



Brussels, 17 March 2020

To: **EU Transport Ministers**

**Subject: Impact of COVID-19 on Aviation**

Dear Ministers,

We are writing to you ahead of the extraordinary meeting of EU Transport Ministers on the 18 March.

The COVID-19 pandemic is impacting European aviation sector in the most dramatic way possible, with the situation deteriorating each day. Whilst currently our airline customers are the worst hit, with some of them fighting for survival in the difficult times ahead, Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs) are also experiencing severe consequences. One of the main objectives of ANSPs is to preserve the business continuity of the air transport industry and this is particularly necessary when considering that Air Traffic Management is part of both the European and national critical infrastructures. To put it another way, without ANSPs the European aviation sector is not possible.

European ANSPs have taken and continue to take extraordinary measures to ensure the health of employees during this time, to guarantee the maximum level of continuity in the provision of Air Navigation Services and to maintain connectivity in Europe. Due to the actions taken, as of today we are pleased to say that this crisis has not impacted capacity.

As the COVID-19 global pandemic continues to cause serious public health concerns, the situation is deteriorating rapidly with more and more countries across the globe deploying travel and flight bans to, from and within Europe. According to Eurocontrol's latest figures, air traffic in the ECAC area is today down 50% from the same day last year, and this picture threatens to worsen further to a 75% decrease in air traffic by the end of this week.

As ANSP revenues are directly related to the volume of air traffic they control, many are already deploying cost containment measures wherever possible and an increasing number of them will inevitably face such issues in the coming weeks if the situation continues.

Combine this with the fact that some airlines are understandably calling for a deferral of ATC charges, ANSPs are now extremely vulnerable to the impact of decreasing traffic, as well as the deferral of payments, both of which will further jeopardize business continuity.

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Therefore, it is essential that the EU includes ANSPs in any European scheme or special aid package to provide relief for the current dire situation for the aviation sector. No measure should benefit one actor at the expense of another and should be for available to all those impacted.

CANSO urges the Transport Council to address this issue and in doing so ensure that the ATM system can respond quickly to the traffic recovery in the short and medium/long term in order to keep the aviation sector alive.

Yours faithfully,



**Tanja Grobotek**  
**Director Europe Affairs**



**Jan Klas**  
**CEO Committee Chair**