



PRESS RELEASE

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COURT ORDERS WIZZ AIR TO REINSTATE DISMISSED UNION LEADER

The European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) today welcomed the decision of Romania's Ilfov court to order the reinstatement of an unfairly dismissed trade union leader. The court decided on 19 March 2015 that the dismissal of the president of Sindicatul Aerolimit (the cabin crew union at Wizz Air's base in Bucharest) was illegal and the company has to reinstate him. In addition, Wizz Air is liable to pay compensation equal to his salary.

The low cost Wizz Air airline has been traditionally non-union. In the summer of 2014, a few courageous cabin crew members decided to set up a trade union to defend the rights of their colleagues at the base in Bucharest (Romania). One month after founding the union its president, Mircea Constantin, was fired on disciplinary grounds. The vice president and secretary of the trade union were suspended from flight duties, with the company claiming that their union involvement made them a safety hazard. Management pressure grew and the Wizz Air CEO stated that he would not accept any kind of union in his company. Many workers began to fear they would lose their jobs, and came under severe pressure from an anti-union campaign arranged by Wizz Air, to send emails renouncing union membership. The whole story culminated on 4 November 2014 with the termination of 19 contracts of Union members.

Despite campaigning by the ETF and ITF together with the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), which included a LabourStart campaign that gathered nearly 10,000 signatures worldwide, Wizz Air refused to reinstate the dismissed workers. Now the decision of the Romanian court has forced the company to respect the law and in particular, the protection of trade union leaders.

"We are very happy about the swift decision in the case of Mircea Constantin, which will enable him to continue his work in Wizz Air and hope for a quick decision in the court case of the other 19 dismissed union members", commented François Ballestero, ETF Political Secretary for Civil Aviation. He was seconded by Gabriel Mocho, ITF Civil Aviation Secretary, who added: "Respect for the right to organise is fundamental. It is unacceptable that airlines are trying to get competitive advantage by not respecting the law. "

For further information, please contact François Ballestero, ETF Political Secretary, f.ballestero@etf-europe.org or Gabriel Mocho, ITF Civil Aviation Secretary, Mocho_Gabriel@itf.org.uk

The ETF represents more than 3.5 million transport workers from 41 European countries. The ITF is an international federation of transport workers' trade unions gathering 4.5 million transport workers from some 150 countries.