



SUSTAINABILITY CRUCIAL FOR LONG-TERM VIABILITY OF THE SECTOR - EUROPEAN AVIATION ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT 2022

News / Airlines



The aviation sector has taken some steps to address its impacts on the environment and climate, but projected growth in demand calls for greater and more decisive action aligned with the European Union's climate and environmental goals. The new European Aviation Environmental Report offers an overview of the current environmental performance of the sector. In addition to reviewing progress made since the 2019 edition, it includes recommendations with a view to reducing the climate change, noise and air quality impacts from aviation.

The [European Aviation Environmental Report 2022](#) looks at the historic and future scenarios of air traffic and its associated noise and emissions. It also summarises the latest scientific understanding of these impacts before focusing on five main impact mitigation areas (Technology and Design; Sustainable Aviation Fuels; Air Traffic Management - Operations; Airports and Market-Based Measures) with recommendations on how to further improve the level of environmental protection.

Welcoming the report as a key instrument to support evidenced-based policy-making, European Commissioner for Transport Adina Vălean commented: “Considerable action has already been taken since the last edition of this report. This is reflected, for instance, in lower CO2 emissions per passenger kilometre and improved noise performance of aircraft. But the report also shows scope to go further – with Sustainable Aviation Fuels showing particular potential, in line with our EU policy approach.”

EASA Executive Director Patrick Ky stated: “Safety is a core element of the culture within the aviation sector and this commitment is reflected at all levels to ensure successful and effective business operations. The European Green Deal means that these same principles now need to be applied to the strategic issue of environmental protection, to ensure the long-term viability of the industry. EASA stands ready to play its role in achieving this.”

EEA Executive Director Hans Bruyninckx added: “As a key part of our mobility system, the aviation sector must fully contribute to achieving the Union’s climate and environment goals. Fully reflecting the costs from aviation environmental and climate impacts within market prices and enhancing the consistency of taxation across sectors would provide meaningful incentives to accelerate the transition of the EU transport sector towards sustainability.”

EUROCONTROL Director General Eamonn Brennan stressed: “This important report shows that

as an industry we have already made substantial steps to achieve our sustainability goals. We have made major advances on the operational side. However, we now need to urgently move forward on the issue of how we power our aircraft in the most sustainable way possible while moving towards zero emission aircraft in the medium to long term. All of this has a cost, and this must be addressed on a systemic level.”

While the number of flights at EU27+EFTA airports dropped dramatically from 9.3 million in 2019, to respectively 4.12 million and 5.07 million in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic, longer-term trends show that the region will be home to some 12.2 million annual flights by 2050, with aircraft CO2 emissions potentially rising to 188 million tonnes, unless environmental protection is further mainstreamed across the sector.

Recognising the multiple European and industry goals that have been established over the last three years, the report highlights the need to independently monitor progress to ensure transparency, accountability, credibility and ultimately establish trust that the measures in place will meet the agreed targets.

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