

Following record 2018 delays, EU member states approve weakest targets ever for air traffic controllers' performance

- Governments extend EU-wide delay targets from 0.5 minutes to 0.9 minutes per flight
- New targets will lead to increased delays and more CO2 emissions

Brussels, 09 April 2019 – Despite record delays and industry calls for urgent EU airspace reform, EU member states last week approved the weakest performance targets ever for Europe's air traffic control providers by agreeing to extend the threshold for delays per flight from 0.5 minutes to 0.9 minutes.

In practical terms, with 11 million flights operating across Europe today, the current target allows for 5.5 million minutes of delay at a time when EU airspace inefficiencies caused airlines and their passengers a shocking 19 million minutes of delay last year (+105% vs 2017).

With the new targets in place for the next two years, passengers can expect even more delays, longer flight times and unnecessary CO2 emissions in the future -- a minimum of 9.9 million minutes of delay will now be acceptable under the new scheme.

"These targets will reward poorly performing ANSPs whilst frustrating those who are already delivering", said Thomas Reynaert, Managing Director, Airlines for Europe (A4E). "Combined with insufficient staffing levels and current underspending by ANSPs on future investments to improve their performance -- the new targets are extremely disappointing and simply bad news for passengers", Reynaert added.

A recent European Commission reportⁱ comparing air traffic management in the U.S. versus Europe found that in 2017, despite the U.S. controlling nearly 50% more flights (15.3m in the U.S. vs 10.4m in Europe) -- "the total number of flights with reportable delay was 387,000 in Europe vs. 258,000 in the U.S. This means that 50% more flights are delayed in Europe than in the U.S.", due to Europe's fragmented system.

A4E is calling on key stakeholders involved in the target setting process to challenge air navigation service providers (ANSP)s to deliver consistent improvements or face financial penalties. A4E airlines remain committed in their support towards identifying and setting more ambitious targets for higher levels of efficiency, to the benefit of airlines, their passengers and the environment.

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.

ⁱ <https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/us-europe-comparison-of-atm-related-operational-performance-2018.pdf>