

Dear President Von de Leyen, Dear President Michel,

We are writing to you to express concern about the revelations of your extensive travel by private jet, in particular to and from the important climate conference COP27.

Private jets must belong solely to a bygone age. Emissions per kilometre of travel are dramatically worse than any other form of transport, with single trips constituting multiples of average annual carbon footprints of ordinary citizens in Europe. Moreover, estimations of the climate impact of private jets often exclude the effect of non-CO2 emissions released by planes at high altitudes. Usage of private jets is simply not tolerable in the midst of a climate crisis.

In the Parliament's resolution of 20th October 2022 on the UN Climate Change Conference 2022 in Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt (COP27), we parliamentarians stated the following:

59. Points to the huge climate impact of the use of private jets, with one single private jet able to emit two metric tonnes of CO₂ in just one hour⁽²⁴⁾; underlines the importance of leaders leading by example, and thus regrets that some world leaders and delegates travelled to COP26 by private jet; urges all participants at COP27 to choose the least polluting mode of transport to get to their destination; notes with concern that private jet use in Europe is estimated to have increased by 30 % compared to pre-pandemic levels⁽²⁵⁾, and thus calls on the Member States to take measures to curtail the use of private jets in their territories without delay.

We are truly saddened at the revelations in Politico that you did not heed our call to avoid travel by private jet to this important climate conference, and consider your travel by private jet to be unjustified.

We strongly urge you to lead by example, not by privilege, and refrain from private jet use, in particular for the upcoming COP28 in the United Arab Emirates. Leaders whose carbon footprints grossly outweigh that of the ordinary citizens will not be taken seriously at home or on international stages. By using such polluting forms of travel, we lose all moral authority to lecture the world about climate action, and undermine the international dimension of the European Green Deal.

We expect you will take a commercial flight to COP28 in Dubai if your presence is deemed necessary.

Sincerely,

Mick Wallace MEP