

What is needed for safe air travel in times of Corona?

To ensure the health and safety of air travel even in times of a worldwide pandemic, German airports and airlines have developed precautionary and hygiene measures in cooperation with their regulative authorities. These are also in line with the recommendations of the UN aviation organization ICAO and the European aviation safety and disease prevention authorities.

Precautionary and hygiene measures along the entire travel chain make flying still safe for healthy



Germany and many other countries are working intensively to keep the spread of COVID-19 infection under control with hygiene and precautionary measures. In many countries, these efforts have been very successful, so that public life is gradually being revived.

Between such countries, where the risk of infection is low, travel is in principle now possible again. In order to eventually be able to visit friends, relatives or business partners abroad again or to fly on holiday, two requirements must be met.

On the one hand, global undifferentiated travel restrictions must be replaced by risk-based individual rules based on the actual occurrence of infection. With this in mind, the German government has lifted the travel warning for the EU countries, the member states of the Schengen area and the United Kingdom. Airlines can now once again serve parts of their networks and will offer 27 percent of capacity at German airports in July compared to July 2019. For other countries, with a few exceptions, a blanket travel warning is in force until 31 August. This should also be replaced by individual risk-based rules immediately.

On the other hand, hygiene and precautionary measures must be obligatory along the entire travel chain to keep the risk of infection low. In this respect, air travel benefits from several structural advantages over other modes of transport and other everyday situations, enabling health-protective travel even during the current pandemic.

In addition, airlines and airports have agreed on further measures in coordination with the health and traffic authorities at the federal and state levels. The measures are explained on the following page.

Benefits of air transport regarding health-protective flying in the time of a pandemic

Beyond the current pandemic the following also applies to air transport:

- Airplanes are equipped with air-conditioning systems which purify the cabin air: This ensures a constant supply of fresh air and an ongoing air exchange. In addition, the cabin air is reliably cleaned of particles, viruses and bacteria using high-performance filters.
- Since passengers' PNR data must be kept for five years, contact tracing is easier than in almost any other parts of society.
- In air travel, passengers and crew are used to compliance with and enforcement of safety rules. This also allows for the measures to be implemented in a controlled manner by the personnel on the ground and the crew on board.

Additional measures for health-protective flying

Moreover, the aviation companies, together with the federal and state health and traffic authorities, have defined further measures to cope with this special pandemic situation. These are also in line with the recommendations of the UN aviation organization ICAO and the European competent authorities.

At the airport, the familiar hygiene and distance rules apply. As it is not possible to keep a distance at some procedures in the airport, for example during security checks, a general obligation to wear masks applies in airport facilities.

Employees with close customer contact are also protected by protective screens. Boarding and disembarking is organized in such a way that crowds can be avoided. Boarding now takes place primarily via air bridges and in groups. If buses are needed nonetheless, a larger number of vehicles is used.

On board the aircraft: Clean cabin air and obligation to wear masks

The core element of flying safe is the supply of constantly fresh and repeatedly purified cabin air for air passengers. The airflow consists half of fresh outside air and half of recirculated air. All air is exchanged within three minutes. This high air turnover alone keeps any virus density low.

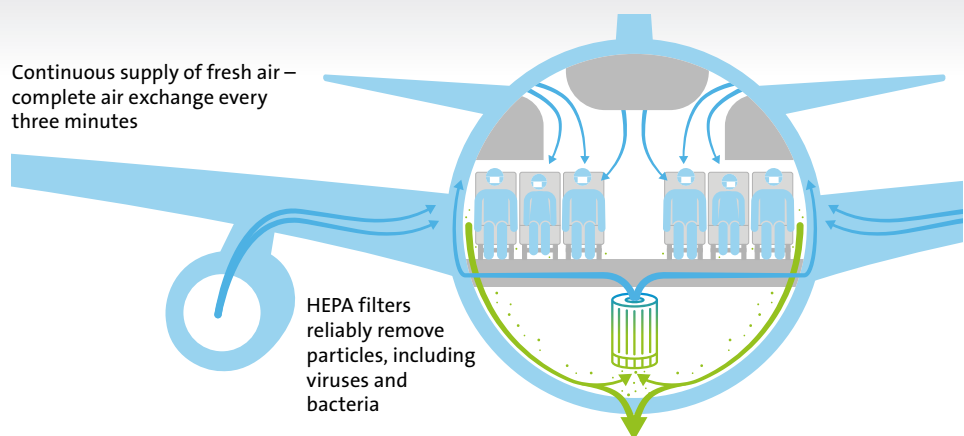
The airflow on board mainly runs from top to bottom. The air is pumped at a speed of one meter per second through the ceiling into the cabin and is exhausted below the window seats. Longitudinal currents that could transport viruses are thus minimized.

In addition, the aircrafts of German airlines are equipped with HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air) filters. These reliably clean the air of viruses, bacteria, fungi and dust before it enters the cabin with a filter performance corresponding to the separation efficiency of filters in an operating room. To also guarantee air exchange and filtration when passengers board and disembark, the airlines have adapted the processes to ensure that the air-conditioning systems are also in action on the ground as long as passengers are on board. In addition to the cabin ventilation and since social distancing is not possible in the aircraft, a personal mouth-nose cover must be carried and worn during the entire stay on board. This minimizes the risk of infection in the immediate vicinity for passengers and crew.

With these structural differences and additional measures the aircraft is the mode of public transport with the lowest risk of infection. The European disease prevention and aviation safety authorities have repeatedly confirmed that no reports documented the transmission of COVID-19 on board an aircraft.

Core element of safe flying: Clean cabin air

Continuous supply of fresh air – complete air exchange every three minutes



About the BDL:

The German Aviation Association (BDL) was founded in 2010 as a joint representation of the interests of the German air-transport industry. Members of the association are airlines, airports, German air traffic control and aviation service providers. These companies employ more than 180,000 employees. Air transport in Germany enables mobility for more than 200 million passengers a year and contributes to the transport of goods worth more than €200 billion to strengthen Germany as a business location.

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