

ACI EUROPE

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Europe's airports join call for more EU budget for transport

Brussels, 2 April 2024: As the Connecting Europe Days event takes place in Brussels this week, under the Belgian Presidency of the European Union, 40+ European transport organisations, representing the key spectrum of Europe's transport network, are again joining forces to urge the Council and the European Parliament to increase the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) budget for transport in the upcoming review of the Multi-Annual Financial Framework.

As one of the 40 organisations in the CEF transport coalition, ACI EUROPE calls for more EU budget to be dedicated to transport, with a particular focus on airports and the broader air transport sector.

Olivier Jankovec, ACI EUROPE Director General commented *"Greater EU financing is a prerequisite for the sector's ability to decarbonise by 2050. There is no escaping that transport modes incurring harder-to-abate emissions, such as aviation, do require more policy and financial support commensurate to the challenge they face. While ACI EUROPE joins the wider transport sector's call for more EU budget for transport, we believe that there should also be a fairer allocation of the funds amongst different transport modes."*

According to the independent study from the consultancies SEO Amsterdam Economics (SEO) and the Royal Netherlands Aerospace Centre (NLR) commissioned by the DESTINATION 2050 alliance, fully decarbonising air transport by 2050 will require funding in excess of €820 billion. Whilst aviation stakeholders are fully committed to the objectives of the EU Green Deal, and have embraced the Fit for 55 legislative package, the sector will not be able to go it alone in financing its transition. A successful, on-time decarbonisation requires sufficient access to finance and public investments, which in turn depend on supportive and fully aligned policies.

The investment needs of airports should be considered as a matter of priority. Europe's airports did not benefit from the same level of support during the COVID-19 crisis at national level compared to other stakeholders. As a result, they had no choice but to pile on debt, which still remains close to **€40bn** higher than pre-pandemic levels. This has led to a significant reduction in capital expenditure – with airports investments reduced by **€27bn** compared to plans over 2022-2024. All of this at a time when financing decarbonisation, digitalisation, resilience, service quality and capacity has never been more crucial for the well-functioning of European air transport sector and its ability to continue delivering value to European citizens. Europe now faces a looming airport investment crunch, as financing needs are estimated at **€360bn** by 2040.

If Europe is to strengthen its resilience, be a leader in the transformation to net-zero economy and finally complete the Trans-European Transport Network, it must translate its words into deeds and reflect these ambitions in the new EU budget for transport.

Download "More EU budget for transport" leaflet [here](#). The campaign leaflet will be officially handed over to the European Commission during the Connecting Europe Days, on 4th April at 5.30 PM (venue: Gold Hall).

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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 55 countries. Our members facilitate over 90% of commercial air traffic in Europe. Air transport supports 13.5 million jobs, generating €886 billion in European economic activity (4.4% of GDP). In response to the Climate Emergency, in June 2019 our members committed to achieving Net Zero carbon emissions for operations under their control by 2050, without offsetting.