

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004142/25
to the Commission**

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(21 October 2025)

Subject: High airfares and possible cartel practices in the aviation sector

Caught between the aviation sector's rhetoric, which claims that the EU's environmental regulation imposed an additional EUR 15 billion in costs on air transport in 2024 — a figure expected to double by 2030 ⁽¹⁾ — and the Commission's scrutiny on mergers and possible abusive practices in the sector, EU passengers continue to face very high airfares ⁽²⁾.

The EU also seems to lead the global delay ranking. One in three air passengers in the EU has been affected by delays and flight cancellations ⁽³⁾.

Meanwhile, the European Parliament is working on a revision of the common rules on compensation and assistance for passengers and an amendment of Regulation (EC) No 2027/97 on air carrier liability.

In this context, could the Commission clarify:

1. The outcome of its 2023 ⁽⁴⁾ investigations into high flight prices and whether it is considering a study on unfair commercial practices (UCP) in aviation, particularly cartel behaviour.
2. If it can provide an updated list of ongoing UCP investigations, similar to the annex to the study ⁽⁵⁾ published in 2020.
3. How it will ensure that the revision of passenger rights delivers concrete and enforceable improvements for EU travellers.

Supporters ⁽⁶⁾

Submitted: 21.10.2025

**Answer given by Mr Tzitzikostas on behalf of the European Commission
(27 January 2026)**

1. In 2023 the Commission looked in detail at the rise of air fare prices at that time to better understand the industry dynamics that led to higher prices. No formal investigations were launched. The analysis has fed into the review ⁽¹⁾ of Regulation (EC) No 1008/2008 ⁽²⁾, which is looking *inter alia* at issues in relation to how to effectively deliver sustainable and affordable air connectivity for all of Europe, while retaining the global competitiveness of EU carriers.
2. The study referred to by the Honourable Members with the annex containing decisions of national competition authorities was published by the Directorate-General for Internal Policies of the European Parliament. The Commission does not collate and publish the decisions of national competition authorities.
3. In 2013 the Commission proposed a revision of Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 on air passenger rights. This text was complemented by a legislative proposal ⁽³⁾ in 2023 on enforcement mechanisms, with a view to improving the rules for obtaining reimbursement and compensation for air passengers. Both proposals are now being discussed by the co-legislators. The Commission will continue to support both institutions in order to find a balanced agreement.

¹ <https://a4e.eu/publications/new-study-reveals-regulatory-costs-for-eu-airlines-soar-by-e15-5-billion-in-a-decade-threatening-competitiveness-and-connectivity-across-europe/>.

² <https://www.avionews.it/item/1254738-expensive-flights-brussels-launches-investigation.html>.

³ <https://www.travelandtourworld.com/news/article/travel-chaos-continues-in-europe-with-dozens-of-new-cancelled-flights-by-norwegian-air-sweden-finnair-and-wizz-air-affecting-passengers-in-brussels-oslo-helsinki-copenhagen-vienna-and-more/>.

⁴ <https://www.avionews.it/item/1254738-expensive-flights-brussels-launches-investigation.html>.

⁵ [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/642381/IPOL_STU\(2020\)642381_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/642381/IPOL_STU(2020)642381_EN.pdf).

⁶ This question is supported by Members other than the authors: Fernand Kartheiser (NI), Nikolaos Anadiotis (NI)

⁽¹⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/14620-Aviation-EU-air-services-rules-revision_en.

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2008/1008>.

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52023PC0753>.