



"[air navigation control, [...] is a task involving the exercise of public authority and is not of an economic nature, since that activity constitutes a service in the public interest which is intended to protect both the users of air transport and the populations affected by aircraft flying over them".

(Extract of decision C.364/92 of the European Court of Justice).

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62nd ATCEUC Committee Meeting Final Communiqué

ATCEUC held its 62nd Committee Meeting in Malta, from 24 to 26 April. ATCEUC has been honoured to be hosted by MATCA, The Malta Air Traffic Controllers Association and wishes to thank MATCA for the amazing organization and warm hospitality.

ATCEUC welcomed Ms. Cathy MANNION (PRB Chair), Mr. Joe SULTANA (Member of PRB) and Mr. Iacopo PRISSINOTTI, Director Network Management at EUROCONTROL.

Open minded approach, transparency on the challenges ahead and operational expertise on both sides of the audience allowed a high-quality level of exchanges and discussions. The ATM/ANS sector needs to identify the successful path for Summer 2024 and beyond.

NM delivered a clear message, **"People want to fly"**. Demand is strong, resilient and load factors are at record levels. PRB identified the challenges and weaknesses and insisted on the voluntary approach needed in building RP4.

Following [ATCEUC and ETF call to reject European Commission proposal](#), ATCEUC members reiterated what must be the top priority for RP4, investment in staff and ATM systems. The capacity needs to be delivered and the demand met. These messages shall be the heart of the RP4 preparation.

This effort in proper investment goes together with improvement in recruitment. How contradictory is it to expect being able to attract young talented people when in some countries candidates have to pay up to 70.000 euros for their own training?

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ATCEUC also calls for the whole aviation sector, from institutions to industrial stakeholders, to improve the appeal of the ATM/ANS sector and its public image. Engaging all together in good practices is a necessity to restore the image of ATM/ANS sector as being a key economic enabler and an essential element to make EU citizen able to connect each other.

The importance of the role of the human in a more digital future, the impact of Artificial Intelligence, how staff organisations should be involved to prioritise strategic investments and make them efficient: all these subjects were heavily discussed by the audience. These discussions echoed several elements pushed by ATCEUC in the ongoing SESAR Master Plan update campaign.

ATCEUC expressed its full support to its member GATCA in its action to improve the safety of the Greek sky. MODE S, CPDLC are essential for the delivery of proper ATM/ANS services. EU passenger going to or overflying Greece cannot understand that the highest level of EU standards can be ignored.

ATCEUC members discussed the subject of pension. How retirement age and level of pension are linked to the core of ATCO's activity: delivering safety. Staff shortages, absence of early retirement schemes, inappropriate pension reversion rate: all these elements have an impact in the ATCOs decision of leaving on pension at the right time.

Reaching and maintaining the highest levels of safety is not a given. Working conditions, training, investment in human, resilience of systems, level of technology... All these elements must be properly addressed together to deliver the service that the European society demands and deserves.

Malta, 26th April 2024