



news

PRESS RELEASE – 8 June 2005

ELFAA to fight any State imposing taxation on aviation to fund development aid

Brussels – June 8 2005. The European Low Fares Airline Association (ELFAA) has criticised those States which continue to single out European Aviation as an extra source for development aid funding. Europe's Finance Ministers failed recently to agree on a common fuel tax levy as a way of generating additional funding and the alternative proposal to allow States to levy an additional air passenger tax on a voluntary basis did not receive any backing this week from the European Commission. However a few States continue to progress this discriminatory approach.

Commenting on this issue Stefan Vilner, President of ELFAA and Commercial Director of Sterling said: "The fact that the European Commission failed to endorse the approach that Europe's aviation should be used to generate additional revenues for development aid funding sends out a very strong message. Unfortunately there are still a few States that have not realised that the days when only the wealthy travel by air are long gone. The emergence of low fares airlines following the liberalisation of the air transport market has resulted in massive decreases in air fares. Air travel in Europe has now become a commodity and ordinary citizens can now afford travel at low fares throughout Europe. In addition, regional airports as well as numerous small and medium-sized enterprises across Europe have benefited hugely through increased trade and economic efficiencies as a result of low air fares. The addition of yet more unrelated taxes onto air passengers will reduce the numbers of people who can afford to travel.

The discrimination against air travel in Europe has to stop and we will fight any further taxes being imposed on aviation which are unrelated, will prevent ordinary citizens from travelling and which place air travel at a disadvantage compared to other modes of transport."

NOTE TO THE EDITORS:

ELFAA Members include: Air Berlin, flybe, Hapag-Lloyd Express, Norwegian, Ryanair, Sky Europe, Sterling, Sverige Flyg, Transavia and wizzair.

Low fares services in Europe currently account for approximately 24% of scheduled air services with ELFAA members carrying approximately 60 million passengers to over 200 destinations.

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