

THE DETAILED WORK PROGRAMME
Varieties of Industrial Relations in Aviation Lockdown (VIRAL)

CALL FOR PROPOSALS - VP/2020/004
Improving expertise in the field of industrial relations

1. Rationale and Problem analysis

This project aims to improve the expertise and knowledge of industrial relations through activities of analysis and research in a crucial European business, particularly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, such as the air transport sector and its value chain.

The air transport sector has undergone numerous changes in recent years. The market liberalization in Europe between 1987 and 1992 (Giemulla and Weber, 2011), the removal of national barriers that controlled routes, access to markets, prices and landing slots, has resulted in a price war between airlines as well as airports, each respectively competing for airspace and the right to host landing and departing planes. New companies have been established, existing ones have been going bankrupt or are being consolidated. A new paradigm based on low-cost carriers (LCCs) has emerged. The companies operating under this paradigm have changed their requirements and forced traditional airlines to reformulate their services and seek new sources of profit. Also airports have been under processes of changes in the ownership and management structure (Paraskevi and Georgopoulos, 2018). Private participation and privatization of airports began in the 1980s. Establishing autonomous entities has had positive effect with regard to, inter alia, revenue generation, investments, business development and access to private capital markets.

Low-cost-carriers gained a foothold in the industry by applying social dumping practices, i.e. transferring employment contracts to countries with little or no regulation, withdrawal from collective bargaining procedures, outsourcing of services to subcontractors, reduction in holiday entitlement and the lengthening working times (Harvey and Turnbull, 2014). Bursting the monopoly bubble of legacy airlines has not only led to greater competition, but equally it has challenged national industrial relations systems that guaranteed favourable working conditions and salaries for pilots, cabin crew and airport employees (baggage, security and retail personnel).

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on air transport sector has been very telling, affecting low cost and legacy airlines equally. During the COVID-19 crisis, airlines have seen their capacity reduced by between 95 to 98 percent, and therefore thousands of employees along the air transport value chain have been laid off or put on short time working. Flight capacity has fallen by over 40% with a 44% drop in passenger revenue compared to 2019 (International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF)'s Civil Aviation Secretary Gabriel Mocho Rodriguez, 'Governments, employers and unions must act together to save aviation', 1 June 2020). The opportunity to restructure has been taken. Within days of the WHO's declaration of a pandemic (11 March 2020), KLM announced job restructuring of between 1500 and 2000 workers (Eurofound, 2020). Lufthansa announced on 11 June 2020 that it plans to lay off 22,000 of its 135,000 employees, with around German workers constituting about half the layoffs. Air France announced on 17 June 2020 job reductions of between 7000-10,000 (Eurofound, 2020).

As the air transport sector has been economically one of the most affected by the pandemic, the project also addresses its actions to tackling the employment, social and economic consequences of the Covid-19 crisis using the key link of the air transport sector.

The air transport sector is based on relatively low profits. The financial condition of the entities is highly dependent on global economic conditions. Economic crises cause rapid deterioration of operational conditions and require immediate action. Companies – both airlines and airports are interrelated and interdependent. Therefore, the deteriorating conditions of operation of the airlines translates immediately into airports. For this reason it's important to study the air transport sector in conjunction with its value chain.

The value chain in air transport is defined as the full range of activities undertaken to provide air transport services - from initiation by the user to end use. The value chain includes airlines, airport and air navigation services providers, aircraft lessors, aircraft manufacturers, maintenance, repair, and overhaul, fuel suppliers, ground handling services providers and product distribution (e.g. computer reservations systems). Stakeholders of the air transport value chain are interdependent and have been operating in an increasingly competitive environment.

The extent of the value chain requires concentration on its selected parts in order to capture the economic conditions relevant to industrial relations problems arising from the result of COVID-19 crisis. For the purposes of the project, the economic conditions of the airline and airport value chain will be analysed. Together they are referred to as the air transport sector.

In order to identify measures to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on the air transport sector, government programmes directly targeting airlines and airports in the countries covered by the project will be identified, as well as cross-sectoral programmes from which these entities could benefit. The scope, type and conditions of support will be explored taking particular account of possible differences in reactions between traditional and low-cost airlines.

As air transport is a vital sector for the European Union, measures to ensure its survival might be taken at EU level, such as the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EEC) No 95/93 on common rules for the allocation of slots at Community airports (COM/2020/111 final), with the objective of protecting great air carriers' rights in the case of slots that have not been used during the period when the aviation market has been most affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Further measures will certainly be taken in the immediate future and will require a corresponding impact assessment of the sector.

In this context on the move, a key role could be played by Industrial Relations and the support that governments intend to give to address employment problems and deteriorating working conditions in the sector (Ricardo, 2019; Gent University, 2015) in view of its reorganisation.

Situating VIRAL within European Union Goals

Drawing from the 'Political Guidelines' of EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, the VIRAL project embodies the idea of 'a Europe that takes the global lead on the major challenges of our times' (Ursula von der Leyen, "A Union that strives for more—My agenda for Europe"). The upheaval to the lives of all Europeans caused by the pandemic can be measured in many ways. VIRAL focuses on the President's goal of an 'economy that works for people' using the key link of the air transport sector, already at the heart of the Commission's priorities on Jobs and Growth, Digital Single Market, Energy Union and EU as a Global Actor through its milestone initiative The Aviation Strategy. A vital consideration for VIRAL involves mapping job market and employment practice changes in the European air transport value chain as a consequence of the lockdown and plans to re-invigorate the industry in the coming years. For example, this project investigates the impact of Covid-19 on atypical jobs, such as pilots and stewardesses, airport service, closure of restaurants and shops located at the airports. An interesting issue concerns how the airline carriers selected and dismissed employees; that is, to what extent factors such as age, single parents (among others) influenced these decisions. Furthermore, low-cost airlines have in the past structured their employment practices through the use of transnational posting of workers (Van Olmen & Wynant, 2019) through employment agencies established in specific countries (such as Crewlink, in the case of Ryanair). This has caused tensions in some national jurisdictions, notably regarding applicable legislation and social security payments. Addressed within the Irish study in VIRAL, the British House of Commons Transport Committee's second report (13 June 2020) called British Airways' conduct a 'national disgrace' in taking advantage of the pandemic. VIRAL offers a vital role in assessing advantage-taking by air transport value chain employing entities in restructuring efforts. The VIRAL project will explore whether these practices have withstood the test of the Covid-19 crisis; while also considering how and to what extent these will re-emerge once the crisis is over. Another important factor for study resides with Ryanair, an entity well-known to the Commission. Ryanair poses a particular challenge in this context. While often the subject of EU competition rulings (such as Case C-28/19 *Ryanair*), this discount airline is now seeking to use competition (specifically challenging the state aid provided to EU-based airlines) to contest the bailout of 'national' airlines, such as Lufthansa or Alitalia.

Long-terms considerations

As countries emerge from the Covid-19 lockdown, the real challenge will involve a restructuring strategy that addresses the issues of global supply (over capacity), sustainability and secure employment. To an extent this process of restructuring has already begun, airlines have begun to lay off employees and reduce their fleets, whilst bailout programmes require aviation firms to commit to a greener future.

Their actions could not only help mitigate the fallout associated with the current crisis, but potentially determine which aviation firms survive. This will involve mapping what measures and procedures were undertaken to secure the short (during the lockdown) and long-term (post-lockdown) future of the European aviation industry.

Although social partners at a national level (aviation related companies, trade unions, employer's associations, and legislators) have negotiated and implemented measures to secure the industry's short-term future, the role of trade unions is of particular consideration in VIRAL with a view to the strategic relaunch of the whole sector and its long-term sustainability.

Social Dialogue

At transnational level, the European sectoral social dialogue is called upon to stop the race to lower working conditions in accordance with the action programme designed by the European Social Pillar. The air transport, being one of the strategic sector most affected by the COVID emergency, can be explored as one of the areas in which the Pillar may have an impact on European governance. Although the Pillar may be considered 'rather limited' (Frank Hendrickx, 'The European Social Pillar: A first evaluation' (2018) 9 *European Labour Law Journal* 3), the proposed investigation recall that the Pillar is 'a compass', serving as a 'guide' (Preamble 12) that offers some basis for legal enforcement: 'for them to be legally enforceable, the principles and rights first require dedicated measures or legislation to be adopted at the appropriate level.'

Problem analysis

This project will study the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on employment levels as well as working conditions in the air transport sector and its value chain. This issue has to be elaborated both in regard to a short-term perspective

(such as the current scale of dismissals), but also according to a long-term outlook which considers the influence on the job security and prospects in the European air transport value chain.

Due to the Covid-19 crisis within the European air transport value chain, analysis will consider the different measures and procedures undertaken for its short- (during the lockdown) and long-term (post-lockdown) future, in the interdisciplinary (economic, socio-legal, industrial relations) perspective, taking into account technological and environmental challenges.

The role of the various national industrial relations systems in mitigating the short-term effect of Covid-19 and in the 'relaunching' of the European air transport value chain facing structural challenges of global competition as well as sustainability, will be focused and compared. The analysis will be enriched by salient case studies with interviews to actors of national industrial relations systems (unions, pilots associations, airlines, public actors) and relevant stakeholder (municipalities, NGOs, consumer associations, supervisory authorities, environmental organisations, etc.). Associate partners and experts will be involved along the whole project to provide different points of view and background analysis.

2. Project Methodology

From a methodological point of view, the project is designed by default as an interdisciplinary approach; this will include economists, lawyers, sociologists and industrial relations scholars. In terms of the design the research will be conducted using qualitative (interviews, case studies) and quantitative (the project partnership can count on access to the Orbis database in which it is possible to consult and compare the financial data of TNC companies at the global level) methods will be applied and comparative law research methods. To cover all of the selected areas of interest a desk research on existing database and scientific studies concerning economic and social aspects will be executed. In this way, we will obtain background data for further, more specific studies that would aim at formulating relevant recommendations for policy makers and social partners. However, the key part of our investigation would be interviews with representatives of airlines and airports. The obtained data will be essential to analyse the situation of airlines, airports and related activities.

3. Detailed description of activities

Detailed description of activities			
Workpackage number	1	Duration (months)	M1– M24
Workpackage title	Project management and coordination		
WP leader:	University “G.d’ Annunzio” of Chieti-Pescara		
Overall Objective:			
WP 1 aims at implementing a high qualified and effective coordination and management system of the project, that will ensure the constant control on the 3 basic factors of the Project Cycle Management (PCM):			
1. The regular and punctual project administration, taking into account the inter-partners’ relationship and the external duties and responsibilities (contacts with the EU Commission, respect of subcontracting rules, etc.);			
2. Joint operational planning and implementation of project activities, secured by the Steering Committee meetings and by the Operational Plan, for the successful achievement of the research and development objectives;			
3. Periodical check of the coherence of the activities progress with the project objectives and expected results			
Specific Objectives:			
1. To agree term of reference, roles and responsibility of the working groups			
2. To fulfil the project objectives and to release deliverables in due time			
3. To guarantee that the expected results are effectively produced and disseminated to broader audiences			
4. To respect the duties linked to the Grant Agreement by both the project leader and the entire consortium so as to ensure that the project meets its contractual obligations in terms of deliverables, internal reporting, quality and timeliness, as well as budgetary framework and quality standards, through continuous progress monitoring and efficient internal communications			
5. To prevent and eventually manage any conflict that can arise in the Consortium			
6. To guarantee a good communication among partners and to manage relationships with the funding Authority			
8. To liaise with other relevant projects within EC Funding Programmes and with other initiatives promoted by public authorities and CSOs at national and international level			
9. To plan sustainability by studying other potential funding applications for follow-ups			
10. To ensure financial management and to meet EU requirements in terms of IPR management.			
Description of work:			
The core body responsible for the project management organizational structure is the Steering Committee , structured in 2 interoperable components: the Project Management Unit, the Administration and Financial Unit. A Scientific Committee will be responsible for the Research activity; it will be managed by the Scientific Coordinator appointed by UdA in close collaboration with the Thematic Areas Coordinators appointed by the Consortium Participants.			

T1 Project Coordination and Management

T1.1: Detailed **Project Management Plan (PMP)** definition (**M 1-3**). It will be discussed and agreed upon by all partners and will be used as guidance and reference document in order to ensure a smooth implementation of the project. Contents: detailed description of WPs and activities; actual start /end dates and rescheduling of activities as appropriate; roles and responsibilities; internal deadlines; internal reporting system; Financial Management; Monitoring and Evaluation; Quality Assurance Plan; internal and external communication.

T1.2 : Consortium Agreement (M 1-3). Signed by all partners, it illustrates all aspects of the consortium relationships (IPR, conflict prevention and resolution, decision making procedures, financial management, etc).

T1.3: 4 Project meetings (M 2-24): kick-off meeting, Pescara (IT), 2 internal project meetings sided by International Plenary Conferences with local Policy Platforms, respectively in Warsaw (PL) and Sevilla (ES) and the final meeting, organized in parallel with the European Conference, in Bruxelles (BE). Active participation to meetings to discuss technical, operational and financial aspects of the project will be provided by all partners.

T1.4: Internal Communication (M1-24): all partners will actively and constantly communicate via email and conference call. Appropriate communication and decision-making procedures will be used in between the partnership meetings, such as an intranet, e-mail distribution lists, internet, virtual meetings, among others.

T1.5: Coordination (M 1-24) with the WP Leaders to plan project related activities at the project and WP levels.

T1.6: UdA will ensure the **Constant Monitoring (M 1-24)** of all project activities and will share with partners monitoring tools to keep track of all activities.

T1.8: Quality assurance proceedings (**M 1-24**) will be put in place by IresER related to all management aspects of the project, including indicators of progress, quality, outcomes, network activities and overall impact. A **Quality and Assessment Plan (M 1-3)** will allow project quality monitoring and control.

T2 Project Administration

T2.1: A specific section of the PMP will describe **Financial Management (M 1-3)**, including internal reporting rules. It will be included in the Consortium Agreement for formal approval by partners.

The financial management system will guarantee the budgetary control: 1. The internal reporting mechanism requires all partners to submit internal and financial report to the coordinator. 2. The funds will be transferred by the coordinator to partners upon submission of their technical and financial reporting.

T2.2: Internal Reporting System (M 1-2): internal reports of activities and costs will be submitted by all partners to ensure the correct implementation and monitoring of project activities and costs according to schedule. The final report will be drawn according to the specifications of the contract with the EC.

T2.3: Time Management (M 1-24): The Gantt chart will be the main document to monitor project implementation. For time management, partners will rely on the precise timing and sequencing of activities organised along the WPs: each activity is assigned to the leadership and coordination of a specific partner who will be responsible for ensuring qualitative and quantitative control over the tasks, deliverables and achievement of project objectives.

Deliverables:

D1.1 Kick off Report	D1.4 Quality Assessment Plan
D1.2 Project Management Plan	D1.5 N. 4 Project meetings' reports
D1.3 Consortium Agreement	D1.6 Interim and Final financial Report

Milestones: **M1.1** Kick off meeting in Pescara (**M2**) – **M1.2** second internal project meetings in Warsaw (**M8**) – **M1.3** third internal project meeting in Seville (**M15**) - **M1.4** the final meeting in Brussels (**M 24**)

Workpackage number	2	Duration (months)	M2 – M8
Workpackage title	The economic analysis of air transport sector and its value chain in Europe		
WP leader:	WARSAW – SGH Warsaw School of Economics – PL		
Overall Objective:			
The aim of the economic analysis of the air transport sector and its value chain in Europe will be to map and diagnose economic conditions of the sector. Factors influencing the economic conditions concerning the whole examined sector and key processes will be described and analysed. Cause-and-effect relationships will be determined and conclusions from the evaluation will be drawn. The economic analysis of the air transport sector will provide a background for the diagnosis of economic problems faced by the sector during the COVID-19 crisis. The project work will identify actions taken by air transport companies to reduce the impact of the crisis, with particular emphasis on the use of public support and measures to reduce personnel costs.			
Specific Objectives:			
1. To realize an economic analysis of the air transport sector and its value chain in Europe 2. To analyse the adopted economic measures to deal with the impact of COVID-19 on the air transport sector in Europe and in the countries involved in the VIRAL project			
Description of work:			

T1 Development of economic analysis before and during the COVID-19 crisis of the airline sector and the airport sector in Europe (M 2-8)

The economic analysis of the operation of airlines and airports in Europe will include the following elements - for each of them the situation in the years prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic will be compared: a) changes in passenger numbers compared to previous economic crises; b) changes in revenue and profitability; c) identification of key players on the European market; d) structure of operating costs, with particular emphasis on personnel costs.

An important Actor in the revival of the air transport sector might be national governments – and their approach might be a decisive factor for the future power balance between national and low-cost-airlines. With governments scrambling to bailout national airlines, these deemed nationally important, certain strings appear to be attached to the financial support on offer.

T2. Analysis of adopted economic measures to deal with the impact of COVID-19 on the air transport sector in Europe and in the countries involved in the project

T2.1. Actions targeting the air transport sector in Europe to reduce the impact of the COVID-19 crisis will be identified in each of the countries covered by the project. The project work will also identify the responses of companies in the air transport sector to adapt the cost structure to the reduced revenues during the crisis (**M 3-5**).

T2.2. The comparison of the types of support offered in each country with the responses to the crisis will provide a basis for drawing conclusions on the impact of support on specific activities. The consequences of the changes will be analysed from the perspective of the European Union and the countries involved in the project (**M 6-8**).

Deliverables:

D2.1. A Report diagnosing economic conditions of the air transport sector before and during the crisis COVID-19

D2.2. Report on the support for airlines and airports to reduce the impact of COVID-19 crisis and airline and airport response for each of the project countries (All partners)

D2.3. A Summary report diagnosing the scope of support for companies from the air transport sector and their activities in relation to the COVID-19 crisis in each of the countries covered by the project

D2.4. Comparative analysis of support and response to the COVID-19 crisis of airlines and airports

Milestones: M2.1. International Plenary Conferences with local Policy Platforms, in Warsaw (**M 8**)

Workpackage number	3	Duration (months)	M2 – M8
Workpackage title	The variety of industrial relations in the air transport sector		
WP leader:	University of Erlagen (DE) - University of Copenhagen (DK)		
Overall Objective:			
<p>The aim of the WP is to realize an analysis of industrial relations in the air transport sector in Europe and project partner countries pre-COVID-19.</p> <p>A key objective in WP3 is to analyse Industrial Relations in the air transport sector pre-COVID-19. As such, WP3 consider the role of European and national industrial relations actors’ played in the sector prior to COVID-19, at which time the power balance to a high degree was in favour of management, due to diverse and not very coordinated Industrial Relations systems across European countries. Overall, WP3 is designed provide important background information necessary to complete WPs 4 and 5 as it will serve as a background carpet to understand the changes taking place in Industrial Relations in the air transport under COVID-19.</p>			
Specific Objectives:			
<p>1. To realize a short general description of national Industrial Relations pre-COVID-19</p> <p>2. To realize a description of Industrial Relations within the air transport sector pre-COVID-19 (low cost and national airlines), with a specific focus on the changing power relations between employers and labour representatives;</p> <p>3. To analyse the role/function played by transnational industrial relations actors (at both sector and company level) in regulating employment terms and conditions of air transport workers prior to COVID-19;</p> <p>4. To realize a cross-national analysis of Industrial Relations in the seven countries involved pre-COVID-19 within the framework of the European sectoral social dialogue.</p> <p>Objectives 1 and 2 are to be addressed by all partner countries, while objective 3 has to be addressed by the lead applicant (UdA). The two leaders of WP3 will consider objective 4.</p>			
Description of work:			
<p>T1. Each partner will be required to provide a concise description of their national industrial relations system (M 2-3), providing information on key actors, forms of collective bargaining (industry vs plant), number of employers covered by collective bargaining, forms of representation (union membership and works councils) and the number of union members and presence of works councils. The overall aim of this task is to provide a traditional understanding, often referred to as a textbook understanding, of the system in question as well as changes that have occurred in recent years, that is, to provide some comprehension of the system’s robustness;</p>			

T2. Each partner will be required to consider to what extent industrial relations practices of air transport sector differed or complied with national practices prior to the outbreak of the pandemic (**M 3-5**). This analysis should occur at two levels: Firstly, a description of industrial relations practices followed in the by national airlines and airports – with a specific focus on how these might have changed in the face of low-cost competition in recent years. Secondly, an analysis of how employment terms and conditions are regulated by Low-Cost-Carriers. Again, the description should be concise.

T3. Acknowledging that we are dealing with a highly global market, one in which the importance of transnational players cannot be ignored, the leaders of WP3 in close cooperation with the lead applicant will offer an understanding of transnational industrial relations procedures pertaining to airlines companies and airports in Europe (**M 2-5**). Here, the focus is very much on the main actors, how they interact as well as agreements that they have concluded, i.e. International or European Framework Agreements. An explorative mapping exercise, the researchers should write a few pages on this subject.

T4. In possession of information gleaned from objectives 1 and 2, researchers are encouraged to speculate on how air transport Industrial Relations differs from Industrial Relations in general – by country and transnationally (**M 5-8**). In a similar vein, the leaders of WP3 will consider in what respects, if any, the particular Industrial Relations in air transport pre-COVID-19 might have lined up a certain approach to the handling of Industrial Relations during COVID-19.

Deliverables:

D3.1. 7 National Reports (of up to 20 pages each) on industrial relations of air transport sector pre-COVID-19.

D3.2. Overview on transnational industrial relations procedures concerning air transport sector pre-COVID-19.

D3.3. Comparative Report on industrial relations practices and developments of air transport sector pre-COVID-19. The report will consider the industrial relations developments at the transnational level, too.

Milestones: **M3.1.** International Plenary Conferences with local Policy Platforms, in Warsaw (**M 8**)

Workpackage number	4	Duration (months)	M9 – M15
Workpackage title	Impact of COVID-19 on working conditions and industrial relations in the air transport sector in Europe		
WP leader:	University of Sevilla, Spain - University of Maynooth, IRL		
Overall Objective:			
The goal is to analyse the effects of the pandemic emergency on employment relationships, working conditions and industrial relations in the air transport sector and its value chain in Europe and in the project partner countries. Analysis of the situation during and after Covid-19			
Main objectives:			
1. Defining a common set of criteria on the basis of which to structure the national and European reports on the impact of the pandemic on employment, working conditions and industrial relations in the air transport sector (during COVID).			
2. Analyse the contribution of industrial relations (if any) to the recovery and restructuring of the air transport sector in the framework of European social and environmental sustainable goals (after COVID).			
3. Check the role of the public actor in supporting the recovery and reorganisation of the sector			
Specific Objectives:			
1. To Analyse the effects of the pandemic emergency on employment, working conditions and industrial relations in the air transport sector in Europe.			
1.1.-analysis of the COVID-19 EU regulation (e.g. SURE) and its impact on the air transport sector in EU-27;			
1.2. focus on the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on the European sectoral social dialogue and information and consultation of workers representatives in EWCs/SE;			
1.3. analysis of possible European case-law caused by situations of non-compliance with EU law (posting of workers, non-discrimination, working time, collective redundancies, transfer of undertakings, state aid, etc.).			
2. To Analyse of the impact of COVID-19 on the working conditions in the air transport sector at national level especially in relation to:			
2.1. Recruitment practices and non-discrimination;			
2.2 Health and safety, modes of pay, access to social security benefits;			
2.3. Stability of employment and precarious contracts (temporary work agency,self-employment,0-hours contract)			
2.4. The undertakings restructuring measures;			
2.5. Flexibility of working time (permits, leaves, vacations, suspensions)			
3. To analyse the COVID-19 impact assessment on the collective labour relations, particularly with respect to:			
3.1. The role of collective bargaining;			
3.2. Participation of the workers’ representatives in the industrial relations system;			
3.3. The effectiveness of traditional union action;			

3.4. The reordering of national and transnational spheres of action.

All the specific objective will be declined taking into account the short term and the long term impact of the COVID, in view of the (possible) reorganisation of the sector, as well as the role of the public actor.

The objective 1 will be analysed by the lead applicant (UdA) with the involvement of associate partners. Objectives 2 and 3 will be addressed both at the national level by each-country involved in the project and by establishing a comparison between different countries in order to identify convergences and divergences in national responses. Objectives 1, 2, 3 will be examined in relation to the measures that governments and European Commission will adopt with a view to relaunching the air transport sector from the perspective of its social and environmental sustainability. The European and national reports should identify the most significant measures and experiences in each country, with the aim of helping to identify the WP5 case studies.

Description of work:

T1. The pandemic caused by COVID-19 has forced the various countries to adopt specific labour measures to deal with the situation of paralysis of productive activity as a result of the confinement of the population. A detailed examination will be made on the impact of measures taken in the field of work/employment in the air transport sector in each partner country during the pandemic period and in view of the recovery (**M 9-11**).

T2. Together with the analysis of the individual aspect of labour relations, the impact of COVID-19 on the collective relations system will be studied, analysing the role and effectiveness of collective bargaining, the levels of negotiation and their adaptation to the COVID-19 situation within the air transport sector, the presence of workers' representatives in multinational companies or those operating in different countries, the employee involvement models in the company decision-making process, the impact of the COVID emergency on legal or conventional mechanisms to regulate industrial conflict (**M 9-11**).

T3. Once the national reports are received, a comparative study will be carried out (**M 12-13**), assessing differences and similarities between the responses given by the different industrial relations systems to the COVID-19 crisis. The comparative study will also verify if and to what extent national varieties of sectoral industrial relations are still the relevant conceptual framework to understand the heterogeneity of social partners' reactions and outputs. A specific attention will be paid to the distinction between legacy and low-cost airline companies, in order to evaluate divergences and common trends in terms of social actors involved, the impact on the value chain, the role the public actors, collective bargaining approaches and outputs.

T 4. After the two previous phases, a global review of national responses to the COVID-19 crisis will be carried out (**M 14-15**) in order to formulate recommendations that can serve as a basis for EU economic and employment policy, so that the crisis becomes an opportunity to reorient the sector towards a more sustainable model that meets the needs of climate change.

In order to achieve specific objectives, a continuous dialogue will be established with the actors of the industrial relations systems, companies, trade unions, public authorities, consumers and users, so that they can express their position on the impact of COVID-19 on the sector's value chain, the problems for the sector's relaunch, as well as the measures to be adopted so that it is carried out in a socially and environmentally sustainable manner. This dialogue will take place at both national and European level.

Deliverables:

D4.1. Report on the European framework of the air transport sector by the lead partner UdA.

D4.2. National report by each partner country on the measures taken in relation to Objective 2.

D4.3. National report by each partner country on measures taken under Objective 3.

D4.4. Comparative overview on measures taken by actors of industrial relations systems in different countries (WP's leaders)

D4.5. Once the national and European reports have been presented and discussed, the lead applicant (UdA) along with the WP4 leaders, will draft guidelines and recommendations addressed to actors of IRs system on actions to promote a sustainable social and environmental recovery of air transport sector.

Milestones: M4.1. In each country Partners will hold at least one national seminar or meeting with the social partners in order to give a more realistic profile to the reports (**M 12**) – **M4.2.** International Plenary Conferences with local Policy Platforms, in Seville (**M 15**)

Workpackage number	5	Duration (months)	M 12 – M 24
Workpackage title	Case studies along the air transport value chain		
WP leader:	IRES ER (IT)-University of Strasbourg (F)		
Overall Objective:			
1. To define a common set of criteria on the basis of which to select 2 case studies in each Partner country.			
2. Analyse the aspects related to industrial relations, employment and working conditions and the consequent impact of Covid-19 pandemic in the selected case studies.			
Specific Objectives:			

1. To present and discuss the results of the comparative analysis emerged in WP4 on the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the functioning and climate of industrial relations at sectoral level
2. To Discuss and design the common criteria for the selection of the case studies
3. To Select 2 relevant case studies per Country according to the agreed criteria
4. to analyse how the Covid-19 outbreak has impacted on the selected case studies in terms of: a) industrial relations; b) employment; c) working conditions
5. To verify if and to what extent the selected case studies and the analysed industrial relations practices are: a) Innovative in terms of contents, process and impact (short and long-term); b) Inclusive in terms of coverage of the air transport value chain; c) Extensive in terms of the role of public actors (tripartite agreements); d) Transferable in terms of implementation in a different industrial context

Description of work:

T1. Comparative analysis of the impact of Covid-19 outbreak on the sectoral industrial relations at the national level in the air transport value chain and selection of the case studies in each targeted country.

T1.1. Cross-checking of WP4 national reports concerning the impact of Covid-19 on sectoral industrial relations along the air transport value chain. The discussion of the national reports that conclude WP4 will allow to report some particularly relevant pilot case worthy of further investigation concerning airlines or value chain (**M 12-15**).

T1.2. Selection of 2 case studies per partner country (M 16-17)

Project partners will agree on common criteria on the basis of which to select the case studies for an in-depth analysis. These criteria will result from the internal discussion between the partners, as well as from the consultation process developed together with the associate partners at the national (see the list in the application form) and European level directly and indirectly involved in the project. Notably, the European Transport Federation has already expressed its interest in cooperating, eventually, on some of the tasks of the present workplan. The close relationships and dialogue between the research partners and the associate partners will guarantee an ongoing validation process not only of the final project outputs but also of all the intermediate products.

The definition of the selection criteria will take into account the main results of the previous WPs, and notably: 1) The degree of deviation from existing practices and legal frameworks; 2) The impact of the practice (short and long-term effect); 3) The extension of the air transport value chain covered by the case study; 4) The transferability of the practice at stake to different sectoral contexts; 5) The inclusiveness in terms of social partners involved; 6) The role of public actors; 7) The positioning along the air transport value chain; 8) The type of company involved (low-cost company vs national airlines company or flag carrier)

T2. Analysis of the selected case studies: role of industrial relation to tackle the Covid-19 crisis (M 18 -24).

T2.1. All partners will be asked to carry out at least 2 case studies in each country. Each case study will explore in depth an industrial relation practice put in place to tackle and mitigate the impact of Covid-19 pandemic (such as: collective bargaining, reorganisation of social partners, tripartite agreements, protocols of industrial relations, introduction of forms of worker participation, collective actions, new organising practices, union campaigns, arrangements affecting employment relations and working conditions along the air transport value chain). Case studies will be realised through qualitative interviews of the main stakeholders involved in the practice observed, and desk-research activity. Each interview will be realized by using a common conceptual framework and classification, in order to allow a comparative analysis of the different case studies.

For each case study, the partners are asked to pay attention to a specific range of issues, such as: the expected results and the results achieved along the value chain; the negotiation process; the role of the social partners involved; the climate of industrial relations; the role of public actors.

While conducting the case studies, different approaches are possible: two case studies representing different aspects and positioning of the air transport value chain; two case studies representing the same part of the air transport value chain but with opposing industrial relations outputs or processes; a transnational case study developed by two or more partners, analysing how varieties of industrial relations can lead to different scenarios.

Deliverables:

D5.1. Presentation and discussion of comparative report of the impact of Covid-19 on national industrial relations systems along the air transport sector and its value chain to evidence the cases of relevant impact at national and European level

D5.2. Selection criteria for case studies

D5.3. Case study report (2 case study for each partner country)

D5.4. Comparative synoptic of all the case studies realised

Milestones: **M5.1.** International Plenary Conferences with local Policy Platforms to present some pilot case studies, in Seville (**M 15**) - **M5.2.** In each country Partners will hold at least one national seminar or meeting with the social partners and stakeholder to present and discuss case studies (**M 18 - 21**) – **M5.3.** European conference in Brussels (**M 24**)

Workpackage number	6	Duration (months)	M 1 – M 24
Workpackage title	Dissemination & communication		
WP leader:	University “G. d’Annunzio” of Chieti-Pescara – University of Urbino		
Overall Objective:			
To raise stakeholders awareness regarding the findings of the Project and to advertise this EU initiative.			
Specific Objectives:			
1. To disseminate news of VIRAL achievements (scientific and societal), methodology and solutions to policy-makers and the academic community in particular.			
2. To raise awareness of the project activities in order to create knowledge, and to transfer it, to the targeted beneficiaries, the general public and the other project target audiences (stakeholders).			
3. To engage further stakeholders.			
4. To improve and specify the exploitation plan by on-going involvement of grassroots actors.			
5. To achieve high quality and open access to project scientific and policy oriented results.			
6. To organise highly attended local public events (No. 15 Seminars and Workshops with the Local Policy Platform) attended by partners, stakeholders, policy-makers, scholars, academic networks, social entrepreneurs, representatives of third sector organisations and related umbrella organisations, and the citizenship, in general.			
7. To ensure the most efficient exploitation of project results			
Description of work:			
T1 Project communication (M 1-24)			
T.1.1 To design and implement a Media Plan covering all dissemination activities (M 1-3)			
T.1.2 The project design is based on Visual Identity, which includes the project logo, a dedicated website design and templates to be used for project documents and publications. (M 1-3).			
T.1.3 The Project Institutional Web-Site/portal (M1-2) will provide website-like services, with purposes of information and general communication. The site will be available in English (while abstract of the project reports will also be produced in all partners’ languages too). The website will be an essential element of the internal and external project communication (M 2-24), providing project overviews and highlights, up-to date information on project results, including public and periodic reports. Additional information on project events including meetings, conferences as well as contact details will be available.			
T1.4 Implementation of a proper Social Media Strategy (M 1-24) carved out on the project audiences (Twitter, LinkedIn and relevant blogs). All conferences and events promoted and/or participated by the project will be covered with live tweeting across different countries by using and ad hoc #hashtag for the social dissemination of its findings and results. The social media campaign is aimed at widening the engagement of the target groups and its interest in the project by adopting the most used innovative communication tools and collaborative technologies. Press releases and selected other materials will be prepared and translated for dissemination to the media and other stakeholders in all Member States.			
T2 Scientific dissemination.			
T2.1 Attendance of Events organised by other relevant projects/networks, national and EU institutions (M 1-24).			
T2.2 In order to foster acknowledgement from stakeholders and the expert community at large, the research partners will be committed to writing 4 Academic Articles (Project Reports) and looking for publication opportunities on peer reviewed specialised journals at national level and/or at international scale.			
T2.3 Three International Plenary Conference (in Pescara, Warsaw and Seville) and 1 International Final Conference (Final Event) in Brussels will be attended by partners, stakeholders, policy makers, scholars, academic networks, social entrepreneurs, representatives of third sector organisations, related umbrella organisations and the concerned citizenship (M 1-24). The workshops will be organized with the local Policy Platforms/ Specially Interested Groups composed by relevant local, regional and national stakeholders willing to support the project in terms of dissemination of the activities and results, as well as direct beneficiaries of the action. By 4 weeks after the events, the organising local partner and its related local Policy Platform will edit a Working Report containing the main results of discussion, to be published on the project website. This micro task implies a thorough networking activity and the building of special relations with the local/national stakeholders.			
T3 Exploitation Strategy (M 1-24)			
T3.1 The Exploitation Plan will clearly identify the project results and classify them accordingly to their exploitation potential. It will also analyse and continuously monitor the target groups, the scenario and users in order to have a clear account of its structure, its key players and react to their needs and future trends. Each partner will contribute to smooth implement the exploitation strategy.			
T3.2 Organisation of 18 seminars for creating awareness and circulating results among social partners. Active engagement of relevant local industrial and social players and Specially Interested Groups (Local Policy Platform: local and regional authorities, enterprises, social partners, scholars) interested in the developed project tools,			

approach, methodology.

T3.3 Regular information on the project activities through the publication of a periodic **e-newsletter** presenting not only the main project results and progress, but also articles and editorials dealing with emerging issues, upcoming events and publications.

Deliverables:

D6.1 Media and Exploitation Plan

D6.2 Info graphic

D6.3 Project website in English

D6.4 Publication of 4 scientific reports

D6.5 Reports on the local workshops

D6.6 E-newsletters

4. Risk analysis and mitigation measures

1. Problems in carrying out field studies and analysis due to conflicts or disagreement with enterprises or other social actors involve: The research is based on a close relationship between the research staff and the actors engaged with the air transport sector. The relationship with the associated partners, with the supportive organisation and with different stakeholders, also involved in the project Policy Platforms, will assure the reduction of this risk. The same selection of the case studies will, in any case, be made according to the evaluation of such a risk, which is of course of pivotal nature. Moreover, given the importance and extension of the targeted sector, we think that although some enterprises may not accept to become subject of our enquiry, there will be many others available on the terrain.

2. Sudden withdrawal of a member of the research team: The project foresees the creation of one research team per involved partner. Each team is made at least of one/two senior/structured researcher and one junior appointed researcher. These teams are structured in the University Department/Centre or Research Centre that will have the capacity to replace one or more researchers that, for unforeseen reasons, might leave the project.

3. Selection of non-relevant case studies: This is a very reduced risk due to the involvement of experienced researchers, sided by relevant territorial stakeholders and social actors, also involved in the Project Policy Platforms to be set in each project venue as both beneficiaries and disseminators of the Action. Moreover, the personal research profile and scientific production of each project researcher show the adequacy and relevance of the involved project personnel to the project themes. In addition to this, the selection of the appointed junior researchers will also take into consideration their specific expertise in the project main themes, while of course assuring equal access to information and opportunities to all potential candidates.

4. Non relevant or interested participants to project workshops and conferences: As in the previous point, the full involvement of social actors in the Policy Platforms, along with the support provided by the formal and personal networks of the researchers involved make this risk purely formal. Measures of mitigation will thus quite easily be implemented. However, the project kickoff meeting will set common guidelines in order to further prevent this risk.

5. Lack of adequate technologies and technical provisions for the project events (public and internal meetings): All partners have adequate competences and access to the most common and used technological instruments and tools. The institutions part of the project have already matured an experience in participating to European projects, thus are aware of the technological needs to allow a proper implementation. Moreover, all the project events will be hosted by the project partners in their own institutions.

6. Logistical problems for the organisation of the events and the welcome of invited guests: The logistical organisation for the invited guests to the project events, as well as for the partners' team, will be guaranteed by each partner administration which has a dedicated budget. The lead applicant will manage the mobility and accommodation for the Project meetings and the local seminars. The WP on project management and coordination has among its objective that of setting up common strategies and principles for the organisation of this task. In the case of new Covid-10 lockdown, all partners can organize the events by call/video conference in presence using their proper technical instruments.

7. Lack of an adequate number of participants to the project events (scarce dissemination of the project results): Communication activities have been assured through the allocation of a specific budget for the construction and update of the project website, for the design and printing of communication material in each of the project languages, for assuring press coverage of the project events as well as to appoint a specific communication manager (appointed by the project Applicant). Therefore, a specific Work Package has been foreseen in order to organise and manage communication and visibility of the project, as well as to involve as many institutions and citizens to its events. Partners' networks will be mobilized through researchers' personal link as well as through notices launched by institutional communication channels. Social networks will also be exploited through a social media strategic campaign, for which a specific budget has been provided. The final conference will be transmitted live too as a webinar in order to allow as many audiences as possible to be reached.