

Airlines demonstrate pivotal role increased SAF uptake and Single European Sky implementation would have in reducing CO₂ emissions

- On the 10th anniversary of the EU's 'Connecting Europe Days'¹ event, ten regularly scheduled A4E flights² departing from Lyon Saint Exupéry Airport are uplifting a 30% blend of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) produced and supplied by TotalEnergies, single-handedly reducing emissions from these flights by 27%³ compared to using conventional jet fuel.
- Increased SAF uptake will play a key role in airlines' ability to reach Europe's Green Deal climate goals and the sector's own 2050 net zero emissions targets.
- Select flights to Lyon⁴ will also put the Single European Sky into early action, securing even further CO₂ savings thanks to optimised flight routings in collaboration with the Single European Sky's ATM Research (SESAR)'s ALBATROSS project.
- EU countries must implement the Single European Sky to avoid expensive sustainable aviation fuels being wasted on inefficient routings.

Lyon, France, 28 June 2022 – Europe's airlines are demonstrating their continued commitment to sustainable air transport by operating dedicated flights with sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) during the European Commission's 'Connecting Europe Days' – (CED) which kicks off at Lyon Saint Exupéry Airport today with the "[Connecting Europe by Air: the Green Transformation](#)" event. Over 2,000 conference participants are expected to attend the 10th anniversary of these events, including hundreds of youth from across Europe*.

A4E airlines including Air France, easyJet, KLM, Lufthansa, Transavia and Vueling are each uplifting 30% SAF on a total of ten flights departing from Lyon today, resulting in a CO₂ emissions reduction of 27% per flight compared to conventional fuel use. Increased SAF uptake has been proven to be the most effective means to decarbonise aviation in the near term, and for long-haul flights until newer technologies, such as hydrogen, become available.

In addition, multiple flights to the conference will also operate with sustainable aviation fuel onboard and feature further sustainability measures currently in place today, including reduced single-use plastics, crew uniforms made from recycled plastic bottles, sustainable catering and further off-setting of emissions through certified climate projects.

Airlines will also showcase the emissions reduction benefits which would result if Member States would stop blocking -- and start implementing the Single European Sky, with flights to Lyon following

¹ See: [connectingeuropedays \(europa.eu\)](https://connectingeuropedays.europa.eu)

²Flights on 28 June include: EasyJet: Flights EJU4434 from Lisbon to Lyon; Lyon to Gatwick and Lyon to Toulouse; Lufthansa:Flight LH1076 from Frankfurt to Lyon and flight LH1077 from Lyon to Frankfurt; Air France flights AF1594 from Lyon to Brest and AF1574 from Lyon to Pau; KLM flight KL1415 from Amsterdam to Lyon, flights KL1416 and KL1418 from Lyon to Amsterdam; Transavia flight TO7770 from Lyon to Porto; Vueling flight VY1220 from Barcelona to Lyon and flight VY1221 from Lyon to Barcelona. See also [Connecting Europe by Air – the Green Transformation \(europa.eu\)](#) for more information.

³ Source: Total Energies. Neat SAF reduces emissions by 91.2% over its fossil-based equivalent. Consequently, 30% SAF reduces CO₂ emissions by 27% over conventional fuel.

⁴Vueling flight VY1220, KLM flight KL1415, Lufthansa flight LH1076 and easyJet flight EJU4434



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unrestricted, fully optimised routings as part of SESAR's ALBATROSS project. ALBATROSS is currently conducting hundreds of gate-to-gate flight trials across Europe to demonstrate how optimised ATM operations and new technologies can mitigate aviation's environmental footprint and maximise emissions reductions, with the goal to reduce average CO₂ emissions per flight by 5-10% (0.8-1.6 tonnes) by 2035 through enhanced cooperation.

"Despite the current challenges our sector is facing, operationally in the wake of the global pandemic, geopolitically and with rising costs – airlines' commitment to sustainable air transport is stronger than ever. Today, under real operational conditions, we've demonstrated that increased SAF uptake and more efficient air traffic management in Europe can reduce CO₂ emissions by more than 30% per flight. Now we need policy-makers to do their part in helping to make SAF more accessible and affordable – but equally, we need national governments to finally implement the Single European Sky, to avoid expensive fuels from being wasted on inefficient routings", said Thomas Reynaert, Managing Director, Airlines for Europe (A4E).

"As today's event shows, aviation's decarbonisation cannot be achieved by airlines acting alone. It requires the collective efforts of many different players, including policy-makers and suppliers, so that all European travellers can benefit – especially the younger generation of flyers, who expect nothing less from us", Reynaert added.

A4E airlines' involvement in Connecting Europe Days includes:

Air France-KLM Group

As demonstrated by its "Destination Sustainability" program, Air France-KLM Group aims to be a European leader in sustainable aviation. To illustrate its strong commitment, the Air France-KLM Group airlines are mobilizing on the occasion of the "Connecting Europe Days". Five flights operated by Air France, KLM and Transavia will fly to their destinations carrying 30% sustainable aviation fuel onboard. This marks the first time that Transavia France operates with SAF on any of its flights, and it is the first time that all carriers of the Air France-KLM Group carry SAF on the same day. Finally, Air France-KLM representatives will participate in panel discussions at the event. Through these actions, AF-KLM Group carriers want to demonstrate that sustainability is not an option, but a necessity -- also for aviation, and the Group remains committed to its efforts.

easyJet

easyJet's flight EJU4434 from Lisbon to Lyon will follow a specifically designed, optimised flight plan to showcase the potential for significant CO₂ savings if the Single European Sky was implemented. Sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) will be uplifted at Lyon for the return flight and two other flights departing Lyon that day. Each of easyJet's flights is already 100% offset, at no cost to its customers, and the airline only invests in projects that are certified by the highest standards. As with all its flights, the airline operates a modern fleet of aircraft efficiently and aim to fill most of its seats to reduce CO₂ emissions per passenger. Ultimately, easyJet has committed to Race to Zero and achieving net-zero CO₂ emissions by 2050, with a focus on the development of innovative, zero carbon emissions technology. The airline has also introduced new crew uniforms made from recycled plastic bottles. This comes in addition to the 36 million single-use plastic items that were already eliminated from inflight operations. The new uniforms will be on display at the Destination 2050 stand at the Connecting Europe by Air: The Green Transformation event. In addition, one of



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easyJet's young Italian pilots who is also pursuing a PhD focussing on sustainability and technological innovation in aviation, will participate in the Youth Panel.

Lufthansa

With its flight LH1076 from Frankfurt to Lyon, Lufthansa shows what can be done already today to fly as sustainable as possible. The flight will be set carbon-neutral: The CO₂ emissions will be offset with 50% SAF and 50% using high quality carbon offset projects. Lufthansa will also uplift SAF in Lyon for the return flight to Frankfurt. With regards to operational efficiency, the use of the SESAR ALBATROSS allows for particularly efficient approach procedures. The Lufthansa Group is also constantly investing in fleet modernisation, and with the A320neo will showcase one of the most fuel efficient aircraft of its type of which Lufthansa was the launching customer. Lufthansa has also made a conscious effort to create a sustainable and attractive on-board catering service with many fresh products. Step by step, single-use plastic articles are to be replaced by sustainable materials, and PET bottles are recycled in a so-called closed loop in Frankfurt, meaning from the recycled raw material, new PET bottles will be produced.

Vueling

Part of International Airlines Group (IAG), Vueling will operate two dedicated flights to the Connecting Europe Days events between Barcelona and Lyon Saint Exupéry Airport on 28 June with around 20 invited students from Barcelona University (UB) and Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) onboard. The airline has managed to reduce around 63% of the CO₂ emissions from these flights thanks to the purchase of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) equivalent to the 50% of required fuel for the route Barcelona to Lyon and produced by Repsol, and a 30% SAF uptake by Total Energies on the return flight to Barcelona. It has also flown an optimised flight plan route thanks to the coordination with the ALBATROSS Team, and with a new generation Airbus A320neo. With this action, Vueling demonstrates that aviation can improve considerably if regulators put the focus on the development of sustainable aviation fuels and airspace efficiency in line with the Single European Sky strategy.

Note to editors:

- This event marks the tenth anniversary of the TEN-T-DAYS (now known as 'Connecting Europe Days' -- and has a special focus on young European travellers, given that 2022 is the European Year of Youth.

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About A4E (Airlines for Europe): Airlines for Europe (A4E) is Europe's largest airline association, based in Brussels. A4E works with policy makers to ensure aviation policy continues to connect Europeans with the world in a safe, competitive and sustainable manner. As a key initiator of aviation's Destination 2050 roadmap, A4E and its 16 members committed to achieve Net Zero carbon emissions for their own operations by 2050. With a modern fleet of over 3,200 aircraft, A4E airlines carried 270 million passengers in 2021 -- down from 700 million in 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Each year, A4E members with air cargo and mail activities transport more than 3.7 million tons of goods, life-saving vaccines and essential medical equipment to more than 360 destinations either by freighters or passenger aircraft. Follow us on Twitter @A4Europe.



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About the ALBATROSS very large-scale demonstration: Launched in February 2021, the SESAR 3 JU very-large scale project, ALBATROSS, is conducting a series of gate-to-gate live flight trials across Europe with a view to demonstrating the feasibility of implementing more energy-efficient flights by combining several technical and operational innovations, known as SESAR Solutions. ALBATROSS follows a holistic approach by covering all flight phases, directly involving all relevant stakeholder groups (such as airlines, ANSPs, network managers, airports and industry) and addressing both operational and technological aspects of aviation and air traffic management. Many solutions are being put into practice during the flight demonstrations, from new precision approach procedures to continuous climb and descent, a more dynamic management of necessary airspace constraints, sustainable taxiing and sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) usage. Find out more about the demonstration and the goal of making energy-efficient flying the norm in the future, ensuring maximum gains in fuel and emission reduction, without impacting the passenger experience. For more information, visit www.sesarju.eu/projects/albatross

About the SESAR 3 Joint Undertaking: The SESAR 3 Joint Undertaking is an institutionalised European partnership between private and public sector partners set up to accelerate through research and innovation the delivery of the Digital European Sky. To do so, it is harnessing, developing and accelerating the takeup of the most cutting-edge technological solutions to manage conventional aircraft, drones, air taxis and vehicles flying at higher altitudes. The SESAR 3 JU partnership brings together the EU, Eurocontrol, and more than 50 organisations covering the entire aviation value chain, from airports, airspace users of all categories, air navigation service providers, drone operators and service providers, the manufacturing industry and scientific community. The partnership also works closely with the regulatory and standardisation bodies, notably EASA and Eurocae, as well as key stakeholders, such professional staff organisations, the space and military communities and global partners. For more information, visit www.sesarju.eu

About SESAR Deployment Manager: The Single European Sky's ATM Research project, "SESAR", is one of the most ambitious modernisation projects launched by the European Union, contributing to the implementation of the Single European Sky. SESAR's goal is to define, develop and deploy the technological solutions needed to increase the performance and digitalisation of Europe's ATM system in the most cost-, flight-efficient and environmentally friendly conditions. Today, more than seven years after the beginning of this deployment phase in 2014, the modernisation of the European ATM systems and infrastructure is an operational reality with 230 projects in operation and 111 ongoing. More importantly, it is delivering its expected performance benefits to the aviation community, its stakeholders and in turn to European passengers, citizens, economy and environment benefitting the #EUGreenDeal.