

1799 Come Fly With Me (passed 19 November 2015)

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Union Notes

1. That a number of societies have recently been informed of an existing UUEAS policy – the Sustainable Transport Policy after organising trips to Western Europe on which they intended to fly.
2. That ‘sustainability’ is a value of the Student Union.
3. That UUEAS have repeatedly passed policies supporting students fighting climate change in a variety of different ways, including by cutting down on the amount of flights students take on trips.
4. The initial Sustainable Transport Policy lists in a footnote the following countries as being restricted for clubs and societies flights: ‘Belgium, Eire, France, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Lichtenstein, Austria, Spain, Portugal, Andorra, Italy and San Marino.’

Union Believes

1. That societies use trips abroad to expand the horizons of their members and offer opportunities that are often blocked off in later life due to jobs and monetary issues.
2. That whilst environmental issues are important and tackling climate change should be a top priority for institutions, this should not be at the expense of the ability of members to gain life-enhancing skills.
3. That journeys by coach or train can, in some instances, be significantly more expensive and lengthier than flights.
4. That in some instances, restricting the ability of a club or society to fly to a Western European country would significantly hamper the ability of that group to organise such a trip.
5. That the essence and intention of the original ‘Sustainable Transport Policy’ is an effective and appropriate way of reducing the environmental impacts of the Student Union, although its communication and some of its application is poor.
6. That some of the countries listed in the original policy do not realistically constitute Western Europe and prohibiting flights to these countries would be detrimental to the development of our clubs and societies and their members. ¹
7. It is important that there is a ‘get out clause’ in the policy, ensuring that clubs and societies are still able to fly to these countries if there are legitimate reasons for doing so, as is outlined in the original policy. ²

Union Resolves:

1. To amend the footnote to resolves 3 of policy 1285 Sustainable Transport Policy to read: ‘For the terms of this policy, Western Europe is taken to include the following countries: Belgium, Eire, Northern France (North of Lyon), the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Western Germany (North and West of Nuremberg)’
2. To mandate the Activities and Opportunities Officer to ensure that this policy, including the ‘get out clause’, is effectively communicated to all existing clubs and societies’

¹ These countries would be Denmark, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Austria, Spain, Portugal, Andorra, Italy and San Marino.

² Such reasons could include, but not be limited to – excessive additional costs accrued by travelling by means other than flight, excessive time required to travel by other means, accessibility needs, lack of availability of required transport.

committees, and to ensure that this policy is passed on to new committees through handovers, training or other such means.
