

ACI EUROPE

10 Rue Montoyer (Box 9)
1000 Brussels, Belgium
www.aci-europe.org

Yesterday's EP vote on 868 not good for airports & their communities

For immediate release

21 March 2018

Brussels, 21 March 2018: Following the vote of the Transport Committee of the European Parliament (EP) yesterday on new EU rules to safeguard competition in air transport (Regulation 868/2004), Europe's airports have expressed their concerns.

While ACI EUROPE supports the efforts of the European Commission to deliver more effective rules to ensure fair competition between EU and third country airlines, the amended text approved by the EP's Transport Committee is deeply concerning.

Olivier Jankovec, Director General ACI EUROPE said *"By allowing the European Commission to impose sanctions on non-EU airlines even before alleged anti-competitive practices are duly documented, assessed and established, the text approved yesterday sends a worrying signal to our international trading partners - and could end up having far reaching negative impacts on the connectivity of our regions and on consumers. This is not how Europe should behave, especially at a time of growing anxiety over the standing and future of the wider Global trading system."*

ACI EUROPE worries that if confirmed, these new provisions would jeopardise existing dispute resolution mechanisms and create significant legal uncertainty. This in turn would make aviation negotiations to further open up market access with the EU's external markets more difficult – potentially compromising the ability of the Commission to deliver on the core objectives of its Aviation Strategy: a Europe that is open and connected with the rest of World.

Europe's airports and their communities depend on open aviation markets (Open Skies) to be able to develop new air routes and increase air traffic. Airports do so by actively marketing themselves to airlines. This involves providing them with robust market research and showing the potential of unserved markets, while at the same time offering extensive rebates and marketing support.

This means that airports can only develop their connectivity when competition thrives amongst airlines – which also leads to more choice for passengers (both in terms of destinations and prices). This only happens when airports are in a position to attract both EU and non-EU airlines. In this regard, while EU airlines have been the backbone of our connectivity, the ACI EUROPE's *2017 Airport Industry Connectivity Report** clearly showed the important role played over the past 10 years by Gulf & Turkish Airlines in further developing air connectivity for Europe.

Jankovec further commented *"At a time when significant airline consolidation is taking place in Europe – with more expected soon – airports cannot support a proposal that risks hurting their ability to develop new air services with third-country airlines and impact existing ones, thus limiting the choice of airlines and destinations for their communities."*

ENDS

Research by Intervistas has shown that every 10% increase in air connectivity generates a 0.5% increase in GDP per capita.

The ACI EUROPE *2017 Airport Industry Connectivity Report* produced in partnership with SEO Amsterdam Economics is available to download here:
<https://www.aci-europe.org/component/downloads/downloads/5094.html>

For more information, contact:

Robert O'Meara, Director, Media & Communications, ACI EUROPE
mobile: +32 (0)486 54 14 71 or tel: +32 (0)2 552 09 82.
Email: robert.omeara@aci-europe.org

*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 billion passengers, 20 million tonnes of freight** and **23.7 million aircraft movements** in 2016. These airports contribute to the employment of **12.3 million people**, generating **€675 billion** each year (**4.1%**) of GDP in Europe.*

EVERY FLIGHT BEGINS AT THE AIRPORT.