



## Aviation, Travel & Tourism Sectors Applaud European Parliament Vote on “EU COVID-19 Certificates” – Setting Final Negotiations with European Commission and Council into Motion

- Swift alignment by all three EU Institutions critical in restoring free movement for EU citizens by summer.
- A clear, simple and harmonized European approach is desperately needed to reopen travel in a safe and responsible way.

**Brussels, 29 April 2021** – Europe’s aviation, travel and tourism sectors fully welcome yesterday’s vote in the European Parliament on the EU’s proposed Digital Green Certificate Regulation, setting trilogue negotiations between the Parliament, the Council and the European Commission into motion. Swift action and alignment among the institutions is now critical in order to make the certificates operational by June and ensure reciprocity with non-EU systems. Common, interoperable, secure and GDPR-compliant health certificates represent an essential tool to facilitate the free movement of people within the EU and reopen travel in a safe and responsible way through the easing, and ultimately lifting of current travel restrictions.

The Parliament position brings forward important changes to the original proposal:

- **A new name, “EU COVID-19 Certificate”** has been agreed to make it clearer to EU citizens and also limit the certificates’ use to during the pandemic.
- **Free and accessible testing:** Testing is absolutely key in the fight against COVID-19, and the requirement to conduct pre-departure tests (often PCR) should not create an economic distortion between travellers. With tests ranging from €10 to €150, it is clear that such high costs could become a deterrent to travel – in particular among families.
- **Full equality among vaccinated and tested citizens:** No additional measures such as quarantine or further testing should be imposed on travellers presenting a valid “EU COVID-19 Certificate”.

The proposed amendments send a strong political message from the Parliament on the urgency to restore free movement in the EU. This is not a privilege -- it is a right as one of the pillars of the single market enshrined in the European treaties. Safely and swiftly re-establishing free movement is both possible and vitally important - not only for holidaymakers, but also for cross-border workers and citizens who will be able to visit their families more easily once the certificates are operational. Vaccination drives in Europe continue to gain momentum, with [26.5% of EU citizens having received at least one dose, compared with 16% four weeks ago.](#)

According to a [recent IATA survey](#), 72% of people want to travel to see family and friends as soon as possible. The sectors therefore urge swift negotiations and agreement by mid-May so that pilot testing and full implementation can take place in June. Time is of the essence, to offer EU citizens a much-needed breather after a year of lockdowns and travel restrictions which have negatively impacted consumers’ mental health and well-being. Multiple [studies](#) show that travel has positive effects on mental and physical health thanks to human and nature connections, boosting people’s energy and relieving stress and anxiety.

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### Notes to Editors:

Launched in 2016, **Airlines for Europe (A4E)** is Europe's largest airline association, based in Brussels. The organisation advocates on behalf of its members to help shape EU aviation policy to the benefit of consumers, ensuring a continued safe and competitive air transport market. With more than 720 million passengers carried in 2019, A4E members account for more than 70 per cent of the continent's journeys, operating more than 3,000 aircraft and generating more than EUR 130 billion in annual turnover. Members with air cargo and mail activities transport more than 5 million tons of goods each year to more than 360 destinations either by freighters or passenger aircraft. Current members include Aegean, airBaltic, Air France-KLM Group, Cargolux, easyJet, Finnair, Icelandair, International Airlines Group (IAG), Jet2.com, Lufthansa Group, Norwegian, Ryanair Holdings, Smartwings, TAP Air Portugal, TUI and Volotea. Follow us on Twitter @A4Europe.

**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, creating 4 million jobs and generating 3% of European 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.

**CLIA EUROPE** - Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) is the world's largest cruise industry trade association, providing a unified voice and leading authority of the global cruise community. CLIA supports policies and practices that foster a safe, secure, healthy and sustainable cruise ship environment for the more than 25 million passengers who cruise annually and is dedicated to promote the cruise travel experience.

**ECTAA** represents some 70,000 travel agents and tour operators in Europe, which provide consultancy and sell transport, accommodation, leisure and other tourism services as well as combined products to leisure and business customers.

**EFCO & HPA** is the representative body at European level, working for all businesses with caravans, tents, motorhomes, chalets and all forms of self-catering accommodation in the park setting. Membership is made up of the national trade associations of 23 European countries.

**The European Travel Commission (ETC)** represents the national tourism organisations of Europe. Established in 1948, ETC's mission is to strengthen the sustainable development of Europe as a tourist destination and to promote Europe in third markets. Its 32-member tourism boards work together to build the value of tourism for all the diverse European destinations through co-operation in sharing best practice, market intelligence and promotion. For more information, please visit [www.etc-corporate.org](http://www.etc-corporate.org)

**ETOA** is the trade association for better tourism in Europe. We work to enable a fair and sustainable business environment, so that Europe remains a competitive and appealing place to live, work and visit. With over 1200 members representing most areas of the industry, we are a powerful voice at local, national and European levels. We welcome a range of tour operators and European suppliers from global brands to independent businesses.

**The European Travel Retail Confederation (ETRC)** is an industry association for the duty free and travel retail industry in Europe, serving the industry and its members to help create the right environment to allow the industry to achieve its potential and protect it when challenges arise. ETRC is composed of national and regional affiliated trade associations representing over 200 European companies, Tax Free World Association (TFWA) representing 500 brand companies, and direct corporate membership from individual companies working in the duty free and travel retail trade across Europe and beyond. The European Travel Retail Confederation's operations are directed by its Supervisory and Managing Boards and carried out by a full-time secretariat. For more information about the organisation, please see our website – [www.etc.org](http://www.etc.org)

**HOTREC** represents the hotel, restaurant and café industry at European level. HOTREC brings together 45 national associations representing the interest of this industry in 33 different European countries. The sector counts in total around 2 million businesses, being 99,5% small and medium-sized enterprises (90% are micro-enterprises, i.e. employing less than 10 people). These businesses make up some 60% of value-added. The industry provides almost 12,5 million jobs in the EU alone (2017). Together with the other tourism industries, the sector is the 3rd largest industry in Europe.

**IAAPA** is the premier trade association representing the diverse and ever-changing attractions industry. For over a century we have connected companies of all sizes, and people of all levels, to provide meaningful experiences for their guests around the world.

**IATA (International Air Transport Association)** represents some 290 airlines comprising 82% of global air traffic. You can follow IATA at <https://twitter.com/iata> for announcements, policy positions, and other useful industry information.

**The European Federation of Rural Tourism (EuroGites)** is a professional tourism trade organization representing a tourism sector with an estimate of 500.000 micro-enterprises and about 5-6,5 million bed places. The comprehensive network covers country and rural businesses such as tourism farms, accommodation in private rural homes (B&B or Self-Catering units), traditional gastronomy, adventure, sport, heritage and cultural activities and associated events related to visitor interests and experiences. As a whole, this sector stands for about 15% of the European tourism capacity.