

Aviation : Antonio Tajani confirms the importance of the Single European Sky

The Vice-president of the European Commission, Antonio Tajani, is visiting today the 100th edition of the Paris Air Show.

The Vice-President Tajani said: “During my visit of the Air Show, I have seen the strong innovation capability of the whole actors of the air transport. These technologies will definitely contribute to the concretisation of the objectives of the Single European Sky in 2020. Despite the current economical crisis, I encourage the industry to accelerate the implementation of the already the existing technologies so to benefit from them as soon as possible”.

Today, Europe must face a situation in which the air traffic, even if it is punctually decreasing due to the international economical crisis, will restart and pursue its growth. Moreover, the actual European air traffic management system, fragmented and based on technologies from the fifties, won't be able to face this growth. Finally, the cost of air transport services in Europe has to be significantly reduced to sustain the comparison with the other Regions of the World.

In order to face this situation, the European Commission combines two solutions: harmonization and technology. It is the essence of the Single European Sky initiative launched by the European Union. Europe acts by creating common rules, harmonized procedures, and by coordinating ambitious technological initiatives like SESAR and NextGen into which the European industry brings decisive contributions. For the first time in Europe, the Single European Sky initiative considers the aviation in a global way, with all its components and its diversity. The “unmanned air vehicles” (UAV), extremely visible at the Paris Air Show, are one illustration amongst others of the future diversity of the Single Sky : without challenging the safety, the Single Sky needs to accommodate the smooth integration of these aircrafts without pilot in the air traffic, and foster the civil development of their civil applications (cargo, maritime surveillance, borders surveillance, forests surveillance or important events monitoring), and the development of induced markets and, thus, employment opportunities.

The Single European Sky initiative should also, and in the short-term, bring tangible benefits to the European citizens, particularly by accelerating the deployment of existing technologies that will increase the environmental performances of air transport while further re-enforcing flights safety.

It is in this spirit that the Vice-President Tajani has requested the SESAR Joint Undertaking to start quickly a wide-scale testing campaign over the South Atlantic Region where the airlines don't benefit today of a real-time surveillance by the air traffic controllers. This testing campaign will allow to confirm the positive impact of space based technologies when used for navigation, communication, surveillance, but also search and rescue in remote areas.