

**Question for written answer E-000379/2024  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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**Subject:** Plans to allow flights with only one pilot in the cockpit and passenger and pilot safety

For a number of years, aircraft manufacturers have been calling for the flight deck crew to be reduced to a single pilot during the flight, apart from take-off and landing. They argue that the technology is so advanced that a single pilot can carry out the necessary tasks while the flight is in cruise phase, which would help mitigate the serious staffing shortages in airlines<sup>1</sup>.

The idea is met with strong opposition from pilot associations, who argue that automation technology will simply increase profits for aircraft manufacturers at the expense of pilot and passenger safety. Despite the position taken by pilots, in 2021 the EU Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) launched a process to assess the possibility of implementing extended minimum crew operations (eMCO), which should be completed in 2027<sup>2</sup>.

1. Should the EASA not take into account the opposition from pilot organisations, which highlight the importance of pilots checking each other and of having a second pilot in the cockpit in case, for example, one pilot loses consciousness?
2. Is the Commission not concerned that reducing the number of pilots in a cockpit to one could deter young people from becoming pilots because of the increased responsibility involved and because they would not feel sufficiently safe?
3. In the Commission's view, would the implementation of eMCO not have a negative impact on the training of new pilots, who would be deprived of the opportunity to fly with older and more experienced colleagues?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.euractiv.com/section/aviation/interview/pilots-accuse-aircraft-makers-of-putting-profit-over-safety/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.eurocockpit.be/news/made-eu-reduced-crew-operations>