Press release | 06.11.2012

Airports and noise

MEPs ground plans to liberalise airport services but fail to address citizens' concerns on noise

The European Parliament's transport committee today voted on EU legislation dealing with airports, including noise and ground-handling. The Greens welcomed the vote to reject the proposed liberalisation of ground-handling services. However, the group regrets the priority given to expanding airport capacity, at the expense of citizens' interests, social standards and the environment, under the 'airport package'. After the vote, Green transport spokesperson **Eva Lichtenberger** stated:

"MEPs have today grounded plans from the European Commission to liberalise airport ground-handling services. The proposals to further liberalise the sector but failed to address concerns with social and employment standards for workers in airports, and the Greens welcome today's vote to reject this approach, which sends a strong signal against social dumping.

"Bad working conditions for ground-handlers undermine the quality of services, with unacceptable consequences on safety and security. Further undermining working conditions is against the interests of both workers and passengers.

"Regrettably the overarching focus of the legislation on airport operation is aimed at boosting airport capacity, which is ultimately at odds with citizens' concerns on noise and quality of life, as well as being bad for the environment. While MEPs have amended some aspects of the draft legislation, the proposed rules remain bad news for those living near to airports and for the environment.

"Despite some cosmetic changes, the proposed rules on airport noise still foresee a role for the EU Commission in decision-making on flight plans, allowing the Commission to intervene to oppose operating restrictions at airports. For example, airports that want to introduce nighttime flight bans, which are clearly in the interests of local citizens, could be challenged by the Commission. This approach is designed to favour increasing EU airport capacity and comes at the expense of good regional practice for airport noise reduction. The Greens are also critical of the failure to align this legislation on 'operational restrictions' with the review of EU rules on 'ambient noise' or noise pollution.

"In general, the 'airports package' is aimed at expanding air capacity and will further exacerbate the unfair competitive advantage of air transport over other more sustainable forms of transport, which air transport already benefits from due to subsidies and exemptions from fuel tax and VAT."

Recommended

Press release

karsten-wurth-unsplash



Court upholds EU climate rules - EU must now show lead…

12.11.2026

Opinion

© Christian Kaufmann



[Healthy food starts with healthy farming. Europe must …]

04.11.2026

Press release

@gettysignature



[U-turn by Conservatives and Social Democrats Puts Jobs…]

04.11.2026

Press release

Image by joakant from Pixabay



[The World must triple efforts to save nature]

29.10.2026

Please share

- E-Mail