# London Mayor Sadiq Khan's extensive international travel sparks climate credibility concerns



London Mayor Sadiq Khan has come under scrutiny following a detailed analysis of his international travel over the past eight years, which suggests that he has flown enough miles to reach the Moon and back. The investigation found that Khan himself has travelled more than 73,000 miles on international flights, but when accounting for accompanying staff, the total miles soar to over 473,000. Across 13 trips, these journeys generated an estimated 43.6 tonnes of carbon dioxide, roughly equivalent to flying 19 times around the Earth’s equator. The mayor’s office purchased at least 70 seats for these flights, which could fill a small short-haul aircraft, and some trips included significant entourages, such as an eight-person team accompanying Khan to New York in September 2024 for a global climate conference.

The data, collated from both 2023 and 2024 records, includes four trips accompanied by 23 staff members to New York, Rome, and Paris, with two of these trips related to climate events. In earlier years, Khan took international visits that included a delegation to India and Pakistan in 2017, with seven staff costing nearly £21,000, and a 2016 trip to Canada and the USA with seven staff costing over £32,000. Analysts estimate that to offset the carbon emissions produced by these journeys, between 1,350 and 2,000 trees would need to be planted annually, an amount comparable to half the carbon absorption capacity of the trees in Hyde Park. These revelations have sparked criticism, with some opponents accusing Khan of inconsistency regarding his environmental stance. Victoria Atkins, shadow secretary of state for environment, food, and rural affairs, described Khan’s travel as a "textbook example of Left-wing hypocrisy," highlighting the contrast between his policies to reduce road traffic and his extensive flying.

Khan has consistently expressed opposition to Heathrow Airport expansions, including the controversial third runway project. For example, in June 2023, he stated, “We don’t want more flights,” and reiterated in January 2025 his concerns about the severe environmental impacts such an expansion would cause. Regarding private jet usage, Khan remarked in May 2023 that frequent air travellers should question the necessity of their journeys and opt for the lowest carbon options whenever possible. His efforts to tackle air pollution in London include the launch of an action plan in 2016, spurred by nearly 10,000 annual premature deaths linked to toxic air, and the expansion of the Ultra Low Emission Zone (Ulez) in 2022, which he described as securing clean air as a "right not a privilege."

However, Khan’s international travel has faced scrutiny over transparency and environmental credibility. The Greater London Authority’s oversight committee has raised concerns about the limited detail provided in records of his overseas trips and called for greater transparency and improved carbon offsetting measures. His 2025 plan to attend the C40 World Mayors Summit in Rio de Janeiro attracted criticism for the environmental impact of the 12,000-mile round trip, particularly as this event was scheduled just days before the UN climate change conference COP30 in Brazil. Critics questioned the optics of Khan flying such distances while championing climate action. The costs of this trip for Khan and his aides were reportedly covered by C40 Cities, an organisation funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies.

In response to these criticisms, a spokesperson for the Mayor of London highlighted that Khan has made 16 international visits by plane, compared to the 34 flights undertaken by his predecessor Boris Johnson during his mayoralty. They defended the trips as necessary for promoting London globally to stimulate trade, investment, and cultural links. For instance, in 2023, Khan and five staff flew to New York for the UN Climate Ambitions Summit, tallying 41,500 air miles combined, and in 2024, he attended a climate summit in Rome with four staff, accumulating nearly 9,000 air miles. The carbon footprint estimates use calculations from the United Nations International Civil Aviation Organization, while noting the variability depending on aircraft type, weather, and routing.

Khan’s travel record highlights the challenging balance that public figures face between representing their cities on a global stage and maintaining a low carbon footprint. His international engagements illustrate the tension between advocating for climate action and participating in global forums that often require extensive travel, underscoring the broader dilemmas of municipal leadership in an interconnected world.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2108093/sadiq-khan-london-mayor-air-miles-moon), [[4]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/sadiq-khan-london-mayor-air-miles-moon-b2108093.html), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/sadiq-khan-london-mayor-air-miles-moon-b2108093.html), [[7]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/sadiq-khan-london-mayor-air-miles-moon-b2108093.html)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2108093/sadiq-khan-london-mayor-air-miles-moon), [[4]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/sadiq-khan-london-mayor-air-miles-moon-b2108093.html), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/sadiq-khan-london-mayor-air-miles-moon-b2108093.html)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2108093/sadiq-khan-london-mayor-air-miles-moon)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2108093/sadiq-khan-london-mayor-air-miles-moon)
* Paragraph 5 – [[2]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/sadiq-khan-mayor-london-gla-city-hall-international-travel-united-airlines-usa-transparency-b1120634.html), [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/sadiq-khan-rio-brazil-climate-change-row-c40-conference-london-mayor-b1234545.html)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2108093/sadiq-khan-london-mayor-air-miles-moon), [[2]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/sadiq-khan-mayor-london-gla-city-hall-international-travel-united-airlines-usa-transparency-b1120634.html), [[4]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/sadiq-khan-london-mayor-air-miles-moon-b2108093.html), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/sadiq-khan-london-mayor-air-miles-moon-b2108093.html), [[7]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/sadiq-khan-london-mayor-air-miles-moon-b2108093.html)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2108093/sadiq-khan-london-mayor-air-miles-moon> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/sadiq-khan-mayor-london-gla-city-hall-international-travel-united-airlines-usa-transparency-b1120634.html> - Concerns have been raised about the transparency of international travel arrangements for London Mayor Sadiq Khan and City Hall staff. The Greater London Authority's oversight committee highlighted issues with the limited detail in records of international trips and called for improvements in carbon offsetting processes. A specific partnership agreement with United Airlines for a trip to the USA in May 2022 was also scrutinised, with calls for data on international trips to be made more accessible.
3. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/sadiq-khan-rio-brazil-climate-change-row-c40-conference-london-mayor-b1234545.html> - London Mayor Sadiq Khan faced criticism for planning a 12,000-mile round trip to Rio de Janeiro for the 2025 C40 World Mayors Summit, just days before the UN climate change conference COP30 in Brazil. Critics questioned the environmental impact of the trip, especially given Khan's role in a group committed to tackling climate change. The cost of the trip for Khan and his aides was expected to be covered by C40, which receives funding from Bloomberg Philanthropies.
4. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/sadiq-khan-london-mayor-air-miles-moon-b2108093.html> - An analysis revealed that London Mayor Sadiq Khan has accumulated over 73,000 miles on international trips in the past eight years, with the total rising to over 473,000 miles when accounting for accompanying staff. These flights produced an estimated 43.6 tonnes of carbon dioxide over 13 separate trips. The mayor's office purchased at least 70 seats on international flights, enough to fill a small short-haul aircraft. Some trips included large entourages, such as an eight-person team that accompanied Khan to New York in September 2024 for an international climate conference.
5. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/sadiq-khan-rio-brazil-climate-change-row-c40-conference-london-mayor-b1234545.html> - London Mayor Sadiq Khan faced criticism for planning a 12,000-mile round trip to Rio de Janeiro for the 2025 C40 World Mayors Summit, just days before the UN climate change conference COP30 in Brazil. Critics questioned the environmental impact of the trip, especially given Khan's role in a group committed to tackling climate change. The cost of the trip for Khan and his aides was expected to be covered by C40, which receives funding from Bloomberg Philanthropies.
6. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/sadiq-khan-london-mayor-air-miles-moon-b2108093.html> - An analysis revealed that London Mayor Sadiq Khan has accumulated over 73,000 miles on international trips in the past eight years, with the total rising to over 473,000 miles when accounting for accompanying staff. These flights produced an estimated 43.6 tonnes of carbon dioxide over 13 separate trips. The mayor's office purchased at least 70 seats on international flights, enough to fill a small short-haul aircraft. Some trips included large entourages, such as an eight-person team that accompanied Khan to New York in September 2024 for an international climate conference.
7. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/sadiq-khan-london-mayor-air-miles-moon-b2108093.html> - An analysis revealed that London Mayor Sadiq Khan has accumulated over 73,000 miles on international trips in the past eight years, with the total rising to over 473,000 miles when accounting for accompanying staff. These flights produced an estimated 43.6 tonnes of carbon dioxide over 13 separate trips. The mayor's office purchased at least 70 seats on international flights, enough to fill a small short-haul aircraft. Some trips included large entourages, such as an eight-person team that accompanied Khan to New York in September 2024 for an international climate conference.