

Press Release

29 April 2022

ERA together with member Air Nostrum steer the discussion on short-haul flight bans and regional aviation's sustainability efforts in Europe

- Air Nostrum, in co-ordination with ERA, hosted a forum this week in Valencia to promote the sustainability efforts of regional aviation in Europe.
- Regional aviation's green transition was high on the agenda as well as industry technological developments, regulatory support for the industry and European airlines' efforts to decarbonise.

This week's Sustainable Regional Aviation Forum, hosted in Valencia by ERA member airline Air Nostrum in co-ordination with ERA, met with industry stakeholders to assess the reality of sustainability challenges for regional flying in Europe, which is essential for European connectivity, and aviation's path towards decarbonisation.

Carlos Bertomeu, Executive President, Air Nostrum opened the event commenting that aviation is a small part of the decarbonisation problem, although perceived by the public as a large part. He went on to say that the relative effort that is required of us as a sector is not proportional to our share of the problem, however we are going to be a large part of the solution.

With 80 per cent of visitors arriving to Spain by air, due to its geographical location, the potential risks to the Spanish economy and its tourism industry are high should European initiatives such as the banning of short-haul flights under 500 kilometres come to fruition. A shift to rail services on these short routes would not necessarily reduce the net carbon emissions, particularly because regional aircraft operating short-haul routes will lead the technology race as electronic and hydrogen-fuelled aircraft are developed. Air routes shorter than 500 kilometres represent 34 per cent of all intra-European routes. All routes must be studied case by case and other impacts must be taken into account in addition to CO₂ emissions. The entire industry is decarbonising with the aim of reaching carbon neutrality by 2050, with the first hybrid electric and hydrogen-powered aircraft available already in the 2030s.

This forum included participation from Isabel Maestre, Director of the Spanish Aviation Safety Agency, AESA; Flor Diaz, Head of Unit Aviation Policy, European Commission; Teresa Parejo, Director of Sustainability, Iberia; Javier Gandara, President, ALA; David Benito Astudillo, Air Transport Deputy Director, DGAC; Rafael Schvartzman, Regional Vice President, Europe, IATA; Juan Jose Montero, Director of Transport Area, Florence School of Regulation; Oscar Sanguino, President, SEPLA; Miguel Ángel Falcón, General Manager, Air Nostrum; Maria Jose Sanz, Quality and Environment Director, Air Nostrum; José Antonio Aznar, Environmental Director, ENAIRE; Silvia Lazcano, Head of Technologies Development and Partnerships, Airbus; Marta Sabin, Director of Market Strategy, ATR; Luis Enrique de la Iglesia, Certification Manager, DANTE Aeronautical and Javier Antúnez, Director of Biofuels, CEPASA.

The recent [study by Oxera](#), on how short-haul flights can provide effective and sustainable connectivity in Europe, was widely discussed, as well as [Destination 2050](#), that highlights the decisive joint actions needed to make net zero European aviation a reality by 2050, through a combination of four key measures working together at national, European and global levels.

* Founded in 1980, European Regions Airline Association (ERA) is a non-profit trade association representing around 57 airlines and 148 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.

Head office: Park House, 127 Guildford Road, Lightwater Surrey GU18 5RA, UK
Telephone: +44 (0)1276 856495 info@eraa.org www.eraa.org
European Regions Airline Association Limited is registered in England & Wales. Company No:8766102

Brussels office: ERA (European Regions Airline Association), Office 50.710, Eurocontrol, Rue de la Fusée, 96, 1130 Brussels, Belgium



ERA Director General Montserrat Barriga commented: “This event is a true example of our industry’s sustainability focus and commitment to decarbonise. We understand the issues, we understand the challenges and we understand the dedication that will be needed if we are to achieve our goals. Working collaboratively with all stakeholders that play a part in aviation is essential to ensure we minimise our environmental impact and ensure future regional connectivity remains intact for generations to come. Aviation has suffered the disastrous effects of the pandemic, and is now heavily impacted by the rocketing fuel prices and the consequences of the war in Ukraine, but we are continuing this sustainability journey until we reach net zero whilst providing vital air services.”

For more information, contact corp.comms@eraa.org

