



Council of the
European Union

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INFORMATION NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Council
Subject: **Any other business**
Airspace capacity
– Information from the Commission

Delegations will find attached an information note prepared by the Commission on the above-mentioned subject for consideration under "Any other business" at the meeting of the Council (Transport, Telecommunications and Energy) on 6 June 2019.

**INFORMATION NOTE
FROM THE COMMISSION**

8 May 2019

The air traffic management (ATM) system in Europe as it operates today has reached its capacity limits, placing in jeopardy the future competitiveness of the European air transport sector. Continuous growth in air traffic (2018: + 3%, 2019 until May: +2%) is resulting in air traffic delays of a magnitude not seen for more than a decade, to the severe detriment of the environment (CO₂ emissions) and inconvenience of air passengers, as well as to the cost of airlines (delays grow disproportionately to traffic: a 14% increase in flights means a 279% increase of delays). The time has therefore come to determine a future direction for the ATM system in Europe in a realistic, practical and beneficial way.

Against the background of severe delays and the critical situation experienced in the summer of 2018, airspace capacity was addressed during the lunch of the TTE Council on 3 December 2018. Ministers agreed on the need to take urgent action in the short, medium and long term.

At the TTE Council, the Commission wishes to inform Ministers about state of play of follow-up actions:

- The ATM Network Manager is implementing a set of operational actions to alleviate the capacity bottlenecks during the summer. The measures are in place and monitoring is underway to ensure that all stakeholders act according to the agreed contingency measures. The aim is not only to alleviate the ATM capacity situation but also to minimise the environmental consequences.
- An Airspace Architecture Study was completed in March 2019. It provides solutions for more flexible and resilient management of the airspace. It highlights the importance of ATM data to be shared at large scale in future, in a more digitalised ATM system, and suggests decoupling of ATM service provision from the delivery of ATM data services.

- The Commission has received 10 recommendations from a Wise Persons Group (WPG) on how Single European Sky (SES) should evolve in the future to achieve a more flexible, scalable and resilient ATM system that supports future needs of the passengers.
 - The Commission and the incoming Finnish Presidency will organise a joint conference on 12th September in Brussels to discuss the strategic orientation of the SES reform.
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