



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Airports and airlines call for immediate Schengen Entry/Exit System (EES) review ahead of peak summer months traffic

Brussels, 11 February 2026: ACI EUROPE (Airports Council International), A4E (Airlines for Europe) and IATA (International Air Transport Association) warned that the Schengen Entry/Exit System (EES) continues to cause significant delays for passengers. Failing immediate action to provide sufficient flexibility, severe disruptions over the peak summer months are a real prospect, with queues potentially reaching 4 hours or more.

In a letter sent to Magnus Brunner, EU Commissioner for Internal Affairs and Migration, airports and airlines:

- Signal persistent excessive waiting times of up to 2 hours at airport border control as mandated in the current stage of the EES progressive rollout (that 35% of all third country nationals entering the Schengen zone must be registered).
- Identify three critical issues that are compounding EES delays: chronic border control understaffing, unresolved technology issues, especially with regard to border automation, and the very limited uptake of the Frontex pre-registration app by Schengen states.
- Warn that unless immediate action is taken to resolve these critical issues, mandatory EES registrations of all border crossings during the peak summer season, in particular in July and August, would result in waiting times of up to 4 hours or more.
- Urge the European Commission to confirm that Schengen Member States will retain the ability to partially or totally suspend EES until the end of October 2026. Under the progressive approach set out by Regulation 2025/1534, the suspension mechanisms would no longer be available beyond early July. Today, it remains unclear whether such suspension could still be activated with the necessary flexibility under the conditions set by the Schengen Border Control Code for the relaxation of border control checks.

Olivier Jankovec, Director General of ACI EUROPE, Ourania Georgoutsakou, Managing Director of A4E and Thomas Reynaert, SVP External Affairs of IATA, said: “*There is a complete disconnect between the perception of the EU institutions that EES is working well, and the reality, which is that non-EU travellers are experiencing massive delays and inconvenience. This must come to an end immediately. We need to be realistic about what will happen during the peak summer months, when traffic at Europe’s airports doubles. The rollout of EES must be flexible to react to operational realities. This is an absolute prerequisite for its success – and for safeguarding the reputation of the EU as an efficient, welcoming and desirable destination.*”

ENDS

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About Airports Council International (ACI) EUROPE

ACI EUROPE is the European region of Airports Council International (ACI), the only worldwide professional association of airport operators. ACI EUROPE represents over 600 airports in 55 countries. Our members facilitate over 95% of commercial air traffic in Europe. 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.

About Airlines for Europe (A4E)

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 4 million tonnes of vital goods and equipment either by freighters or passenger aircraft.

About International Air Transport Association (IATA)

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) is the trade association for the world's airlines, representing over 360 airlines accounting for some 80% of global air traffic. We support many areas of aviation activity and help formulate industry policy on critical aviation issues.