Question for oral answer O-000033/2021 to the Commission
Rule 136
Karima Delli
on behalf of the Committee on Transport and Tourism

Subject: Impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the aviation sector

The COVID-19 pandemic has been severely affecting the entire aviation sector, with air traffic down by more than two thirds compared with 2019 levels. This long-lasting drop in traffic will have consequences for years to come and is threatening the economic viability of companies, jobs and working conditions.

The Commission has put forward emergency measures such as decreasing slot usage thresholds for airlines, providing guidelines on COVID-19 testing and quarantine for air travellers, and rolling out the digital green certificate. It has also issued a working document on State aid rules and public service provision in the air sector.

However, it is unclear how quickly the sector will recover as slow vaccination procedures, travel restrictions and quarantine rules, combined with testing and other requirements, are hampering air travel.

The recovery of the aviation sector will require both regulatory support at EU level and the provision of significant public and private financial assistance to safeguard business and jobs. It is also essential to safeguard competition in the sector to make sure consumers have access to affordable travel and to ensure a level playing field for air carriers and workers. It is clear that more coordinated measures and common protocols are needed at EU level to relaunch travel and tourism. Furthermore, there is a need for a socially responsible and more sustainable recovery in line with the EU’s climate goals to make aviation more resilient and future-proof.

1. Does the Commission intend to propose further measures to support the recovery of the EU aviation sector? In addition to the introduction of the digital green certificate, how could the coordination of travel restrictions and sanitary requirements be improved to ensure consistency between the measures taken by the Member States, improve travel certainty and encourage bookings? How can a level playing field among air carriers be ensured while maintaining jobs and respecting workers’ rights?

2. Does the Commission intend to reflect on the economic, social and connectivity aspects of aviation in EU legislation, including in the revision of Regulation (EC) No 1008/2008, while ensuring greater coordination between EU and national transport authorities?

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Lapses: 4.8.2021