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## Growing Split in Europe's Airlines Over Climate Policy

*New research shows legacy airlines leading negative lobbying*

There's a growing divide between Europe's airlines when it comes to climate policy engagement, with legacy carriers more negative than their low-cost competitors, *new research* by climate think tank InfluenceMap shows.

The report draws on hundreds of pieces of evidence scored against Paris-aligned government and science-based benchmarks, as well as data from more than 10 Freedom of Information (FOI) requests from the European Commission and the UK Government.

While there has been broad improvement in the climate lobbying positions across the aviation sector in Europe since InfluenceMap's 2021 *report*, this updated research highlights the ongoing gap between the industry's top-line support for net zero emissions and its opposition to near-term policies designed to achieve that goal. The sector also continues to compare negatively with the wider corporate landscape in Europe.

The analysis shows low-cost airlines **easyJet** (C+), **Wizz Air** (C-), and **Ryanair** (D+) now score slightly higher than the legacy airlines within the European aviation sector on InfluenceMap's A-to-F system of measuring climate policy engagement.

By comparison, **Air France-KLM** (D), **International Airlines Group (IAG)** (D), and **Lufthansa** (D-) score the lowest, broadly matched by the European-focused industry group **Airlines for Europe (A4E)** (D) and the **International Air Transport Association (IATA)** (D-).

### CHANGE IN EUROPEAN AVIATION COMPANIES' AND ASSOCIATIONS' PERFORMANCE SCORES 2021-22

	INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS		LEGACY AIRLINES			LOW-COST AIRLINES			AIRLINE MANUFACTURERS	
										
2021	E+	E+	E+	E+	E+	E	D	D	D	D-
2022	D	D-	D	D-	D	D+	C+	C-	D+	D

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**InfluenceMap transport analyst Lucca Ewbank said:** "The aviation sector remains one of the key opponents of effective climate policy in Europe. However there have been some notable shifts within the industry during the past year - in particular from low-cost airlines which have been more vocal in support of some aspects of EU climate policy.

"This is contrast to the legacy airlines which have all stated top-line support for net zero by 2050, but are continuing to lobby against a broad range of policies that would help achieve that goal.

*"There is now a fairly clear divide between low-cost airlines and their legacy competitors when it comes to climate policy engagement in Europe."*

The report includes links to full company profiles, as well as key pieces of evidence which demonstrate the divide within the industry.

It shows how legacy airlines, such as **Air France-KLM** and **IAG**, have continued to push back against the inclusion in the EU ETS of all international flights departing Europe, arguing instead for climate policy to be enacted globally. In contrast, during the past year - for the first time - many low-cost European airlines, such as **easyJet** and **Ryanair**, have publicly supported this expansion.

The report also incorporates new FOI documents, which reveal new details on how the sector is pushing back on key climate policies. This includes:

- A newly released *document* obtained via FOI reveals that **IAG** urged the EU Commission in January 2022 to weaken the bloc's Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) mandate by limiting it to intra-EU flights and amending its phase-in timeline. This is despite the company *publicly committing to power 10% of its own flights with SAF by 2030*.
- The European airline sector has actively lobbied against an EU kerosene tax, including a newly released *email* from **Air France-KLM** to the EU Commission in October 2021 appearing to oppose such a tax.
- Newly released FOI documents from a June 2021 consultation process reveal opposition to the UK's Air Passenger Duty from airline groups including *easyJet, IATA, IAG, Ryanair, and Wizz Air*. They also show airlines including *Ryanair, American Airlines, and IAG* appearing to fight back against a frequent flyer levy in the UK.

In addition, the report highlights the industry's pushback against the need for modal shift or demand management policies.

Despite the IPCC's recent recommendation for such measures, the sector continues to use a range of arguments to defend ongoing air travel, including its *economic benefits, equality of access, and the ability of aviation to grow sustainably*. Even the highest scoring airline - easyJet - has *pushed back* on the need for modal shift policies.

The sector also commissioned a *study* which belittled the emissions savings of transitioning to rail transport.

*Full report is available here*

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### **About InfluenceMap**

InfluenceMap is a London-based think tank providing data driven analysis to investors, corporations and the media on issues related to energy and climate change. Our metrics for measuring corporate influence over climate policy are used by investors, including the global Climate Action 100+ investor engagement process.