



21<sup>st</sup> July 2020

To: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
**European Commission**  
[REDACTED]  
**1049 Brussels, Belgium**

Copy to: [REDACTED], **DG MOVE**  
[REDACTED]

**Topic: Aviation – Airport Slot Blocking**

Dear [REDACTED]

We would like to react to IATA's premature call to extend the current waiver from the 80-20 use-it-or-lose-it rule for airport slots until end of March 2021.

We understand that the European Commission is currently monitoring the situation of air traffic and gathering facts before deciding.

As you will be aware, Wizz Air, one of the largest European airlines, has continued operations – to the limited extent possible – throughout the COVID19 crisis, playing a key role in maintaining EU connectivity and enabling the repatriation of many of its citizens on commercial air services.

Wizz Air has been and remains a company focused on growth. You may have seen announcements in recent days, including the establishment of new Wizz Air bases in Dortmund, Larnaca, Lviv, Bacau, Milan-Malpensa, Tirana and St Petersburg. Our growth directly benefits the economies of the communities which we serve.

Our relentless focus on cost control means that Wizz Air's business is resilient with a strong balance sheet and we have developed a unique corporate culture where colleagues are supportive and want to see the business thrive and expand, for the career opportunities that it provides. These unique attributes mean we have a far more positive outlook than virtually any other airline, including those who were awarded massive amounts of State Aid.

The COVID19 crisis dealt an unprecedented blow to the aviation industry, worldwide indeed. Given the almost impossibility of operation against a backdrop of international flight bans, it was entirely appropriate that the 80/20 rule on slot use be suspended for the summer 2020 season.

As noted above, Wizz Air is in its own recovery phase. As most airlines have now re-started their operations, we believe that the pace of the broader industry's recovery phase should not be dictated by the needs of financially-weak carriers.

We are therefore concerned to hear of a possible alleviation of the 80/20 rule for the winter 2020 season. We believe that any alleviation is unjustifiable and we are totally against any further slot waivers from October 2020 onwards. As a matter of fact Wizz

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Air has already recovered 77% of its capacity year on year and is interested to pursue new market opportunities including some of the slot constrained airports in Europe which are currently unavailable due to unoperated slots held by incumbent carriers without operations.

An extension of the waiver would be irrational and anti-competitive and would hinder rather than help the recovery of the EU aviation industry. In turn, this would adversely affect the economies of the cities served by those airports as the airports would suffer a shortfall in passenger numbers, reducing everything from their own employment requirements to local supply and supply chains. Ultimately, it would prejudice the economic recovery of the EU, by restricting air connectivity and it would come at a high cost to the traveling public and the economy. It would, further, be grossly unfair to airlines such as Wizz Air who are willing and able to expand, but who would be prevented from doing so by airlines with weak business models or a history of poor cost management.

By way of example, we note that some of London Gatwick Airport's existing airlines have publicly stated that they believe that it could take years until the levels of demand get back to normal. If that is the case, does the European commission believe that allowing such airlines to block slots without operating them is genuinely in the interest of EU connectivity?

We consider this to be one of the most important issues facing the EU aviation industry as air services are restored and we trust the European commission to take the right decision.

I am at your disposal to organize a meeting to further discuss the matter and provide any data you may need.

Please accept, dear [REDACTED], the assurance of my highest consideration.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Wizz Air Group