



European airports and airlines slam misguided Global Solidarity Levy proposal

Brussels, 09 July 2025: ACI EUROPE and A4E — the key industry bodies representing Europe’s airports and airlines — today joined global industry voices in pushing back against misguided recommendations from the Global Solidarity Levies Task Force to target air transport in its aim to raise funds for international development.

Olivier Jankovec, ACI EUROPE Director General said: *“Taxing aviation equals socio-economic self-harm and is a counterproductive measure to both development and climate action — we cannot mince our words in decrying this new proposal. It ignores the fact that what precisely sets aviation apart from other sectors is its ability to support wider economic activity along with a wide range of positive societal outcomes — from poverty reduction to gender equality and quality education. It will also hamper progress towards our shared net zero goal by diverting much needed funding away from the sector. Targeting air connectivity by treating aviation as cash cow is another symptom of government short-sightedness.”*

Ourania Georgoutsakou, Managing Director at A4E said: *“European airlines already collect multiple local, national and international taxes and levies and pay for the environmental impact of flying, be it under the EU ETS or with the significant investments in new aircraft and sustainable aviation fuel. An additional levy on premium passengers will only further unlevel the playing field, will divert much-needed funds for the sector’s transition to net zero and will ultimately increase the cost of flying for all.”*

The proposed Global Solidarity Levy on air travel unfairly singles out aviation and ignores the crucial role that air connectivity plays in global development, cohesion, and prosperity — even more so for developing states. Just in Europe, every 10% increase in air connectivity yields a 0.5% gain in GDP per capita, while also being associated with -14% in poverty, +9% in quality education, +19% in gender equality and +8.5% in research & development.

With European aviation committed to achieving net zero CO₂ emissions by 2050, the sector faces an estimated €1.3 trillion in required investments. Redirecting potential capital from the green transformation to tax coffers undermines this effort. Rather than supporting aviation’s decarbonisation agenda, the levy penalises it — a contradiction that makes climate and development goals harder, not easier, to reach.

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ACI EUROPE is the European region of Airports Council International, the only worldwide professional association of airport operators. ACI EUROPE represents over 600 airports in 55 countries. Our members facilitate over 90% of commercial air traffic in Europe. Air transport supports 14 million jobs, generating €851 billion in European economic activity (5% 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. Based in Brussels, we lead and serve the European airport industry and maintain strong links with other ACI regions throughout the world.

Airlines for Europe (A4E) is Europe's largest airline association. Based in Brussels, A4E works with policymakers to ensure aviation policy continues to connect Europeans with the world in a safe, competitive and sustainable manner. With a modern fleet of over 3,700 aircraft, A4E airlines carried over 771 million passengers in 2024 and served nearly 2,800 destinations across Europe and the wider world. Each year, A4E members transport more than 54 million tonnes of vital goods and equipment either by freighters or passenger aircraft.