



Smooth reopening of external EU borders jeopardised by non-harmonised, uncoordinated national measures

- EU/Schengen countries are not adhering to the EU Council recommendations, creating a patchwork system of travel restrictions & border controls throughout Europe – thus eroding consumer confidence.
- Europe’s airlines and airports urge EU/Schengen states to follow their own agreed scientific-based approach and do away with politics during critical reopening phase.

Brussels, 08 July 2020 – Despite agreeing at EU Council level to a scientific-based approach and endorsing their own “white list”¹ [recommendation](#) just one week ago, EU States are adopting extremely diverging lists. As a result, there is very little clarity and significant uncertainty on which citizens can travel where. This has effectively led to a patchwork system of travel restrictions and border controls throughout Europe which may remain in place for weeks or months to come. The situation also weakens the functioning of the Schengen area: since Member States apply different rules, a Japanese tourist could choose to fly to Warsaw and then travel within the Schengen space without controls.

A4E and ACI EUROPE, representing Europe’s airlines and airports, today urged EU and Schengen States to do away with politics and follow their agreed, fact-based approach towards lifting the ban on non-essential travel to the EU & Schengen area for countries where the epidemiological situation allows. The two associations also support regular updating of the white list in the coming weeks, including its expansion to other non-EU/Schengen countries which fit the criteria proposed by the European Commission and approved by the EU Council, in order to support air transport and European tourism’s recovery.

Examples of diverging implementation of the EU Council recommendations include:

- Belgium keeping its borders closed to travellers from the 15 white-listed countries until further notice;

¹ Non-EU countries whose citizens are able to enter the EU, currently including: Algeria, Australia, Canada, Georgia, Japan, Montenegro, Morocco, New Zealand, Rwanda, Serbia, South Korea, Thailand, Tunisia, Uruguay – and China, should reciprocity of measures be confirmed.

- Germany reopening its borders to eight countries from the white list while requiring reciprocity from China, Japan and South Korea before lifting entry restrictions from those countries;
- Greece barring entry to Serbian nationals (not residents), therefore not following the Council Recommendation and going against the EU principle of non-discrimination;
- Hungary announcing that it will not open its borders to non-EU countries except Serbia for the moment;
- Ireland extending its advice to avoid all non-essential travel until 20 July; a “green list” of countries which people could travel to will not be published until then;
- Poland extending its flight ban until 14 July, except for flights from the EU, Canada, Albania, Georgia, Japan, Korea, Montenegro and Ukraine – thereby not using the whole list of approved countries;
- Spain reopening its borders on 04 July to 12 countries from the white list - however residents of Algeria, China and Morocco will only be able to travel to Spain if these countries reopen their borders to Spanish residents in a reciprocity move.

“These diverging national approaches are hurting our single market and will slow down aviation and tourism’s much needed recovery”, said Thomas Reynaert, Managing Director of Airlines for Europe (A4E). *“The situation is also creating an uneven playing field within Europe at a time when our sector is still struggling for survival”,* Reynaert added.

“We can’t afford to exit the situation as chaotically as we entered it,” said Olivier Jankovec, Director General at ACI EUROPE. *“EU countries are not sticking to their own agreed plan. This is not conducive to consumer confidence and it is clearly undermining efforts to restore air connectivity”.*

European aviation remains in a severe and unprecedented crisis. Annual losses are projected to total -€82 billion, globally – the worst year in aviation’s financial history. Europe’s airlines are projected to lose €19 billion and are among the top three worst affected regions, globally. The latest forecast for European airport revenue losses for the full year 2020 stands at a staggering -€32.44 billion. Continued uncertainty about travel restrictions, quarantines, and the pandemic’s evolution will affect consumer confidence in the foreseeable future, making a harmonised and coordinated approach to the reopening of borders even more imperative.

##ENDS##

Notes to Editor:

- For further information on COVID19 recovery measures needed for EU aviation, see <https://a4e.eu/publications/eu-recovery-strategy-for-a-greener-more-digital-european-air-transport/>
- ACI EUROPE’s Off The Ground Recovery Plan working papers can be found at <https://www.aci-europe.org/industry-topics/covid-19.html>

About A4E

Launched in 2016, Airlines for Europe (A4E) is Europe’s largest airline association, based in Brussels. The organisation advocates on behalf of its members to help shape EU aviation policy to the benefit of consumers, ensuring a continued safe and competitive air transport market. With more than 720 million passengers carried each year, A4E members account for more than 70 per cent of the

continent's journeys, operating more than 3,000 aircraft and generating more than EUR 130 billion in annual turnover. Members with air cargo and mail activities transport more than 5 million tons of goods each year to more than 360 destinations either by freighters or passenger aircraft. Current members include Aegean, airBaltic, Air France-KLM Group, Cargolux, easyJet, Finnair, Icelandair, International Airlines Group (IAG), Jet2.com, Lufthansa Group, Norwegian, Ryanair Holdings, Smartwings, TAP Air Portugal, TUI and Volotea. In 2019, A4E was named "Airline & Aviation Business Development Organisation of the Year" by International Transport News. Follow us on Twitter @A4Europe.

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About ACI EUROPE

ACI EUROPE is the European region of Airports Council International (ACI), the only worldwide professional association of airport operators. ACI EUROPE represents over 500 airports in 46 European countries. Our members facilitate over 90% of commercial air traffic in Europe: 2.5 billion passengers, 20.7 million tonnes of freight and 25.7 million aircraft movements in 2019. In response to the Climate Emergency, in June 2019 our members committed to achieve Net Zero carbon emissions for operations under their control by 2050, without offsetting.

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