

European Commission

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Ministry of Transport and Housing

DK-1220 Copenhagen K

Phone

Dear

Thank you for a fruitful meeting in February. It was a pleasure to discuss relevant transport issues with you. We have a lot of work in front of us.

One urgent matter I would like to raise to your attention is the 'use-it-or-lose-it principle' in aviation slots regulation. As you are aware, the Covid-19 has had severe economic consequences for the aviation sector. Demand has decreased drastically which has impacted both airlines and airports, who both anticipate a summer programme with a significant decline in passengers. In an aviation market that is operating at the margins of profitability, this development is worrying.

It has come to my attention that some airlines fly almost empty aircrafts across Europe to make sure that they do not lose their slots in given airports. This issue has recently been debated in the Danish and European media.

In line with several other member states, I find this very unfortunate. Particularly because we are facing a potential economic crisis in several parts of our business sectors, and we are initiating climate actions to fulfil both the Commission's and member states' CO<sub>2</sub>-emission reduction targets. In this context, it seems obvious that the Commission should take action to suspend parts of the slots regulation; particularly the use-it-or-lose-it principle.

The Commission suspended this specific provision during the financial crisis in 2009, and I call upon the Commission to initiate the necessary legislation to effectuate a similar suspension or other relevant measures as soon as possible. I notice that the association of European Airport Coordinators publicly has stated that legislation is necessary for them to suspend the use-it-or-lose-it principle.

Yours sincerely,