

The six Member States of the Functional Airspace Block Europe Central (FABEC), Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, The Netherlands and Switzerland reconfirm their commitment to cooperate and to continuously improve the efficiency and performance of their airspace while aiming to reduce the environmental impact of aviation.

Bonn, 13 December 2022 – At the occasion of today’s FABEC Council the Member States reconfirmed the importance of FABEC as a tried and tested undertaking, enabling effective cooperation with the aim of constantly improving the performance of the airspace in the core of Europe. For nearly ten years, FABEC has proven to be an enabler for strengthened cooperation between Member States, with both civil and military authorities, their national supervisory authorities and their ANSPs, with the objective to working towards an operationally seamless airspace, achieving optimal performance in the areas of safety, environmental sustainability, capacity, cost-efficiency and military mission effectiveness.

By setting up commonly agreed policies and procedures and by sharing best practices, States, NSAs and their ANSPs have found effective ways to manage traffic in their airspace. Safety has been boosted by cooperation between national competent authorities. Capacity and environmental friendly flights are improved by cross-border cooperation, Free Route Airspace and delegation of services. By continually reorganizing routes and airspace structure, jointly with the Network Manager, FABEC considers traffic flows, for the benefit of the efficiency of the entire European network. Key projects such as Free Route Airspace and cross-border arrival management (XMAN), which are being implemented successfully and in close cooperation, are enablers of capacity and resilience in the European network, while aiming to reduce the environmental impact of aviation.

FABEC States are convinced that by managing performance cooperatively, operations are continuously optimized in all relevant domains of the Single European Sky.

In the previous reference period, a holistic approach has been achieved by a common FABEC performance plan. Very recently, mostly due to economic considerations following the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, FABEC States have opted to submit revised national performance plans for the 3rd reference period of the Single European Sky. This decision is without prejudice to any future reference period, considering also the existing proposals for a revision of the regulatory framework at EU level. FABEC States see great benefits of preserving this possibility and maintaining such a cooperation among functional airspace blocks.

FABEC States are convinced that managing their airspace in close cooperation brings real added value to the air travel experience of European citizens and the aviation industry. The current situation, marked by strong traffic volatility following a pandemic, geopolitical and economic uncertainty, has shown that the way to manage one of the busiest and most complex airspace in Europe is to work closely together. To this end, the Director Generals for Civil Aviation of the six States have today reconfirmed their continued and full commitment to cooperate as FABEC.

