

## Press release – Transport Committee pledges to stop empty flights due to COVID-19



“It is in no one’s interest to fly empty aircraft and it comes at great environmental and economic cost. We need to stop this practice and make sure that the aviation industry can cope with the current extraordinary circumstances caused by the COVID-19 outbreak,” said Transport Committee Chair [Karima Delli](#) (Greens/EFA, FR).

“The ‘use it or lose it’ rule has already been temporarily suspended on a number of occasions in the past and the Parliament is committed to finding a quick solution with the Council,” added the Chair.

The slot allocation rules always concern the next corresponding season. The slots for summer 2020 were already confirmed last year. This means that there will be enough time to work and vote on this priority file.

### **Next steps**

The Parliament is now looking into the Commission’s proposal and will announce the precise details of the next procedural steps to start legislative work together with the Council in the coming days.

### **Background**

Under current rules (EU Airport Slots Regulation (EEC 95/93)), aircraft take-off and landing slots are allocated in the EU solely by independent coordinators for the summer or winter scheduling seasons. If an air carrier has used a series of slots for at least 80% of the time during a given season, it will retain it in the next corresponding season (this convention is referred to as 'historical slots', 'grandfather rights' or the '80-20 rule'). Otherwise, the slots go back into the pool for reallocation.

Consequently, slots that are under-used by air carriers are reallocated (known as the 'use it or lose it' rule).

The 'use it or lose it' rule has, however, been temporarily suspended on a number of occasions in the past, for example following the events of 11 September 2001; during the Iraq war; during the SARS epidemic in 2003 and, in 2009, in response to the economic crisis and its impact on air carriers.