

**ACI EUROPE**

10 Rue Montoyer (Box 9)  
1000 Brussels, Belgium  
www.aci-europe.org

# Connectivity gone bust: 6000 air routes in Europe have vanished

*Systemic damage to air connectivity requires urgent support from EU and Governments*

**Brussels, 18 December 2020:** ACI EUROPE has today published its [2020 Airport Industry Connectivity Report](#), with the findings exposing the systemic collapse of the aviation network and air connectivity due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Published yearly since 2014, these reports do not measure passenger volumes but the extent to which Europe's airports and their communities are connected to and accessible from the rest of our continent and the world – using a set of direct, indirect and hub connectivity indexes.

This year's report highlights the harsh reality of more than 6000 air routes previously operated from Europe's airports still not being restored 9 months into the COVID-19 crisis.

**EU/UK airports** have been the hardest hit, with their direct connectivity almost disappearing in April, then experiencing a weak recovery over the peak Summer month of August at -55% before falling again as of September (-62%).

Amongst larger EU/UK airports, the sharpest decreases in direct connectivity were registered by Madrid-Barajas (-71%), Rome-Fiumicino (-70%), Munich (-68%), London-Heathrow (-68%) and Frankfurt (-67%) as of September. Meanwhile, smaller regional airports have often seen their direct connectivity even more decimated as evidenced by Linz (-96%), Treviso (-95%), Vaasa (-91%), Quimper (-87%), Newquay (-86%), Shannon (-83%) and Burgas (-82%).

Conversely, direct connectivity at **Russian and Turkish airports** has proven more resilient, due to both the size and relative dynamic of their domestic market. This has resulted in more contained direct connectivity losses for Moscow-Domodedovo (-12%), Saint Petersburg (-26%), Moscow-Vnukovo (-28%) and Istanbul-Sabiha Gökçen (-33%).

Hub connectivity has been even more affected than direct connectivity, with **the Majors** (top 6 European airports for hub connectivity) having recovered only 16% of their hub connectivity by September. Amongst the league, Munich (-93%) and London-Heathrow (-92%) registered the steepest losses in hub connectivity, followed by Frankfurt (-89%), Istanbul (-85%), Paris-CDG (-81%) and Amsterdam-Schiphol (-70%).

This, states ACI EUROPE in a stark message to National Governments, is the extent of the damage linked directly to measures enacted to contain the virus – the 'blanket quarantine' approach still being taken in many countries.

Olivier Jankovec, Director General of ACI EUROPE, commented: "*The damage is so systemic that relying solely on market forces to restore air connectivity would not be realistic. The EU and governments across Europe*

*must urgently intervene to help jump-start it. We need a [Recovery Framework for aviation](#) that includes 'Air Connectivity Restart Schemes' similar to that seen in Cyprus - with temporary financial contributions aimed at supporting the restart of air routes on a non-discriminatory basis."*

*He added: "Air connectivity is an essential part of the productive capacity of our societies, with every 10% increase in direct air connectivity delivering a 0.5% increase in GDP per capita. It is what holds Europe together, by enabling local economic development, inward investment and tourism. We will not build back and recover without restoring air connectivity."*

**## ENDS ##**

**For more information, contact:**

Virginia Lee, Director, Media & Communications, ACI EUROPE

tel: +32 2 552 09 82

Email: [virginia.lee@aci-europe.org](mailto:virginia.lee@aci-europe.org)

*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 45 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.*