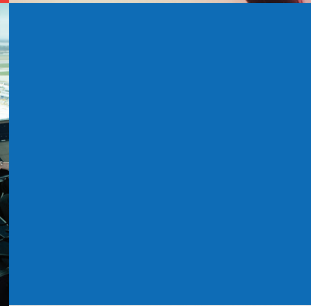
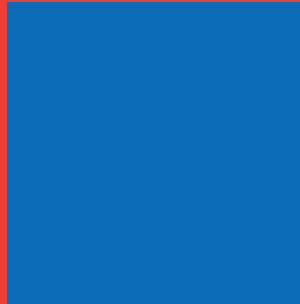




EUROPEAN
TRANSPORT
WORKERS'
FEDERATION



ETF Civil Aviation EU Elections Manifesto 2024



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Introduction

The European Union and Europe in general faced very difficult challenges during the last parliamentary mandate: COVID and the war against Ukraine are just two of the crises that deeply affected Europeans. The economy of the continent suffered an unprecedented shock and no sector was spared. Transport workers were on the frontline at all times delivering essential goods and services, keeping people together.

Aviation was particularly affected by both the pandemic and airspace consequences of the war in Ukraine (closure and sanctions). With air traffic increasing and foreseen to go back to pre-pandemic levels in 2024, and at the same time facing severe lack of staff, aviation workers are under enormous pressure to perform what are more and more unattractive and precarious jobs in the sector, particularly as many in the industry are not protected by EU social provisions.

Aviation workers need the European Union to live up to the ideals of solidarity and unity upon which it was founded and this document summarizes our main political demands ahead of the European Elections 2024.

Shortage & Cost of Living

Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have been saying that a lack of available staff would be an issue in the aviation sector, and finally, it has arrived. Hiring people seems mission impossible right now, as most **aviation workers have already found better jobs elsewhere due to their transferable skills and better pay and conditions in other sectors of the economy.**

Almost three-quarters of ground staff in Europe were out of work at the height of the pandemic. In a context of high inflationary pressure, in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis, exacerbated by the war in Ukraine, given the precariousness of

their contracts and the exposure to health and safety issues, long working days, and shift work, most of them have decided not to return to aviation. Similarly, we see the same issues with cabin crew who have found better jobs in other industries and have no interest in returning.

Member states and employers have been complicit in this problem as they freely gave and received state aid throughout the pandemic without any requirement to maintain employment. So, the aviation industry is currently at capacity crisis where people are simply choosing not to return to work in the sector. Furthermore, **our industry relies upon highly skilled and expe-**



rienced workers in every field of civil aviation. Simply replacing workers to regain adequate numbers does not make the industry as safe as it was prior to the pandemic. **The loss of experience and skill is of grave concern to us.**

Sustainability

With heat waves and extreme weather events becoming more and more frequent, the impact and consequences on climate change are ever more apparent also at aviation workplaces. Heat and floods have disrupted operations in many airports, the air quality both in the cabin and on the ramp is deteriorated and workers are paying the consequences of pollution and climate change with their health. **Aviation workers support legislation that promotes and incentivizes measures aimed at greening the industry because all sectors of the economy need to do their part.** However, a level playing field must be guaranteed with third country airlines whose operations and fuel are often heavily subsidized by their States and can distort fair competition.

Aviation workers are also citizens, they care about their jobs and the planet alike for the simple reason that there are no jobs on a dead planet. They feel the impact of climate change in their workplaces already (extreme weather events, such as high heat and floods disrupt normal operations in airports more and

more frequently) and they want their jobs in the future to be desirable jobs, with good pay and conditions. We need these jobs to be respectful of the environment because in our view only jobs that respect workers' health are sustainable and therefore only sustainable jobs are healthy jobs. It would be unfair for workers to pay the price of climate measures: we need heavy involvement of the unions in decision making on greening measures and the establishment of just transition mechanisms for the jobs that will potentially be lost in the future. **Without just transition from a social perspective there won't be any transition at all. Airports are often located in densely populated areas.** The loss of jobs due to ill-thought out or neglectful sustainable initiatives could be diluted and relatively unseen within the wider population. The risk is that tens of thousands of aviation workers could pay a very high price if they aren't properly represented. Whilst some jobs may be easier to retrain and apply transferrable skills and salary expectations, some such as pilots, air traffic controllers and cabin crew are not.

Women and Diversity

The role of women and minorities needs to be highlighted in the aviation sector and unions can do their part. Women are less present in leadership roles; female pilots make up for 4% of the global number and female ATCOs to varying degrees around Europe are still a minority. Similarly, the proportion of women



engineers in airlines, airports, ATC facilities etc is relatively low. Among cabin crew, and other customer-facing roles, like check-in agents, women are actually a majority but are confronted with lower salaries compared to other professions in the sector, with gender stereotypes that are difficult to overcome, and violence at work (by passengers, co-workers and managers). **Women in aviation face a double difficulty: a “glass ceiling” whereby it is very difficult to reach leadership positions in their profession and a “sticky floor”, where horizontal mobility is also very complicated to achieve.** The latter phenomenon is a perfect breeding ground for salary segregation in the industry. For an industry so heavily populated by women in lower paid roles not to be selected or attracted to the higher paid roles needs to be challenged and acted upon.

Women in aviation need recognition of their professionalism, want to get rid of harmful stereotypes, and fight against gender-based violence. Furthermore, they denounce unfair rosters and shifts that do not take into account the care work i.e., the double burden all women still carry, and the dire need for work-life balance.

Social Dialogue and Collective Bargaining

Social dialogue and collective bargaining are key cornerstones of the European labour policy and social model. **The EU should make sure that**

social dialogue and collective bargaining are respected and encouraged in companies that operate in Europe and have an economic interest in Europe. Moreover, a strong social conditionality should be taken into account when firms access public funding in times of crises **so that workers do not pay the price in terms of redundancies and reduction of their salary and conditions.** Additionally, **sectoral social dialogue at the EU level is essential especially in aviation, an industry that is international by its own nature,** where actors are often multinational companies.

Unfortunately, we observe a double challenge for it to be effective: employer associations (especially those representing airlines) are very fragmented and with little to no mandate to negotiate at the EU level. Secondly, the European Commission itself, under whose auspices meetings are organised, is disinvesting human and financial resources from social dialogue. We regret this approach as it contradicts the support to social partners the President of the Commission herself declares publicly.

If President von der Leyen believes that “the future of Europe will be built with and by our social partners”; the European Commission must accordingly support and promote truly equal and substantive social dialogue and negotiation between the social partners, as well as creating the conditions that foster collective bargaining agreements, especially at sectoral level.

Our Demands Ahead of the 2024 EU Elections

The aviation sector involves a great variety of professions that together compose the complex puzzle allowing the industry to function. Therefore, and in order to clarify our specific goals, our demands ahead of the 2024 EU elections are divided into three sub-categories by professional groups: air crew, ground staff, air traffic management.

Our Demands for Air Crews

Goal	How	Legislative or political tool needed
End of social dumping in aviation	<p>Clear definition of homebase and operational base.</p> <p>Respect of national and EU labour legislation and adherence to posting directive</p> <p>End of bogus self-employment</p> <p>End abuse in wet leasing practices</p>	<p>In lack of a meaningful revision of regulation 1008/2008 with strong social focus, a <i>lex specialis</i> on social sustainability in aviation is needed</p> <p>Review of posting directive with extra provisions on aviation</p> <p>Empower the European Labour Authority and national labour authorities through training on aviation and means to conduct joint inspections</p> <p>Deepen coordination between the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and European Labour Authority (ELA)</p>
<p>Improve health and well-being of air crews</p> <p>Improve standards of cabin air quality</p>	<p>Prevent fatigue among air crews and respect of crew working time provisions, including Flight Time Limitations</p> <p>Accept that current social legislation in EC 2000/79 is inadequate for today's aviation workers as there is a lack of coherence between technical requirements for working time (EASA FTL) and EU social expectations</p> <p>Mandate manufacturers to provide direct air intake for aircraft cabins or provide filters to remove toxic substances from bleed air.</p>	<p>Development and promotion of existing EASA tools on fatigue for air crew.</p> <p>Develop relationships with ILO and ELA to create a road map of what mechanism/s available to us for resolving social issues around days off, weekly rest hours, adequate 'time-off task' breaks, maximum weekly hours, leave, minimum rest periods.</p> <p>Promote CEN technical report and encourage legislators to protect air crew from toxic cabin air.</p>
End third-party violence	<p>Identifying unruly passengers and establishing no-fly lists</p>	<p>Ratification of Montreal Protocol by all Member States (19 missing)</p> <p>Specific instrument to prevent unruly passengers from flying a certain airline</p>

Our Demands for Ground Staff

Goal	How	Legislative or political tool needed
Improve livelihoods of ground staff workers	Limit competition among handlers in the airports (stop competition on labour costs)	Review the (96/67/EC) ground handling directive and its impacts on shortage
Improve OSH for ground staff workers	<p>Shed light on OSH issues (musculoskeletal diseases...) of ground staff workers (especially - but not only - loading/unloading agents), as musculoskeletal diseases are the leading contributor to disability, early retirement from work, lower levels of well-being and reduced ability to participate in society (WHO)</p> <p>Protect airport workers against adverse health effects from exposure to UFP</p>	<p>Improve and harmonize minimum training requirements and recurrent training for ground handling workers through EASA Ground Handling Regulation</p> <p>Development of minimum equipment requirements for the loading areas of aircraft (type-specific)</p> <p>Mandatory system for monitoring manual handling loads of individual employees should be developed, as well as a financial incentive system for airline operators to adopt such equipment should be developed</p> <p>Development of an EU-wide regulation requiring mandatory system for limiting and monitoring UFP exposure of ground staff</p>
End third-party violence	Identifying unruly passengers and establishing no-fly lists	Specific instrument to prevent unruly passengers from flying from/to a certain airport

Air Traffic Management

Goal	How	Legislative or political tool needed
Put back reality in the performance regulation of ATM	Tackle the issue of interdependencies in the different performance areas, and use the right indicators	Work on new indicators in the scope of the Single European Sky legislative package, especially for RP5
Improve staffing and training of ATM workers	Increase investment in both staff and technology	Ambitious and fit-for purpose Reference Period 4 (RP4) of the Single European Sky Performance Scheme that includes, among other things 1) a change management indicator 2) a release on pressure that is currently put on cost when setting targets.
Improve health and well-being of ATM workers (especially safety-critical personnel)	<p>Prevent fatigue among ATM workers (especially safety-critical ones)</p> <p>Monitor and improve mental health</p>	<p>Development and promotion of existing EASA tools on fatigue for ATCOs</p> <p>EASA-specific output on mental health of ATCOs</p>
Reject attack to the right to strike for ATM workers	Defend the rights of ATM workers to strike through legislative and practical actions	Ensure that the right to strike remains a national competency while ensuring that article 28 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union relating to collective and strike action is fully respected.
Strengthen bargaining power of ATM experts (non-ATCO or ATSEP)	Recognize ATM experts' skills and competences	Improve and harmonize minimum requirements ATM experts (non-ATCO or ATSEP)



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