

# EUROPEAN AIRLINES MUST REMOVE QATARI JET FUEL FROM SUPPLY CHAINS

*Friday, December 16<sup>th</sup>: Amidst worldwide scrutiny of Qatar's poor human rights record during the football World Cup, a Stay Grounded briefing paper exposes European airlines' deep financial connections to Qatar and other jet fuel exporting countries that still criminalise homosexuality, alongside other human rights violations and treatment of migrant workers.*

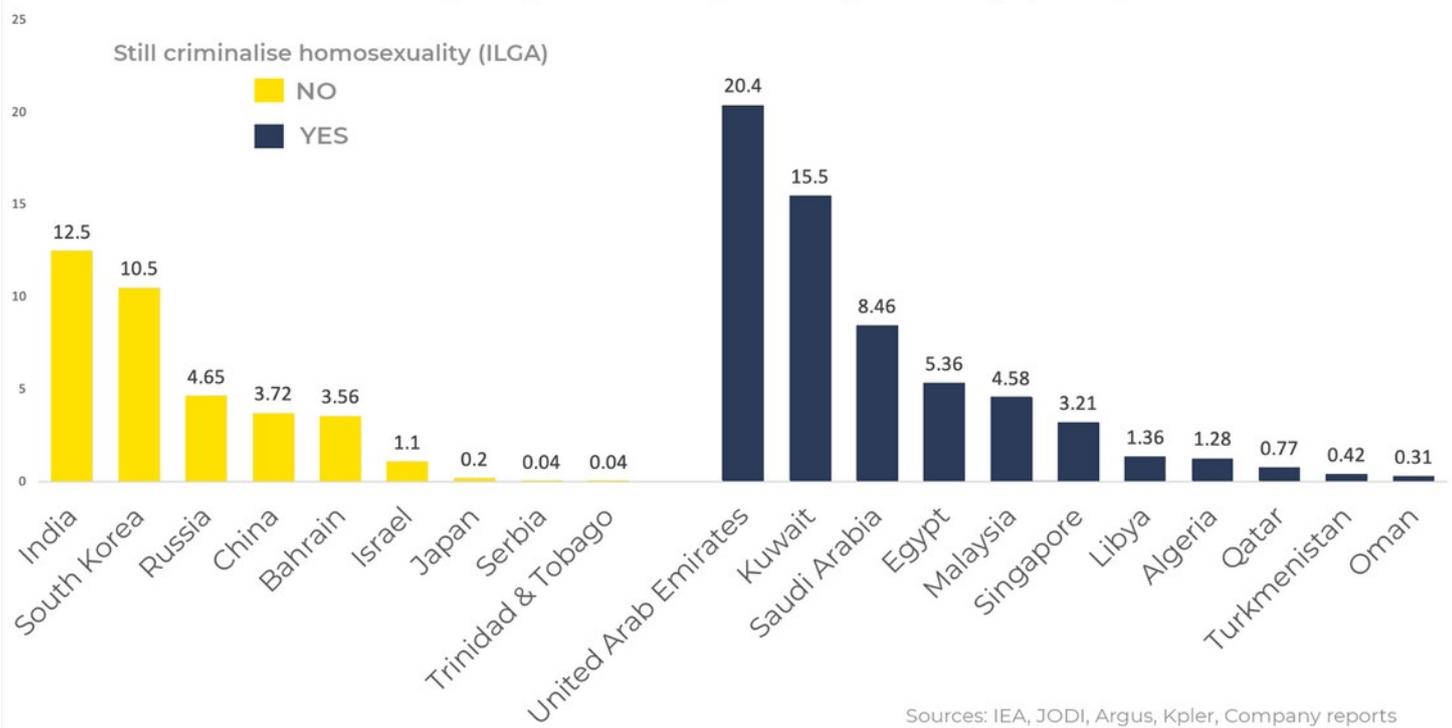
Stay Grounded combined jet fuel import data from the IEA, Eurostat, Joint Oil Data Initiative (JODI) and specialist industry publications, cross-referencing the country-of-origin of Europe's jet fuel against the [ILGA World State Sponsored Homophobia Report](#) tracking national law in these jurisdictions.

## **The results suggest that European airlines have a major human rights problem in their supply chain:**

- 62% of Europe's jet fuel imports come from countries that still criminalise homosexuality - whether by imprisonment, the death penalty, or other sanctions
- In many of these countries, jet fuel revenues are received by a state-owned oil company under the beneficial control of the government or its ruling family that also shape and enforce national laws
- All major European airlines bought jet fuel from Qatar last year. However, it only makes up a small percentage of each airline's total procurement, so they could easily halt purchases on human rights grounds if they wished and they should do so immediately
- 5 of the top 10 country suppliers of jet fuel to Europe still criminalise homosexuality
- Air France/KLM was the top buyer of Qatari jet fuel in Europe last year, with an estimated consumption of 274 barrels per day (spending around \$7.7 million in the year as a whole)
- IAG (owner of British Airways) was the 2nd largest buyer of Qatari jet fuel in Europe in 2021



Data: Europe's jet fuel imports by country (2021) in %



## AIRLINES' DEEP HYPOCRISY ON LGBT+ RIGHTS

European airlines claim to support European values of diversity, inclusion, and LGBT+ rights, but none of them appear to have applied these values to their supply chains.

Air France has publicly [supported](#) the Paris LGBT pride march, while failing to disclose its major financial support to governments which threaten gay people with the death penalty.

[British Airways says](#) it “continue[s] looking for new and innovative ways to celebrate diversity and support individuals in our LGBT+ community to be themselves” - whilst sending millions of dollars a year to governments that repress gay rights.

Lufthansa says during the World Cup in Qatar it is even more important to [celebrate](#) diversity and support LGBT rights - while failing to disclose it has been buying Qatari jet fuel for the last decade.

The AirFrance KLM Group defines one of its key corporate [principles](#) as promoting "TRANSPARENCY in the execution of our professional practices". Stay Grounded urges the company (and all European airlines) to come clean on its jet fuel sourcing and transparently disclose to all its customers exactly where it is buying jet fuel from.

AirFrance KLM is right to [support](#) the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which require companies to actively monitor all parts of their supply chains for risks to human rights. As AirFrance KLM explains, "We are committed to respecting human rights, the environment, and ethical standards."

## QUOTES ON THE ANALYSIS' RESULTS

*"We need to kick out oil bought from states that violate human rights! Autocratic states like Qatar and the United Arab Emirates supply fuel to European airlines, who tacitly accept the homophobic and misogynist practices in these countries. This shows again that the climate crisis and social injustices are closely linked. Europe must now show the red card to oil from authoritarian states - and set a clear goal for airlines by when they must stop using oil."*

*"We urge AirFrance KLM, and all other airlines, to live up to these commitments and apply rigorous human rights standards to its jet fuel sourcing. Policymakers must introduce mandatory country-of-origin labelling of jet fuel used on flights from European airports, so that passengers have the information they need to make informed decisions. Travellers concerned about human rights, including LGBT+ rights, should stick to other transport modes and stay away from airlines, given the lack of transparency to date."*

**- Stay Grounded aviation expert and co-founder Magdalena Heuwieser**

### IMPRINT

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