


Procedure file

| Basic information | | |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| INI - Own-initiative procedure | 2008/2136(INI) | Procedure completed |
| Developing a common aviation area with Israel | | |
| Subject | | |
| 3.20.01 Air transport and air freight | | |
| 3.20.01.01 Air safety | | |
| 6.40.05.06 Relations with the countries of the Middle East | | |
| 6.40.15 European neighbourhood policy | | |
| Geographical area | | |
| Israel | | |

| Key players | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---|------------|
| European Parliament | Committee responsible | Rapporteur | Appointed |
| | TRAN Transport and Tourism | | 20/11/2007 |
| | | NI ROMAGNOLI Luca | |
| | Committee for opinion | Rapporteur for opinion | Appointed |
| | AFET Foreign Affairs | The committee decided not to give an opinion. | |
| European Commission | Commission DG | Commissioner | |
| | Energy and Transport | TAJANI Antonio | |

| Key events | | | |
|------------|--|---|---------|
| 09/11/2007 | Non-legislative basic document published | COM(2007)0691 | Summary |
| 22/05/2008 | Committee referral announced in Parliament | | |
| 17/02/2009 | Vote in committee | | Summary |
| 23/02/2009 | Committee report tabled for plenary | A6-0090/2009 | |
| 12/03/2009 | Results of vote in Parliament |  | |
| 12/03/2009 | Decision by Parliament | T6-0127/2009 | Summary |
| 12/03/2009 | End of procedure in Parliament | | |

| Technical information | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Procedure reference | 2008/2136(INI) |
| Procedure type | INI - Own-initiative procedure |
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|----------------------------|---|
| Procedure subtype | Initiative |
| Legal basis | Rules of Procedure EP 54; Rules of Procedure EP 54-p4 |
| Stage reached in procedure | Procedure completed |
| Committee dossier | TRAN/6/62896 |

Documentation gateway

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|---|-------------------------------|------------|----|---------|
| Non-legislative basic document | COM(2007)0691 | 09/11/2007 | EC | Summary |
| Committee draft report | PE416.450 | 01/12/2008 | EP | |
| Amendments tabled in committee | PE418.432 | 27/01/2009 | EP | |
| Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading | A6-0090/2009 | 23/02/2009 | EP | |
| Text adopted by Parliament, single reading | T6-0127/2009 | 12/03/2009 | EP | Summary |
| Commission response to text adopted in plenary | SP(2009)3244 | 06/10/2009 | EC | |

Developing a common aviation area with Israel

In 2005 the Commission prepared a Communication on 'Developing an agenda for the Community's external aviation policy', the purpose of which is to forge aviation links with the EU's partners along its southern and eastern flank. The main objective of the policy is to share the same market rules through a 'Common Aviation Area'.

The specific purpose of this Communication is to seek Council approval for a comprehensive agreement on a Common Aviation Area with Israel that combines market opening and regulatory cooperation with improved convergence in priority areas such as safety, security, environmental protection and the application of state aid/competition rules.

The EU is the largest trading partner of Israel, which in turn is one of the EU's biggest trading partners in the Euromed area, with a total trade amounting to almost EUR 23 billion in 2005. As far as aviation is concerned, the EU and Israeli markets are closely linked. The capacity provided in the total EU-Israel market is evenly split between Community and Israeli air carriers - due in large part to the bilateral air services agreements between the Member States and Israel.

The report points to a number of benefits in the creation of a Common Aviation Area with Israel. For example, until now, the EU Member States have negotiated restrictive bilateral air service agreements with Israel resulting in a reduced level of market opening and strict market conditions for operators. The current system of bilateral air service agreements distorts patterns of traffic and may disadvantage several Community air carriers as well as consumers in some Member States. A Community level aviation agreement, on the other hand, would establish a level playing field for all Community air carriers and allow passengers in all Member States to benefit from similar conditions and increased traffic between the EU and Israel.

The Common Aviation Agreement with Israel will bring about a number of economic benefits. Market openings should offer EU and Israeli passengers significant improvements. The number of direct connections between the EU and Israel as well as the overall number of flights will increase trade and tourism flows significantly. An important share of the economic benefits is expected to be reaped by the European airline industry and the wider European economy. Further, the Common Aviation Area will help create substantial new market opportunities for those EU air carriers that would like to begin air operations with Israel but who, currently, do not have the right to do so. Economies of scale will also be realised by integrating Israeli carriers into existing alliances with Community air carriers.

For its part, Israel has declared its readiness to begin negotiations on the development of a Common Aviation Area with the EU. This commitment highlights Israel's ability and capacity to harmonise aviation standards with those of the EU, thereby establishing a solid legal framework for aviation relations. Once approved the agreement will help establish an ambitious framework that integrates wider aviation issues such as regulatory co-operation with cooperation on aviation safety, security, air traffic management, RT&D as well as industrial cooperation.

In light of the above, the Commission proposes that the Council authorise the Commission to begin negotiations with Israel as soon as possible. The Commission will work closely together with the Member States and all relevant stakeholders to further develop and achieve the objectives set out in the proposed Council Decision.

Developing a common aviation area with Israel

The Committee on Transport and Tourism Luca ROMAGNOLI (NI, IT) on developing a Common Aviation Area with Israel in response to the Commission Communication on the subject. It recalls that Israel is the most important aviation market in the Middle East with a strong growth potential, and that it has a strategic position as a bridge between Europe and the Middle East and towards regions which are further away.

The committee welcomes the commencement of the negotiations with Israel on a comprehensive air transport agreement. It stresses the importance of the agreement in terms of creating the conditions for extending the Common Aviation Area. Members consider that the agreement:

- should not limit the level of market access already achieved in the existing bilateral agreements;

- should also be balanced in terms of market access. Furthermore market opening needs to be phased, reciprocal and sustainable;
- should provide for stringent air safety and security rules.

Members emphasise that the opening-up of markets must always follow regulatory convergence with regard to safety, security, environmental, State aid and competition law aspects, and also the employment rights of the workers and that the degree of liberalisation has to be linked to the degree to which a level playing field is achieved in these areas.

They recognise that for long and medium haul air routes, the aviation sector is the fastest way to connect countries, places and people and will continue to be the most attractive means of transport in terms of speed and cost in the future. They also recognise the important contribution of the aviation sector in creating work, both directly and indirectly, particularly linking places of the world where no other competitive means of transport is now available. Nonetheless they encourage the use and development of inter-modality and other means of transport.

The aviation sector has certain negative environmental effects, in particular as a source of noise and as a significant contributor to pollutant emissions. Members therefore consider it essential that the agreement allows for the possibility to take action within the EU with respect to environmental issues in order to mitigate the impact of aviation on water, air quality and noise levels.

With regard to the negotiations themselves, Members stressed that these should be carried out in close cooperation with the Member States, given that they have the necessary expertise and experience to assist with such negotiations. The Commission is called upon to ensure that the Parliament and all relevant stakeholders are fully informed and consulted throughout the negotiations.

Developing a common aviation area with Israel

The European Parliament adopted, by 455 votes to 62 with 54 abstentions, a resolution on developing a Common Aviation Area with Israel in response to the Commission Communication on the subject.

It recalls that Israel is the most important aviation market in the Middle East with a strong growth potential, and that it has a strategic position as a bridge between Europe and the Middle East and towards regions which are further away.

Parliament welcomes the commencement of the negotiations with Israel on a comprehensive air transport agreement. It stresses the importance of the agreement in terms of creating the conditions for extending the Common Aviation Area. Members consider that the agreement:

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