

Question for written answer E-004282/2019
to the Commission
Rule 138
Ignazio Corrao (NI)

Subject: Crises in smaller airports, co-marketing and possible solution – readjustments of municipal surcharges

In 2014, the Guidelines on State aid to airports and airlines (2014/C 99/03) introduced a number of restrictions on co-marketing, which had an adverse effect on minor Italian airports of national interest.

In particular, thanks to a co-marketing agreement (costing EUR 6 million per year) Trapani Airport used to have approximately 1 500 000 passengers per annum in transit, generating EUR 300 million in GDP. Once the agreement had expired, passenger traffic fell to 480 000.

The 2003 Italian budget law introduced a municipal surcharge on airport departure taxes of EUR 6.50 + VAT per passenger, which each airline is responsible for collecting and then paying to the airport operator.

A readjustment of these municipal surcharges – without changing the balances – with an increase in the tax for larger airports and an exemption for smaller airports, would be a boost for the latter, increasing their competitiveness and attractiveness to carriers.

Such a solution could increase the profits of smaller airports, in accordance with free market principles, thereby avoiding the need for co-marketing agreements that are a burden on airport operators.

Can the Commission say:

1. whether and how it intends to amend and supplement its guidelines so as to ensure greater protection for smaller airports;
2. what its view is of the proposal concerning a readjustment of municipal surcharges?