

Question for written answer E-002689/2024

to the Commission

Rule 144

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Subject: Unfair competition in the aviation sector owing to Russian sanctions

Since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, Chinese airlines have rapidly expanded their routes to Europe, while a number of European airlines have been forced to suspend their operations in China. This disparity creates an uneven playing field, where European airlines must undertake long and costly detours around Russian airspace due to Russian counter-sanctions, while their Chinese counterparts continue to operate without restriction. Data indicate that Chinese airlines now control a staggering 77 % of the market share on routes between Europe and Asia, a significant increase from 55 % in 2018¹.

Furthermore, it has been suggested that the EU consider implementing measures such as imposing penalties on flights using Russian airspace or restricting access to EU airspace for airlines that use Russian airspace. However, it is crucial that we approach this matter carefully, making sure that our response does not escalate into a broader trade conflict with China, while at the same time ensuring fair competition.

What is the Commission's assessment of the situation, and what initiatives will it take to ensure fair competition?

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¹ https://borsen.dk/nyheder/virksomheder/flyselskaber-paa-stribe-lukker-ned-for-kina-nu-forsoger-de-at-raabe-politikere-op?b_source=sas&b_medium=row_1&b_campaign=list_5.