

Air transport: common rules for civil aviation security

2001/0234(COD) - 29/11/2001 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

In approving the report by Mrs Jacqueline FOSTER (EPP-ED, UK) by 398 to 100 with 21 abstentions, the European Parliament adopted numerous amendments. A majority of MEPs did not agree with the Transport Committee that the costs of security in civil aviation should be borne by the Member States. It was pointed out that it was essential that both users of air transport and the air transport sector would, in the medium term, have to contribute to the ensuing costs. MEPs felt that the financing of the cost of certain additional air security measures might not lead to distortion of competition between operators and between airports. It was therefore necessary that Member States adopted, in close cooperation with the Commission, a clear, coordinated approach towards financial compensation. If implementation of this Regulation was found seriously to jeopardise the survival of airports, the cost of certain additional air security measures could be met in the short term by public authorities. But this financial compensation could only be granted on a one-off basis and could not be greater than the level of investment committed pursuant to this Regulation. An amendment was also passed, calling on the Commission to submit, within six months of entry into force of the Regulation, proposals to introduce uniform arrangements in the Member States for the financing of security measures in order to avoid any distortion of competition between operators and Member States within the Community. Parliament also adopted an amendment that specifically recognised the role of the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) regarding common standards for security measures at airports and the technical equipment used for aviation security. Another amendment was adopted demanding that checks on airports by EU inspection teams should be unannounced. It should also be added that it is proposed that the Commission develop a mechanism to assess, together with the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and ECAC, whether third-country airports meet the essential security requirements. Finally, Parliament called for measures of an administrative nature to be implemented immediately. Where measures might require changes to airport infrastructure, immediate implementation would not be practicable but implementation should apply six months after entry into force of this regulation.