

## Utdrag ur presentationer vid Europe Air Sports möte i Oslo 22/3 2025

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EMFU är fullvärdig medlem i EAS och jobbar för modellflygets framtida plats i lufterummet

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## EAS Annual General Meeting Oslo, 15 MAR 2025

Challenges facing the  
model flying community

Jürgen LEFEBERE ( EMFU )



EUROPE AIR SPORTS



## Model Flying



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- Largest Air Sport > 500K pilots in Europe
- Around half of the 700+ FAI international air sport competitions
- **EMFU:**
  - Soon 23 members in 13 EASA member countries + UK
  - To grow to around 230'000 represented pilots
- An excellent safety record established in well over a century
- Until 2019 all aircraft <150kg under national rules – usually 'light touch' Member State regulation, mostly planning rules for airfields
- Since 1 January 2023 fully under EU rules (Regulation 2019/947):
  - "traumatic" – re-claiming pre-existing rights at national level
  - Disproportionate investment for a volunteer-driven sport



## The Value of Model Flying



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### The importance of a thriving model aircraft community:

- "Kindergarten" to "retirement home" and "everything in between"
- "First contact" for Europe's future aviation professionals and enthusiasts – nobody engages and trains as many future aviators as we do
- Pioneers in development and deployment of new aviation-related technologies:
  - Electrification
  - Use of new materials & processes (carbon, glass fibers, 3d printing...)
  - Experimenting with airfoils and aircraft designs
- War in Ukraine has shown importance of model aircraft pilots and Europe-based production
- **Above all: it's fun!**



## Central Challenge: The Participation Threshold



Graupner UHU (~280gr)  
(free flight balsa wood model)

### “Open Category”

- Minimum Age 16 (12) years or under supervision
- Registration of pilot, registration number on aircraft
- Online theoretical knowledge training course and examination
- Max. 120m above ground

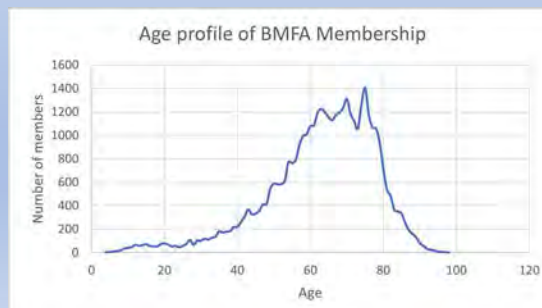
### “In the framework of model aircraft clubs and associations”

- “club membership” (costs)
- Registration of pilot, registration number on aircraft
- National requirements (age, training, ...)

Increased threshold for participation = reduced participation

## Maintaining Participation

- Regulation raises threshold for participation = reduced participation
- Ageing membership – predominantly older men
- Reduced willingness/interest membership clubs
- Perhaps more people operating ‘under the radar’ free from regulation
- Not enough younger/diverse members



## Concrete Regulatory Challenges



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- **Reducing the regulatory burden in existing and upcoming EU rules:**
  - Model aircraft are not “drones”: stop automatic inclusion in new rules, repeated fight for exemptions
  - Review of current rules: reduce participation threshold
- **Low-impact and risk-based implementation of existing EU rules**
  - Overly strict interpretation and implementation of EU rules by the Member States
- **Electronic conspicuity and U-Space:**
  - Exempted....but not really....
  - Electronic conspicuity options that are compatible with the requirements of our sport (financially, technologically and practically)
- **Improving awareness and dialogue with EASA and EU institutions**
  - Low awareness of our sport, its importance and its needs
  - Need to strengthen the dialogue with EASA and improve awareness of our concerns in DG MOVE/Commission/Parliament



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