



Brussels, 15 May 2019

Dear Candidate in European Parliamentary Elections,

Will you help transport workers' trade unions win fair contracts and conditions at Ryanair?

You have surely heard about the recent tensions at budget airline Ryanair. Staff and their unions are working hard to improve conditions at the company, but we also need the EU Institutions to ensure that European rules and values are fairly applied. That is why the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) are writing to you today.

As a candidate to become a directly-elected representative of European citizens, the ETF and ITF expect you to make a real difference to the lives of Ryanair workers during your mandate.

As an MEP it will be your responsibility to promote and secure human rights and protect working conditions. Only in this way can the European aviation sector grow fairly and remain safe in the future.

The European Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights. Those rights apply to all sectors of the economy and need to be respected by all employers.

A business model based on a disregard for trade union rights, temporary agency work, bogus self-employment, 'forum shopping' for the weakest labour and social security laws, poor wages and unfair working conditions has no place in the European labour market.

Ryanair workers therefore call on you to support changes in the following key areas during your mandate.

Respect for trade union rights

Trade union rights mean the right to form and join a trade union, to negotiate collectively and to take collective action, including strikes. Those rights are set out in national, European and international legislation.

In the four years to come we expect you to respect, recognise, guarantee and ensure those fundamental rights when legislating and when taking initiatives.

Direct employment

Ryanair employs long-term workers on temporary agency contracts and, where it is able, imposes self-employment to avoid more robust labour law and payments for social security and tax. This should not be permitted. It is abundantly clear that pilots and cabin crew in commercial aviation are not self-employed. Is a pilot free to hire other people? Can a cabin crew member decide when to work and when to take holiday? Workers deserve the contract arrangements most appropriate for their situation, not unstable employment relationships that only benefit employer profits.

We expect you to close the legal loopholes used to avoid the appropriate labour and social security legislation, as well as avoid the appropriate level of taxation, and ensure that bogus self-employment is transformed into a proper employment relationship between business and worker.



Decent wages

Ryanair must pay decent wages, always respecting national legislation and company or sectoral collective bargaining agreements where these exist.

We expect you to legislate to create and safeguard decent economic conditions in Europe, reflecting the important contribution made by Ryanair workers.

Applicable law

When a transnational business applies the weakest possible national labour and social security legislation to its workforce, this is unequivocally an act of social dumping. Ryanair continues to pursue this approach, even after recognising and negotiating with unions in some jurisdictions.

We expect you to continue the work begun during the previous term to ensure that aircrew are subject to labour and social security legislation in the jurisdiction of their home base. Ryanair workers expect this to become the accepted norm enforced across the EU.

Support us

If you intend to back fair employment conditions for Ryanair workers, we invite you to send us an email (w.warneck@etf-europe.org) with a photo and a short statement expressing your support. We will publish these photos online to mark your important role in the ETF/ITF campaign to clean up Ryanair's labour practices.

We look forward to discussing these issues with you shortly after your election, and we will continue to monitor your work concerning these key demands throughout your mandate.

Yours sincerely,

Livia Spera
Acting General Secretary
ETF

Stephen Cotton
General Secretary
ITF