

## Dutch aviation taxes highest in EU, say critics

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Dhaka: The Netherlands is set to raise aviation taxes from January 1, 2026, in a move expected to generate nearly €250 million in short-term revenue and €1.1 billion annually in the long run.

Critics warn the changes will make the country the most expensive EU destination for air travel.

The proposed 2.9pc increase will see the standard Dutch air passenger tax rise from €29.40 to €30.25, according to the Royal Dutch Airline Traffic Association (ANVR).

While the government says the hike supports environmental protection and sustainable aviation, industry stakeholders and consumer advocates argue it will undermine climate efforts and make flying less accessible.

The bigger concern, critics say, is a tiered tax system planned for 2027, which will charge based on flight distance. Under the proposal: Short-

haul flights (under 2,000 km): no change, Medium-haul (2,000–5,000 km): €47 tax, Long-haul (over 5,500 km): €70.86 per passenger.

Amsterdam's Schiphol airport, recently ranked Europe's second-best for direct connectivity by ACI Europe, could be impacted by the new structure.

Director general, Olivier Jankovec, called the move "short-term political thinking," arguing that aviation taxes "divert resources from the massive investments needed to reach net-zero" and "penalise consumers."

Airlines for Europe (A4E) Managing Director Ourania Georgoutsakou says the Dutch tax hikes "serve neither the passenger nor the climate," warning they will harm tourism and business by pushing travelers to other destinations.

KLM CEO adds the Netherlands is now "the most expensive country in the EU for air travel, no matter the distance." However, it's unclear if KLM's assessment factors in recent tax increases in Belgium or Germany's similar tiered system.

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