



Airports and airlines issue plea to Europe's Heads of State: Prioritise preparations and set a date to make the Digital Green Certificate a reality

Brussels, 22 April 2021: In a joint [letter](#) sent to European Heads of State and Ministers last night, aviation bodies A4E, ACI EUROPE and ERA issued a direct appeal for urgent action and transparency in making Digital Green Certificates ready for issue by the end of June at the very latest.

Following the European Commission's proposal for a common EU framework for the Certificates, which the industry fully supports, the signatories are 'relieved and encouraged' to see the legislative process being fast-tracked. But, they say, this is no guarantee that the Digital Green Certificates will be either implemented or become operational. This rests in the hands of individual countries and their plans largely remain unclear to the industry.

As one of the sectors hardest hit by the pandemic and with an essential role in kick-starting societal and economic recovery - aviation stands ready to deliver a safe and effective resumption of travel. Summer 2021 represents a make it or break it moment, with millions of EU tourism jobs supported by aviation and the wider recovery of the sector hanging on the line. Visibility across ongoing work is urgently needed, and target dates must be both set and shared as early as possible - to establish the state of readiness of each EU/EEA country and Switzerland.

In a direct call to action, the leadership of A4E, ACI EUROPE and ERA urged all concerned States *"to take the necessary steps for an effective and timely planning and execution of all actions needed from a technical, administrative and legal point of view to be able to effectively start issuing Digital Green Certificates by June at the latest."*

They also pointed to the need *"to ensure an effective and early planning and coordination (...) over the conditions and criteria for the easing of travel restrictions both within the EU/EEA/Switzerland and externally."* The [ECDC's latest technical report](#) issued yesterday provides welcome new guidance, explicitly raising the possibility of waiving testing and quarantine requirements for fully vaccinated travellers. This is an important development which now allows for exactly such planning and co-ordination for an easing of restrictions.

The latest industry data shows a deepening crisis in the sector, with air traffic in a continuing downward spiral. Passenger traffic in **Q1** slumped by **-81.7%** across the European airport network, compared to the same period pre-pandemic (Q1 2019). This marked a further decrease from the previous quarter (Q4 2020 at -79.2%), resulting in **the loss of 395.5 million passengers (attribute to ACI EUROPE)**. Similarly, air connectivity keeps declining, with Europe having lost over 8,500 air routes this month, further down from 6,663 air routes lost last January.

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Airlines for Europe (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 in 2019, 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. Follow us on Twitter @A4Europe.

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.

European Regions Airline Association (ERA) - Founded in 1980, European Regions Airline Association (ERA) is a non-profit trade association representing over 60 airlines and around 150 companies involved in European air transport and is the only association representing the entire spectrum of companies involved in European aviation. The association promotes the interests of European airlines by lobbying European regulatory bodies on policy matters, promoting the social and economic importance of air transport and its environmental commitments.

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