

Open Skies Air Transport Agreements

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What are Open Skies Agreements? Open Skies agreements are a form of air transport agreement that the U.S. government negotiates with foreign government partners to provide rights for airlines to offer international passenger and cargo services. They are pro-consumer, pro-competition, and pro-growth. As such, Open Skies Agreements promote increased travel and trade, spur the creation of high-quality jobs, and facilitate broad economic growth. Their provisions include reciprocal obligations to eliminate government intervention in commercial air carrier decisions about routes, capacity, frequencies, and pricing, thereby freeing airlines to provide more affordable, convenient, and efficient air services to consumers and shippers. Open Skies agreements improve flexibility for airline operations, expand cooperative marketing opportunities between airlines, enable global express delivery cargo networks, liberalize charter regulations, and commit governments to high standards of aviation safety and security.

Growth in Open Skies Partnerships: Since 1992, the United States has established Open Skies with over 125 foreign partners. Open Skies agreements recently brought into force include those with Belize, the Republic of Guinea, Grenada, Namibia, and Sint Maarten (Kingdom of the Netherlands). We have also expanded opportunities under existing Open Skies agreements with Japan and Kenya and completed negotiations on new Open Skies agreements with The Bahamas, Belarus, Haiti, Kazakhstan, and the United Kingdom. Over 70 percent of international departures from the United States now fly to Open Skies partners. We have Open Skies with countries at all levels of economic development, including major economies like Brazil, India, and South Korea as well as smaller countries like Brunei, Cabo Verde, and Rwanda. Our agreement with the European Union liberalized one of the world's largest international aviation markets. Texts of Open Skies agreements, other air transport agreements, and other documents are available online: <https://www.state.gov/civil-air-transport-agreements>.

Impact and Enforcement: Our goal is to provide beneficial results for as many U.S. stakeholders as possible. Open Skies international aviation policy has greatly benefitted the American traveling public, airline industry, cities, airports, and airplane manufacturers through expanded growth and jobs as demonstrated by the expansion of direct international connections to cities like Denver, Detroit, Las Vegas, Memphis, Minneapolis, Orlando, Portland, and Salt Lake City. The Brookings Institution estimated in 2015 that Open Skies agreements yield approximately \$4 billion in annual economic gains to consumers. U.S. policy also seeks a level playing field on which U.S. airlines and workers can exercise all rights under existing agreements. The Department of State consults regularly with industry stakeholders and leads engagements with foreign aviation partners to ensure that these commitments set out in agreements are carried out in practice.