

# Eu aviation policy

[Engineering](#), [Aviation](#)



## Introduction

I don't agree the EU aviation policy has failed to meet its overall objective of producing safe, affordable, convenient and efficient service for its customer.

Mega-policy, according to De (2011, p. 22) is master policy that deals with overall goals, certain basic assumption policy instruments and implementation strategies with the aim of typically large scale investments, and is divided as internal and external policy. In the EU aviation industry context, internal policy is meant to govern EU registered airlines whereas External governs non-EU registered airlines.

The main aim of EU is to achieve a safe, affordable, convenient and efficient service for consumers.

To provide a safe, affordable, convenient and efficient services

## **1. Internal Policy**

### i. Safety:

EU established the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) with the goal of ensuring civil aviation safety for its member countries (European Commission, 2009). The agency's main task is to ensure air transport is safe as well as sustainable. To achieve this important goal, the agency has developed some of safety and environmental rules that must be adhered to by all stakeholders. In addition, it constantly monitors implementation of these standards through regular inspections of member states' adherence to the rules, as well as offering technical support through training. Through

EASA, EU regulates pilot and other crew member training as well as issuance of licences for European pilots.

The establishment of single aviation market has been a huge success in enabling the EU agencies to collaborate in monitoring safety policy implementations. For example, European Commission, European Aviation Safety Agency and Eurocontrol have collaborated under the pillar of safe aviation services to the passengers through licensing regulations. Other agencies involved in safety regulation are national civil aviation authorities, and safety investigation authorities, who work to incorporate all stakeholders, including aircraft manufacturers and airline companies, in safety measures. The agencies operate under the common safety rules, which enable them to do random safety inspections at any European airport.

Statistics show that, despite the rise in traffic over the last two decades, EU's air safety initiatives have successfully maintained high standards in terms of aviation safety (EASA Annual Safety Review).

It must, however, be noted that despite the raft of security measures, the notion of 'zero risk' in aviation does not exist, and occasional cases of accidents may occur. In such cases, EU advises that thorough investigations is the best approach, as studies show that accidents do not occur as a result of single event but a combination of multiple prior events (Ferroff et al., 2012).

ii. Freedom to establish & provide services:

EU's establishment of a single European Aviation Market, from the initial 27 national air transport markets all over Europe, has created an atmosphere of success in terms of freedom to all markets. The initiatives were meant to:

Increase market access to every European carrier, with no restriction on capacity;

Ensure non-discrimination in terms of license provision across Europe;

Ensure freedom to provide services to the aviation industry

Ensure operators' freedom to price their product and services

Ensure implementation of penalties on those who infringe on the procedures

The increase in more choices has also seen the number of EU routes increase by 25 percent from 1992 to 2011. The increased competition has led to a 420 percent rise in intra-EU routes with more than two carriers over the same period (Zamarreno, 2012). Finally, the EU initiative led to a rise in new entrants, which facilitated competition and the emergence of a market for low-cost air services, which currently account for 40 percent of the EU aviation market.

## **2. External Policy**

### **i. Market Opening**

The external aviation policy has been an integral part of EU's strategy in its effort towards greater flexibility, consistency and transparency in matters of international civil aviation. To achieve these goals, EU has been gradually and consistently making and ratifying bilateral and multilateral agreements with other international aviation bodies outside EU. As such, EU has been

carrying out is horizontal mandate of bringing the existing bilateral and multilateral agreements into line with EU laws. They also identified the creation of a Common Aviation Area with neighbouring nations, including United States, Canada, Australia, Brazil and India among others as an important step towards realising sustainable growth. This realisation has led to:

Over 117 non-EU states accepting EU designation;

Close to 1000 bilateral aviation safety agreements have conformed to EU laws, which have translated into over 70 percent rise in EU air traffic;

Some neighbouring countries willingly participate in a pan- European Common Aviation Area e. g. agreements with Morocco (signed in December 2006) and Israel (signed in July 2012) among many other nations;

Comprehensive agreements with key partners such as United States, Canada and Brazil, which aims to open partners' markets, removal of investment barriers, and converging regulations across borders;

Increased level playing field through adoption of common rules and standards that ensures greater aviation safety, efficient infrastructure, consumer protection and lower prices due to competition (Zmarreno, 2012).

## ii. Affordability and Convenience

An external policy has meant that EU citizens benefits from reduced prices and more travel offers resulting from competition between EU and international airlines. Moreover, every airline must up its game by offering better services in terms of quality and convenience to withstand competition.

The European Union aviation industry employs more than five million people around the world and contributes ^365 billion to the European GDP (Sandbag, 2012). In spite of the current economic crisis, it is projected that global aviation industry will continue to experience an average annual growth of 5 percent till 2030. When EU emphasises its commitment to external partnerships through their external aviation policies, their goal is to ensure barriers to growth is eliminated through removal of any limiting factor of investment (e. g. airline ownership). It must be noted that initial ownership of airlines were highly regulated, with governments restricting foreign ownership in what was cited as national security measures. However, the discriminatory approach to ownership was removed, thanks to EU's raft measures to increase fairness, allowing more openness in market access and competition. For example, EU has a general ownership rule that allows up to 49 percent foreign ownership of a European aviation company (European Commission, 2009). This is much better than the United States' 25 percent of voting stocks restrictions to foreign ownership. Arguably, this arrangement has made EU aviation industry more attractive to external investors, hence the region's benefits from large economy of scale.

### iii. Environmental Safety

Aviation industry is responsible for 2. 5 percent of the total global carbon emission (Sandbag, 2012). This percentage rises to 4. 9 percent of the total anthropogenic carbon effect if all the radiation components are included. Put to context, this would make aviation industry the seventh largest carbon emitting ' country' worldwide. The forecast from the International Civil

Aviation Organisation (ICAO) indicates that by 2036 carbon emissions from the industry alone will hit 300% compared to 2011 levels (Bows, et al., 2010).

European Union's decision to include aviation industry into its carbon market, with the introduction of Emission Trading Scheme (ETS), signalled their desire to protect the global climate. More importantly, EU member countries ensured EU law has primacy over national law, hence giving the union broader power to control any form of environmental destruction that may emerge from a single country's non-compliance.

In December 2012, EU's court of Justice made a major landmark decision when it ruled out that the decision by the EU to include the international aviation in the ETS did not contravene international law as claimed by many international airline operators (Sandbag, 2012). This meant that the court gave EU authority to implement the carbon emission policy. Although there is still an ongoing row that has escalated into a number of non-EU members joining forces together to challenge EU and its emission policy, the steps towards safer environment is on course, with EU leading the park towards realising this important milestone. It is important to note that major EU airlines are in the process of adopting ETS to set pace for their international peers. This is an important step considering that 25 percent of the total aviation emission comes from the region's airlines (Braun, 2008).

Conclusion

EU aviation policy has been hailed around the world as one that has achieved success amid the biting economic challenges facing many airline industry players. EU aviation industry has seen tremendous growth and development for the last two decades. One of reasons for this astronomical growth has been attributed to the union's efforts to provide safe, affordable, convenient and efficient service for its customers. Policy formulation, research and implementation are some of the most important operational aspects of aviation sector the union has embraced. Despite the numerous challenges, some of which are cross-border related, various reports show that EU's efforts have resulted into some measurable success that is not comparable to any other regional union around the world. The union's mega policy on aviation, which consists of internal and external, has seen substantial changes in safety, freedom to establish and provide more choices, opening of more markets, increased affordability & convenience and environmental safety. These initiatives have also led to affordable pricing by the airlines, convenience, and safer environment. It's no doubt the reason why EU is considered the world's largest and the most successful regional market integration with the most liberalised air transport.

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