

# EUROPEAN CONSUMER ASSOCIATIONS BLAME 17 AIRLINES FOR GREENWASHING



The European consumer organization BEUC and 22 member associations from 18 countries have filed a complaint with the European Commission and the Network of Consumer Protection Authorities (CPC) against 17 airlines for misleading climate claims or 'greenwashing.'

The joint statement, released by the consumer and user association CECU, highlights that **airlines make climate-related marketing claims in which they ask consumers to offset or neutralize the CO2 emissions of their flights.**

BEUC stated that these practices are considered misleading and deceptive to consumers and violate EU rules on fair commercial practices. They also added that these practices amount to greenwashing.

The 17 airlines are Air Baltic, Air Dolomiti, Air France, Austrian, Brussels Airlines, Eurowings, Finnair, KLM, Lufthansa, Norwegian, Ryanair, SAS, SWISS, TAP, Volotea, Vueling, and Wizz Air.

## Call on the Airlines to Stop Cheating

In addition, the associations jointly urge the authorities to send a clear and strong signal to airlines and the aviation sector to "stop misleading consumers with climate-related commercial claims."

"Airlines must be transparent that flying is not sustainable and will not be sustainable in the foreseeable future," the statement adds.

According to BEUC's statement, if airlines make false claims and ask customers to pay extra fees, the authorities should make the airlines refund the customers.

## Unfair Airline Practices

As examples of misleading statements, the associations have cited claims that "the payment of additional credits can offset or neutralize the CO2 emissions of a flight" as objectively misleading because "the climate benefits of offsetting activities are highly uncertain."

Furthermore, BEUC has denounced that airlines mislead consumers by "charging them more" to contribute to Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) development. **However, the fuels currently available are not suitable for use in the market, and the EU has implemented legislation with low targets for their help in aviation fuel.**

On the other hand, consumer organizations have criticized the idea that air transport can be considered sustainable, responsible, and environmentally friendly. They argue that the current strategies employed by the aviation industry cannot eliminate greenhouse gas emissions.

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