

PRESS RELEASE

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A4E calls for major reform of Eurocontrol ahead of Director General Election

- Association has written to national transport ministries setting out its policies.
- Selected candidate must improve efficiency for the benefit of European passengers without generating service disruptions and strikes.

Airlines for Europe (A4E) today called for the urgent reform of Eurocontrol and the need for genuine leadership ahead of the election of a new Director General of Eurocontrol next month. As the election enters its final phase, A4E has urged the national authorities who cast the votes to elect a candidate committed to efficiency and reform.

“We are dissatisfied with the operation of Eurocontrol where inefficiencies and a lack of transparency have prevailed for too long. There has been no ambition to improve cost efficiency. The current election provides an opportunity to correct this”, said Thomas Reynaert, Managing Director of A4E.

“The required reforms are well known and many recommendations have been set out in a report produced for the European Commission by Steer Davies Gleave on separating the important role of Network Manager, governing flight routings in European airspace. There needs to be a further removal of duplication between the functions of different European agencies and independence from Eurocontrol for the Performance Review Body, which oversees what national Air Navigation Service Providers charge airlines for air traffic control”, added Reynaert.



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A4E has written to national transport ministries setting out its policies outlining both the reform of Eurocontrol and the task faced by the next Director General.

“The status quo cannot be allowed to continue. The selected candidate must have a track record in the delivery of efficiency and reform, of commercial focus, and of being able to lead change in a complex industrial relations environment, without this degenerating into service disruptions and strikes”, said Reynaert.

Note to editors:

- Eurocontrol is the European inter-governmental body responsible for the co-ordination of aspects of European Air Traffic Control (ATC), comprising 41 member countries.
- Air traffic control strikes are one of A4E’s single most important concerns. Over the period 2010 to 2016, there were 217 days of strikes by air traffic controllers – equivalent to almost one full month of strikes every year. Since 2010 the overall impact of ATC strikes have cost €12 billion to the EU economy, associated with more than 140,000 jobs.

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.

