

Air transport: environmental impact, towards a sustainable development

2000/2054(COS) - 07/09/2000 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In approving the report drafted by Mrs Caroline LUCAS (Green/EFA, UK), the European Parliament adopted the resolution on the Communication from the Commission - Air Transport and the Environment: Towards meeting the challenges of Sustainable Development. The European Parliament considers that the Community should support and strengthen the ICAO process of revising noise stringency levels in order to meet as far as possible the particular needs of the densely populated, industrialised EU and to take account of the particular needs of third country airlines from the developing world who operate in the EU. This could include a global system of airport classification agreed under ICAO auspices and therefore calls on the Commission to pursue complementary measures to be implemented if ICAO cannot reach appropriate agreement. The Commission is also urged to develop a common definition of average noise level at ground level, which must serve as a basis for developing noise standards at European airports. The Parliament further recommends that the EU adopt Community-wide noise exposure targets that ensure that nobody is exposed to unacceptable noise levels at night, these noise levels should be based on WHO Guidelines. The Community is encouraged to continue to actively contribute to the work of the ICAO in identifying and evaluating market-based mechanisms and new emission parameters for the climb and cruise phase of flights. With regard to air traffic management, the Commission is asked to develop a new policy framework to allow slot allocation also to be linked to the environmental performance of aircraft and operations, including the prioritisation of slot allocation for journeys where high speed rail alternatives do not exist. As far as kerosene tax is concerned, the European Parliament considers it necessary, for reasons of environmental policy, to introduce a kerosene tax on all routes departing from the EU. It also believes that if international agreement is not reached on a kerosene tax, a Community-wide environmental charge should be introduced, based on the polluter pays principle. The Parliament calls urgently on the Commission to examine the economic impact of the zero-rating VAT on air tickets, kerosene, and the purchase of new aircraft. In relation to land-use planning, the Commission is asked to develop guidelines on land-use planning in order to standardise national legislation and to co-ordinate Member States' actions. Member States should prevent the development of urbanisation in the vicinity of airports so as to safeguard citizens' health and airports' long-term expansion opportunities.