



**SGH**

Warsaw School  
of Economics



**UNIVERSITY  
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**VIRAL**

Varieties of Industrial Relations in Aviation Lockdown (VIRAL)

# **WP 4: Impact of COVID-19 on working conditions and labor relations in the air transport sector in Europe**

country report: Poland

29 September 2022, Warsaw, Poland

# Agenda

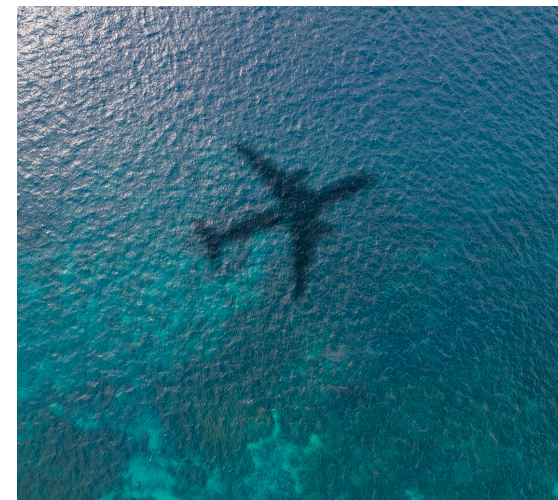
General overview of IR in Poland during and since lockdown resulting from COVID-19



The financial situation and employment in aviation in Poland since 2020



Impact of COVID on working conditions in the air transport sector in Poland



# General overview of IR in Poland during and since lockdown resulting from COVID-19



➔ social dialogue in Poland

# General overview of IR in Poland during and since lockdown resulting from COVID-19

- Level of unionisation in Poland is not satisfactory
- The pandemic had an obvious negative impact on trade union activities - their members were deprived of the opportunity to meet
- The low frequency of meetings in problem teams and ad hoc teams within the Social Dialogue Council





# General overview of IR in Poland during and since lockdown resulting from COVID-19

- Silent change...in the ammendment to the COVID-19 act fro 31.03.2020:

*The Prime Minister shall dismiss a member of the Council in the event of:*

*misappropriation of the Council's activities leading to the impossibility of a transparent, substantive and regular dialogue between workers' and employers' organisations and the governmental side.*

→ very evaluative rationale

# General overview of IR in Poland during and since lockdown resulting from COVID-19

- can the social partners be consulted on a draft already adopted???
- legislation to support the economy during COVID-19 often made conditional for the financial support → dialogue between workers and employers → hope for a revival of social dialogue?
- Polish law already allowed for the suspension of parts of a collective agreement before the pandemic. The crisis solutions introduced even more far-reaching mechanisms

# General overview of IR in Poland during and since lockdown resulting from COVID-19

OPZZ:

*Are trade unions involved in key decisions related to preventing the spread of a coronavirus outbreak?*

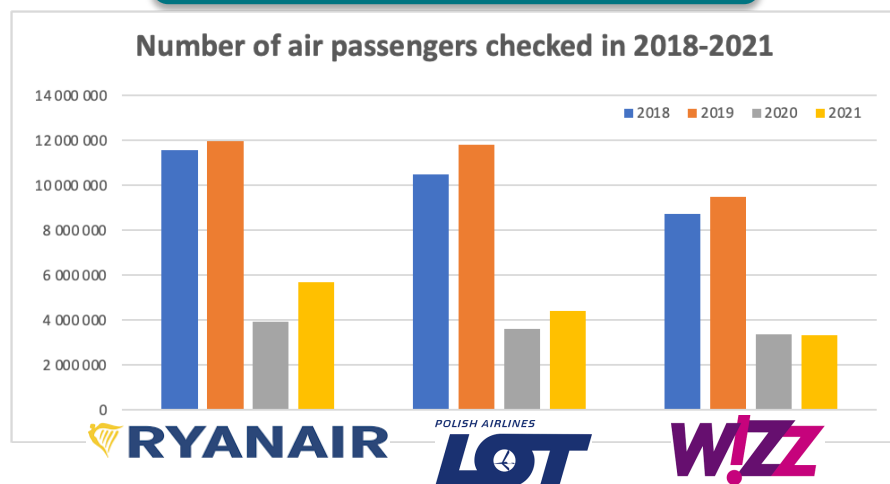
42.1% trade unions were involved in decision-making

43.3 % trade unions were not involved in decision-making

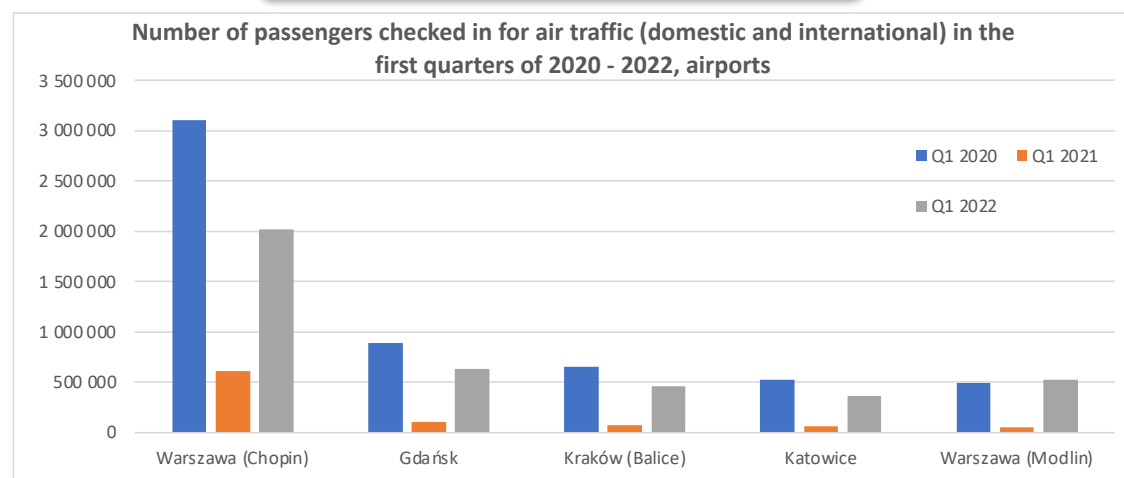
Single answers also appear: "sometimes yes" (7 times), "don't know" (3 times), "there was no need" (2 times), "the union forced action" (2 times), "unions are informed" (2 times).




# Number of passengers in Poland since 2020

## Airlines



## Airports



	Q1 2020	Q1 2020 as % of the year	Q1 2021	Q1 2021 as % of the year	Q1 2022
 RYANAIR	2 230 254	57,02 %	143 862	5,32 %	2 123 255
 LOT	1 998 266	55,73 %	351 657	8,00 %	1 151 143
 WIZZ	1 660 326	49,49 %	175 959	2,53 %	1 051 131



Varieties of Industrial Relations in Aviation Lockdown (VIRAL)





## LCCs in Poland

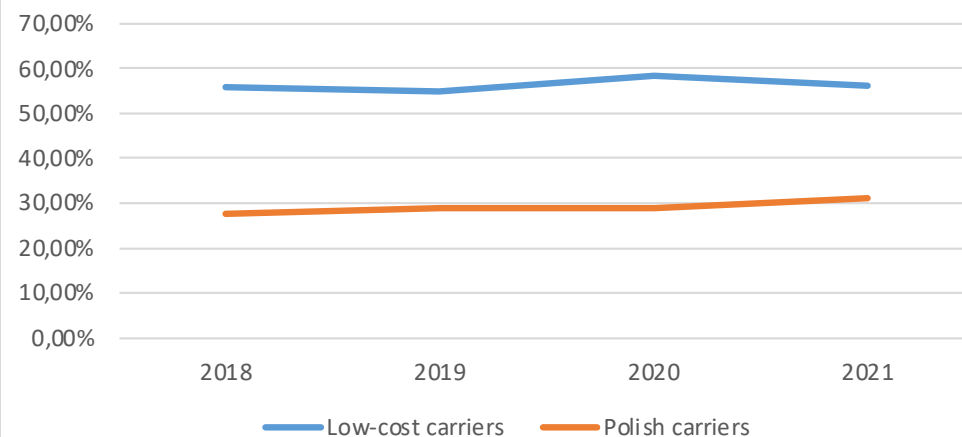
### LCCs

2019: 55%  
2020: 58.4% of all passengers  
2021: 56%

### Polish carrier

2019: 29%  
2020: 28.9% of all passengers  
2021: 31.1%

Share of low-cost and Polish carriers in passenger traffic  
2018 - 2021



POLISH AIRLINES



Owner

69.3% of shares - the State Treasury

Results

2019: + 68.9 million PLN  
2020: - 1 billion 41 million PLN  
2021: - 1 billion 327 million PLN

Passengers

2020: 3.1 million  
2021: 4.2 million  
2022(F): 8 million

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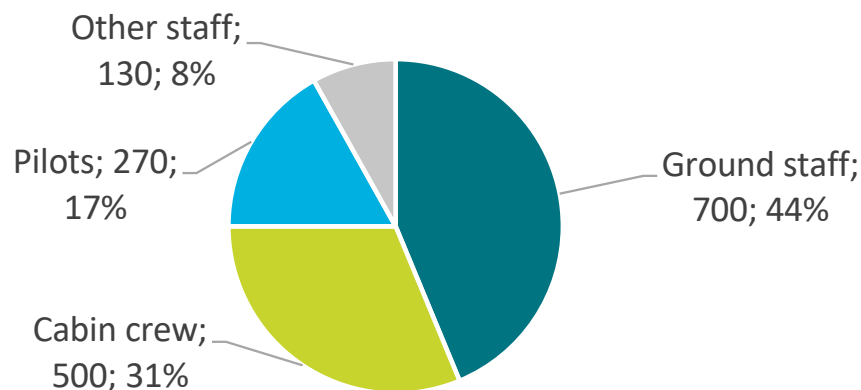
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# Changes in employment conditions

## Employment

- Before the pandemic: ca. 1 600 FTE
- Almost as many people were **self-employed**:
  - formally not employees,
  - so-called B2B contracts, i.e. treating employees as sole proprietors.



## Changes

- Salary reductions and working hours:
  - Offer to cut by 40%,
  - due to little response from the workforce, halved the working hours of a large proportion of full-time employees (from cabin crew and ground staff).
  - Return to full time at the end of 2021.
- Collective redundancies:
  - Announced in mid-February 2021.
  - Originally, 300 jobs were to be cut - mainly cabin crew.
  - After the intervention of the trade unions the number was reduced to 270.
  - The management did not announce the final scale of the reduction.
  - A number of trained staff, with a lot of experience and seniority, had been made redundant.

# Air traffic controllers – conflict with Polish Air Navigation Services Agency (PAŻP)



- When: late April and mid-June 2022
- Who: around 600 flight controllers in Poland
- Why:
  - In Q2 2020 PAŻP agreed with the trade unions to reduce:
    - staffing of air traffic control towers,
    - salaries.
  - At the end of 2021 PAŻP wanted to fix the changes.
- What:
  - In April 2022 the flight controllers launched a protest action.
  - The unions shifted the weight of the dispute:
    - from just pay issues - which could be met with a mixed reaction from the public,
    - to the issue of traveller safety - which gained them recognition and support from the public.

# Impact of COVID-19 on IR in the air transport sector



- During and since COVID-19 pandemic no visible change in:
  - employees representation in aviation,
  - union density in aviation,
  - employers' organizations rates in aviation,
  - collective bargaining rate in aviation.
- Strengthening of the dynamics delineated in WP3.
- Since lockdown no legislation has been passed that specifically affects IR in the aviation industry.

**Thank you!**