

PRESS RELEASE

The CNMC publishes a market study on air traffic services in Spain

- The CNMC recommends continuing the reform begun in 2010 with the aim of obtaining greater efficiencies in air traffic services and related markets.
- The high safety and quality standards that are characteristic of civil aviation must always be taken into account.
- The opening up of aerodrome air traffic services to competition has resulted in a 60% increase in efficiency and an improvement in the quality of services.

Madrid, November 19th 2018.– The CNMC (Spanish National Commission on Markets and Competition) has published a Market study on air traffic services in Spain ([E/CNMC/002/18](#)). It analyzes the functioning of air traffic services and the training of professionals in Spain, from the point of view of competition and efficient economic regulation.

Proper functioning of air transport is essential to ensure the mobility of people and goods, thus contributing to the development of economic activity and boosting territorial and social cohesion. In 2017, 81.5% of the almost 82 million international tourists who visited Spain arrived by plane.

Air traffic services comprise the control and supervision of aircraft movements while en-route (en-route services), when approaching the airport (approach services) and while the aircraft is moving through the aerodrome (aerodrome services).

A legal reform in 2010 liberalised aerodrome air traffic services (while they are moving through the airport) in 18 Spanish airports. Other European Union countries (United Kingdom, Sweden and Germany) have liberalised both aerodrome and approach services.

The liberalisation has resulted in a significant cost reduction as well as an improvement of quality in these services, thus benefiting airport users, airlines and travellers.

The CNMC suggests a set of recommendations in order to continue reaping these benefits. In particular:

- To proceed with the liberalisation of aerodrome air traffic control so as to achieve further cost reductions and quality improvements.
- To simplify the requirements for the provision of air traffic services in those airports where it is possible under safety conditions (technically speaking, to

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proceed with the designation of airports as AFIS¹).

- To explore the possibility of liberalising approach control services, given the positive experiences of other European countries.
- To stimulate greater competition in air traffic controller training services.
- To eliminate the vertical integration of Aena, S.A. and ENAIRE, as the current situation disincentivises going further with the reform.

¹ AFIS (Aerodrome Flight Information Service) are less complex air traffic services which are provided at airports with lower complexity of traffic.