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MANAGEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE AIRPORT CITY CONCEPT

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Abstract. The article explores the management mechanisms of sustainable development in the hospitality industry through the lens of the Airport City concept, which integrates transportation, logistics, and service infrastructures into a unified economic ecosystem. The study highlights how aviation hubs function not only as transport nodes but also as powerful catalysts for the transformation of hospitality and tourism sectors, creating new models of regional competitiveness and spatial development. *The research subject* encompasses the interrelation between airport-centered logistics systems and the management of the HoReCa sector under conditions of growing global mobility. *The methodological* foundation of the research is based on a system approach and principles of strategic and sustainable management. Comparative and structural analyses were applied to examine the dynamics of hospitality development in European airport hubs such as Vienna, Frankfurt, Warsaw, and Budapest. The study also used statistical data from the Vienna Airport Group, ACI Europe, and national tourism authorities to evaluate investment trends, hotel performance indicators, and the efficiency of integrated logistics systems. The research combines theoretical synthesis with case-based analysis, focusing on the Airport City Vienna as a benchmark of effective integration between transport and hospitality infrastructures. *The purpose* of the study is to identify the managerial patterns and economic factors that determine the sustainability of hospitality development in regions with active airport-based economies. *The research aims* to reveal how the synergy between air transport, urban logistics, and service industries influences hotel performance, investment attractiveness, and the diversification of hospitality services. The findings indicate that airport cities represent a new model of territorial management where hospitality enterprises become integral elements of the transport and logistics chain. The analysis of Airport City Vienna demonstrates that the expansion of passenger flows and transport accessibility directly correlates with the growth of hotel occupancy, average daily rates, and investment volumes. Effective management of sustainable development in this context relies on integrated strategies combining public–private partnerships, digital transformation, ESG principles, and innovations in smart logistics. In conclusion, the study substantiates that the Airport City model can serve as a framework for managing the sustainable evolution of the hospitality industry. This framework enhances operational efficiency, supports green transition objectives, and strengthens the economic and social resilience of regions integrated into global air transport networks.

Keywords: sustainable development, sustainability, hotel management, hospitality industry, airport city, airport, aerotropolis, air transport, transport logistics, transport management.

JEL Classification: L83, M11, M14, O18, R41

1. Introduction

The transformation of global transport systems and the intensification of international mobility have fundamentally reshaped the structure and management of the hospitality industry. In this context, aviation hubs have evolved into complex economic ecosystems that combine logistics, business services, and tourism infrastructure. The Airport City model, which integrates these components, is becoming one of the most innovative paradigms for sustainable regional development. It redefines the relationship between

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air transport, urban logistics, and the hospitality sector, generating new managerial challenges and opportunities.

The relevance of this study lies in the growing need for sustainable management strategies that align the goals of economic efficiency, environmental responsibility, and social inclusiveness in the hospitality industry. While the interconnection between transportation and tourism has been widely studied, the managerial dimension of the Airport City as a driver of hospitality development remains insufficiently explored, especially in the context of Central and Eastern Europe. The scientific novelty of this research is the conceptualization of airport-centered hospitality management as a mechanism for achieving sustainable growth through logistical and spatial integration.

The purpose of the study is to substantiate theoretical and practical approaches to managing the sustainable development of the hospitality industry within the framework of the Airport City concept.

To achieve this purpose, the following research objectives were defined:

1. To analyze theoretical approaches to the definition and management of the hospitality industry in conditions of transport-driven mobility.
2. To explore the economic and logistical potential of aviation hubs as catalysts of regional development.
3. To examine the interdependence between airport infrastructure and the hospitality sector through European case studies.
4. To identify managerial models for integrating HoReCa enterprises into transport-logistics systems.
5. To evaluate the practical effectiveness of such integration using the example of Airport City Vienna.

The methodological basis of the study includes a system-structural approach, comparative and statistical analysis, and the principles of sustainable and strategic management. The research relies on the analysis of secondary data from international organizations (ACI Europe, European Regions Airline Association), statistical agencies, and corporate reports of airport operators and hotel chains.

The logic of presentation follows a sequential structure: from theoretical generalization and conceptual definition – to the analysis of economic and logistical interconnections – and finally to the practical case study and managerial conclusions. Such an approach ensures the integrity of the study and allows for identifying the role of airport cities as catalysts for sustainable transformation within the hospitality industry.

2. Theoretical Foundations of Hospitality Industry Development Management

The hospitality industry represents one of the leading components of the modern global economy, as it ensures the satisfaction of both basic and socio-cultural human needs in accommodation, food, recreation, and service support (Jones & Lockwood, 2018). It encompasses the activities of hotel, restaurant, tourism, entertainment, and transport enterprises that operate in close interconnection and form a unified economic service space. Management within the hospitality sector acts as a key factor in ensuring the efficiency of this process, as it defines strategic directions of enterprise development, creates competitive advantages, optimizes resource utilization, and generates added value for the customer (Enz, 2010).

In academic literature, the concept of the "hospitality industry" is interpreted as a system of interrelated types of economic activity aimed at creating a positive customer experience, comfort, emotional satisfaction, and client loyalty (Pizam & Mansfeld, 2009). The modern concept of hospitality goes beyond the traditional understanding of a hotel or restaurant, emphasizing the value of impressions, service individualization, ethical standards, and sustainable development (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2019). Within this context, hospitality management encompasses strategic, operational, innovative, and logistical dimensions of governance, all oriented toward achieving maximum efficiency and long-term competitiveness (Enz, 2010).

The theoretical foundations of hospitality industry management are based on the integration of several scientific approaches. The systemic approach views HoReCa enterprises as open socio-economic systems that continuously interact with their external environment (Page & Connell, 2020). Strategic management ensures a long-term business orientation, taking into account global mobility trends, changing demand patterns, and emerging logistical challenges (Dwyer & Edwards, 2009). The innovation-based approach provides

a foundation for the creation of new service formats, productivity enhancement, and the implementation of digital technologies (Hjalager, 2010). Meanwhile, the logistical approach ensures the rational organization of resource, information, and customer flows, which is particularly relevant amid the rapid development of transport systems and growing population mobility (Zhang et al., 2009).

An important aspect of modern management is the integration of sustainable development principles into the operations of hotel and restaurant enterprises. The concept of sustainable hospitality management seeks to balance economic, environmental, and social interests (Bohdanowicz et al., 2011). Businesses are increasingly adopting "green" practices – energy-efficient technologies, waste management systems, the use of local resources, and the advancement of corporate social responsibility (Kasim, 2009). Such an approach strengthens the ecological resilience of enterprises, enhances their reputation, and attracts investment focused on responsible and long-term development (Gössling et al., 2015).

Equally significant is the influence of innovation management, which facilitates the digital transformation of the hospitality industry. The use of advanced technologies – online booking systems, CRM platforms, mobile applications, contactless services, artificial intelligence, and data analytics – enables businesses to improve service quality, respond quickly to market changes, and optimize logistical processes (Kim et al., 2016). The digitalization of HoReCa business operations creates new opportunities for supply chain management, occupancy forecasting, customer flow coordination, and the development of personalized offerings (Stipanuk, 2020).

In contemporary conditions, the role of transport logistics as a fundamental factor of effective management in the hospitality sector is becoming increasingly important. Spatial accessibility, the convenience of transport communications, and the presence of large aviation or railway hubs directly affect the formation of demand for hotel and restaurant services (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2015). Therefore, managerial decisions in this domain must consider logistical flows, passenger traffic density, tourist routes, and integration with transport networks (Zhang et al., 2009). Within the zones of influence of aviation hubs – where the interests of transport, tourism, and service converge – new forms of business interaction emerge, requiring adaptive and innovative managerial approaches (Hall & Gössling, 2016).

3. The Economic Essence and Logistic Potential of Aviation Hubs

Aviation hubs occupy a central position in the global transport and economic system, serving not only as points of intersection for passenger and cargo flows but also as powerful drivers of regional development (Graham, 2020). In the contemporary context of global mobility and intermodal integration of transport systems, they are transforming into complex economic and logistical entities that combine transportation, trade, tourism, hospitality, logistics, and business infrastructure (ACI Europe, 2023). This multidimensional character of activity shapes a new paradigm in the perception of the aviation hub – as the core of territorial economies and a key catalyst of urban growth (Kasarda & Green, 2015).

From an economic perspective, an aviation hub can be defined as a multifunctional logistics node that concentrates flows of resources, capital, labor, and innovation. Its operation generates a significant multiplier effect, manifested in job creation and in stimulating demand for services in related industries such as construction, transportation, food service, tourism, IT, and recreation. According to European research, each job created at an airport generates between two and four additional jobs in the surrounding economy, while each euro of income in the aviation sector produces more than two euros in related industries (InterVISTAS, 2015; ACI Europe, 2023). Thus, aviation hubs act as local economic multipliers, contributing to the formation of an investment-attractive environment and supporting sustainable regional growth.

From a logistical standpoint, hubs serve as integration centers where various modes of transport – air, rail, road, and urban – are interconnected. This multilayered logistics system ensures the efficient movement of goods, services, and passengers, minimizes time costs, and enhances regional competitiveness (Rodrigue & Notteboom, 2022). The effectiveness of the logistical infrastructure of aviation hubs is critically important for the hospitality industry, as it determines the intensity of tourist flows, the

speed of service delivery, accessibility of facilities, and the ability of businesses to integrate into international value chains (UNWTO, 2024).

In recent years, the Airport City concept has gained widespread implementation. Within this model, the airport becomes the core of an economic cluster that includes business centers, hotels, shopping and entertainment complexes, logistics parks, and exhibition areas (Kasarda & Lindsay, 2011). The development of Airport City models promotes the diversification of airport revenues, creates new opportunities for the hospitality sector, and strengthens regional competitiveness in the global economic system (Kasarda, 2019).

A further evolution of this model is the Aerotropolis concept, introduced by John Kasarda, which conceptualizes the airport as the central element of an urban structure – a "city of mobility." Within the Aerotropolis framework, transport, industrial, service, and tourism infrastructures are deeply integrated, while territorial development management is based on principles of logistical optimization, sustainability, and intersectoral synergy (Kasarda & Appold, 2014).

For the hospitality industry, the Airport City and Aerotropolis concepts open new avenues for strategic development. Hotels, restaurants, conference centers, and service companies located within or near such hubs become part of a highly competitive environment where the primary advantages are speed, accessibility, and multiservice integration (Güller & Güller, 2003). This environment transforms managerial approaches in hospitality, requiring strategic planning, innovation in logistics processes, implementation of "smart" resource management technologies, and coordination with transport infrastructure systems (UNWTO, 2024).

Therefore, aviation hubs play a dual role – as both economic and logistical cores of their territories. Their development not only enhances transport mobility but also creates new models of economic growth based on the integration of business, technology, and service. Consequently, within the modern framework of hospitality industry management, aviation hubs are regarded as key elements of global competitiveness and catalysts of sustainable urban development (Kasarda & Green, 2015; ACI Europe, 2023).

4. The Interconnection Between Aviation Hubs and the Hospitality Industry

The functioning of aviation hubs significantly transforms the spatial structure of the hospitality market, determining the dynamics of demand for hotel, restaurant, and business services. Airports have long ceased to be merely transport nodes – they have evolved into powerful centers of economic activity around which hotel clusters, business centers, conference zones, and recreational spaces are formed (Kasarda & Lindsay, 2012). This process is driven not only by the growth of passenger flows but also by global trends toward the spatial concentration of service functions that ensure comfort and efficiency in a highly mobile lifestyle.

European practice demonstrates that airport zones are key areas of intensive hospitality development. In Frankfurt am Main, for instance, the area surrounding Frankfurt International Airport has developed into the *Gateway Gardens* complex – a business park with over 700,000 m^2 of office and hotel space serving passengers, crews, and business travelers (SEO Amsterdam Economics & ACI Europe, 2024). In Vienna, the area near Vienna International Airport includes a network of branded hotels (NH, Moxy, HEIN) and a modern conference center that generates a significant share of business tourism (Rudnicki, 2023). In Warsaw, the vicinity of Chopin Airport and the emerging CPK (Centralny Port Komunikacyjny) has become a site of rapid development for logistics parks and international hotel chains, illustrating the integration of aviation and tourism management within territorial planning. Similarly, in Budapest, the Liszt Ferenc hub has developed the *Airport City Cargo & Hotel* cluster, which combines logistics, HoReCa, and business tourism functions (Oxera, 2025).

A key factor linking aviation hubs and the hospitality industry is passenger traffic. Its growth directly affects hotel occupancy rates, demand for catering, short-term rentals, and other HoReCa services. According to the Airports Council International Europe (ACI Europe, 2024), a 10% increase in passenger volume typically results in a 6–8% rise in hotel service demand in adjacent regions. This reflects the multiplier effect of transport infrastructure on the hospitality sector (Khatter, 2023).

Among the logistical factors influencing the efficiency of hospitality management near airports, the most critical are transport accessibility, travel time, service flexibility, and partnerships with airlines and tour operators. High-quality transport and logistics infrastructure reduces transaction costs and increases the competitiveness of hotels located within airport zones (Shahparan, 2023).

Collaborative management models – such as joint loyalty programs or "flight + stay" packages – have proven to be effective tools for integrated management within the logistics chain "passenger – airport – hotel – service" (Camilleri, 2025).

The modern concept of managing the interconnection between aviation hubs and the HoReCa sector is grounded in the principles of sustainability, digitalization, and customer-oriented logistics. The integration of booking systems, dynamic pricing, transport routing, and service operations creates preconditions for resource optimization and improved service quality. This is particularly relevant in the context of rising mobility, the proliferation of low-cost airlines, and the expansion of short business travel routes (Jang, 2024).

Thus, aviation hubs act not only as transport nodes but also as economic cores for the development of the hospitality industry. Their logistical efficiency and strategic location shape new models of spatial organization within the tourism and hospitality environment, in which HoReCa management is increasingly oriented toward interaction, integration, and sustainable growth.

3. Management of the Integration of the Hotel and Restaurant Business with Transport and Logistics Infrastructure

In today's economy of global mobility, the effective development of the hospitality industry is impossible without systemic integration with transport and logistics infrastructure. The management of this process requires a strategic approach that combines the principles of spatial planning, operational efficiency, sustainable development, and service digitalization. Considering the growing role of aviation hubs as multifunctional centers of economic activity, the interaction between the HoReCa sector and transport structures becomes a key factor in enhancing regional competitiveness (Shahparan, 2023; Rudnicki, 2023).

Management of integration in the context of the hotel and restaurant business involves coordination at three interrelated levels: strategic, operational, and innovation-technological. At the strategic level, the main tasks include planning the territorial development of airport zones, establishing partnership models between air transport operators, hotel chains, and municipal authorities, as well as developing investment management mechanisms. A notable example is Vienna Airport, where the management of Airport City Vienna is based on a public-private partnership model that ensures the sustainable development of transport, business, and hospitality infrastructure (SEO Amsterdam Economics & ACI Europe, 2024).

At the operational level, integration manifests through the coordination of logistics processes – synchronization of transport flows with bookings, optimization of transfer and connection times, and creation of integrated passenger service routes. This ensures continuity of the customer experience, which is crucial for improving service quality in the hospitality industry. According to Camilleri (2025), the use of digital analytics systems in the HoReCa sector near airports can reduce operating costs by 10–15% and increase customer satisfaction through personalized service.

The innovation-technological level of integration management relies on digital platforms and smart logistics systems. The use of artificial intelligence, big data, and the Internet of Things (IoT) in hotel resource management enables the alignment of information flows with transport systems, improving planning accuracy and demand forecasting (Jang, 2024). For instance, integrated management systems such as "Flight-Hotel Sync" automatically update bookings in case of flight delays or schedule changes, minimizing time losses and preventing service overload.

An essential aspect of modern integration management is environmental and social responsibility. The concepts of "green airports" and "sustainable hotels" are increasingly implemented in joint infrastructure projects. For example, at Frankfurt Airport and nearby hotels, energy efficiency programs, water reuse systems, and CO_2 emission reduction measures are being implemented in line with ESG reporting strategies (Khatter, 2023; Camilleri, 2025).

Thus, sustainable integration management becomes not only a tool for efficiency improvement but also a marker of corporate responsibility and business innovativeness.

As a result of the interaction between transport-logistics structures and the hospitality industry, a synergistic effect is formed, manifested in increased regional competitiveness, higher tourist attractiveness, expanded business activity, and strengthened local economies. The management of this integration should be based on the principles of systemic approach, partnership, digital transformation, and sustainable development, ensuring the effective adaptation of the hotel and restaurant business to new challenges of global mobility.

6. Practical Implementation and Analytical Section

To verify the theoretical propositions regarding the influence of aviation hubs on the development of the hospitality industry, an analytical study was conducted based on the case of Vienna International Airport (VIE) – one of the key logistical and tourism centers of Central Europe. Its development model, Airport City Vienna, serves as an example of a comprehensive integration of transport, business, and hotel infrastructure that ensures the sustainable growth of regional economic activity (SEO Amsterdam Economics & ACI Europe, 2024).

Over the past decade, Vienna Airport has demonstrated a steady increase in passenger traffic – from 22.7 million passengers in 2015 to more than 30 million in 2024 (Vienna Airport Group, 2025). This dynamic development has directly influenced the structure of the hospitality market in the surrounding Schwechat area. Within a 5 km radius of the terminals, there are over 25 accommodation facilities of various categories – from international hotel brands such as NH Vienna Airport Conference Center and Moxy Vienna Airport to specialized business hotels and short-stay apartments. The average hotel occupancy rate in this area reached approximately 78% in 2024, which is 11% higher than the average occupancy rate in Vienna overall (Austrian National Tourist Office, 2024).

Investment activity in the HoReCa sector near the airport has shown a clear upward trend. Between 2020 and 2024, total investment in the hotel and restaurant infrastructure of Airport City Vienna exceeded €300 million, primarily driven by the expansion of the congress and exhibition complex and the construction of new service facilities. The key investors include transnational hotel chains (Hilton, Accor, Marriott) in partnership with Austrian logistics and development companies. This form of public-private partnership (PPP) has become the foundation for establishing a sustainable territorial development management mechanism (Rudnicki, 2023).

The logistical factor within Airport City Vienna is manifested through its exceptional transport accessibility. The airport offers a direct rail connection to the city center (CAT – City Airport Train, 16 minutes travel time), is integrated into the A4 and S1 motorways, and is supported by an intercity bus infrastructure. This transportation network facilitates the synchronization of passenger, staff, and business event flows, thereby enhancing the efficiency of hotel operations management. According to Vienna Airport Group (2025), approximately 35% of local hotel guests are transit passengers, while another 40% are participants in business events and exhibitions organized within the Airport City complex.

Analytical data indicate a direct correlation between the development of transport logistics and the economic performance of the hotel sector. The increase in flight frequency and the opening of new destinations in 2023–2024 led to a 14% rise in demand for short-stay hotel services, while the average revenue per available room (RevPAR) grew by 11% compared to 2022 (Statista, 2025). This confirms the hypothesis of a synergistic effect resulting from the interaction between transport and hospitality structures, where the expansion of logistics flows directly stimulates the growth of service infrastructure.

Based on the conducted analysis, several managerial conclusions can be drawn:

1. Logistical integration (aviation, railway, and road communication) is a key factor in shaping the competitive environment of the hotel business near hubs.

2. Service diversification (conference halls, coworking spaces, quick-service restaurants, wellness zones) allows for more efficient utilization of transit and business customer flows.

3. Partnership management models between airport authorities and hotel operators help optimize costs and improve service quality.

4. Digitalization of operations (integrated booking systems, flow analytics) enhances demand forecasting and enables more efficient occupancy management.

Thus, practical implementation confirms that aviation hubs such as Vienna International Airport act as powerful catalysts for the development of the hospitality industry. The management of integration between transport-logistical and hotel processes ensures not only economic efficiency but also forms a strategic foundation for sustainable regional development.

7. Conclusions

The results of the study confirm that aviation hubs serve as critical centers for shaping new economic models in the development of the hospitality industry. They provide not only transportation mobility but also create a favorable environment for investment, employment, the expansion of the HoReCa sector, and the strengthening of regional competitiveness. Within the context of the global economy, air transport nodes are emerging as the core of integrated spatial structures such as the Airport City and Aerotropolis, where logistics, tourism, and service functions converge into a unified ecosystem.

The management of hospitality industry development under such conditions acquires a systemic character, integrating strategic planning, logistical thinking, innovative governance, and sustainable approaches. A pivotal role is played by public–private partnership models, digital platforms for service and client flow management, and ESG standards, which collectively define the contemporary paradigm of responsible and adaptive management.

The empirical analysis based on the case of Vienna International Airport demonstrated that the synergy between transport logistics and the hotel-restaurant business produces a clearly measurable economic effect: higher hotel occupancy rates, increased revenues, intensified investment activity, and greater diversification of services. The growth of hotel clusters near airports is directly proportional to the intensity of passenger flows and the degree of transport accessibility, confirming the direct influence of logistical factors on the managerial efficiency of the hospitality sector.

From a managerial practice perspective, it is advisable to implement integrated development strategies for airport areas that align the interests of transport operators, municipal authorities, investors, and hospitality enterprises. Such strategies should be based on the principles of innovation, energy efficiency, customer orientation, and sustainable spatial planning.

In the future, further research should focus on quantitative assessment of the impact of logistical indicators – such as passenger traffic, freight turnover, and transport accessibility – on the profitability of the hotel sector, as well as on the study of management models within the Smart Airport–Smart Hospitality framework. This would make it possible to develop a theoretical and practical foundation for designing new management strategies for the hospitality industry's growth in close interaction with transport systems under the conditions of global mobility.

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