

Vienna Airport Welcomes National Council Decision to Reduce the Air Transport Levy

Flughafen Wien AG welcomes the decision of the National Council of Austria's Parliament to reduce the air transport levy by half. "The approved decrease in the 'ticket tax' supports efforts to strengthen the Austrian business location, above all tourism. We will take all possible measures enabling this impetus to growth to ultimately help generate higher revenue for the government and more than compensate for the lower proceeds from the air transport levy. This move is also an important signal for the airlines, which were very restrained in their investment activity as a consequence of the air transport levy. In this respect, the reduction is an invitation to the airlines to invest in Austria", say Günther Ofner and Julian Jäger, Members of the Management Board of Flughafen Wien AG. "The complete elimination of the air transport levy would be desirable from a socio-political perspective. It would help lower-income segments of the population to afford flights abroad, which in turn would have a positive impact on levelling out social inequality", they add.

With regard to the press release issued today by Global 2000, it should be noted that the Austrian aviation sector is the only mode of transport which finances its infrastructure completely on its own, and thus does not receive any state subsidies from the national budget – in contrast to other forms of transport. The publicly listed company Flughafen Wien AG is not given a single cent from the taxes which are paid. On the contrary, the Austrian aviation industry pays approximately € 2.3 billion in taxes and social security contributions to the Republic of Austria each year. On the basis of a value creation of € 4.6 billion, the sector accounts for about 1.7% of the country's gross domestic product.

Aviation sector secures more than 70,000 jobs

Vienna Airport is an important job creator. More than 20,000 people are employed at the airport hub. The domestic aviation industry secures over 70,000 jobs throughout the country. In a period characterized by a tense situation on the labour market, the economy requires investment-enhancing conditions in order to grow and thus be capable of positively impacting the labour market and purchasing power. The aviation sector continues to suffer from high cost and competitive pressure, which was also demonstrated by recent developments at airberlin and Alitalia. Mega-airports which are not subject to growth restrictions and with capacities of 150 million passengers are being established at the gates to the European Union, for example in Istanbul. The challenge is to safeguard the competitiveness of Austria as a flight hub in order to be able to successfully hold its own in global competition.

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