

# Jost Lammers delivers strong message to policy-makers on the need for action and alignment for aviation to recover

## ACI EUROPE

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- **Trade body releases analysis showing no correlation between increased air passenger volumes and infection (positivity) rates in Europe during Q3**
- **Lack of effective EU coordination leaves no other choice but to urge like-minded Governments to test air travellers and lift travel restrictions on a bilateral basis**

**Brussels, 17 November 2020:** Delivering his keynote address at ACI EUROPE's virtual Annual Congress today, association President Jost Lammers acknowledged that emerging news of an effective vaccine gives reason for hope. However, this cautious optimism was delivered with a caveat – that airports along with the rest of the aviation sector cannot simply wait out the inevitable time challenges of safety confirmation and herd immunity.

Lammers said: *"We need another - immediate and interim solution to go through the Winter and probably most of next Summer. The solution lies in replacing quarantines for air travellers with testing. This is about doing better managing and reducing transmission risks – and saving livelihoods."*

Lammers challenged the assumption that requiring air travelers to quarantine is a zero-risk response to the global pandemics: *"Quarantines only work to the extent they can effectively be enforced. We all know this is very challenging and generally not the case. They also do not prevent infected people from travelling in the first place. The assumption that quarantines are a zero risk approach must be reconsidered."*

## **No correlation between infection rates and passenger traffic**

Lammers framed his comments in the context of a **[new analysis released by ACI EUROPE today](#)**. Covering the months of July, August and September when air traffic experienced a timid recovery on the back of State lifting travel restrictions, this analysis reveals that increases in air passenger volumes are not correlated to any level of statistical significance with changes in COVID-19 infection (positivity) rates in Europe.

This analysis confirms and supports the position of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), which considers that travel restrictions are not effective in situations where community transmission is already present – as is the case across Europe.

Lammers further pointed to the endorsement by the European Commission of rapid antigen testing as being a *"step in the right direction. This must now be complemented by more effective and joined up contact tracing at European level"*.

However, the time-critical nature of progress was firmly in the spotlight.

*"We are deeply frustrated by the lack of effective co-ordination and progress at EU level on all these issues" he said. "This is hurting livelihoods by the day. Many of our people have lost their jobs already, with more being at risk in the coming weeks".*

*"This leaves us no other choice but to urge European Governments to work with other like-minded Governments to test air travellers and lift travel restrictions on a bilateral basis."*

### **Recovery Framework for Aviation to safeguard air connectivity and protect livelihoods**

Lammers called for a balanced approach to financial support for the aviation eco-system, highlighting ACI EUROPE's proposals for a specific **Recovery Framework for Aviation**, sent to the European Commission just days earlier. Such a State aid framework would enable EU support beyond 2021 with Governments providing financial support accordingly. The proposals include as a priority:

- Extending supportive unemployment schemes for all staff working at airports.
- Compensating airports for lost revenues for as long as travel restrictions prevent recovery.
- Connectivity Support Schemes to financially support the restoration of air services in a non- discriminatory way.

With close to 200 European airports on the brink of insolvency, the risk of a permanent shut down in air connectivity is a tangible threat.

### **Rethinking aviation for a decarbonised future – Building Back Better**

Lammers highlighted the clear correlation between the need to financially support aviation through the COVID-19 crisis, and the need for aviation to decarbonise and become more sustainable. The alignment of the aviation industry as a whole behind the proposal for an **EU Pact for Sustainable Aviation** published less than 24 hours previously, underpin this core pillar of future recovery.

Lammers said *"The airport industry has been at the forefront of Climate Action. We started Airport Carbon Accreditation more than 10 years ago and the new certification levels we are launching today confirm our alignment with the Paris Agreement".*

*"I am thrilled that following the Aviation Roundtable Declaration released yesterday, the entire European aviation sector is now committed to the same ambition. The EU Pact for Sustainable Aviation we have jointly proposed means the ball is now with the European Commission and EU States. To deliver on our Net Zero commitment, we need them to provide the regulatory and financing framework that will enable us to do so".*

**## ENDS ##**

#### **Note to Editors**

Jost Lammers is the President and CEO of Munich Airport. He was appointed as President of ACI EUROPE in June 2019.

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*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.*