



PRESS RELEASE

EUROPEAN TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION

FEDERATION EUROPEENNE DES TRAVAILLEURS DES TRANSPORTS

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AVIATION STRATEGY FOR EUROPE IT IS TIME FOR THE COMMISSION TO DELIVER ON SOCIAL ISSUES!

On Monday 7 December 2015, the European Commission (EC) presented its long-awaited Aviation strategy for Europe. The European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF), the largest European workers' representative in civil aviation, agrees on the urgency for a comprehensive strategy integrating social aspects, safety and security, as well as measures to restore fair competition. However, the ETF is dissatisfied by the lack of binding legislative proposals and actions in the social field in the Commission strategy.

Aviation must retain its reputation as the safest mode of transport in Europe. However, the ETF is concerned about the uncritical approach vis-à-vis the so-called new business models, which often involve a lack of industrial relations, questionable forms of employment and outsourcing. The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) admitted that precarious and atypical employment may have adverse effects on safety.

Enrique Carmona, ETF Civil Aviation Section President, commented: *"The adoption of a comprehensive strategy on aviation by the EC is needed. The presented document however does not strike the right balance between efficiency, safety, security and social concerns, which are all crucial for the industry's future. The existing standards should not be watered down in view of external competition. On the contrary, they should ensure fair competition for airlines, social protection for workers and most importantly, safety for the flying public."*

The ETF and its affiliates are also concerned that without concrete legislative actions, the EC commitment to a strong social agenda and high quality jobs in aviation only remain hollow phrases. Liberalisation has brought benefits for industry and passengers but also provoked a race to the bottom for aviation workers. The strategy needs to address social issues, precarious and atypical employment such as outsourcing, excessive use of agency work, temporary contracts, bogus self-employment, cascade subcontracting, pay-to-fly or zero-hour contracts.

François Ballestero, ETF Political Secretary for Civil Aviation, stated: *"The strategy is not in line with Commissions' commitment to high social and employment standards which is part of the 2016 work programme. We need concrete proposals to fight social dumping and ensure fair competition both in the single market and with regard to third countries. Among other issues, provisions on transfer of staff in ground handling and labour law and social security applicable to aircrew and other mobile workers must be better regulated"*.

On the other hand, the ground staff members represented by the ETF welcomed the inclusion of ground handling into the scope of EASA.

The ETF together with its national affiliates will closely monitor the implementation of the Commission strategy and concrete actions. ETF calls on the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers to demand from the EC binding proposals against social dumping and flags of convenience.

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The ETF represents more than 3.5 million transport workers from more than 230 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.