



PRESS RELEASE

EUROPEAN TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION

FEDERATION EUROPEENNE DES TRAVAILLEURS DES TRANSPORTS

Catania, 1 July 2014

EUROPE MUST STOP SOCIAL DUMPING AND FLAGS OF CONVENIENCE IN CIVIL AVIATION

Around 120 delegates have gathered on the 1st and the 2nd of July 2014 in Catania, Italy, to attend a two-day conference on the evolution of the aviation labour market since the introduction of low fares airlines. Scientific research has revealed that the arrival of low fares airlines has introduced social dumping practices in the European aviation sector. The conference organised by the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) demands that the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council stop these unfair practices and address the concerns of the workforce through the adoption of new specific legislation.

This conference is part of a wider EU funded project, which includes a scientific study that documents the impact of the new "flexible models" on employment in European civil aviation. The preliminary results have been presented by Professor Peter Turnbull (Cardiff University) and Dr Harvey Geraint (Birmingham University): *"The data clearly illustrate the evolution in the civil aviation labour market that has increased the precariousness of work in the industry and altered the challenges facing trade unions"*.

Enrique Carmona, ETF Civil Aviation Section President, commented: *"Due to the increased share of atypical forms of employment, such as agency work, zero-hours contracts or even (bogus) self-employment, the already overwhelming flexibility of work and the trend for social dumping in aviation are rocketing. It is imperative that trade unions develop appropriate strategies in response to these threats. This also brings big challenges for trade unions. We therefore need to engage in campaigns to address the concerns of the workforce, both at a national level and at European level"*.

The new business models developed in civil aviation try to avoid labour law and social provisions as much as possible, often choosing to establish in a Member State to avoid social and labour laws of another country. Moreover, temporary agencies and bogus self-employment potentially increase safety risks in aviation since non direct employment weakens the strong safety culture and accountability and procedures that currently prevail.

François Ballestero, ETF Civil Aviation Political Secretary, added: *"In addition to unfair competition on the back of workers in the EU, through social dumping and flags of convenience, we face increased pressure from non-European airlines which do not respect workers' rights. The participants of the conference call the European decision makers to reverse this trend through the adoption of new legislation that protects the staff from Europe and their jobs"*.

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The ETF represents more than 2.5 million transport workers from 243 transport unions and 41 European countries, in the following sectors: railways, road transport and logistics, maritime transport, inland waterways, civil aviation, ports & docks, tourism and fisheries.
