ACI MEMBERS AIMS TO BOOST THE COMPETITIVENESS OF EUROPEAN AVIATION

News / Airlines, Airports / Routes

As the finishing touches are being put to the EU's landmark Aviation Package, Augustin de Romanet, President of ACI EUROPE and President & CEO of Aéroports de Paris, met earlier today with Violeta Bulc, the EU Transport Commissioner. He was accompanied by Arnaud Feist, CEO of Brussels Airport and Armando Brunini, CEO of Aeroporto di Napoli – both members of the Board of ACI EUROPE.

With the Aviation Package, the European Commission intends to propose a comprehensive strategy aimed at boosting the competitiveness of European aviation and optimising its role as an enabler of economic growth and job creation. The formal adoption of the Package is currently planned for December.

The 3 CEOs restated their support for the initiative and thanked Commissioner Bulc for her leadership in ensuring that the Aviation Package is amongst the 23 priorities of the Junker Commission for jobs, growth and investment. They stressed the strategic relevance of air connectivity for the EU economy – especially within the context of Europe's increasing dependence on external trade and foreign direct investment: +10% increase in connectivity is associated with +0.5% increase in GDPper capita.

They also underlined that Europe still needs to embrace the strategic relevance of aviation. Prominent emerging economies have already made the link, actively supporting air connectivity with aviation growth being part of their economic development policies. In Europe, the lack of

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political support for aviation and unaligned regulatory intervention is hampering the development of air connectivity and creating a widening competitive deficit for the European aviation sector. This threatens our global hub positioning and ultimately, the competitiveness of the European economy.

Augustin de Romanet said “The Aviation Package is a unique opportunity to reset aviation policy with a strong focus on connectivity, consumers and the economy. The issues that need to be addressed are many, starting
from our license to grow and the looming airport capacity crunch. They also include scrapping heavy and unfair national aviation taxes, securing access to emerging markets through Open Skies, delivering the Single European
Sky and reducing regulatory cost inefficiencies – in particular within aviation security.”

FOCUS ON CONSUMERS, NOT AIRLINES OR AIRPORTS

In calling for the Aviation Package to focus on connectivity, consumers and the economy, ACI EUROPE also urged Commissioner Bulc to resist airline-centric approaches to aviation policy. Recent high profile examples of debates on this include external relations and Open Skies, as well as airport charges.

The 3 CEOs referred to unsubstantiated demands by the top 5 EU airlines to further tighten the regulation of airport charges° – which would essentially allow for an arbitrary transfer of wealth from airports to airlines. This would be at odds with the fact that airports in Europe are businesses in their own right and need to be treated as such. This would also fly in the face of market-based policy making and ultimately compromise connectivity.

AVAILABILITY OF WATER AT AIRPORTS

As part of its focus on consumers, ACI EUROPE has recently issued a Recommended Practice on the provision of water, in the context of the current regulatory restrictions which prevent passengers from taking bottled water through security checkpoints.

In line with this Recommended Practice, a growing number of airports are making water available after security checkpoints through water fountains or low cost water initiatives, making bottled water available for €1.

According to ACI EUROPE’s tracking of the implementation of their Recommended Practice, currently 126 airports welcoming almost 50% of European passengers have either implemented or have imminent plans to implement the Recommended Practice on water in the months to come. ACI EUROPE will continue to track the initiative’s progress.

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