built: Alcochete. Therefore more than 2/3 of the news highlighted this location.

- In 2009, *Ota was not mentioned at all, and Alcochete gained even more visibility* on the news (83% of the NLA-related news). The uncertainty was smaller than in the previous couple of years, gaining an almost residual relevance. Some delays started to be reported, but not enough to overshadow the Alcochete spotlight.
- 2010 marked *a slow beginning on Alcochete's loss of popularity,* caused by an increase on delays and postponements. The Resolution of the Council of Ministers – that extended the preventive measures for one more year – is a specific example of why the delays became more and more frequent.
- In 2011, *the delays increased even more,* consisting of nearly 2/3 of the total of articles collected. The residual reference to Ota has to do with the fact that compensatory measures for the Ota lands were at stake at the time, facing the risk of never being put into practice. The news that highlighted Alcochete presented in 2011 the lowest proportion in the time slot. Moreover, *the Portela+1 option had started to be mentioned,* something that had not happened since 2007 (before the NLA location was officially decided).
- In 2012, the proportion of articles mentioning *Portela+1 represented 2/3 of the NLA-related news headlines.* It was the highest variation between two consecutive years in this study.

**FIGURE 5. 2007-2012 YEARLY PROGRESS.**
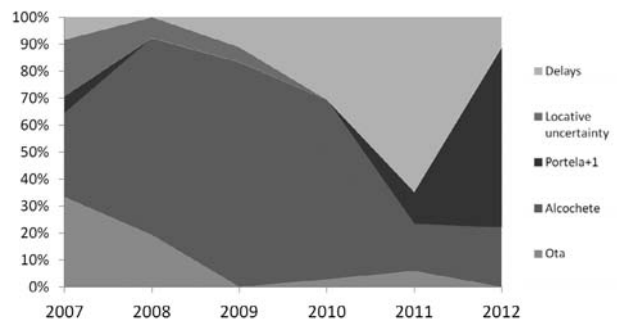
6.2. TIMELINE

After selecting only the most important news, there was an average of 3,1 articles per trimester, whose headlines, dates and sources were organized in a calendar, followed by a short quarterly summary of those news.

It was then noted that those summaries clearly showed if each trimester had been marked by progresses/confirmations regarding the construction of a new airport, or if in the other hand it had been a trimester during which there were delays, setbacks and/or uncertainties.

Therefore, when making the timeline image, the quarterly summaries were coloured in green or red, depending on whether they represented steps forward or back on the NLA process (see Figure 6).

FIGURE 6. LOCATIVE UNCERTAINTY: SYNTHESIS TIMELINE
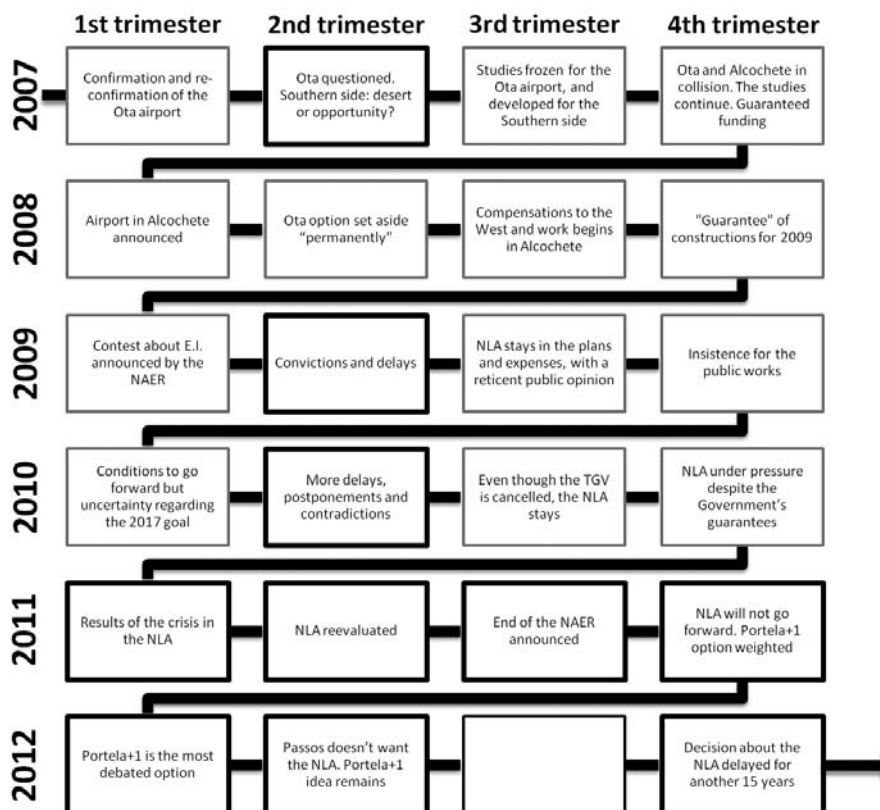
6.3. THE LEGAL ENACTMENTS

While there were steps forward and steps back regarding the media procedures, there was also a production of enactments about the NLA problem, although they also contributed for the same indecision framework. Between 2007 and 2011 there were 8 new relevant legislative documents and only one regarded a decision to locate the NLA in Alcochete (see Table 2); all the others were related to the comparison of alternatives and the creation or revocation of preventive measures. Besides these 8 most important enactments, other legal documents about airport-related topics were also released, mainly regarding the privatisation of ANA (the airport authority of Portugal), but those were discarded for this analysis.

TABLE 2. LIST OF THE MOST IMPORTANT LEGAL DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THE NLA (2007-2012)

Type of document	Date	Description
Decree-Law	September 2007	Creates a system of services acquisition in order to conduct a compared technical analysis of the different locative alternatives for the NLA.
Resolution of the Council of Ministers	January 2008	Ratifies the LNEC report that compares the alternatives for the NLA and defines actions that have to be developed for the implementation of the project.
Resolution of the Council of Ministers	May 2008	Adopts the conclusions and recommendations of the LNEC report, and confirms the approval of the NLA location in Alcochete.
Decree	July 2008	Creates preventive measures for the Alcochete area where the NLA is planned to be built and its surrounding areas.
Law	August 2008	Revokes the law that extended the term of preventive measures of soil occupation in the Ota area.
Resolution of the Council of Ministers	March 2010	Creates preventive measures for two years (extendable for one more year), for areas needed to build the train connection to the NLA.
Resolution of the Council of Ministers	July 2010	Extends, for one year, the preventive measures in the area planned for the construction of the NLA and its surrounding areas.
Resolution of the Council of Ministers	November 2011	Approves the Strategic Transport Plan, which supports the idea of rethinking the NLA with an approach towards the management of Portela and the possibility of turning an airfield infrastructure into a small airport for low-cost companies.

In order to make the 2007-2012 evolution analysis more thorough, the enactments related to the NLA were analysed together with the news. This temporal articulation between the published opinion/news and the enactments (see Figure 7) shows us how the legal documents have a slower dynamics.

Even when the NLA process was stagnant and the Portela+1 option had gained prominence, those changes were still not shown in any governmental decision, and that was worsened by the fact that the restrictions to the land use in the Alcochete area were maintained through preventive measures.

FIGURE 7. 2007-2012 YEARLY PROGRESS, SHOWING THE MOST IMPORTANT ENACTMENTS THAT WERE RELEASED DURING THOSE YEARS
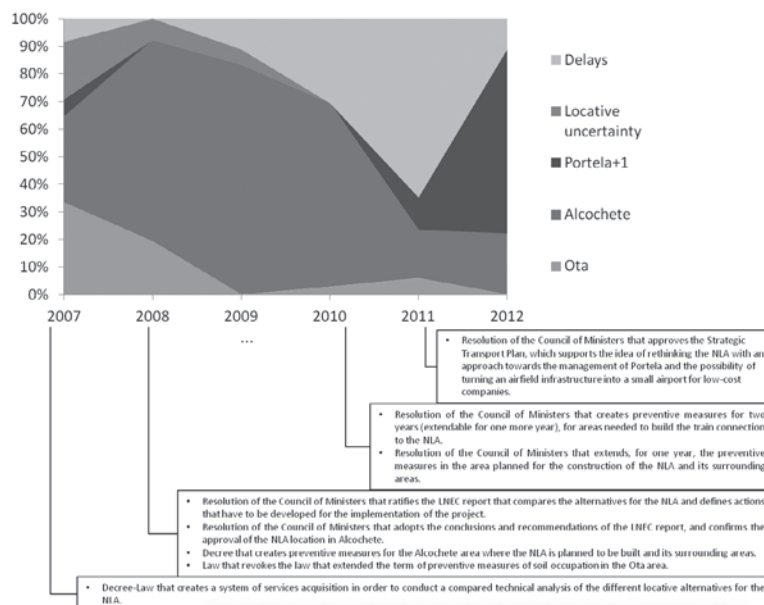
6.4. FINAL REMARKS

This paper aims to portray an (in)decision process about one of the most impactful infrastructures that could be installed in the territory: the New Lisbon Airport. This portrait – far from being a mere description – intents to demonstrate the successive indefinitions that happened in the period between 2007 and 2012; and, at the same time, it aims to illustrate how the legal decisions come after the pressure from the media, with a pronounced lag.

The mutations that occurred throughout this 6-year period are not merely vicissitudes; they are expressed in the form of territorial consequences. Those consequences can be caused by legal documents that impose preventive measures, by rules from land management instruments, or by the real estate behaviour.

Therefore, when the location, the characteristics or the temporal materialisation of this kind of infrastructure change, the whole economic, social and territorial framework is strongly affected. Taking that into account, a compensation agreement between the Portuguese Government and the Western municipalities – affected by the non-construction of the NLA in Ota – was signed in 2008. This agreement ("West-Flatlands Action Program") was worth 2 billion euro in compensations for the losses caused for several years.

However, even if nothing changes formally – as it is happening now – the indefinition still results in costs, since contradictory expectations continue to be fueled, making it impossible to set a consistent and articulated path towards the development of the territory.

REFERENCES

Brueckner, Jan (2003). Airline traffic and urban economic development. *Urban Studies*, Vol. 40, n.º 8, pp. 1455-1469.

Cejas, Roberto (2006). Tourism service quality begins at the airport. *Tourism Management* Vol. 27, pp. 874-877.

Correia, Marcos & Silva, João (2013). *A Review of the Concept of Aerotropolis and Assessment of Its Applicability in the Planning of the New Lisbon Airport*, CEGOT – 1st International Meeting – Geography & Politics, Policies and Planning, Porto.

Ergas, Yaron & Felsenstein, Daniel (2012). Airport relocation and expansion of derived tourist demand: The case of Eilat, Israel, *Journal of Air Transport Management*, Vol. 24, pp. 54-61.

Hakfoort, Jacco & Rietveld, Piet (2001). The regional economic impact of an airport: the case of Amsterdam Schiphol airport. *Regional Studies*, Vol. 35, n.º 7, pp. 595-604.

INE (2011). *XIV e XV Recenseamentos Gerais da População*, Lisboa, Instituto Nacional de Estatística.

INE (2011). *III e IV Recenseamentos Gerais da Habitação*, Lisboa, Instituto Nacional de Estatística.

Innerarity, Daniel (2009). *O Futuro e os Seus Inimigos*, Lisboa, Teorema.

Julião, Rui; Ribeiro, José & Brandão, Jorge (1988). *Aeroporto Internacional de Lisboa – Que Alternativas?*, Lisboa, Centro de Estudos de Geografia e Planeamento Regional.

Reese-Schafer, Walter (2000). *Politiche Theorie heute. Neure Tendenzen und Entwicklungen*, Munchen-Wien, Oldenburg.

Shimank, Uwe (2005). *Die Entscheidungsgesellschaft. Komplexitat und Rationalitat der Modern*, Wiesbaden, Verlag fur Sozialwissenschaften.

Shon, Donald (1967). *Technology and Change: the New Heraclitus*, New York, Pergamon Press.

Sousa, Jorge (2001). *Elementos de Jornalismo Impresso*, Porto, Letras Contemporâneas, pp. 45-48.

Zhang, Anming & Zhang, Yimin (2001). Airport charges, economic growth and cost recovery. *Transportation Research Part E: Logistics and Transportation Review*, Vol. 37, n.º 1, pp. 25-33.

http://news.google.pt