



AIRLINES AND AIRPORTS AGREE CONDITIONS FOR EUROPEAN WINTER SLOTS WAIVER

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Facing the most difficult winter season in aviation’s history, airlines and airports have agreed to abide by a set of conditions together with slot coordinators under which an extension of the waiver of the “use-it-or-lose-it” rule could be applied for the entire 2020-2021 winter season. Continued uncertainty about a second wave of the pandemic and haphazard travel restrictions have caused passenger demand to plummet, leading to a slower recovery in European air transport and making the need for an extended slots waiver more urgent than ever.

To facilitate a prompt decision by the European Commission, ACI EUROPE, Airlines for Europe (A4E), Airlines International Representation in Europe (AIRE), the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the European Association of Slot Coordinators (EUACA) have agreed on [specific conditions](#) to ensure a timely return of slots not planned for use this winter. This represents a significant achievement given the extraordinary circumstances airports and airlines find themselves in.

It is now critical that the European Commission formalizes an extension of the slots waiver and clarifies how the conditions will be implemented. Industry and slot coordinators require a clear signal from the Commission as to the rules of the game for the coming winter season.

“Decisions must be made now to enable the timely return of slots for the winter season once the waiver is granted. This will give airports and airlines certainty in planning their schedules and

operations and ensure that passengers know what to expect in the tough months ahead. Further delays will paralyze the winter planning process and add millions in costs for all parties,” said Olivier Jankovec, Director General, ACI EUROPE.

“Restoring passenger confidence is a top priority for the entire aviation sector and indeed the European economy. Given the constantly changing government restrictions, it is vital that the upcoming winter schedules provide passengers with as much predictability as possible,” said Thomas Reynaert, Managing Director, A4E.

“Only a full-season slots waiver will ensure that the flying of empty planes is avoided and enable flights to be operated in the most sustainable way possible. Airlines and airports in Europe stand ready to apply the agreed conditions as soon as the full-season waiver is granted and call on the European Commission to endorse this agreement and authorise the waiver immediately,” said Rafael Schwartzman, IATA Regional Vice President for Europe.

04 SEPTEMBER 2020

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