



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## UK support for sustainable airport expansion set to boost its economy and global position

### ACI EUROPE

Boulevard du Régent 37-40 (5th floor)  
1000 Brussels, Belgium  
[www.aci-europe.org](http://www.aci-europe.org)

**Brussels, 29 January 2025:** ACI EUROPE applauded today's announcement from the UK Government, who have embraced an ambitious growth agenda for the country leveraging air connectivity with support for the expansion of London Heathrow Airport.

**Olivier Jankovec, ACI EUROPE Director General** said: *"By supporting a third runway at London Heathrow, the UK Government is seizing the power of air connectivity as one of the key levers for boosting the country's economy and reinforcing its global position. We now call on the Government to expedite the approval of expansion at London Gatwick and London Luton airports."*

*"With every 10% increase in air connectivity yielding a 0.5% gain in GDP and 1.6% rise in employment, allowing airports to expand where needed to meet future demand is all about effectively supporting wider economic activity — in particular trade, inward investment and tourism. This is both highly relevant and timely, considering the new era of geoeconomic competition we now face. Ultimately, this is about futureproofing the country."*

While all airport expansion projects must adhere to a strict regime of environmental permits and, in the specific case of the UK, to the Climate Change Act, there is no escaping the reality that the UK Government's support for airport expansion must come hand in glove with full support for aviation decarbonisation — in particular as regards the production and affordability of Sustainable Aviation Fuels and airports' access to renewable energy.

Looking at the wider European context, Jankovec concluded: *"This announcement should be a wake-up call for the EU. The Draghi report is all about the imperative of competitiveness and growth to achieve our climate goals — and it is unequivocal about the fact that as global passenger demand keeps increasing, infrastructure will need to expand so as to tackle congestion and unlock further growth. Yet, we see a number of EU countries focused on limiting capacity at their major airports — jeopardising not just their own economic prospects but also those of the bloc."*

**## ENDS ##**

**For more information, contact:**

Agata Lyznik  
Director of Communications & Media  
Tel: +32 2 552 09 89  
Email: [agata.lyznik@aci-europe.org](mailto:agata.lyznik@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 55 countries. Our members facilitate over 90% of commercial air traffic in Europe. Airports and air connectivity support 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.