

Why the extra “free” bag just doesn’t fly

Let’s unpack what’s really inside the European Parliament’s “free” cabin bag

1 More expensive airfare

A mandatory extra bag raises basic fares for everyone – even for those who don’t want a second bag.



Most recent flyers prefer a lower base fare with one small bag included.¹

28% already travel

with just one small bag under the seat¹

2 More boarding delays

Aircraft cabins simply can’t fit everyone’s extra bag.

A typical 190-seat plane fits about

90 large cabin bags

meaning more waiting to load excess bags in the hold.



Only 20% of passengers are willing to wait longer for an extra ‘free’ bag¹

3 Heavier flights = higher emissions

More weight means more fuel burn – and more CO₂ emitted.

Every extra kilogram increases fuel consumption. The mandatory extra bag could add over **1.6 tonnes** per short-haul flight² – contradicting airlines’ efforts to go net zero.



What actually works

All A4E airlines now apply an EU-wide standard for the personal bags (40 × 30 × 15 cm) already included in every basic fare. This is the minimum a passenger can expect to bring on board, and many airlines have larger allowances.



1. [YouGov survey](#) commissioned by Airlines for Europe (A4E), 25 Sept–2 Oct 2025, 6,275 respondents across Austria, Belgium, France, Germany and Spain.

2. Financial Times, [“EU’s extra free cabin bag will weigh on airline passengers”](#), 19 July 2025.