

AIRE's statement on Aviation Competitiveness

Airlines International Representation in Europe fully recognizes and embraces the necessity of **decarbonization efforts reducing the pressure on the climate**. However, it is important to note that the European Union is already at the forefront of global climate regulation. Excessive burdens and over ambitious proposals such as fuel taxation (including sustainable fuel), troublesome monitoring duties, or lack of adequate support to produce **Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF)** will place the EU aviation sector at a strategically disadvantaged position compared to external competitors.

- **Presently, only the civil aviation sector is responsible for nearly 5 million jobs in the EU and contributes over 110 billion euro to the economy¹.** Moreover, airlines services are enhancing the post-pandemic revival of European tourism industry, which makes up about 10% of the EU economy². Well-functioning aviation eco-system supports millions of jobs in the entire supply chain: from new planes construction and technical maintenance to various subcontractors like catering, translation services or security. However, if regulations become excessively stringent, EU carriers may face overwhelming challenges, resulting in a sector's economic decline. Therefore, it should be born in mind that EU's GDP, tourism sector and job market are at stake.
- We are contented with the European Commission's policy priorities set out by Ursula von der Leyen for the upcoming term, especially the emphasis on strengthening the competitiveness of European businesses, as also emphasized in Mario Draghi's report, "**The Future of European Competitiveness**". We hope the proposed approach, combining ambitious climate goals with support for vulnerable companies, will lead to effective and concrete policies.
- As AIRE, **we are open to actively participate in public dialogue to develop optimal measures addressing the matter of the EU aviation sector competitiveness**. Issues such as SAF production infrastructure, emissions fiscal burdens, refinement of air traffic management are among those that need to be discussed with sector representatives. Europe has the ability to maintain its leadership in aviation emission reductions, become a technological powerhouse in sustainable

¹ European Commission (2023) Internal Market. Available at: https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-modes/air/internal-market_en (Accessed: 26 September 2024).

² European Parliament (2024) Tourism Factsheet. Available at: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/126/tourism> (Accessed: 26 September 2024)

aviation technologies and uphold the esteemed portfolio of its quality and accessible airlines. However, achieving these objectives requires prioritizing competitiveness as a central directive.

Civil aviation is vital for the economy and tourism, but restrictive regulations could jeopardize the sector and EU economic stability. AIRE is committed to actively participating in public dialogue to create effective measures that boost the competitiveness of the EU aviation sector. Thus, we have strongly advocated for the inclusion of competitiveness within the agenda for 2025 of the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee