



Civil Aviation and the Sustainable Development Goals

The Aviation industry is a major driver of economic growth and social development. Air transport which is an arm of the industry is one of the fastest modes of public transport which connects countries, cultures, and enriches the lives of many. Air transport allows people from different countries to cross international boundaries for personal, business, medical, and tourism purposes. According to estimates provided by the United Nations, the International Civil Aviation network carries over 4 billion passengers annually. The Aviation industry also accounts for almost 65.5 million jobs with over 10 million women and men working within the industry to ensure 120,000 flights and 12 million passengers are transported safely to their destinations on a daily basis. Aviation is also central to international trade. The movement of goods across locations all over the world has been facilitated by the industry and this is essential to economic growth, particularly in developing countries. With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the role of the aviation industry as vital to global connectivity has become more relevant and it is also viewed as an enabler of global peace and prosperity.

The contributions of the aviation industry to sustainable development:

- Aviation facilitates the delivery of humanitarian aid to victims of natural disasters and war. Over 35,000 tonnes of food and commodities were delivered by air to victims of floods, conflict, and health crises in 2019.
- Aviation promotes access to vital medical supplies particularly in remote communities. Many drugs and vaccines need to be used quickly and transported in a strict temperature-controlled environment and air transport is the ideal mode of transportation.
- Over 4 million students travel abroad to study each year and many use air transportation.
- More than 40,000 commercial flights have already taken place on sustainable aviation fuel and this figure is projected to rise. These sustainable fuels are 80% less carbon-intensive than traditional fossil-based jet fuel.
- Around 2.7 trillion dollars in global economic activity can be traced to the aviation industry.
- Air transport can foster innovation by encouraging effective networking and collaboration between companies located across the world.
- Aviation connects populations through integrated transport links. Around 17,370 unique departure and arrival routes are served by the world's airlines.
- The movement of goods and services will help reduce inequality amongst countries and individuals.
- Airlines and manufacturers work closely together to recycle aircraft at the end of their service. 90 percent of the aircraft by weight can be recycled and this is vital to a circular economy.
- Aviation connects tourists to destinations that rely heavily on healthy marine ecosystems to drive economic growth.

Actions around the world:

- The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) provides effective passenger and light cargo transport for the humanitarian community: [Learn more](#)
- Medical Air Service offering comprehensive medical air services at Kotoka International Airport: [Learn more](#)
- Air Charter Services - delivering humanitarian aid to the places that need it: [Learn more](#)