

## **CANSO Person of the Year 2026**

**Nominee: Jan Klas, Director General, Air Navigation Services of the Czech Republic**

Description of why they should be nominated:

Forty years of managerial experience in the ATM sector

- In 1996 active participation on the CANSO establishment process as a member of the ANS CR top management,
- nationally and internationally recognized Director General of ANS CR since 2007,
- member of the Scientific Board of the Faculty of Operation and Transport at the University of Žilina,
- Manager of the Year – Czech Management Association,
- long-term and systematic support for the development of the CSR and the cultivation of a professional business environment in civil aviation,
- promotion and popularization of the ATM sector and its importance through modern communication platforms.

Respected leader and recognized expert within the European ATM community

- active and continuous dialogue with representatives of European and global institutions and professional organizations,
- innovative and forward-looking approach to European ATM, focused on modernization, liberalization, and the reduction of regulatory burden, including through the following activities:

EASA ATM Ground Equipment SC,

CANSO financing of the ANS think tank.

Provision of modern and reliable operational services combined with the implementation of advanced technologies within and beyond the SESAR framework

- design, construction, and seamless commissioning of advanced ATM operational positions for both en-route and airport services in the Czechia,

- ensuring a high level of safety and adequate capacity in accordance with airspace user requirements, including the ability to contribute to mitigating capacity shortfalls within the European ATM network,
- optimization of operations at regional airports and the associated reorganization of Czech airspace to better reflect user needs,

acting as a system integrator for the safe integration of unmanned aircraft operations in Czech airspace and leading steps toward full-scale U-space deployment,

- successful completion of the Free Route Airspace implementation project and integration of Czech airspace into the South-East Europe Free Route Airspace,
- as one of Europe's pioneering ANSPs, effective implementation of FF-ICE functionality as part of the SESAR Deployment Programme,
- operational deployment of CPDLC into service well ahead of mandated timelines, fully meeting EC requirements,
- development of the core ATM system TopSky through coordinated cooperation with European alliance partners (FINEST – Finland and Estonia), supporting the objectives of the pan-European ATM strategy and contributing to the shaping of a new European air traffic management concept.

Successful leadership and effective crisis management

- strong support for unified European ATM coordination during periods of economic crisis,
- maintenance of operational resilience and financial stability throughout the COVID-19,
- active support for Ukraine and the partner ANSP UkSATSE, including structured preparation for post-war recovery.
- Successful expansion of the company's commercial portfolio in 2025, through the Czech Air Navigation Institute and in cooperation with Canadian Aviation Electronics, acceleration of digitalization and modernization of the training ecosystem,
- successful delivery of the largest training programme for Bosnia and Herzegovina (70 ATCOs), enabling the subsequent assumption of independent ATM service provision.
- Personal engagement in charitable initiatives

- founder and chairman of the “Vítej” Foundation, dedicated to supporting individuals with autism,
- active involvement and support within the “Dětský mozek ” Foundation,
- focused on assisting children with central nervous system disorders.

Description of why they should be nominated (Nomination 2):

- With over four decades devoted to the ATM, aviation industry, Jan’s name resonates with ATM. He spent years in operations before taking on leadership positions and has spent the last 1,5 decades as CEO.
- His credibility, professionalism and humbleness contributed to the stability he brought not only to his organization, but also to the European ATM network.
- His leadership skills supported him in taking on a number of positions, functions outside of ANS CR.
- His strategic and pragmatic mindset and clear,logical communication style creates an atmosphere that, when he speaks people listen. We believe that his contributions to the network are unquestionable, and fully support his nomination for the CANSO Person of the Year Award.