

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Supporting European jobs, economic growth and sustainable development through aviation

### Air transport supports 11.9 million jobs, \$860 billion of European GDP

**New York, 19 July 2016** – Aviation is vital to the modern, globalised world, supporting millions of jobs and driving economic growth. But the benefits of connectivity must be protected with appropriate support from governments if the air transport sector is to help fulfil its potential as a connector of people, trade and tourism and is a driver of sustainable development. These are the conclusions drawn in a new report, *Aviation: Benefits Beyond Borders*, issued by the Air Transport Action Group (ATAG).

Worldwide, aviation supports 62.7 million jobs and generates \$2.7 trillion in gross domestic product (GDP). Not only does air transport provide significant economic benefits, but it also plays a major role in the social development of people and communities all over the globe, allowing people to travel for educational opportunities and cultural exchange, more broadly. Across Europe, specifically, air transport supports 11.9 million jobs and contributes \$860 billion to Europe's GDP.

In the next 20 years, forecasts suggest that aviation-supported jobs worldwide will increase to over 99 million and GDP to \$5.9 trillion. While traffic in Europe is not expected to grow at as high a rate as other regions of the world, mainly due to the maturity of the market, the past five years have seen remarkable growth in the region. Congestion and a lack of infrastructure investment could impact on the growth of air transport connectivity, as could the continued delay in fully implementing the Single European Sky which would bring about significant efficiency improvements.

ATAG executive director, Michael Gill, says that the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the United Nations highlights a number of goals that the international community should strive to achieve by 2030: "We found that air transport in some way supports 14 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, from decent work and economic growth to quality education and reduced inequalities. By continuing to grow in a sustainable manner, aviation can strive to be a force for good for many years to come."

"A significant factor in our work on sustainable development is the industry's world-leading climate action plan. We need support from governments around the world to agree on a key part of that plan at the upcoming International Civil Aviation Organization Assembly, where we hope an agreement can be reached on a global offsetting scheme for air transport. It is a vital part of our industry's future role in helping to support development worldwide."

**more**

Athar Husain Khan, Chief Executive of the Association of European Airlines (AEA): "The European airlines fully contribute in a sustainable and environmental friendly way to Europe's economic growth, regional development, mobility and social cohesion. This is once more proven in the *Aviation: Benefit Beyond Borders* edition 2016 with very clear figures. We urge Europe's policymakers to address the many regulatory and infrastructural problems European airlines are facing, to develop a balanced approach to environmental issues and to create more competition between service providers through liberalisation. The new EU Aviation Policy is a step in the right direction but we need more concrete and ambitious actions in order keep our European industry competitive."

Thomas Reynaert, Managing Director of Airlines for Europe (A4E): "Aviation is a crucial enabler of economic activity in Europe, directly stimulating the wider tourism industry and creating jobs, especially in areas of Europe affected by high youth unemployment. The proliferation of air travel taxes reduces the ability to do business in Europe through a decrease in operations and a reduction of connectivity and therefore these taxes should be abolished. Speaking about economic measures we also call for a global instrument to address CO2 emissions from aviation."

Simon McNamara, Director General, European Regions Airline Association (ERA): "Aviation is a vital resource for European mobility, social development and growth. This is especially true in the regions of Europe where other transport modes are less accessible and where mobility, sustainability and connectivity are so vital to economic prosperity. Governments should join industry in promoting what is an essential and sustainable business for Europe and the world"

Olivier Jankovec, Director General for Airports Council International Europe: "The story of aviation's positive influence on our world is one that needs support – especially here in Europe. Thankfully, people are making the link. Late last year, the EU's Aviation Strategy acknowledged the role aviation place in securing economic growth. This new *Benefits Beyond Borders* report brings the conversation further, analysing aviation's societal influence and environmental progress."

Guenter Martis, Director European Affairs for the Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation (CANSO): "Potential traffic growth in Europe is hampered by fragmented political thinking and lack of action by States. CANSO Members, providers of air traffic services, are working hard to improve the efficiency of European airspace through implementing the next generation air traffic management system, SESAR; and initiatives such as Free Route Airspace, which is already demonstrating the environmental and operational benefits of a more flexible route network. States must play their part by fully committing to and implementing the Single European Sky."

The report, *Aviation: Benefits Beyond Borders*, covers the global aviation sector, with regional and some national analysis. It is available for download at [www.aviationbenefits.org](http://www.aviationbenefits.org).

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**Contact:**

» **ATAG:** [www.atag.org](http://www.atag.org) / Haldane Dodd / [doddh@atag.org](mailto:doddh@atag.org) / +41 79 429 8710 / Twitter: @enviroaero

**Notes:**

- The full report and case studies are available from [www.aviationbenefits.org](http://www.aviationbenefits.org)
- Media may also be interested in the newswire, capturing sustainable aviation news from across the industry at [www.aviationbenefits.org/newswire](http://www.aviationbenefits.org/newswire)
- The **Air Transport Action Group** is a coalition of organisations and companies throughout the air transport industry that drive the sustainable development of the air transport sector. Funding members include ACI, Airbus, ATR, Boeing, Bombardier, CANSO, CFM, Embraer, Honeywell Aerospace, GE, IATA, Pratt & Whitney, Rolls-Royce and Safran. [www.atag.org](http://www.atag.org)

**AIR TRANSPORT ACTION GROUP** | Geneva, Switzerland | +41 22 770 2672 | [www.atag.org](http://www.atag.org)

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