

Press Release

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ERA's General Assembly underscores regional aviation's value in Europe

- Hundreds of aviation professionals gathered for the annual ERA General Assembly, this year taking place in Seville, Spain.
- Held from 8–10 October, the event welcomed more than 170 companies, including airline senior executives and industry suppliers from across Europe, as well as policymakers.

ERA has concluded its highly successful 2024 General Assembly in the vibrant city of Seville, bringing together leaders and key stakeholders from the regional aviation sector for insightful discussions, fruitful networking and engaging exhibitions.

In the first conference session, ERA airline CEOs highlighted their key challenges, including supply chain issues, rising costs and the economic and operational impacts of environmental regulations. All speakers stressed the importance of maintaining essential connectivity while balancing decarbonisation with financial sustainability. Additionally, the panel discussed recruitment and retention challenges, with a focus on the changing expectations of younger employees and a general shift in values since COVID-19.

Industry leaders also discussed the progress toward decarbonisation and the challenges as 2030 and 2050 targets approach. Efforts in air traffic management and operations, while the need for fleet renewal and new technologies were emphasised. Discussions on sustainable aviation fuel noted challenges like scarcity and rising costs, as well as the need for airport infrastructure to support many of these innovative solutions. An audience poll underscored the important role regional aviation plays in achieving net zero by 2050, with 80 per cent of the audience in agreement that ERA members will be the leaders of decarbonising short haul.

Montserrat Barriga, Director General, ERA, said: "This year's ERA General Assembly marked another pivotal moment in the association's ongoing mission to advocate for the vital role of regional aviation in connecting Europe's communities and economies. Showcasing the resilience and forward-thinking nature of the regional aviation sector is impressive. Here in Seville, we created the perfect environment for essential conversations, helping us drive progress towards a more sustainable and efficient future. As one speaker said, there is great optimism for our sector because we serve communities and that will never change"

Andrew Kelly, Director, ASL Airlines Ireland said: "The ERA General Assembly is a unique event, bringing together experts from airlines, OEMs and service providers to work together on the major challenges the industry faces. As an event, the General Assembly is inimitable and exceptional service that matches the requirements of airlines and businesses committed to Europe's regional aviation sector."

Jóhanna á Bergi, CEO, Atlantic Airways said: "Attending the ERA General Assembly is a fantastic opportunity to connect with industry leaders and peers, fostering valuable relationships and collaborations. Engaging in discussions on key issues, such as supply chain, sustainability and

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

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innovation in regional aviation offers a platform for sharing insights and gaining inspiration. By addressing these critical topics, we can collectively shape the future of the airline industry and drive meaningful change.”

Maarten Koopmans, Managing Director, KLM Cityhopper said: “It was great to moderate the panel on the road to sustainable aviation. It is encouraging to see which steps our community has taken already and also that the regional airline community is really leading the transition. We are not there yet and it will be tough, but the leadership within our community is taking responsibility and is moving the needle. It gives me confidence that we can and will create sustainable aviation.”

Jasmin Bajić, President and CEO, Croatia Airlines said: “At Croatia Airlines, we firmly believe that one of the key challenges in sustainable airline development is managing the dynamic growth of the industry and its impact on global climate change through CO₂ emissions. That’s why I was pleased to participate in the senior leadership panel focused on achieving our industry’s sustainability targets. Whilst the session highlighted there is much work to be done and many regulatory challenges ahead, it also underscored the clear commitment of regional aviation to sustainably serve Europe’s regions.”

Faye Malarkey Black, President and CEO, Regional Airline Association said: “Our lively talk with ERA’s airline and airport CEOs demonstrated the essential collaboration between ERA and our US association RAA and its benefit to our respective membership. Workforce development, fleet trends and capacity partnerships are important topics where we can learn from one another. Despite different regulators, competitive landscapes and even business models, our organisations share important supply company partners. Most importantly, we share a resolute commitment to connecting the world with safe, reliable regional air service.”

You can read more about the event on the [ERA website](#), see key takeaways on [LinkedIn](#) and download event images [here](#). For more information, please contact Becky Warburton, Editor Corporate Communications, on +44 (0)1276 485582 or by email at becky.warburton@eraa.org

