

Flybe campaign takes off over Air Passenger Duty



Flybe, Europe's largest regional airline, has launched a national media campaign against the unfairness of Air Passenger Duty (APD), with advertisements in today's national and regional newspapers.

The airline has welcomed the Chancellor's move to scrap APD on flights for children in yesterday's Autumn Statement. But Saad Hammad, Flybe's Chief Executive, today calls for broader reform of APD, to encourage the economic regeneration of UK regions.

Mr Hammad said: "The scrapping of APD on flights for children is to be welcomed. However, there are not many business travellers under the age of 12 years. This change is just tinkering at the edges and represents a missed opportunity by the Chancellor to show that he is serious about the economic regeneration of the UK regions. Despite continuing to engage with the government to emphasise the unfairness of APD, the needs of our regional passengers are still being ignored.

"It's time for the Chancellor to seriously listen to the UK regions and deliver reform quickly, to ensure the government does not inflict further damage to the UK's aspirations for economic growth."

Today's adverts highlight the unfairness of APD and the way in which it works against UK regions. On a return journey from Manchester to Paris a passenger pays APD of £13, or 1.76p a mile; on a return journey from Manchester to Athens a passenger also pays APD of £13, or 0.4p a mile. But on a return journey from Manchester to Exeter passengers must pay £26 in APD, or 6.84p a mile.

"The Smith Commission's recommendations to devolve APD to the Scottish Government shows progress, and we believe its implementation would demonstrate the benefits of cutting or abolishing the tax to other nations or regions within the UK, which in turn would deliver a balanced economic recovery," Mr Hammad said.

Flybe operates more UK domestic flights than any other airline and is the largest scheduled airline by air traffic movements at Belfast City, Birmingham, Exeter, Inverness, Manchester, Newquay and Southampton airports.