

Analysis of claimable cancellations and delays 2012-2025

Paul Vaneker

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Lennoc B.V. focuses on collecting and analysing European flight information. The company was founded in 2005 at a time when European flight data had to be gathered from many different sources. Lennoc decided to consolidate European flight information into one master database. The architecture for the database was completed in 2008 and since then Lennoc has operated at the forefront of European flight intelligence.

The database allows third parties to compare flights, routes, airports and flight statistics in a flexible and efficient way.

This information is collected on a daily basis and Lennoc is continuously expanding its input sources. With the assistance of our own Flight Intelligence team, we can offer the best advice and customize products and analysis relevant to your organisation.

Data report claimable delays and cancellations

The European Union is currently working on a revision of Regulation (EC) No 261/2004. Decisions taken in this context will have long-term consequences for both passengers and airlines.

To ensure that future policy choices are well-informed, it is essential to assess how the regulation has functioned in practice over time. A clear understanding of historical developments is necessary to ensure a fair and balanced policy for the future.

To support an evidence-based discussion, this report analyses flight operations falling within the scope of EU Regulation 261/2004 over a period of fourteen years.

The objective is to examine the relationship between air traffic growth and the occurrence of claimable cancellations and delays, with a focus on long-term developments rather than short-term fluctuations.

The analysis includes all flights that fall within the geographical scope of EU Regulation 261/2004, covering flights operated by EU-based carriers as well as outbound flights from the European Union operated by non-EU carriers.

Years that were heavily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic were excluded, as the unprecedented disruption to air traffic during this period would distort long-term trend analysis.

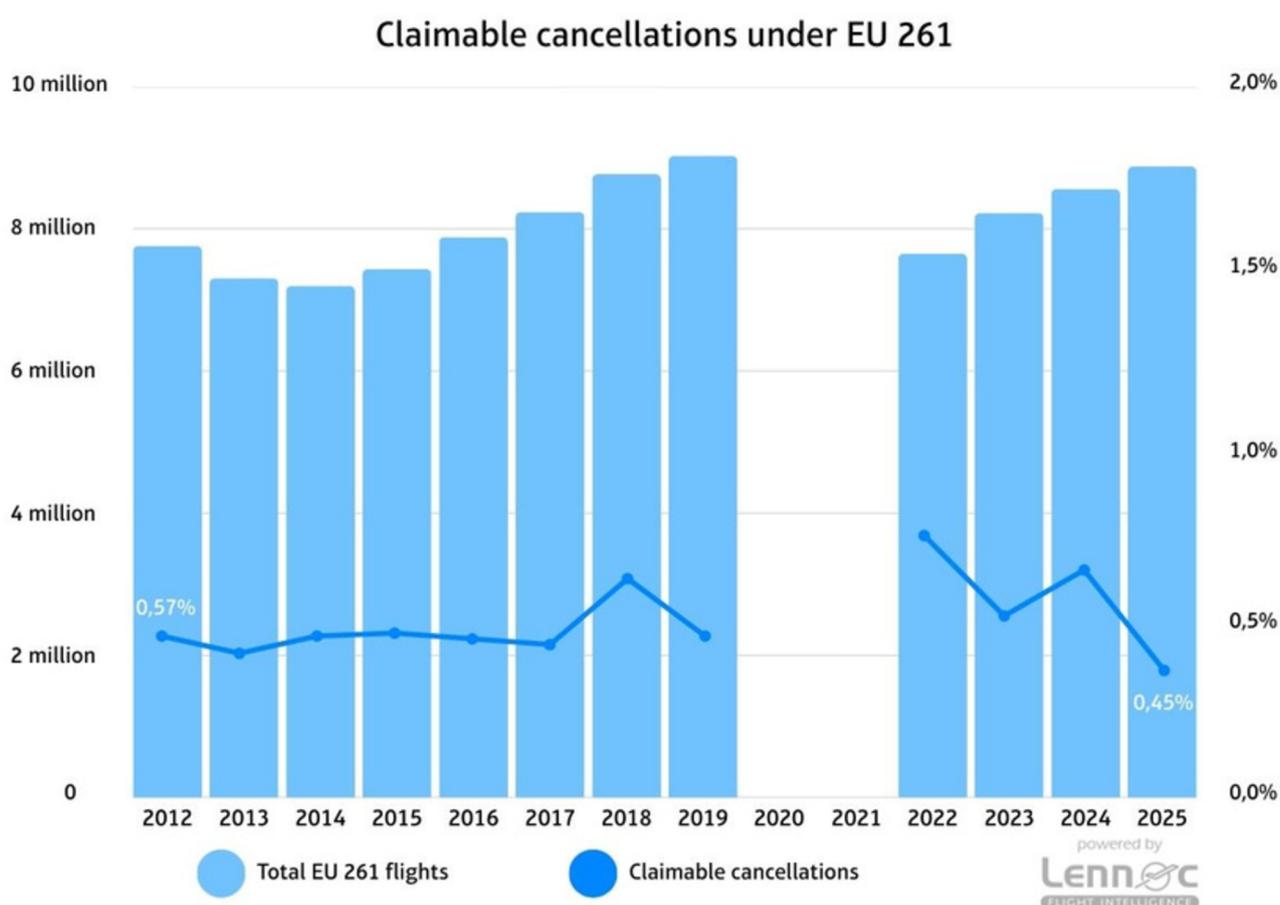
In addition, the impact of Brexit has been accounted for by excluding flights that no longer qualify following February 2020 across the entire dataset.

Throughout this paper, the term “claimable” refers exclusively to cancellations and delays that were within the control of the airline or inherent to normal airline operations. Events classified as extraordinary circumstances are excluded. This distinction is to ensure that the analysis reflects operational performance rather than external influences.

Cancellations

The chart shows that while the total number of flights qualifying under EU Regulation 261/2004 has increased steadily over time, the percentage of claimable cancellations has remained broadly stable.

In 2012, 0,57% of all EU 261 flights were cancelled for reasons that were within the airline's control or inherent to normal airline operations. By 2025, this percentage had decreased to 0,45%, representing an operational improvement of approximately 21% despite continued growth in air traffic volumes.



Several individual years deviate from this long-term trend due to specific circumstances.

In 2018, multiple strike actions at Ryanair led to a temporary increase in claimable cancellations. In 2022, post-COVID start-up disruptions resulted in airlines selling more tickets than could operationally be delivered with existing capacity.

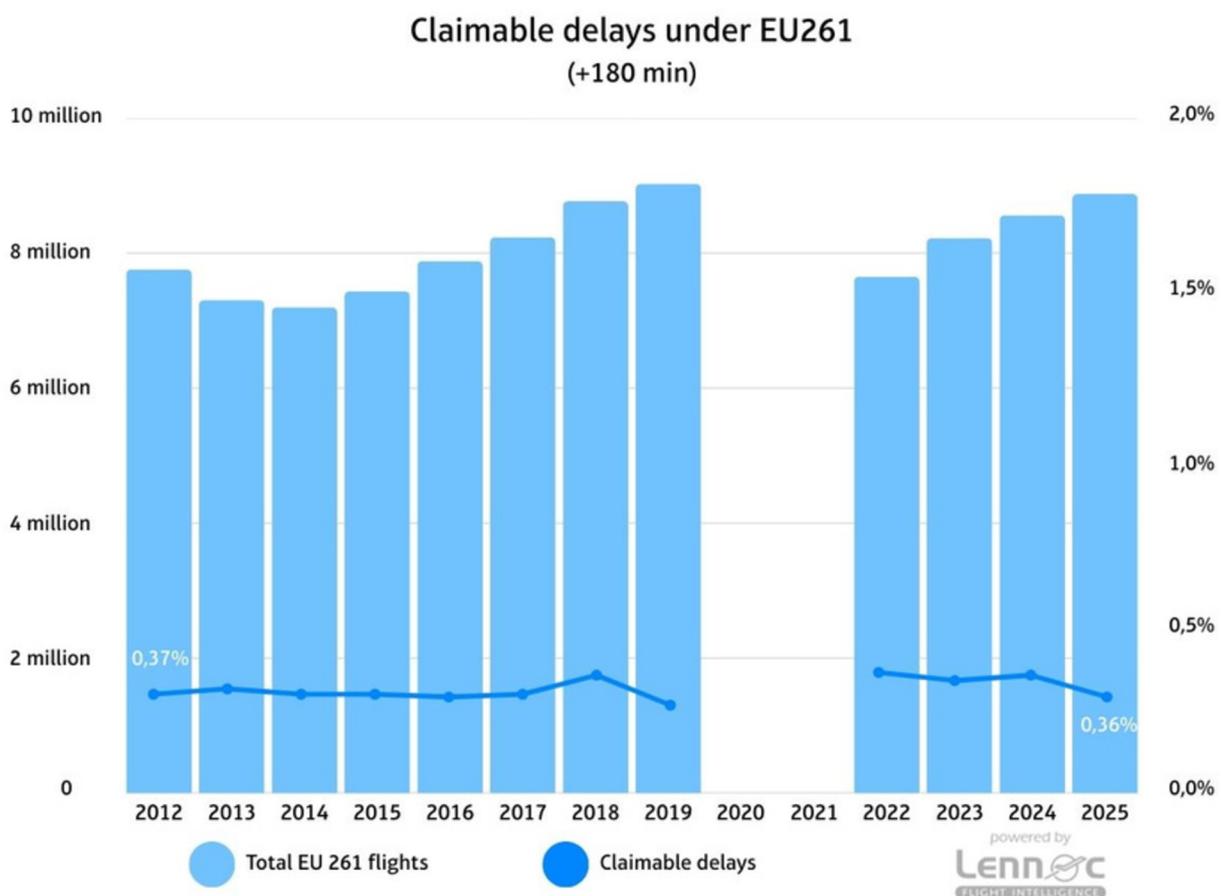
In 2024, multiple strike actions at Lufthansa again caused a temporary rise in claimable cancellations.

Overall, the data indicates that the increase in air traffic **has not led to a proportional increase** in claimable cancellations, suggesting structural improvements in airline operational performance rather than deterioration.

Delays

The chart shows how the share of claimable long delays (exceeding 180 minutes) has developed over time in relation to the total number of flights qualifying under EU Regulation 261/2004. Long delays represent a small fraction of overall EU 261 flights throughout the entire period.

In 2012, 0,37% of all EU 261 flights experienced a delay of more than three hours for reasons that were within the airline's control or inherent to normal airline operations. In 2025, this percentage was 0,36%, indicating that the relative occurrence of claimable long delays has remained virtually unchanged over time.



Fluctuations in the data are limited and occur mainly in specific years rather than part of a sustained trend.

In 2018, industrial actions coincided with a temporary increase in claimable long delays.

In 2022, the restart of air traffic following the COVID-19 period led to operational disruptions, including staff shortages and capacity mismatches, which were reflected in higher delay levels.

Concluding, the data shows that long delays have remained a consistently small and stable share of EU 261 flights, even as total traffic volumes increased. This indicates **stability in the occurrence of claimable long delays** rather than a structural increase over time.

Any questions?

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact Paul Vaneker.

Email: pvaneker@lennoc.com

Phone: [+31\(0\)88-0066422](tel:+31(0)88-0066422)

