

Air France-KLM to order 50 long-haul Airbus A350s: group

September 25 2023



The order is also accompanied by acquisition rights for 40 additional aircraft.

Air France-KLM announced Monday that it was going to place a "major order" for 50 long-haul Airbus A350s, as part of its effort to introduce more fuel-efficient planes.

The Dutch-French group said the planes, which represent an order of more than \$16 billion (15.1 billion euros) at the given listed price without counting any discounts applied, will be delivered between 2026 and 2030.

The order is also accompanied by acquisition rights for 40 additional aircraft.

The statement said the order was "an evolutionary order, providing the group with flexibility to allocate aircraft within its portfolio of airlines, according to market dynamics and local regulatory conditions."

Air France-KLM CEO Benjamin Smith said the order was "a major step in the renewal of the group's fleet".

He said the Airbus 350 "is a quieter, more fuel efficient and more cost-effective aircraft compared to previous generations" that would be "instrumental in helping the group reach our ambitious sustainability targets".

The order aims to replace 33 older generation Boeing 777-200s and A330s from the two airlines.

The Airbus 350 is one of several more fuel efficient long-distance jets, along with other later generation planes including the Boeing 787 Dreamliner.

Air travel demand

Smith said that the group had set a target to reduce CO₂ emissions per passenger kilometre by 30 percent by 2030.

And the group said in Monday's statement that the Airbus A350

consumes 25 percent less fuel than the previous generation of aircraft of a similar size, largely due to the use of lighter materials.

In July, Air France-KLM said it had doubled its [net profit](#) in the [second quarter](#), benefiting from high demand in air travel despite rising inflation which has increased costs.

The group posted a net profit of 604 million euros (\$662 million) between January and June, and said sales rose by 13.7 percent compared with the same period in 2022.

Ticket prices have soared since the pandemic, driven by rising [fuel costs](#), increased demand and capacity constraints.

The group managed to turn a profit last year after having lost 11 billion euros during the pandemic, requiring the governments of France and the Netherlands to intervene.

Air-France and KLM were also among 17 European airlines hit by a consumer complaint filed with the EU's executive arm earlier this year accusing the companies of greenwashing—the practice of making misleading climate-related claims.

The European Consumer Organisation, or BEUC, said in June that there should be a Europe-wide investigation and for airlines to "stop making claims that give consumers the impression that flying is sustainable".

Dutch [environmental groups](#) last year also threatened to take KLM to court over what they said were "misleading adverts" that promoted flying as sustainable.

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