

**Question for written answer E-002230/2023  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: The continued rise in airfares

Rising demand and both staff and aircraft shortages<sup>1</sup>, as well as general inflation and higher energy prices, have resulted in airfares in Europe increasing by 30 % year-on-year<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore, many major airports have had their landing fees capped, yet airlines are free to charge consumers higher prices while making European airports compete<sup>3</sup> and pushing fuel prices downstream to consumers<sup>4</sup>.

A number of carriers have employed so-called drip pricing<sup>5</sup> and 17 European airlines have been accused of using misleading greenwashing marketing, such as claims that paying extra credits can 'offset', 'neutralise' or 'compensate' the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of a flight<sup>6</sup>. Moreover, it seems that some airlines have misled consumers by charging them more supposedly to contribute to the development of sustainable aviation fuels<sup>7</sup>.

1. Is the Commission monitoring the current rise in airfares?
2. Does it consider that airlines are abusing their pricing power?
3. Taking into account the fact that, under the current EU passenger rights rules<sup>8</sup>, the Commission has no power to intervene in individual disputes between passengers and air carriers, will it propose a reform of the legal framework in force, including Regulation No 1008/2008<sup>9</sup>, in order to improve consumers' rights and protection as promised in the sustainable and smart mobility strategy<sup>10</sup>?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ft.com/content/ec304d7b-91d0-41b8-9e0c-34bd387039f0>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ft.com/content/d311bea0-67ff-487f-aa63-48a05ffb6175>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.flightglobal.com/networks/european-airports-back-in-profit-but-aci-warns-about-fundamentals/153938.article>.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ft.com/content/2352bd19-98ed-4cee-9611-125ecf61ed00>.

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.tse-fr.eu/sites/default/files/TSE/documents/doc/wp/2023/wp\\_tse\\_1434.pdf](https://www.tse-fr.eu/sites/default/files/TSE/documents/doc/wp/2023/wp_tse_1434.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.beuc.eu/press-releases/consumer-groups-launch-eu-wide-complaint-against-17-airlines-greenwashing>.

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.beuc.eu/sites/default/files/publications/BEUC-X-2023-086\\_Green\\_Flying\\_Targeted\\_airlines\\_%26\\_identified\\_practices.pdf](https://www.beuc.eu/sites/default/files/publications/BEUC-X-2023-086_Green_Flying_Targeted_airlines_%26_identified_practices.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> [https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-themes/passenger-rights/air\\_en#:~:text=EU%20law%20protects%20air%20passengers,destruction%20or%20damage%20to%20baggage](https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-themes/passenger-rights/air_en#:~:text=EU%20law%20protects%20air%20passengers,destruction%20or%20damage%20to%20baggage).

<sup>9</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1008/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 September 2008 on common rules for the operation of air services in the Community (OJ L 293, 31.10.2008, p. 3): <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02008R1008-20201218>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://transport.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-04/2021-mobility-strategy-and-action-plan.pdf>.