

ACI EUROPE

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Airline bankruptcies & risk aversion limit traffic growth in September

For immediate release

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Brussels, 15 November 2019: European airport trade body, ACI EUROPE today released its latest air traffic report for **September & Q3 2019**, measuring all of commercial aviation flights: full service, regionals, low cost and charter.

On average, the growth in **passenger traffic** across the European airports stood at **+2.2%** in September – down from +3.4% in August. The growth in Q3 stood at +2.6% - down from +4.3% in H1. Meanwhile, **freight traffic** kept declining for the 11th consecutive month at **-2.8%** (-3% for Q3) and **aircraft movements** barely increased at **+0.8%** (+1.1% in Q3).

Olivier Jankovec, Director General of ACI EUROPE commented: *“The passenger traffic growth dynamic keeps softening, and there is no recovery in sight for a depressed freight traffic. While these figures account for worsening macro-economic & trading conditions, they also reflect the fact that 4 European airlines went bust in September. More generally, Europe’s airports see airlines limiting capacity & network development and focusing on protecting their yields. That trend is getting more acute as we have entered the Winter season - with the grounding of 737MAX as well as ATM limitations clearly not helping.”*

WEAKEST EU MARKET IN 6 YEARS

The impact of the bankruptcies of Aigle Azur, XL Airways, Thomas Cook and Adria Airways was mostly felt in the **EU market**, where passenger traffic grew by **+2%** - the weakest monthly performance in 6 years. The airports most affected by these airline market exits included Ljubljana (-9.6%), Paris-Orly (-9.4%), Fuerteventura (-9.2%), Glasgow (-7.7%), Las Palmas (-6.1%), Corfu (-4%), Newcastle (-3.7%), Kos (-3.3%), Tenerife South (-3.1%) and Heraklion (-2.7%).

Amongst EU national markets, Latvia (+11.4%) was the only one achieving double-digit growth, while Estonia & Luxembourg (+9.6%), Austria (+9%), Hungary (+8.6%), Poland & Malta (+7.6%), Finland (+6.4%) and Portugal (+6.2%) still significantly outperformed the EU average. At the other end of the spectrum, Slovenia (-9.6%), Bulgaria (-7.9%), Sweden (-2.1%), Slovakia (-1.1%), the UK (-0.7%), Germany (-0.4%) all posted passenger traffic losses - while Greece (+0.3%), Denmark (+0.5%) and Cyprus (+0.6%) barely grew.

Amongst capital & larger EU airports, the best performances came from Milan-Malpensa (+33.5% - partly due to the closure of Milan-Linate for runway refurbishments), London-City (+11.9%), Riga (+11.4%), London-Luton (+10.7%), Vienna (+10.4%), Budapest (+8.6%), Lisbon (+7.3%), Madrid (+7.1%), Prague (+6.7%) and Helsinki (+6.6%).

NON-EU MARKET BETTER

Airports in the **non-EU market** saw passenger traffic expanding by **+3%**, in September - driven by Ukraine (+28.8%), Armenia (+18.7%), North Macedonia (+16.5%), Albania & Serbia (+13.7%).

Iceland (-34.2%) continued to be severely affected by the bankruptcy of WOW and other airlines’ capacity adjustments, with the latter also impacting Georgia (-9.9%). Meanwhile, Russia slightly outperformed the non-EU average (+3.4%) – and gains were rather limited in Switzerland (+0.6%), Turkey (+1.8%) and Norway (+2.3%).

Amongst non-EU capital & larger airports, the highest increases in passenger traffic came from Kyiv-Boryspil (+27.6%), Yerevan (+18.7%), Tirana (+13.7%), Belgrade & Skopje (+11.9%) and Minsk (+11.2%).

MAJORS & SMALLER REGIONAL AIRPORTS UNDERPERFORMING

The growth in passenger traffic at **the Majors** (top 5 European airports) remained weak in September at **+1.2%** (compared with +1.3% in August). Paris-CDG achieved the best performance (+4.8%), even becoming the busiest European airport during the month with more than 6.81 million passengers. Istanbul (+1.8%), Amsterdam-Schiphol (+1.4%) and Frankfurt (+1.3%) grew at a much lower pace, while London-Heathrow (-3%) was affected by industrial action at British Airways.

Smaller regional airports (less than 5 million passengers/annum) significantly underperformed at **-0.7%** - reflecting once again the fragility of their markets when trading conditions deteriorate.

Apart notable exceptions including Kharkiv (+66.3%), Targu Mures (+65%), Turku (+46.8%), Friedrichshafen (+43.7%), Kutaisi (+34.7%), Mostar (+25.3%) and Zadar (+25.2%), the best performance amongst regional airports came from larger ones (more than 5 million passengers/annum) such as Krakow (+31.7%), Bologna (+24.6%), Sevilla (+19.6%), Nantes (+13.2%), Bordeaux (+11.6%), Bilbao (+11.4%) and Porto (+10.6%).

FREIGHT DOWNTURN - EU FOCUSED

As in the preceding months, the downturn in **freight traffic** in September is entirely concentrated on the **EU market (-4.4%)** with **non-EU airports** making significant gains **(+4.8%)**.

During **Q3**, airports welcoming more than 25 million passengers per year (Group 1), airports welcoming between 10 and 25 million passengers (Group 2), airports welcoming between 5 and 10 million passengers (Group 3) and airports welcoming less than 5 million passengers per year (Group 4) reported an average adjustment **+2.4%**, **+4.1%**, **+2.2%** and **+0.7%**.

The airports that reported the highest increases in passenger traffic during Q3 are as follows:

GROUP 1: Vienna (+**13.2%**), Antalya (+**12.5%**), Moscow SVO (+**9.4%**), Lisbon (+**7.7%**) and Madrid (+**7.3%**).

GROUP 2: Milan MXP (+**26.2%**), Kyiv KBP (+**25.8%**), Porto (+**11.3%**), Moscow-Vnukovo (+**8.9%**) and London-Luton (+**8.4%**).

GROUP 3: Krakow (+**29.8%**), Sevilla (+**20.2%**), Nantes (+**16.8%**), Bologna and Bordeaux (+**13.1%**) and Riga (+**12.6%**).

GROUP 4: Targu Mures (+**113.5%**), Ohrid (+**53.8%**), Turku (+**52.9%**), Kharkiv (+**42.1%**) and Nis (+**39.9%**).

ENDS

Notes to Editors

Want more access to the latest airport traffic data? ACI EUROPE has developed a dedicated App providing just that. The App gives you all the usual key figures, but also enabling you to make customised comparison tables & graphs that can be downloaded and shared via email or social media. The App is available for iOS, Android and as a WebApp. To find out more, go to www.aci-europe.org/trafficapp

The ACI EUROPE Airport Traffic Report is a dedicated service for journalists available in the password protected 'Airport Traffic Report' section of the 'Media room' on our website www.aci-europe.org. Accredited members of the media may also access additional traffic analysis and comprehensive traffic databases. For your password to access these sections, please contact us by e-mail at: biljana.banjac@aci-europe.org. Your request will be validated and the password will be e-mailed to your work address.

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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: **2.3 billion passengers, 21.2 million tonnes of freight** and **25.7 million aircraft movements** in 2018. 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.*

EVERY FLIGHT BEGINS AT THE AIRPORT.