

ACI EUROPE

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European aviation unites in call for support for green recovery from COVID-19

- Sectors hardest hit by the crisis require particular attention and assistance
- Funding for decarbonisation projects and future technologies must be prioritised
- Sustainable air transport and tourism are key for Europe's green recovery

Brussels, 23 June 2020: With the gradual restarting of passenger air transport in the coming weeks, leaders from over a dozen air transport associations¹ representing Europe's aviation sector today issued an [urgent call](#) for EU leaders to prioritise specific decarbonisation initiatives in their allocation of future COVID-19 recovery funding. European aviation continues to reel from the sudden collapse of the air transport system over the last months and is amongst the sectors most heavily impacted. But these challenges are compounded by the need to meet ambitious climate change goals going forward. Ensuring an accelerated deployment of existing decarbonisation solutions and adequate investments to bring new technologies forward will be key – investments which should be at the heart of the EU's COVID-19 recovery strategy. In the meantime, existing financial instruments, such as loans, could also be made available to provide urgent relief.

Europe's aviation sector is committed to contributing to the recovery of European economies in line with the Green Deal objectives, and to the benefit of all. The sector therefore calls on policymakers to include smart measures to support Europe's civil aviation sector during its recovery. This requires ensuring that aviation climate action is eligible for funding under the mechanisms foreseen by *Next Generation EU* and the new Multi-annual Financial Framework (MFF).

A combination of public and private investment is necessary to allow air transport leaders to speed up work to decarbonise the sector - in line with the EU goal of climate neutrality by 2050.

Olivier Jankovec, Director General of ACI EUROPE, said: *"Benefitting from these support measures will help our sector regain its economic viability – a prerequisite for safeguarding both air connectivity and our ability to keep investing in decarbonisation. Airports – along with our partners in the aviation eco-system – have been brought to their knees by this crisis. Our determination to pursue climate action, in line with ACI EUROPE's commitment to Net Zero carbon emissions under airports' control at the latest by 2050, remains as robust as ever – but our ability to invest has been hit hard. Aviation is one of the sectors where decarbonisation is particularly challenging, so including it in a joined up green recovery makes sense for all".*

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¹Aerospace & Defence Industries Association of Europe (ASD); Airlines International Representation in Europe (AIRE); Airports Council International Europe (ACI EUROPE); Airlines for Europe (A4E); European Regions Airline Associations (ERA); Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation (CANSO); European Helicopter Association (EHA); European Business Aviation Association (EBAA); European Travel Commission (ETC); Ceemet – European Tech & Industry Employers; General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA); International Air Transport Association (IATA); International Aircraft Owner and Pilots Association – Europe (IAOPA Europe)

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Specific proposals include:

- 1. Boosting the production and uptake of Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAFs) in Europe** through a dedicated and stable set of policy measures and public investment plans. Such measures would notably be welcomed within the "ReFuel EU Aviation-Sustainable Aviation Fuels" initiative and include:
 - **Direct capital investment (or ownership) in SAF production facilities**, enabling the necessary de-risking required to debt finance projects as well as the execution of off-take contracts with aircraft operators;
 - **Making Europe the centre of excellence for the development and production of SAFs** through the construction and funding of commercial scale SAF projects from globally approved technology pathways.
- 2. Implement a green incentive scheme for airlines and aircraft operators to replace older aircraft** (fixed wing and helicopters) with more modern and environmentally friendly aircraft. Use public funds dedicated to the recovery to provide such incentives to aircraft operators. On average, new aircraft models are 20% - 25% more fuel-efficient and produce less noise compared to previous generations. Such an incentive scheme would speed up the green transition towards the EU's shorter term ambition of 2030.
- 3. Increase public funding and public co-funding rates for Civil Aviation Research & Innovation (Clean Aviation and SESAR):** Use resources from the recovery funds to inject additional capital beyond the amount that will be provided through the MFF and Horizon Europe, in particular. European disruptive technologies and innovative fuels, including hydrogen, can generate deep and long-term emissions reductions towards the EU's Climate Neutrality in 2050.
- 4. Continued investment in the European Air Traffic Management system (ATM):** Enhance the benefits of the Single European Sky and temporarily provide 100% public funding for the deployment of SESAR technologies with proven sustainable and environmental benefits. Such funds should benefit all stakeholders that will need to contribute to the deployment of new technologies, including airports, airspace users and air navigation services providers.
- 5. Investment in sustainable airport and heliport infrastructure:** Ensure funding eligibility of projects related to energy efficiency, renewable energy and electrification (e.g. improving the energy efficiency of terminal buildings, renewable energy generation on-site, supply of electrical ground power to aircraft on stand, electrification of ground vehicle fleets, etc.).

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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 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.*