



## **Airlines and airports issue stark warning to European Prime Ministers on inconsistent approach to travel restrictions**

*Failure to follow science-based advice runs contrary to expert authorities and is crippling Europe's economies*

**Brussels and Geneva, 31 July 2020:** Europe's airline and airport associations have written to Prime Ministers, Transport, Health and Home Affairs Ministers across the European Union, Schengen and the UK, setting out deep concerns over their failure to implement coherent and science-based approaches to travel restrictions.

The letter, sent jointly from Airports Council International Europe (ACI EUROPE), Airlines for Europe (A4E) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA), is highly critical of the introduction of new restrictions relating to selected countries. Many of these restrictions, state the organisations, are inconsistent with the principles laid out by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).

The aviation sector has been dealt a crippling economic blow by the pandemic. Despite repeated calls for a science-based, harmonised and coordinated approach to new restrictions – differing national approaches have emerged. Some of these unilateral national measures are contrary to expert guidance and further damage consumer confidence. Moreover, the imposition of such restrictions fails to take into account other options governments have to protect their citizens, such as effective track-and-trace systems.

*“The European Aviation sector is urging EU/Schengen States and the UK to reconsider restrictions to travel that have been imposed between them – including quarantines”,* state the three associations in the letter. *“We fail to see any valid science-based and proportionate justification for such restrictions from a health policy perspective”.*

The aviation associations assert that renewed efforts must be urgently put into:

- Effectively co-ordinating and aligning responses to the evolving epidemiological situation at EU level and in close co-operation with the UK, to be addressed urgently and jointly by home affairs, transport and health ministries and the European Commission;
- Re-enforcing the principle of risk-based and proportionate measures – localising restrictions and NOT imposing blanket country bans, with quarantine used as a very last resort – following ECDC guidance;
- Ensuring the interoperability of contact tracing apps, as none of the existing apps are interoperable;
- A harmonised implementation of the EASA/ECDC and ICAO Take-Off Aviation Health Safety Protocols;
- Informing the public accordingly and in close cooperation with the travel and tourism industries.

The full text of the letter can be read [here](#).

- ENDS –

**Note to editors:**

- **ACI EUROPE (Airports Council International)** 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.
- **Airlines for Europe (A4E)** is Europe's largest airline association, based in Brussels. The organisation advocates on behalf of its 16 airline group members to help shape EU aviation policy to the benefit of consumers, ensuring a continued safe and competitive air transport market. Follow us on Twitter @A4Europe.
- **IATA (International Air Transport Association)** represents some 290 airlines comprising 82% of global air traffic. You can follow IATA at <https://twitter.com/iata> for announcements, policy positions, and other useful industry information.

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