

Europe's Inefficient Airspace Cost the EU €17.6 bn in 2018; 334 m Passengers Affected¹

- Air Traffic Control (ATC) capacity and staff shortfalls responsible for >75% all 2018 delays²
- A4E airlines working to mitigate passenger impact in summer 2019

Brussels, 06 March 2019 – EU passengers experienced one of the worst years for delays in nearly a decade last year, with ATC capacity and staff shortages responsible for more than 75% of all delays. Whereas Europe's air traffic increased by 3.8% (2018 vs 2017) – delays in the air skyrocketed 105% in comparison, due to a combination of ATC shortages, ATC strikes and an overall inefficient EU airspace structure.³

According to the latest Eurocontrol data, some 334 million passengers (+26%) were impacted by the resulting delays and cancellations, costing the EU economy €17.6 bn -- a 28% increase compared to 2017.

Following last summer's record delays, A4E airline COOs together with leaders from the Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation (CANSO), European Business Aviation Association (EBAA) and Eurocontrol launched the "Efficient Airspace" declaration, agreeing a set of principles and measures in order to improve the situation as quickly as possible. Several of the measures agreed in the November declaration have already been addressed and will be put into place by the start of the 2019 summer schedule.

"As the last months have shown, a combined effort among operational and political stakeholders is required for real progress to occur. We continue to call on national governments and the EU to make reform of Europe's inefficient air traffic management system a top political priority", said Thomas Reynaert, Managing Director, Airlines for Europe (A4E).

To accomplish this, A4E is recommending the following actions and solutions to be agreed by political stakeholders:

- Minimise the impact from local disruptions
- Shorten delivery times (2-3 yrs) for air traffic controllers – with quicker, more flexible deployments
- Manage the European air traffic network centrally
- Implement cross-border airspace in the next Commission mandate
- Promote a competitive environment in the provision of ATC services
- Require air traffic management (ATM) systems to be inter-operable
- Establish independent economic regulation for ANSPs
- Make ANSPs liable for 261 costs arising from disruptions originating with ATC

¹ Eurocontrol Presentation at European Aviation Club, February 2019

² Source: <https://www.eurocontrol.int/news/2018-air-traffic://www.eurocontrol.int/news/2018-air-traffic>

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About A4E

Launched in 2016, Airlines for Europe (A4E) is Europe's largest airline association, based in Brussels. The organisation advocates on behalf of its members to help shape EU aviation policy to the benefit of consumers, ensuring a continued safe and competitive air transport market. With more than 700 million passengers carried each year, A4E members account for more than 70 per cent of the continent's journeys, operating more than 2,900 aircraft and generating more than EUR 110 billion in annual turnover. Members with air cargo and mail activities transport more than 5 million tons of goods each year to more than 360 destinations either by freighters or passenger aircraft. Current members include Aegean, airBaltic, Air France-KLM, Cargolux, easyJet, Finnair, Icelandair, International Airlines Group (IAG), Jet2.com, Lufthansa Group, Norwegian, Ryanair, TAP Air Portugal, Smartwings and Volotea.