Analysis of green jet fuel production in Europe
Why the EU can and should increase e-kerosene targets in ReFuelEU

June 2022

Summary

Aircraft rely solely on fossil jet fuel to operate, leading to disastrous consequences for the planet and a dependency on imports from conflictual third countries. Sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) offer a promising alternative that will help reduce aviation’s emissions. The EU has proposed to increase the amount of SAFs used in aircraft departing from the bloc through its ReFuelEU proposal. Blending mandates, where it is compulsory for all jet fuel supplied to EU airports to have a certain proportion of SAF, are currently being negotiated in the context of ReFuelEU Aviation.

There are many types of SAFs. Renewable e-kerosene, a synthetic fuel made of CO₂ (e.g. captured from the atmosphere) and green hydrogen, is the most sustainable SAF and holds one of the keys to aviation’s decarbonization. But e-kerosene production will need to be greatly increased to make a difference.

The ReFuelEU text includes a sub-target for synthetic aviation fuels, like e-kerosene, which constitutes a great opportunity to foster e-kerosene production in Europe. However, the sub-target proposal of 0.7% by 2030 made by the European Commission is too low to have an incentivising effect on the market.

In this study, we quantify the total e-kerosene production plans in Europe. We show that there will be 0.16 Mt of e-kerosene available in Europe by 2025, produced by 10 companies, and 1.83 Mt in 2030, produced by at least 18 manufacturers. However, those growth predictions are highly reliant on favourable political conditions. Blending mandates at EU level need to be set high enough to support market ramp-up.

T&E, therefore, recommends:

- A blending mandate of at least 0.1% (0.05 Mt) in 2025 and at least 2% (1.00 Mt) in 2030.
- E-kerosene needs to be produced with renewable electricity and preferably with carbon sourced from direct air capture.
- The synthetic fuel sub-target should also include renewable electricity and green hydrogen for direct use in aircraft. These will be used by novel propulsion technologies that will soon enter the market, such as electric, fuel cell, or hydrogen-powered aircraft.

The market development of e-kerosene bears great industrial potential for Europe’s green job market and know-how and should therefore not be neglected.
1. E-kerosene blending mandates as part of ReFuelEU Aviation

In July 2021, the European Commission's (EC) ReFuelEU Aviation proposal introduced blending mandates for Sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) and sub-quotas of e-kerosene (see Table 1). The EC has proposed an e-kerosene blending mandate of 0.7% by 2030, increasing to 28% in 2050. This is a good first step but further policy incentives are needed to ensure ReFuelEU Aviation encourages the production of e-kerosene in Europe and sets aviation on a pathway to zero emissions by 2050. In this analysis, we show how these sub-targets for e-kerosene currently proposed can be revised, based on the current planned e-kerosene production.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2025</th>
<th>2030</th>
<th>2035</th>
<th>2040</th>
<th>2045</th>
<th>2050</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total mandated SAF share</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-mandate for Synthetic fuel (e-kerosene)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Mandated SAF shares in aviation fuel (ReFuelEU Aviation EC proposal)

The EC proposal is currently being discussed in the European Parliament and Council of the EU. This offers a key opportunity to ensure ReFuelEU Aviation meets the decarbonisation needs of the industry.

INFO BOX: E-kerosene produced sustainably

While demand reduction and energy efficiency are important steps to reduce aviation’s climate impact, e-kerosene is an important technological solution that will help reduce the remaining emissions according to T&E’s Roadmap to decarbonise European aviation by 2050¹.

Synthesised from hydrogen and CO₂-molecules, using green electricity, the life cycle of e-kerosene can be near carbon-neutral. In order to be as sustainable as possible, direct air capture (DAC) should be the preferred pathway to obtain the carbon fraction for this fuel. This way, the production process will not rely on (fossil) combustion technologies as it would in the case of point source-capture (PS)². The electricity used for the production process needs to be additional. The producer needs to guarantee that it obtains additional green electricity certificates or uses its own green electricity production installations. More efficient technology alternatives exist for other transport modes, such as electrification for road transport. Therefore renewable hydrogen and additional renewable electricity for the creation of synthetic fuels should be channelled towards

² For more details: T&E. (2021). Aviation’s CO₂: use it or bury it? How can aviation end or extend the fossil fuel era. Retrieved from https://www.transportenvironment.org/discover/aviations-co2-use-it-or-bury-it/
aviation and e-kerosene, given the fact that aviation is considered a sector that is harder to decarbonise than the road sector.

The main advantage of e-kerosene is that it is better scalable compared to biofuels. Advanced biofuels, sourced from waste and residues, can play their part in renewable jet fuels but cannot be scaled in line with aviation's needs. They are available only as much as their primary product is manufactured. Biofuels from used cooking oil (UCO) or animal fats should only be used in very limited quantities, as both already have alternative use cases. More information about the sustainable production of e-kerosene can be found in our FAQ³.

2. The market is ready to scale up the production of e-kerosene

This study analysed the projected production capacity of e-kerosene in Europe in order to assess whether the ReFuelEU e-kerosene mandate is set at the right level. If it is too low or too high, it will not incentivise manufacturers to ramp up production sustainably.

2.1 Commitments to produce e-kerosene go higher than proposed mandates

We have analysed 18 e-kerosene producers’ plans in order to assess their expected e-kerosene production capacity up to 2030. Four additional companies have planned to produce e-kerosene but did not specify their production capacity, so are not included in our quantification. More information on the companies and the data sources can be found in the Annex.

The key findings are that:

- Currently, the EC proposal suggests a mandate of 0.7% for 2030 which translates to 0.35 Mt⁴ of e-kerosene.
- Table 2 shows that the total production capacity of the companies analysed adds up to 0.16 Mt (produced by 10 companies) already in 2025 and 1.83 Mt in 2030 (produced by at least 18 companies).
- This translates to 0.32% of the EU’s jet fuel demand in 2025. For 2030, we expect the 1.83 Mt of e-kerosene to cover 3.65% of the EU’s jet fuel demand, saving about 5 Mt of CO₂, or what is emitted by 30,000 transatlantic flights⁵.

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⁵ The emissions savings are calculated using 85% of GHG savings for e-kerosene compared to fossil kerosene. As data about the commercial production of e-kerosene are not easily available, the average between the legally required minimum GHG savings for RFNBOs (70%) and the maximum (100%) is used as a proxy.
Companies use different carbon sources for production, and some of them combine different types: 7 out of the 22 companies listed in our table in Annex use DAC, 14 use biogenic sources (e.g. wood wastes, biomethane, or residual biogas-plant CO2), and 8 use industrial point source carbon capture (e.g., cement factory, furnace gases).

Companies are continuously making new announcements about their e-kerosene production plans, as funding requests get approved or testing phases have been successful. We, therefore, expect more announcements in the years to come.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2025</th>
<th>2030</th>
<th>Feedstocks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total (in Mt)</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>DAC, biogenic, PS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Pledged e-kerosene production capacity in 2025 and 2030.

2.2 EC’s blending proposal is too low to incentivise market ramp-up

T&E recommends a blending mandate of 0.1% in 2025 to support the ramp-up of the e-kerosene market, which translates to 0.05 Mt of e-kerosene. As highlighted in Table 2 in 2025, we estimate that manufacturers will reach a production capacity of about 0.16 Mt which is almost four times what would be needed to fulfil the mandate. Given the uncertainties in a developing market, setting a blending mandate of 0.1% seems to be a sufficiently prudent approach.

For 2030, T&E proposes a blending mandate of 2% which translates to 1.00 Mt of e-kerosene. We are confident that the market will be able to meet this target, as companies have already pledged to produce a combined 1.83 Mt of fuel by 2030 (and the amounts might still increase in the meantime).

The current European Commission proposal merely asks for 0.7% of e-kerosene in 2030. Compared to the overall amount of fuel expected to be produced, this amount is negligible. It would not suffice to incentivise swifter and wider production uptake as it is way lower than what companies have already announced. Figure 1 below shows the contrast between the ambition of the Commission proposal and the production forecast.

Emissions from a typical transatlantic flight are calculated as an average of emissions from flights between Europe and North America, using AIS data from PlaneFinder (2019) and the Eurocontrol CO2 calculator.
Figure 1: Forecasted e-kerosene production capacities in Europe with EC and T&E blending asks.

Looking at the graph, one can expect ambitious growth rates in the e-kerosene market. It can be expected that, with more time, more companies will publish production targets, resulting in an even higher absolute amount of e-kerosene available in the market. It needs to be kept in mind that companies’ outlooks are highly dependent on the political context. With favourable conditions, they are likely to increase their production goals. Additionally, newcomer companies will be encouraged to enter the industry as they see sufficient potential for market share in a non-saturated environment, provided that the blending mandates are sufficiently high.
2.3 E-kerosene production as an industrial opportunity for Europe

As highlighted in Figure 2, most of the companies analysed are projected to produce e-kerosene in Europe in the next decade including in Germany, France, Portugal, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Norway.

The emergence of e-kerosene production companies is a great industrial opportunity for Europe that can be extended more widely. By fostering this sector, Europe can establish itself as a leader in e-kerosene production, paving the way for know-how and technology. According to the European Commission, scaling e-kerosene production bears the opportunity to create 202,100 additional jobs by 2050. For example, the manufacturer EDL in Germany pledged to produce 50,000 t of e-kerosene starting in 2026 in the context of the project “HyKero”. This will create roughly 100 jobs directly and indirectly lead to many more in the associated energy sector.

Even though the price of e-kerosene is not as competitive as untaxed fossil jet fuel at the moment, this is set to decrease as companies scale up production. A study by ATAG for example estimates that

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e-kerosene costs will come down by 61\% by 2050 (compared to 2025), as the cost of (green) hydrogen comes down and renewable electricity is more available\textsuperscript{9}. Stronger carbon pricing signals through the EU’s Emission Trading System (ETS) and a jet fuel tax can help accelerate this shift by ensuring that the price gap between fossil jet fuel and e-fuels is reduced as much as possible.

The bottom line is that there will be a growing amount of e-kerosene in the market. Companies have the capacity to produce but they need the right quotas to support them and a stable political horizon to convince investors of their long-term sustainability and profitability. An effective European e-kerosene mandate ensures the creation of a market for this product, which provides necessary reassurance to investors that the e-kerosene has a future in aviation’s decarbonisation.

2.3. Looking forward: Hydrogen and electricity

The inclusion of renewable electricity and green hydrogen within the definition of synthetic aviation fuels in ReFuelEU will allow these energy sources to count “directly” towards the synthetic aviation fuels sub-mandate, thus creating incentives for technological innovation. Hydrogen and electricity will indeed soon be directly used by new “zero-emission” planes such as electric, fuel cells, and hydrogen-powered aircraft, so it is important that they are included in the ReFuelEU Regulation.

Moreover, these two energy sources are forecasted to provide a significant share of the EU’s aviation energy demand in the coming decades. T&E’s Aviation Decarbonisation Roadmap\textsuperscript{10} estimates that European aviation will require 2.5 Mt of hydrogen for direct use in zero-emission aircraft by 2050, whereas A4E’s Destination 2050 report\textsuperscript{11} anticipates a hydrogen demand of 3.7 Mt. These projections represent 10 to 20\% of aviation’s energy consumption for 2050 and are consistent with global hydrogen demand projections for that year provided by ATAG’s Waypoint 2050\textsuperscript{12} (20\% of aviation energy, 43 Mt), the ICCT’s

Hydrogen-Powered Aircraft White Paper\textsuperscript{13} (18.7-94.6 Mt). As for electricity, ATAG’s Waypoint 2050\textsuperscript{14} estimates it will supply 2\% of aviation’s energy demand by 2050.

Aviation’s future demand for hydrogen and electricity will depend on technology development and aircraft uptake, but according to the average estimates above, we can expect an important part of the European aviation market to be fuelled by these two energy carriers. This would further support setting ambitious synthetic fuels sub-targets, especially after 2035, when the number of hydrogen planes in service is expected to grow rapidly.

### 3. Policy recommendations

1. European e-kerosene blending mandates should be set at a minimum of 0.1\% (0.05 Mt) in 2025, thus introducing an interim target and increase to at least 2\% for 2030 (1.00 Mt). Only mandates that are high enough can incentivise the market to grow.
2. Electricity used for the e-kerosene production needs to be additional and the hydrogen needs to be green.
3. Direct Air Capture (DAC) CO\textsubscript{2} should be the preferred pathway to source the carbon needed for e-kerosene production and should have a dedicated scale-up target within ReFuelEU’s synthetic fuel sub-target.
4. Renewable hydrogen and electricity for direct use in “zero-emission” aircraft should be included in the synthetic aviation fuel definition under the EU’s ReFuelEU initiative.
5. Stronger carbon pricing signals should be adopted through a jet fuel tax and a revised EU carbon market rules (EU ETS) to improve the cost competitiveness of e-kerosene.

### Further information

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\texttt{https://aviationbenefits.org/media/167417/w2050_v2021_27sept_full.pdf}
Annex: Methodology

We listed 22 companies that have announced plans to produce e-kerosene. We analysed their production capacity based on the information available on their websites and through personal communication. For each company, we gathered the planned capacity and timeline, with a focus on 2025 and 2030. The e-kerosene total is evaluated by considering the share of e-kerosene for each company on the total production output of a plant. Four companies did not include specific numbers for production capacity, they are therefore not part of the total quantification in Table 2.

In order to assess the percentage of e-kerosene in the total share of aviation fuel demand in 2025 and 2030, we assumed a total jet fuel demand of 48 Mt in 2025 and 50 Mt in 2030, according to our Roadmap to Decarbonise European Aviation by 2050\textsuperscript{15}.

In Table 3 below, you can find an overview of the data sources used to assess expected e-kerosene production capacity and related assumptions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company*</th>
<th>Data source(s)</th>
<th>Feedstock</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Norsk-e-fuel.com</td>
<td>Change the aviation industry.</td>
<td><a href="https://www.norsk-e-fuel.com/technology">Website</a></td>
<td>DAC, bio, PS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synhelion</td>
<td>We turn sunlight into fuel. Move the world toward net-zero.</td>
<td><a href="https://www.synhelion.com">Website</a></td>
<td>DAC, bio, PS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spark e-Fuels</td>
<td>Our Vision.</td>
<td><a href="https://www.sparkfuels.com">Website</a></td>
<td>DAC, bio, PS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineratec GmbH</td>
<td>Welcome to Ineratec.</td>
<td><a href="https://ineratec.de/en/home/">Website</a></td>
<td>DAC, bio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caphenia (EnZaH2)</td>
<td>CAPHENIA produziert E-Fuels in Niedersachsen.</td>
<td><a href="https://caphenia.tech/caphenia-produziert-e-fuels-in-niedersachsen/">Website</a></td>
<td>Bio</td>
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<td>Source</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>KEROSyN100demo</td>
<td>KEROSyN100. Die Defossilisierung der Luftfahrt. (n. d.). kerosyn100.de. Retrieved June 1, 2022, from <a href="https://www.kerosyn100.de/">https://www.kerosyn100.de/</a>; e-mails</td>
<td>Bio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SkyNRG Germany</td>
<td>Baden-Württemberg fördert die Studie zur Herstellung und zum Einsatz von synthetischem Kerosin auf Basis erneuerbarer Energien.</td>
<td><a href="https://www.schwenk.de/baden-wuerttemberg-foerdert-die-studie-zur-herstellung-und-zum-einsatz-von-synthetischem-kerosin-auf-basis-erneuerbarer-energien">schwenk.de</a>; e-mail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEMEX/SASOL/ENERTRAG</td>
<td>CEMEX, Sasol and ENERTRAG join forces to produce SAF from green hydrogen and CO2.</td>
<td><a href="https://www.aviacionline.com/2022/04/cemex-sasol-and-enertrag-join-forces-to-produce-saf-from-green-hydrogen-and-co2/">aviacionline.com</a>;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Enerkem</td>
<td>Facilities &amp; Projects.</td>
<td><a href="https://enerkem.com/company/facilities-projects/">enerkem.com</a></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3: Information on companies, feedstock, assumption, and data source.**

Legend: DAC - direct air capture; PS - point source capture (e.g., cement factory); Bio - biogenic carbon source (e.g., wood wastes, biogas-plant)

* This list is not exhaustive. If you want to be featured, please contact us.