

**Report of the EVP EUR**

Presented by Frédéric Deleau

**SUMMARY**

This report summarizes the activities of the EVP EUR since the last IFATCA Annual Conference 2023 in Jamaica. Specific points are dedicated to activities, meetings and future developments proposed for the IFATCA EUR Region.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. This report will cover the full period between two IFATCA Annual Conferences.
- 1.2. It is a pleasure and an honour to be able to represent my friends and colleagues for such an important position during the changing times we all have had to experience, after the worse crisis aviation had to sustain.
- 1.3. However, opportunities arise faster in some moments of history, and we shall analyse each of them to reflect on and use them towards constructive and positive changes for the Federation.
- 1.4. After 4 years in position, I shall once again thank all our members and the Executive Board (EB) for giving me the honour of the IFATCA Executive Vice-President Europe (EVPEUR) responsibilities during some milestone moments like the IFATCA 60 years Anniversary, the 100 years of ATC celebrations, the 50 years anniversary of MUAC and the 60 years anniversary of EUROCONTROL.
- 1.5. This report is addressing the most relevant activities I was directly involved in.
- 1.6. As an Annex to this report, readers will find as a reminder the various meetings attended and the vision and new proposals, we still wish to bring forward for the IFATCA EUR Region for the coming years.
- 1.7. I wish to thank all IFATCA Member Associations and my fellow Executive Board members for their trust, support, and patience.

- 1.8. The IFATCA EUR Member Associations have renewed me their trust for another 2 years term (until 2026) during the Riga European Regional Meeting and I once again all heartfully thank them for their trust and friendship.
- 1.9. I wish to make it clear with this report that the most important value we have at IFATCA consists of the people helping every day. They are the do-ers, the makers, the ones to be thanked and praised, while as EVP EUR, I consider myself as a facilitator, at best a guide, a representative, an initiator, and motivator, for them – sometimes also a “difficult checker” when it comes to the financial part – but that’s part of the responsibilities.
- 1.10. With situations at general and personal level, I will always consider that I still have a lot to learn, read and develop to reach the desired required level. That’s why we praise and value teamwork where we share, criticize, develop, and consolidate our ideas, values, and work under “TOGETHER – FURTHER!”.
- 1.11. To this end, a group was created to support EVP EUR with work, creativity, transparency, and reactivity. This group is flexible depending on motivation, needs, expertise, and possibilities. During the ERM2023, the group was expanded with the wish to integrate a new IFATCA generation and new ideas. I wish to warmly thank Marc Baumgartner, Philippe Domogala, Paul Neering, Tom Pilgard, Mark Jarc, and Olga Toki for suffering my daily questions, mistakes, doubts, and ideas. I also wish to thank all representatives for their remarkable work towards any success the Federation can achieve in Europe.
- 1.12. The complexity and number of projects in the EUR Region call for exceptional and committed professionals – we are blessed to have many of them, volunteers, ready to contribute to the IFATCA credibility at the highest level. They are the true experts and heroes that make it happen for IFATCA.
- 1.13. I wish to express the EUR Region and the EB recognition towards all individuals and Member Associations who have demonstrated outstanding and exceptional dedications towards the Air Traffic Control professional fundamentals and what the Federation represents and stands for.
- 1.14. I wish to thank EGATS (The EUROCONTROL Guild of Air Traffic Services) for my re-nomination as EVP EUR.
- 1.15. I also wish to thank the Director of MUAC, Mr John Santurbano, for his continuous personal support, and all my friends and colleagues at the EUROCONTROL Maastricht UAC and EUROCONTROL Agency for their help and support.
- 1.16. Last but not least, without the support of my family towards my commitments, nothing would be possible. They bring the energy behind the scenes. I wish to thank them for letting me engage so much into the common good while neglecting them too many times.

## 2. DISCUSSION

### 2.1 EVP EUR Activities:

#### 2.1.1 European Regional Meeting - ERM2023:

2.1.1.1 The European Regional Meeting 2023, was organised by the Latvian Air Traffic Controllers' Association under the leadership of Ausra Straume in Riga, Latvia, between the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 2023.

2.1.1.2 A workshop took place with presentations and discussion focusing on "Air Traffic Controller Fatigue" and [the on-going EASA study](#) on the subject.

2.1.1.3 It was a refreshing event and it demonstrated once more how important the in-person meetings allow the development of qualitative discussions and human relations amongst Member Associations members and representatives of various organisations.

2.1.1.4 After the official opening of the ERM2023 by EVPEUR, the Director General of EUROCONTROL addressed the Member Associations representatives (MAs). We had a high-level panel bringing together representatives from the European Commission and local authorities, including a military representative, to debate and explain more specifically the situation of the Baltic countries in the current context, including the on-going war of aggression against Ukraine.

2.1.1.5 Further, presentations and discussions covered the FEAST system for selection of candidate ATCO, the future EUR developments as proposed by EVPEUR, MAs issues, organisational issues, EDITF, IFATCA2030 and Comms Team. We held a last panel with Iacopo Prissinotti, Director of the Network Manager (NM) to present the lessons learned from Summer 2023 and the preparations for Summer 2024.

2.1.1.6 The various presentations can be found under [erm2023.com - Presentations of ERM2023](#)

#### 2.1.2 European Regional Meeting - ERM2024

2.1.2.1 The preparation for ERM2024 is on-going.

2.1.2.2 This year's European Regional Meeting will take place in Skopje, North Macedonia.

2.1.2.4 The Organising Committee led by Natasha Mjat is showing a remarkable motivation and dedication to deliver once more an exceptional moment to be remembered in our EUR history.

2.1.2.5 All details and invitations will be distributed in due time.

2.1.2.6 The ERM2024 website, [www.erm2024.org](http://www.erm2024.org), has been updated and allows for registration and hotel bookings.

### **2.1.3 Executive Board Meetings – EB meetings contribution.**

2.1.3.1 EVP EUR participated to two in-person EB meetings – one of which was organised in September 2023 by PCX, Duncan Auld, in Abu Dhabi, UAE. The other one took place in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, organised by EVP TECH Benjamin Van Der Sanden in February 2024.

2.1.3.2 EVP EUR tried to attend as many EB weekly Zoom meetings as possible, however, could not make more than 60% of the calls lately due to shifts or other commitments.

2.1.3.3 These in-person and visio meetings allow us to share our issues and build further the plans and work for the Federation. It is always a pleasure and an honour to work with dedicated people.

### **2.1.4 JCHMS – Joint Cognitive Human Machine System Group**

2.1.4.1 While not directly involved in the developing work, EVP EUR supports the work being undertaken and wishes to thank the participants for their dedication. It is work with a high potential for the future ATCO work environment and IFATCA needs to keep the lead and understanding of the complexity.

2.1.4.2 More support material and explanations can be found in the report of Marc Baumgartner – SESAR Coordinator.

2.1.4.3 A dedicated “Digitalisation Workshop” was organized by IFATCA in Geneva, Switzerland, on 22/03/2024, after the Airspace World 2024 to present and debate with various stakeholders the work developed by the JCHMS group. The presentation and recording of the workshop are available on request.

### **2.1.5 PEC – Prosecutor Expert Course**

2.1.5.1 EVP EUR participated to the PEC in November 2023.

2.1.5.2 The PEC is organised by EUROCONTROL and IFATCA with the contribution of ECA (European Cockpit Association). The aim is to bring together the judiciary world (prosecutors) and the operational world to foster understanding of the Aviation system complexity in event of incidents or accidents. The Just Culture principles and a blame free culture are the corner stones of the discussions and presentations during those 2,5 days courses.

2.1.5.3 The initiative shall be continuously supported and, potentially, expanded to other regions.

## **2.1.6 SSCC – Safer Sky Consultative Committee.**

2.1.6.1 EVP EUR joined the SSCC for the first time in June 2023 in The Hague, The Netherlands. IFATCA is member of [the SSCC](#). Jean-Francois Lepage (ICAO Liaison Officer) is the alternate to EVP EUR.

2.1.6.2 The SSCC is aiming at sharing information and bringing advises concerning conflict zones in order to improve safety.

2.1.6.3 The SSCC was created at the initiative of Canadian and Dutch authorities after the shot-down of [PS702](#) and [MH17](#).

2.1.6.4 After the high-level conference, attended by the ICAO Council President Salvatore Sciacchitano, the Dutch Minister of Transport and various Ambassadors, EVP EUR had the opportunity to visit the reconstruction site of MH17 and listen to the Dutch accident investigators in charge of the investigations. Thereafter, a visit to the National MH17 monument was organised and a meeting with some of the family members of the victims of the crash.

2.1.6.5 It was an emotional moment, shared by EVP EUR as he controlled, so talked to the pilots, cleared the aircraft to its requested level and gave direct to the Polish border to the MH17 on the day of the shot-down.

## **2.1.7 SESAR**

2.1.7.1 The [SESAR 3](#) contract has been signed and work is on-going. The contract runs for 4 years.

2.1.7.2 The opportunities of this new contract for the Federation are highly valuable, both in term of professional contributions and financial benefits.

2.1.7.3 SESAR brings additional funding and is an undeniable source of financial and profitable benefits for the whole Federation.

2.1.7.2 More details: see SESAR Coordinator report.

## **2.1.8 Research Wave programs**

2.1.8.1 While the world was put on idle during COVID, under the advises of the SESAR Coordinator, EVP EUR supported to continue to invest time and financial resources to develop contacts and IFATCA visibility towards the European Research programs.

2.1.8.2 The investment proved to be a judicious advice as IFATCA has been accepted to compete in various consortia.

2.1.8.3 One consortium from Wave One has started: [CODA - Controller Adaptive Digital Assistant](#) – and is already bringing financial returns.

2.1.8.4 While we hope to be contemplating more acceptance and financial returns, it does put a lot of stress on our resources. We therefore will need to re-invest some of our resources into the management of the programs, potentially hiring professional support as it will not be possible shortly to follow all necessary activities within a small, dedicated group, already under high pressure.

### **2.1.9 IFALPA and ECA collaboration**

2.1.9.1 Our collaboration with IFALPA and ECA has nicely developed over time and shall continue to do so.

2.1.9.2 In the near future, we wish to jointly present some ideas and vision for the development of the Single European Sky (SES).

### **2.1.10 CISM – Critical Incident Stress Management**

2.1.10.1 EUR has launched a CISM Survey aiming at validating some data to find the gaps between the reality and the regulatory requirements of EASA.

2.1.10.2 Our plan is to go to EASA and show the difference between the expectations and the reality aiming at gathering support to improve the overall situation for our MAs.

2.1.10.3 EUR will be happy to share our findings with our friends and colleagues from other regions. We also have ICISF licensed peers who could potentially assist for specific courses.

### **2.1.11 Relation with EUROCONTROL**

2.1.11.1 EVP EUR has had specific contacts with EUROCONTROL aiming at developing a win-win process aiming at a deeper IFATCA involvement and collaboration in various programs, while getting reimbursed for the efforts.

2.1.11.2 To this aim, we can now enjoy a privileged agreement that will allow us, under specific circumstances and conditions, to deliver ordered work for EUROCONTROL against financial support for mission costs.

2.1.11.3 This is a new opportunity for our MAs to get involved into certain projects and send some of their members to collaborate but also learn from different systems in an international organisation environment, in a cost-neutral way for the Federation.

### **2.1.12 SES2+ - a never-ending dying story...**

2.1.12.1 The SES2+ is under discussion at EU level for years. Lately a tri-partite (European Parliament/European Commission/Council (States)) has been called to find solutions and compromises.

2.1.12.2 Despite some changes to the original proposal during the last months, IFATCA, and various actors, including big States, are still far from satisfied. We believe the basics are wrong and will not deliver a better legislative environment for the ATM/ATC in Europe.

2.1.12.3 We have developed our own proposal and will deliver our vision aiming mainly at defragmenting the European system while keeping Safety at the same or a higher level, improving stability and developing higher efficiency.

2.1.12.4 EVPEUR team is preparing a high-level meeting aiming at delivering our vision and ideas for the introduction of a robust SES. This meeting should be organised Q3 2024 in Brussels, Belgium.

### **2.1.13 MESAFA – Mental Safety Program**

2.1.13.1 Following the tragic accident of the [Germanwings 4U9525](#), the EU has launched a research program aiming at detecting better medical and psychological conditions potentially affecting the Safety of Air navigation.

2.1.13.2 IFATCA has been called to participate in the research program to bring the ATCO perspective. EVP EUR participate in various video calls.

2.1.13.3 Copy from the EASA website: “This research project assesses new medical developments for the early diagnosis as well as treatment of mental health conditions which could pose a safety risk for aviation and would consequently lead to pilot and air traffic controller (ATCO) unfitness or the limitation of their medical certificate for safety purposes. Currently, there are no specific, validated mental health assessment methods for aviation use, incorporating the specific operational needs, to address the issues identified. Research is needed to further detail the specific needs, and to develop and validate assessment methods or to assess the applicability of existing methods for use in the aviation environment.” (...)

2.1.13.4 More information: [MESAFA \(Mental health\) | EASA \(europa.eu\)](#)

2.1.13.5 The preliminary results of the work will be presented during a conference in Cologne at the EASA HQ on 23/04/2024.

### **2.1.14 ICAO Paris office**

2.1.14.1 Under the supervision of EVP EUR but the leadership of Philippe Domogala, we had various meetings of the ICAO Paris office.

2.1.14.2 We warmly welcome two new representatives into the ICAO support group: Silja Johnsdóttir (ISATCA) and Ger Leyden (IATCA)

2.1.14.3 For more ICAO Paris information, please see Philippe Domogala report.

## **2.1.15 ICAO Beijing Office - Free Route Airspace Webinar**

2.1.15.1 EVP EUR took part as speaker in a webinar organised by the ICAO Beijing Office on Free Route Airspace (FRA) on 29/08/2023.

2.1.15.2 The presentation is available on request.

2.1.15.3 A follow-up workshop was planned to be organized. However, due to several constraints and local issues concerning the feasibility of developing a FRA concept across (some) countries in Asia due to (Civil-)Military relations, the workshop discussions are postponed.

## **2.1.16 Staff Shortage HEAT MAP**

2.1.16.1 The EUR region, after data collected via a survey from the EUR MAs, presented a self-made HEATMAP of the ATCO Shortage situation in Europe.

2.1.16.2 The participating Member Associations rated the following items: An overall appreciation of the staffing situation in the tower, approach, area control and support units of their ANSP; The frequency of overtime in towers, approach, area control and support units; The staff planning look-ahead time; Whether and how often staff shortage has been identified as a contributing factor in safety events.

2.1.16.3. Based on the answers, each country was given an average rating, which translated to a colour on the map - green for overall well-staffed; yellow for some concerns; orange for overall concern; red for services deeply impacted by staffing shortages.

2.1.16.4 The results are available here: [Staff Shortage Survey - EUR Region - IFATCA](#)

2.1.16.5 The HEATMAP was promoted amongst our MAs and Aviation authorities. It did attract some constructive attention.

2.1.16.6 EVP EUR was interviewed by several news outlets over Summer 2023 regarding the ATCO staff shortage issues (Articles in The Financial Times, Politico, Bloomberg, The Telegraph UK, Skift)

## **2.1.17 Network Management Board (NMB) and new CNS Program management**

2.1.17.1 Extract from the PMP: "In July 2023, the European Commission invited EUROCONTROL, in its role as Network Manager, to take on a new task – that of the CNS Programme Manager."

2.1.17.2 "The CNS Advisory Group's report describes the factors that have historically hindered rapid and synchronised deployment of CNS ground facilities and associated airborne equipment. It included a number of recommendations to remedy this situation, one of which was the need to



nominate a CNS Programme Manager (PM) whose key task would be to develop a CNS Evolution Plan as the basis on which stakeholders could successfully coordinate their activities to synchronise and accelerate the evolution of CNS ground and on-board equipment.”

2.1.17.3 “Purpose: The CNS Programme Manager shall establish and implement “a holistic CNS programme management to ensure successful implementation of the CNS evolution plan using or adapting existing entities to maximum effect”.

2.1.17.4 IFATCA, together with other PSOs (Professional Staff Organisations) are involved in the consultation process of the program aiming at reducing the fragmentation and higher efficiency of the CNS infrastructure.

2.1.17.5 EVPEUR insisted to get the PSOs involved in the consultation as equal partner and to be heard (vs Listened to), as an early involvement of ATM/ATC staff is a key to a successful implementation of new systems/changes/developments. Defragmentation is more than welcomed.

### **2.1.18 Analysis and Position on the Impact of ATM related strikes**

2.1.18.1 In April 2023, EUROCONTROL published a study highlighting the impact of strikes on the aviation sector in Europe.

2.1.18.2 In May 2023, a petition of one of the largest intra-European low-cost carriers was delivered to the president of the European Commission Ms. Ursula von der Leyen, which created a debate at a political and public level to restrict and organise the right of strike across the European Union, notwithstanding that it is a recognised national matter.

2.1.18.3 In October 2023, the Network Manager of EUROCONTROL published a study on the "[Impact of ATM related strikes on the European ATM Network](#)".

2.1.18.4 In the study, EUROCONTROL suggests eight different, possible, scenarios for mitigation measures and analysis, to minimise the impact of ATM related strikes on the European ATM network, including Scenario #3 “**USE OF MILITARY ATCOs AS COMPLEMENT TO CIVIL ATCOs.**”

2.1.18.5 While IFATCA is not a Trade-Union, our professional and technical mission pushed us to react and publish a sound analysis of the situation regarding the use of Military ATCOs as complement to Civil ATCOs. Our argumentation was reinforced due to the lack of disclaimers that EUROCONTROL put in its published study.

2.1.18.6 The full analysis can be found here: [Position on the Impact of ATM related strikes - IFATCA](#)

### **2.1.19 Need for a Legal Entity established in the EUR(O) Area.**

2.1.19.1 See arguments included in previous reports.

2.1.19.2 More than ever, with a growing visibility and more involvement requests, new opportunities shall not be restricted by legal requirements and/or shortcomings that could be solved upstream from an administrative point of view.

2.1.19.3 Some EU rules could have questioned the participation and led to IFATCA not being potentially accepted as partner into several EU funded programs, notwithstanding the [EU intergovernmental agreements](#).

2.1.19.4 Moreover, having an established legal entity in the EURO Zone would open some opportunities that, so far, did not materialise, for example avoiding paying transfer fees from/to EURO, developing extra remunerated activities that could potentially create issues with the Non-for-Profit status of the Federation in Canada, create investment opportunities, etc.

2.1.19.5 While the EB has decided to put on hold the establishment of a legal entity in Europe, in the EUROZONE, in Brussels, Belgium, next to all the European Aviation organisations, EVPEUR is still of the opinion that this issue should not be forgotten and buried for the future, and that it should be an integral part of the future vision and development of the Federation.

### **2.1.20 Various meetings attended by EVP EUR**

2.1.20.1 EUROCONTROL Provisional Council (PC) meetings, Brussels, Belgium – bi-annual meetings.

2.1.20.2 European ATM Staff Representatives Conference (EASC), Brussels, Belgium

2.1.20.3 1-to-1 Meeting with Director General (DG) EUROCONTROL, Brussels, Belgium

2.1.20.4 Tech Talks, Visio

2.1.20.5 Data 4 Safety (D4S) – Visio

2.1.20.6 EASA SAB Coordination meeting with EASA Coordinator and SAB representative Andrea Poti – Visio

2.1.20.7 Remote Towers Concept – Visio

- 2.1.20.8 Nordic Meeting -Reykjavik, Island
- 2.1.20.9 IFATSEA European Meeting – Bucharest, Romania
- 2.1.20.10 ATCEUC Meeting – La Valette, Malta
- 2.1.20.11 IFISA – Copenhagen, Denmark
- 2.1.20.12 EVPEUR Team Meeting, Brussels, Belgium
- 2.1.20.13 Visit Taiwanese Delegation, Brussels, Belgium
- 2.1.20.14 Visit Taiwanese Delegation, MUAC, Beek, The Netherlands
- 2.1.20.15 Visit NATCA Delegation, MUAC, Beek, The Netherlands
- 2.1.20.16 Industry Partners discussion – Visio
- 2.1.20.17 Visit New iNM OPS room, Brussels, Belgium
- 2.1.20.18 Visio Meeting with EUR MAs – Visio
- 2.1.20.19 60 years Anniversary EUROCONTROL reception, Brussels, Belgium
- 2.1.20.20 GdF 20 years Anniversary Celebrations, Darmstadt, Germany
- 2.1.20.21 Presentation/Meeting with State liaison Officers, Brussels, Belgium
- 2.1.20.22 BGATC AGM presentation, Steenokerzeel, Belgium

## **2. Letters**

- 2.1 Various letters were sent to national and international authorities on request of or supporting our Member Associations.

## **3. Various – near future.**

- 3.1 Some reorganizations will be needed, and reassignment of some reps will be proposed to the Executive Board.
- 3.2 In order to increase participation of a newer generation into sensible domains, EVPEUR will bring some suggestions and put requests where and when needed.

## **4. Special consideration.**

- 4.1 The IFATCA EUR zone unfortunately has suffered several armed conflicts during the last months.

- 4.2 Together with the EB, EVPEUR wishes to extend his unwavering commitment to the well-being of all our colleagues and friends in the Air Traffic Controllers’ Associations suffering from tragic events.
- 4.3. We remain at your disposal, through EVPEUR or directly to the EB, to offer any assistance within our capacity.
- 4.4 Humanism calls for respect and it shall be our ultimate and most important goal.

**3 Conclusions:**

- 3.1 The last 12 months saw a significant increase in traffic and the recovery brought traffic figures above 2019 levels in many areas in Europe.
- 3.2 Except for the Baltic area and Belarus which suffer the impact of the war of aggression against Ukraine and the resulting sanctions imposed on air traffic flows, Ukraine with zero rate due to military restrictions most of the continent saw a surge in numbers.
- 3.3 Imposed financial restrictions on recruitment and training are delivering the expected staff shortage and high-pressure level on staff during the summer schedule period.
- 3.4 IFATCA has further developed its visibility and credibility, got involved in new projects, high level discussions and interactions, we will still be investing funds to find new opportunities while consolidating our assets in Europe. Always looking ahead to deliver our mission and vision.
- 3.5 During the IFATCA events and conferences, a nice friendly and professional spirit prevails – collaboration is natural across all MAs all year round, including via a dedicated WhatsApp group.
- 3.6 The “TOGETHER – FURTHER!” spirit is becoming a natural way of acting and reacting on all occasions across EUR.

**4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 It is recommended that this report be accepted as information.

**5 REFERENCES**

- 5.1 See hyperlinks in the report.

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