

Ryanair contests aid to rivals before EU court

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Ryanair said Tuesday it has contested state aid provided to Air France and SAS to deal with the plunge in travel due to the coronavirus pandemic before the European Court of Justice.

"So far just two decisions have been made by the European Commission and we have formally appealed those decisions and we will go to court," said David O'Brien, the airline's chief commercial officer.

One of the cases involves Air France, which the French government has decided to help by allowing it to defer certain tax payments.

The other SAS, which involves a credit line of 3.3 billion kronor (\$340 million, 310 million euros) that is guaranteed by the governments of Sweden and Denmark.

O'Brien said "the guarantee means that in fact SAS will never have to repay that".

Concerning Air France, he said the fact that French airlines "don't have to pay French airport taxes but non-French airlines do" was a market distortion.

After European nations banned travel and ordered people to stay at home to stem the spread of the deadly new coronavirus they undertook measures to help support firms.

Airlines have been particularly hard hit, and even before the crisis a number had recently collapsed in the highly-competitive sector.

"We will appeal any European Commission state aid decisions that discriminate unlawfully between airlines," said the [low-cost airline](#) that operates domestic and international routes in a number of European countries.

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