Air transport: creation of the Single European Sky

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The European Parliament adopted the report drafted by Sir Robert ATKINS (EPP/ED, Uk) concerning the European Parliament's resolution on the Commission communication to the Council and the European Parliament on the creation of a Single European Sky. The European Parliament is of the opinion that the single European sky (airspace) must be created quickly. However, it believes that its creation on the basis of appropriate common rules and a separation of functions should not stand in the way of the public service duties of air traffic control and should leave Member States the choice of status for the operators providing it. The Council is also urged to take the political decision that the Commission should develop a single sky over a single market to provide the optimum use of European airspace, whilst maintaining the principle of subsidiarity, as well as equal access to the airspace for all users. With regard to Eurocontrol, the Parliament believes that it should therefore be divested of its obligation to service provisions and that immediate steps be taken to liberalise the provision of air traffic services by inviting the aviation industry to participate in and tender for such provisions and calls therefore on the Member States to: - pool regulative competences for air traffic control within the framework of this reformed Eurocontrol; - develop progressively a liberalised and fully operational internal market in the provision of air traffic services throughout the European Union's airspace and that of neighbouring European States. In terms of new technology, urgent consideration must be given to renewing and renovating the technical infrastructure to support the necessary improvements in ATM methodology and high priority must be given to the interoperability of new technology, and to the launching of European-scale research and technological development initiatives with the support of the Commission and the European industry to develop smart air transport systems relating to flow, information and communications management, such as Galileo. As regards the use of military airspace, the European Parliament urges the Council to commit itself to an urgent review of the delineation, protection and use of military airspace, with a view to achieving smooth cooperation of civil and military air traffic services.