

EU Sustainable Transport Investment Plan: An important step forward, but significant gaps remain in accelerating Europe's aviation decarbonisation

Brussels, 5 November 2025 — The European Commission's Sustainable Transport Investment Plan (STIP) is a constructive step towards addressing the financing and policy challenges of the aviation sector's net zero transition, noted DESTINATION 2050*, an alliance of aviation partners.

The Plan provides a long-awaited signal to tackle the teething problems of the Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) market in Europe. Yet, the aviation sector remains concerned that the Plan falls short of what is needed to accelerate the decarbonisation of air transport and safeguard Europe's global competitiveness. Driving the production of Sustainable Aviation Fuels alone would require €100 billion investment by 2035. In this context, the announced potential funding support as part of the STIP appears disappointingly low and not commensurate with the scale of investment required.

DESTINATION 2050 partners commend the Commission's inclusion of a double-side auction system to stimulate investment and reduce the cost gap for Sustainable Aviation Fuels. This shows growing recognition of the need for market-based incentives to scale up SAF production and uptake. They also welcome plans to consolidate financing instruments to trigger SAF production projects – noting that this will need to extend to advanced biofuels in addition to e-SAF.

However, the sector remains deeply concerned by the uncertainty remaining over:

- The timely establishment of a Book & Claim mechanism, one of the most effective tools to ensure SAF accessibility across all EU airports – regardless of local fuel availability. While it is positive that the STIP refers to such a mechanism, the commitment to assess its feasibility and design needs to become a top priority. The industry needs certainty and commitment from the Commission's side that Book & Claim will be developed and implemented as soon as possible.
- The extension post-2030 and increase in SAF allowances under the EU ETS. While the STIP indicates that the Commission will assess such possibility, it equally falls short of providing the necessary certainty and commitment.
- The absence of targeted support for hydrogen and electric technologies, both of which are vital to achieving aviation's net-zero by 2050 objective.

Without a coordinated and adequately financed strategy – one that includes a Book & Claim mechanism, expands SAF allowances under the ETS, channels EU ETS revenues into SAF production, and supports multi-year offtake agreements – the EU risks falling short of its own decarbonisation ambitions, undermining its own competitiveness and missing the opportunity to turn sustainable aviation into an economic success story.

DESTINATION 2050 partners welcome the positive signal delivered by the STIP and urge the Commission and Member States to:

- Implement in a timely and coordinated manner all the measures listed in the Plan. The aviation sector stands ready to cooperate and support this endeavour.
- Ensure concrete follow-up both on the Book & Claim design and implementation, as well as the extension of SAF allowances under the EU ETS.
- Increase the funding envelope for aviation decarbonisation measures. Notably, the DESTINATION 2050 partners join the call issued by the Commission to mobilise the European Investment Bank to fund SAF projects.
- Mobilise targeted funding for emerging technologies such as hydrogen and electric propulsion.
- Redirect the left-over funds available at national level under the Recovery and Resilience Funds to renewable and low carbon fuels projects before 31 August 2026.
- Guarantee policy coherence between DG MOVE, DG CLIMA, and DG ENER to provide industry with regulatory stability and investment confidence.

By closing these crucial gaps and working collaboratively between the Commission, Member States and industry, we are confident that the EU can deliver a credible pathway towards a competitive, connected, and climate-neutral European aviation sector.

ENDS

** A4E, ACI EUROPE, ASD, CANSO Europe, ERA*

About A4E

Airlines for Europe (A4E) is Europe's largest airline association. Based in Brussels, A4E works with policymakers to ensure aviation policy continues to connect Europeans with the world in a safe, competitive and sustainable manner. With a modern fleet of over 3,600 aircraft, A4E airlines carried over 718 million passengers in 2023 and served nearly 2,100 destinations. Each year, A4E members transport more than 5 million tons of vital goods and equipment to more than 360 destinations either by freighters or passenger aircraft. A4E is #Flyingforourfuture with our commitment to Europe and our call to action for incoming European policymakers. Find out more at www.flyingforourfuture.eu

About ACI EUROPE

ACI EUROPE is the European region of Airports Council International, the only worldwide professional association of airport operators. ACI EUROPE represents over 600 airports in 55 countries. Our members facilitate over 95% of commercial air traffic in Europe. Air transport supports 14 million jobs, generating €851 billion in European economic activity (5% of GDP). In response to the Climate Emergency, in June 2019 our members committed to achieving Net Zero carbon emissions for operations under their control by 2050, without offsetting. Based in Brussels, we lead and serve the European airport industry and maintain strong links with other ACI regions throughout the world. www.aci-europe.org

About ASD

ASD is the voice of the European Aerospace, Security and Defence Industries. Based in Brussels, the association's overall representation adds up to more than 4,000 companies, accounting for 98% of industry's total turnover and 92% of its total employment in Europe. ASD actively supports the competitive development of our industries in Europe and worldwide by advocating common positions and providing technical expertise to public institutions and member companies. For more, visit www.asd-europe.org and follow us on [LinkedIn](#).

About CANSO

CANSO - the Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation - is the global voice of the air traffic management (ATM) industry and is shaping our future skies. Our members support over 90% of the world's air traffic and include air navigation service providers, airspace users and operators, manufacturers and aviation industry suppliers. We raise the bar on global ATM performance by connecting the industry to share knowledge, expertise and innovation. www.canso.org

About ERA

Founded in 1980, European Regions Airline Association (ERA) is a non-profit trade association representing over 50 airlines plus around 150 other companies involved in European air transport and is the only association that bring together the entire spectrum of companies involved in European aviation. The association supports and defends the airline industry in providing safe, efficient and sustainable air connectivity to all regions of Europe. By lobbying European regulatory bodies on policy matters, ERA promotes and protects social responsibility, environmental sustainability and the development of regional economies and local communities. www.eraa.org

About DESTINATION 2050

Europe's aviation sector is collectively on board to lead the way in reducing aviation CO₂ emissions — making flying more sustainable for the long term. In February 2021, Europe's airlines, airports, civil aeronautics industry and air navigation service providers laid out a joint long-term vision along with concrete solutions to the complex challenge of reaching net-zero CO₂ emissions from all flights departing the EU, UK and EFTA by 2050. The independent report by the Royal Netherlands Aerospace Centre (NLR) and SEO Amsterdam Economics shows how a combination of actions from all stakeholders — including the EU and national governments — in four key areas could achieve substantial CO₂ emissions reductions in line with EU climate goals. These include: Improvements in aircraft and engine technologies (including hybrid, electric and hydrogen propulsion), using sustainable aviation fuels (SAFs) both for fixed- and rotary-wing platforms, implementing economic measures and improvements in air traffic management (ATM) and aircraft operations. The updated roadmap was released in February 2025. For more information, visit www.destination2050.eu



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