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## **EUROCONTROL and ECAC urge all stakeholders to facilitate smooth implementation of COVID-19 health checks**

Brussels, Belgium/Paris, France - As implementation of the EU Digital COVID Certificate entered into force across Europe on 1 July 2021, EUROCONTROL and the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC), are calling on all stakeholders to ensure that aviation can function efficiently and without disruptions caused by COVID-19 health checks.

Eamonn Brennan, EUROCONTROL Director General said: *“ Our aim at EUROCONTROL is to get Europe flying again safely, efficiently and in the most environmentally friendly manner. To achieve that, we’ve been working closely with airlines, airports, air navigation service providers to make sure that on the operational side, we are ready for the increase in flights we expect for the summer period. However, if those flights are being delayed due to passengers waiting in queues caused by COVID-19 health checks, that work will not bring the expected outcomes, and European citizens will rightly ask why this couldn’t be better managed.”*

Ingrid Cherfils, President of ECAC, emphasised the importance of continuing strong cooperation among ECAC Member States, and added: *“ We must ensure that we take advantage of this important step so that it contributes to the revitalisation of air transport this summer, in a safe, secure way while also maintaining the integrity of passengers. A coordinated approach across ECAC Member States, and close cooperation between national aviation and health authorities, remain essential to facilitate the integration of COVID-19 health checks as part of the smooth passenger journey at the airports”.*

Air traffic in Europe is currently at approximately 50% of the equivalent period in 2019, and EUROCONTROL forecasts show that this should rise to 70% by August or over 24,000 flights a day on average across Europe. With possible check-in times per passenger of up to 12 minutes, and potentially over 2.5 million passengers across the continent each day, operational partners will struggle to ensure that flights can depart on time unless actions are taken to ensure health checks are carried out in such a way as to avoid major congestion at the airports.

Useful recommendations and guidance were published by the European Commission on 28 June, including preventing duplication and verifying the EU Digital COVID Certificate as early as possible and ideally online, for example during the online check-in process.

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Note to editors

### **About EUROCONTROL:**

EUROCONTROL is a pan-European, civil-military organisation dedicated to supporting European aviation. As Europe's Network Manager, we play a central coordination role, using our technical expertise to support Member States and a wide range of stakeholders (air navigation service providers, civil and military airspace users, airports and aircraft/equipment manufacturers). We strive to make European aviation safe, efficient, scalable, cost-effective and environmentally sustainable, partnering the European Union to make the Single European Sky a reality.

EUROCONTROL has 41 Member States: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. EUROCONTROL has Comprehensive Agreements with Morocco and Israel.

### **About ECAC:**

Founded in 1955 as an intergovernmental organisation, the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) seeks to harmonise civil aviation policies and practices amongst its Member States and, at the same time, promote understanding on policy matters between its Member States and other parts of the world.

ECAC's mission is the promotion of the continued development of a safe, efficient and sustainable European air transport system.

ECAC brings together the widest grouping of Member States of any European organisation dealing with civil aviation, being currently composed of 44 Member States: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom.