



Industrial Relations in the French Aviation Sector during COVID-19

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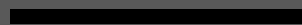
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Menu

- **Employment** situation during and after (?) the crisis
- Role of the **state** intervention
- **Collective bargaining** and the management of the crisis
- **Conclusions**



WORKING CONDITIONS

- Negotiated cuts through “agreements of collective performance” (*accords de performance collective*)
 - Ryanair, EasyJet, Air Caraïbes, French Bee, Air Austral...
 - Not used by Air France (but still negotiated freeze on increases and other cost saving measures)
- Now: tensions for going back before the original end of these agreements.



EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

- Massive recourse to **partial activity** (i.e. partial unemployment or short-time working)
 - Suspension of employment contract with 70% of gross paid by the unemployment insurance (i.e. the state)
 - More than 11 million workers in the broader economy
- Now scaled down but still possible to use **partial activity of long duration**
 - similar result but requires collective agreement (sectoral or company)
 - **No sectoral agreement** for the French aviation!



EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

- Still certain negative effects
 - People caught in between jobs (quit one company but hiring frozen due to the crisis)
 - Impact on remuneration due to bonuses and other calculations based on fly hours
 - Dismissals of ground staff and airport staff
 - Some companies have dismissed more notwithstanding the possibility of partial activity
 - **Impact on the balance of power** (no possibilities for collective action)



ROLE OF THE STATE

- Loan to **AirFrance** (~€7 billion)
 - Conditions related to environmental standards
 - Increase competition (give away slots at Paris Orly)
 - But also restructuring → reduction of 8500 jobs through voluntary departures and non-replacement
- **Partial activity** is the main visible public intervention
 - Specificity of the sector was also taken into account → the possibility of using partial activity extended (like in hotels, tourism, restaurants etc)



COLLECTIVE BARGAINING



- Promoted by the need to access partial activity and/or wage cuts
 - Essentially *every* company operating under the French system
 - Even Ryanair! 😊
- BUT → the impact seems limited to this specific necessity
 - Ryanair is back to ignoring calls for negotiations from trade unions



COLLECTIVE BARGAINING & CONFLICT



- Present tensions to renegotiate wage cuts
 - “Surprising” return to peak level activity during Summer 2022
 - Trade unions demand the renegotiation of agreements of collective performance (often run until 2024 or even later)
- Strikes (or threats of strike)
 - Transavia, Ryanair, Volotea...





CONCLUSIONS

- Two main stories
- **1) The State-centric model confirmed**
 - Pro-market governments notwithstanding, the massive public intervention (partial activity) fit within the ideological framework of the French state



CONCLUSIONS

- Two main stories
- **2) Promotional measures for collective bargaining work but...**
 - Cannot change lack of social dialogue culture / straight-up opposition to collective bargaining

A woman with long blonde hair is shown in profile, looking out of an airplane window. The scene is dimly lit, with the primary light source being the warm, orange glow from the window. The text "Thanks!" is overlaid in white, centered horizontally and slightly below the vertical center. The background shows the interior of the airplane cabin, including another window and a portion of a seat.

Thanks!