

New EU report highlights need for greater investment in Europe's air traffic management



Brussels, Belgium - 17 October 2025 - European Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs) have been obliged to lower costs to meet EU efficiency targets, but this has limited their ability to invest in the capacity needed to handle more flights. Despite this, they recently managed to improve performance and reduce delays – proving that investment in air traffic management pays off. CANSO is calling on the EU to allow more realistic cost-efficiency targets to allow ANSPs to keep investing in capacity for the future.

In its Annual Monitoring Report^{[\[1\]](#)} published on 14 October, the EU's Performance Review Board (PRB) sets out how ANSPs from 29 European countries^{[\[2\]](#)} dealt with rising air traffic levels in 2024, with over 9.5 million flights (a 5.2 per cent increase from the year before). The ANSPs continued the trend of delivering year-on-year cost savings to their customers, the airspace users. The report shows that average

European-wide en route actual unit costs fell to €46.62, down seven per cent on 2023 and below the EU target of €49.48.

In terms of providing capacity, while ANSPs achieved efficiencies such as increased number of maximum sectors open (+seven per cent versus 2023) and more sector opening hours (+two per cent), other factors such as adverse weather, geopolitical instability and the implementation of new ATM systems and staffing, contributed towards delays.

ANSPs managed to increase the total number of operative air traffic control officers (ATCOs) across the network but recruiting and training enough new ATCOs to achieve the desired number remains a huge challenge. In this regard, CANSO calls for more realistic Cost Efficiency targets that prioritise the long-term provision of Capacity. However, improvements in summer 2025 show that where investment has been made, it is already reducing delays for airlines and passengers.

According to a recent report by EUROCONTROL for the period 1 June – 15 September 2025,^[3] traffic across 42 European countries^[4] increased three per cent compared to the same period in 2024 but en-route delays per flight decreased by an average of thirty-one per cent. This reflects the positive impact of recent investments in airspace design, technology, and controller availability. CANSO's European members will continue to strive for improved performance.

Enrico Parini, CANSO Director Europe Affairs said: “The PRB's Annual Monitoring Report gives a picture of the complexities and challenges of air traffic management in European airspace last year. Our members delivered more capacity to meet growing traffic demand while also pushing down costs. European ANSPs are committed to continuing the recent reduction in delays over the long term. We call for EU regulation to allow them greater flexibility to invest in the future to meet airlines' needs.”

^[1] Performance Review Board Monitoring Report 2024

^[2] 27 EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland

^[3] European Aviation Trends Issue 10 - Overview of European air traffic during Summer 2025

^[4] 27 EU Member States, Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Israel, Moldova, Morocco, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia/Montenegro, Switzerland, Turkey and UK

CANSO – the Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation – is the global voice of the air traffic management (ATM) industry and is shaping our future skies. Our members support over 90% of the world's air traffic and include air navigation service providers, airspace users and operators, manufacturers and aviation industry suppliers. We raise the bar on global ATM performance by connecting the industry to share knowledge, expertise and innovation.

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