
Aviation organizations call on EU to act fast

By **Rick Lundstrom** on April, 6 2020 | Airline & Terminal News



A joint statement from eight association and organizations, released today, called on member states in the European Union to provide financial support, protect travel employees and consumers and work on short-term and long term solutions.

“Europe’s aviation industry is facing an unprecedented liquidity crisis -- the European Union must act now!,” said the release. “In light of the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis, Europeans are no longer able to travel.”

The organizations issuing the call for assistance are: [Airlines for Europe](#) (A4E), [Airline Catering Association](#) (ACA), [Airports Council International](#) (ACI EUROPE), [Airport Services Association](#) (ASA), [The European Travel Agents’ and Tour Operators’ Associations](#) (ECTAA), [European Regions Airline Association](#) (ERA), [EU Travel Tech](#) (EUTT) and the [European Travel Retail Confederation](#) (ETRC).

Better coordinated and proactive actions are urgently required to support the industry and aid in its future recovery, the group says, specifically:

- Member States must provide financial support as quickly as possible to the whole “travel ecosystem.” There is currently a cash liquidity issue at every level of the air travel ecosystem, they contend. To face this liquidity crisis, it is crucial that all actors and supporting measures are considered on a non-discriminatory basis.
- The current crisis exceeds all foreseeable and manageable expectations. The European Institutions must take all the necessary measures to ensure the short-term financial viability of the travel industry enterprises with the objectives of maintaining a functioning travel industry, protecting employees and consumers alike, and helping them to efficiently restore air connectivity and support the re-growth of European economies.
- The crisis affects the entire travel ecosystem and coordination is crucial. It is essential to setup an organized consultation procedure, flexible and informal as in the tourism industry, to exchange updated information, address urgent issues and draw up lines for mid- and long-term solutions.

“We welcome the initial actions from the European Commission in targeted areas such as state aid, recognizing that entire markets are non-functioning and urgent aid is needed,” said the statement. “The aviation sector is a strategically important sector. It must be positioned as a critical enabler of Europe’s economic recovery once the crisis has passed.”

In Europe, aviation represents more than 12 million jobs and €800 billion (US\$863 billion) in European economic activity. That is 3.3 percent of all employment and 4.1 percent of all GDP in European countries. Additionally, the group said, air transport is a major contributor to the social cohesion and cultural values of Europe. The freedom of movement of citizens and goods sits at the core of the European project and would not be a reality without air transport.

“Europe’s citizens, communities and visitors will see its vibrance restored more rapidly if the air

transport sector can quickly recover, once the COVID-19 health crisis has passed. No small part of this depends on governments providing firm supportive measures today," said the statement.