DFS Deutsche Flugsicherung

IFR Pilot Info 01/2024

update

Facts about airspace Class E

- Class E airspace is controlled airspace in which IFR and VFR traffic is permitted.
- Upper limit FL100, over the German Alps FL130, whereby FL100 or FL130 already belong to Class C airspace.
- Lower limit 2500 ft AGL, below that (uncontrolled) Class G airspace.
- In the vicinity of aerodromes with IFR traffic, the lower limit of Class E airspace is reduced to 1700 ft AGL or 1000 ft AGL (see schematic chart at the end).
- Speed limit of 250 kts applies to all flights below FL100; no speed limit in the level band between FL130 and FL100 above the German Alps.
- Weather minima for VFR traffic: 1000 ft vertical distance and 1.5 km horizontal distance from clouds, flight visibility below FL100: 5 km; above FL100: 8 km.
- VFR pilots are responsible for complying with the conditions regarding the weather minima.
- During the day, radio contact for VFR traffic is not mandatory.
- No separation between IFR and VFR traffic.
  For VFR flights at night in Class E airspace, filing a flight plan is mandatory if the flight leaves the vicinity of the aerodrome. At night, VFR traffic must have radio contact with an ATC sector; ATC, however, has no obligation to establish separation between IFR and VFR flights at night.

- Transponder activation according to SERA13001: When an aircraft carries a serviceable SSR transponder, the pilot shall operate the transponder at all times during flight, regardless of whether the aircraft is within or outside airspace where SSR is used for ATS purposes.

  Pilots shall not operate the IDENT feature unless instructed by ATS.

  Except for flights operating in airspaces where the competent authority provides for mandatory operation of transponders, aircraft that do not have an adequate power supply are exempt from the requirement to continuously operate the transponder.

- At night: Transponders are mandatory for all aircraft in Class E airspace

- Transponders are mandatory for all aircraft in the transponder mandatory zone (TMZ) that is part of Class E airspace.
  - For VFR flights, the obligation to maintain air-ground voice communication watch on an air traffic control frequency applies in conjunction with the obligation to set an individual TMZ transponder code (code and frequency published on the ICAO chart).

- Traffic information is provided to the extent possible.

- VFR traffic is not controlled even when in radio contact.

- IFR flight documents only provide information on the airspace structure in some cases.

- VFR charts provide no information on IFR routings. The ICAO chart 1:500.000 shows the IFR final approaches schematically at controlled civil and military airports that are not protected by Class C or D (not CTR) airspace.

- The right-of-way rules under SERA3210 apply:
  - IFR flights do not have a general right-of-way in Class E airspace.
  - Aircraft in the final stages of approach to land and landing aircraft shall be given way to.
  - Sailplanes, hang gliders, paragliders, balloons and aerotow operations shall have the right-of-way over powered aircraft.
  - This not only applies when the IFR flight is being radar-vectored but also when the IFR flight is on a published IFR procedure. To prevent dangerous aircraft proximity (airprox), the procedure shall be deviated from and ATC informed.

Arrival and departure charts

To draw the attention of IFR pilots to the special features of Class E airspace, DFS has now added the appropriate information to all AIP IFR approach and departure charts from and to controlled airports that are not protected from unknown VFR traffic below FL100 by Class C or D (not CTR) airspace.

For airports whose approach and departure procedures lie between the control zone and FL100 through Class E airspace (also TMZ), the following information will be given on charts:

IFR PROFILES WITHIN CLASS E AIRSPACE. WATCH OUT FOR VFR TRAFFIC UNKNOWN TO ATC.

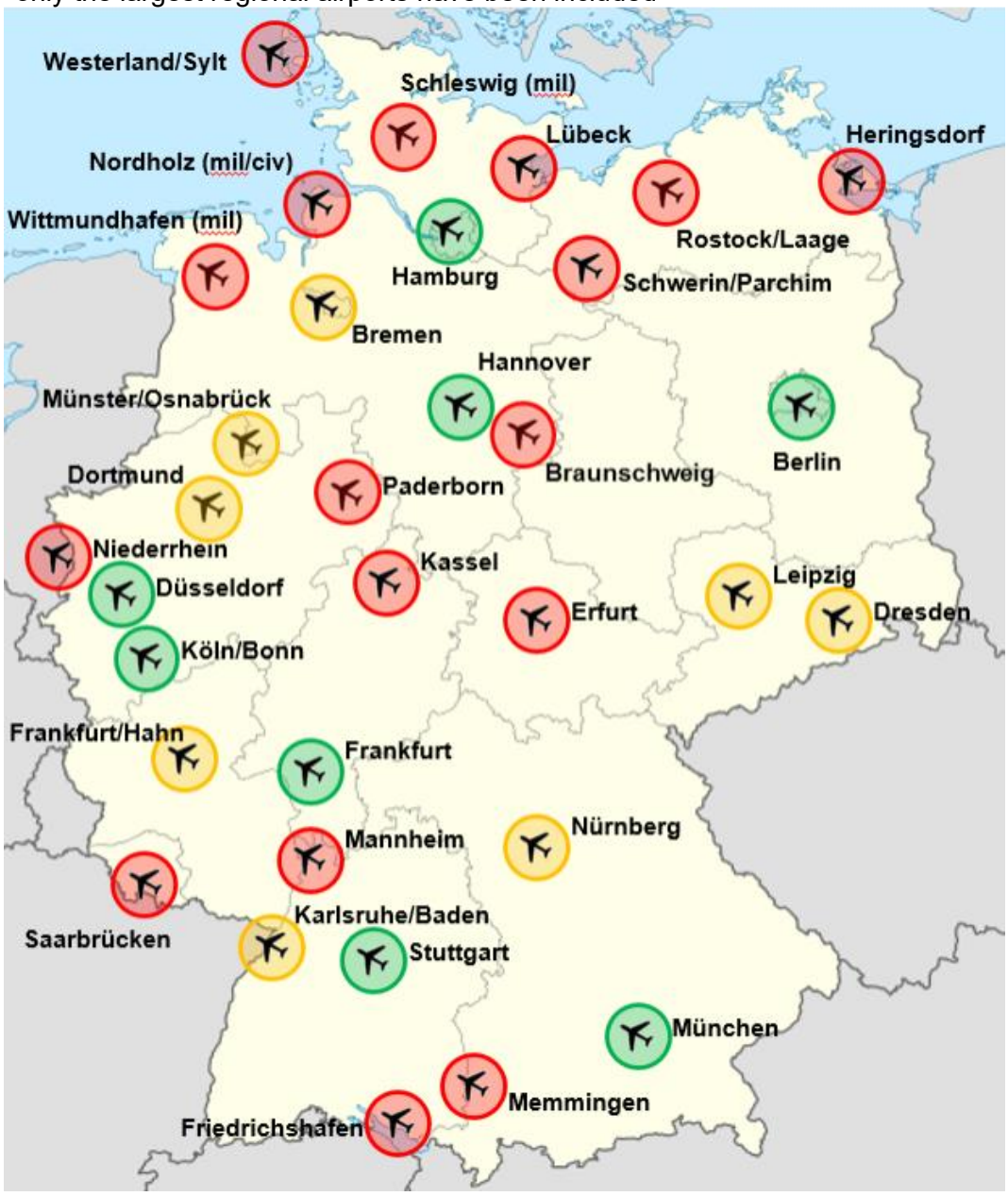
For airports whose approach and departure procedures in the area between the control zone and FL100 are partially protected by the establishment of additional Class C or D (not CTR) airspace, but a remaining part still leads through Class E airspace (also TMZ), the following note is shown on the charts:

PARTS OF IFR PROFILES WITHIN CLASS E AIRSPACE. WATCH OUT FOR VFR TRAFFIC UNKNOWN TO ATC.

DFS has begun to show the C/D/TMZ airspace structures at selected airports with existing IFR/VFR mixed traffic problems on the AIP IFR approach/departure charts in order to raise awareness of these problems among IFR pilots.

Airports and regional airports*

*only the largest regional airports have been included

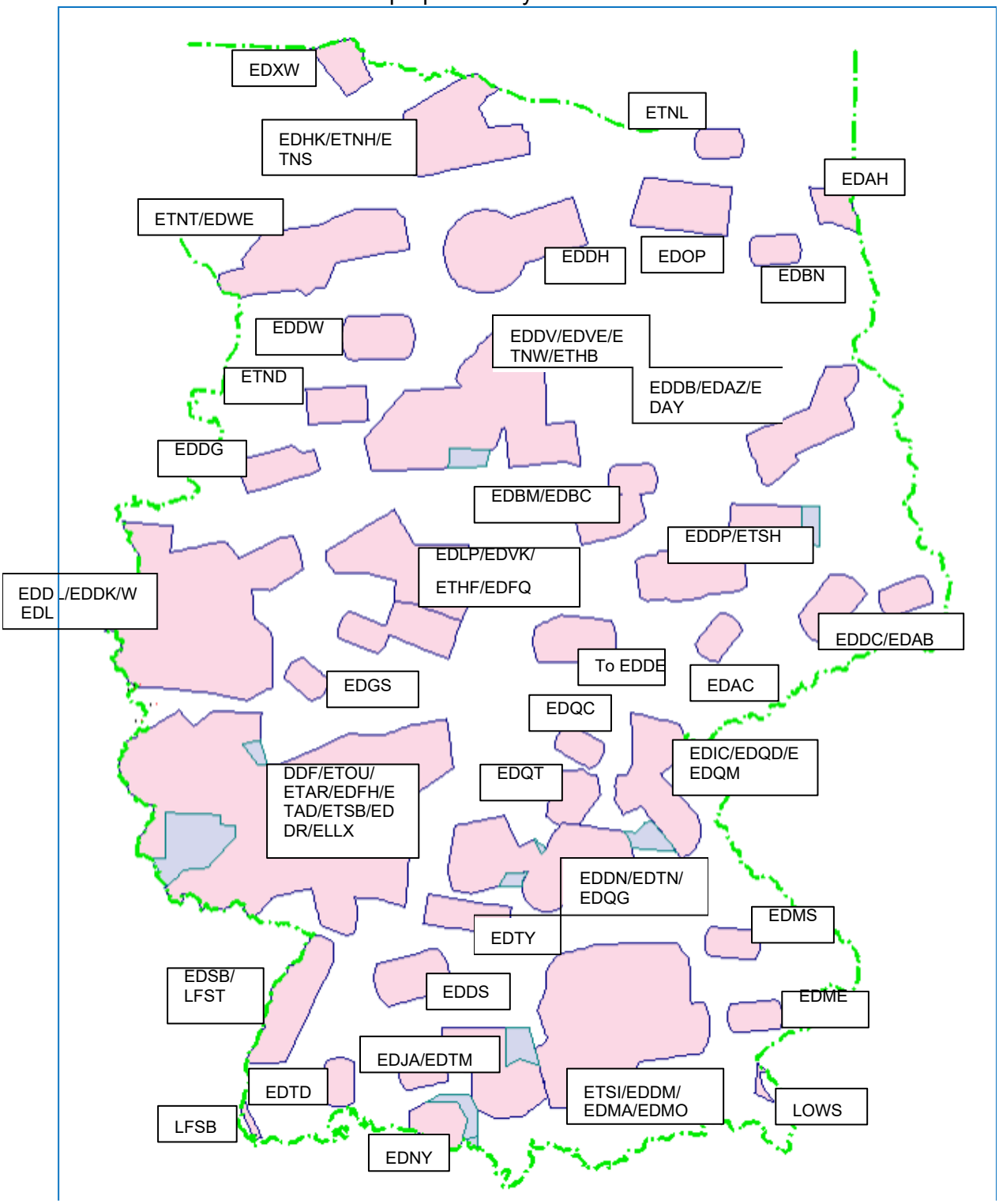


No protected Class C and/or D (not CTR) airspace below FL100, Class E airspace until reaching the control zone. The aerodromes of Niederrhein, Memmingen, Paderborn, Friedrichshafen, Erfurt, Wittmundhafen (mil.), Nordholz (mil.), and Schleswig (mil.) have a TMZ. At Memmingen and Friedrichshafen airports, the TMZ extends from the control zone to FL100. At Niederrhein Airport, there is a small Class D (not CTR) airspace north of the CTR. At Schleswig and Nordholz aerodromes, there is an RMZ Glider, with identical dimensions to the TMZ, which applies to sailplanes that are not equipped with a transponder.

Protected Class C and/or D (not CTR) airspace at levels above the CTR, but not up to FL100. At some airports, protection was extended upwards and sideways by TMZs. At Bremen, Nürnberg, Leipzig and Dresden airports, the TMZ was extended above Class C or D (not CTR) airspace up to FL100.

Protected Class C and/or D (not CTR) airspace below FL100 up to the CTR; in Hamburg and Hannover supplemented laterally by a TMZ.

Lower limit of Class E airspace
Schematic representation as at 21 MAR 2024
The locations are for orientation purposes only.



- white: Lower limit of Class E airspace at 2500 ft AGL
- blue: Lower limit of Class E airspace at 1700 ft AGL
- red: Lower limit of Class E airspace at 1000 ft AGL