

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 12th March 2017

Rue du Luxembourg 3
1000 Brussels - Belgium
Tel +49 172 424 0381

aage.duenhaupt@a4e.eu
www.a4e.eu

Summer of disgrace looms after a record-breaking 1,500 flight cancellations during one-week strike in France

- Passengers should sign A4E petition to call on European and French policy-makers to finally take action.
- Next Air Traffic Control (ATC) strike could happen in Italy on 20 March.
- ATC strikes cost up to €12 billion of European Union's GDP over the last seven years.

More than 1,500 flight cancellations and more than 320,000 minutes (or 5,300 hours) of delay have been the result of one of the longest ATC strikes in Europe. Control centres in Brest, Bordeaux and Marseille have been on strike last week forcing airlines to reduce their flight offerings in France by 25% and not only affecting flights serving Paris, but also services overflying France, including links from the UK and Italy, Switzerland and Spain. Airlines had to fly detours of hundreds of miles to avoid French airspace while adjacent airspaces had to be regulated, too, as a consequence of additional traffic refiling to avoid the high delays due to industrial action.

“It is devastating to see that more than a million passengers suffered from this year's first ATC strike. We cannot wait anymore - European and French policy-makers need to implement measures capable of minimising Air Traffic Management disruption's impact on travellers. Political, operational and technological solutions exist for a problem that affects the whole continent. These solutions would allow to limit the impact of such strikes on travellers and business, without questioning controllers' fundamental right to strike”, said Thomas Reynaert, Managing Director of A4E.

“Travellers can unite and let out their frustration about the continuous travel disruptions supporting our petition ‘**Keep Europe's Skies open**’. We will present this petition in Brussels to urge the EU Commission and



PRESS RELEASE

the EU Parliament to finally take action. Holidays and the Summer break are ahead of us as possibly the next strikes”, concluded Reynaert.

Solutions A4E has called for encompass the compulsory minimum of 72 hours notification of participation in a strike, which should be implemented by European States where possible and practical, and an upper airspace evolution away from geographical dependency enabling European passengers to make uninterrupted journeys throughout the continent.

During the 2010-16 period, there were 217 ATC strike days in the EU - one disrupted day every nine days. In total, there were 278 disrupted days if you take into account the days before and after an ATC strike as flights had to be cancelled in advance and accumulated delays spilt over to the next day. Since 2010 the overall impact of ATC strikes have cost €12 billion to the EU economy, associated with more than 140,000 jobs.

A4E’s petition can be signed under www.keepeuropesskiesopen.com

About A4E:

Airlines for Europe (A4E) is Europe’s largest airline association, based in Brussels. Launched in January 2016, the association consists of Aegean, airBaltic, Air France KLM, Cargolux, easyJet, Finnair, Icelandair, International Airlines Group (IAG), Jet2.com, Lufthansa Group, Norwegian, Ryanair, TAP Portugal and Volotea, and plans to grow further. With more than 550 million passengers on board each year, A4E members account for more than 70 per cent of the continent’s journeys, operating more than 2,700 airplanes and generating more than EUR 100 billion in annual turnover.

