

Margrethe Vestager  
Executive Vice President  
European Commission

*E-Mail:*

[Margrethe.Vestager@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Margrethe.Vestager@ec.europa.eu)

*cc:*

[Adina-loana.Valean@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Adina-loana.Valean@ec.europa.eu)

[Nicolas.Schmit@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Nicolas.Schmit@ec.europa.eu)

Brussels, 29 May 2020

Dear Commissioner Vestager,

### **ETF/ECA call for a fair deal for the Lufthansa Group**

the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) together with the European Cockpit Association (ECA) as well as our respective member unions and associations representing all categories of aviation workers are following with great concern the developments surrounding the discussion on state aid to the Lufthansa Group and the associated conditions of the European Commission.

According to media reports, one of the conditions involves a hand-over of take-off and landing rights ("slots") to other market players. We would like to point out that some of them have been openly engaged in wage and social dumping across Europe for decades, distorting competition on the Single Market and harming labour standards, and should therefore not be rewarded with additional slots for their harmful business practices. To be clear, we are talking about airlines that are involved in practices such as bogus self-employment, precarious broker agency contracts, salaries under the threshold of poverty, union busting or even violation of labour law. These practices are well-documented and the national courts and the European Court of Justice have pronounced themselves on these matters.

We would also like to remind that – while some of these airlines are pointing at the Lufthansa Group and other network carriers as privileged recipients of state aid – they have also benefitted from state support in the form of guarantee for cheap loans and thus facilitated access to fresh money. Equally, they have been benefitting from artificially low airport charges and financial support e.g. from local tourism authorities, whilst network carriers have been paying airport charges at usual market rate and are not benefitting from local authorities' subsidies.

The ETF and ECA and their members are therefore calling on the European Commission to reconsider its decision on conditions attached to the approval of state aid for Lufthansa Group. As opposed to market-based conditionality, we strongly support conditionality based on social responsibility and respect for trade unions as well as environmental sustainability. Market sanctions should be deployed in respect of support given to airlines that damage society, staff and passengers, not those who act in good faith.

The message of the Commission that recovery measures have to focus on people should be reflected here. The EU has promised a social recovery and competition rules cannot ignore it any longer.

We also take this opportunity to reinforce our call for fairer EU legislation on air services, taking into account not only the needs of the market but also social conditions of the workers, to ensure fair competition which is undistorted from social dumping and atypical employment.

To this end, we would like to ask you for an urgent meeting with ETF and ECA leadership to discuss our concerns and proposals.

Yours sincerely,



Livia Spera  
General Secretary



Philip von Schöppenthau  
Secretary General