

The Nine Freedoms of the Air

To enable air services to be provided all over the globe, civil aviation everywhere is based on nine "Freedoms of the Air". These freedoms, and the specific traffic rights deriving from them, are negotiated not by the world's airlines but between their home states. The resulting traffic rights are then enshrined in bilateral or multilateral air services agreements, which also have to be ratified by the parliaments of the countries concerned. These traffic rights are not subject to the rules and regulations of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Associated right

1st Freedom
The right to overfly the partner state without landing in it.

2nd Freedom
The right to make an intermediate landing in the partner state for non-commercial purposes (e.g. refuelling or maintenance).

3rd Freedom
The right to transport passengers, cargo and mail from the home state to the partner state.

4th Freedom
The right to transport passengers, cargo and mail to the home state from the partner state.

5th Freedom
The right to transport passengers, cargo and mail between the partner state and another state on a flight originating or ending in the home state.

6th Freedom
The right to transport passengers, cargo and mail from one partner state to another partner state via the home state.

7th Freedom
The right to transport passengers, cargo and mail between the partner state and another state with no need for the flight to originate or end in the home state.

8th Freedom
The right to transport passengers, cargo and mail within the partner state on a flight originating or ending in the home state (consecutive cabotage).

9th Freedom
The right to transport passengers, cargo and mail within the partner state with no need for the flight to originate or end in the home state (stand-alone cabotage).

SWISS's position

SWISS supports the full global liberalization of First- and Second-Freedom rights.

SWISS supports the liberalization of Third- and Fourth-Freedom rights as long as unfair competition can be sanctioned accordingly.

SWISS advocates that these traffic rights should be handled restrictively, and should only be granted provided three conditions are met: a) that this is in the interests of the Swiss economy, b) that there is adequate market demand in Switzerland for the associated services and c) that any resulting unfair competition can be sanctioned accordingly.

