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# The ETF is supporting its aviation members across Europe in industrial action during the summer and expects the situation to get much worse

20 Jun 2022

This summer aviation is in serious industrial problems, and that is a certainty by now. **The ETF is supporting all industrial action of its aviation members this summer and expects there to be much more disruption and industrial action as the summer develops.**

Yet **the ETF calls on passengers not to blame the workers** for the disasters in the airports, the cancelled flights, the long queues and longer time for check-ins, and lost luggage or delays caused by decades of corporate greed and a removal of decent jobs in the sector.

On one side, millions of discontent passengers are suffering from cancellations of flights or significant delays all across Europe; and the overstretched aviation workers are being asked day after day to work beyond exhaustion to cover for the staff shortages in aviation.

On the other side: the European Commission, governments and regulators, seem to be totally disconnected and utterly uninterested in the dramatic reality the industry is facing. They remain completely still and silent, almost in a defying way.

In an [open letter](#), the ETF anticipates the chaos the aviation sector is currently facing will only grow over the summer as workers are pushed to the brink, who seem to be the only ones taking the blow of a failing industry.

**The ETF calls for an immediate change of the way the aviation industry works to make it more suitable to the people, be them workers or passengers, by:**

- Collective bargaining, and sectoral social dialogue between all unions and aviation companies in Europe, in line with national applicable or European law;
- Fair pay, decent work and fair conditions for all aviation workers;
- An end to all forms of precarious work, in particular, bogus self-employment;
- General pay increases to at least match high inflation;
- Protection of EU ownership and control rules within the aviation sector;
- Rejection of the [SES2+ proposal](#) in the Air Traffic Control sector, which aims only to liberalise the industry;
- A review of current regulations for Ground Handling services in Europe and an end to the liberalisation of the sector.

**The ETF General Secretary, Livia Spera, stated:**

*'The aviation workers cannot take it anymore. They have been under significant pressure for quite some time now, and it is clear this has reached boiling point. They are being stretched to their limits without any reward; we want better working conditions and fair pay for them. Enough is enough! **Thus, we support the lawful industrial actions taken by our affiliates, and encourage our affiliates to continue to fight throughout the summer.** Now is the time to fundamentally change the sector, the aviation industry cannot continue on as it did before the pandemic.'*

**At the same time, the ETF calls on passengers not to blame the workers for the disaster in the aviation industry.** The ETF considers these are the direct consequences of the failures of governments, employers, and regulators, combined with the greed of some air companies who used the COVID-19 pandemic as an excuse to lower the number and quality of jobs in the aviation sector.

**ETF President, Frank Moreels reminds** that pushing workers to the limit is not new:

*'The industry has long been subjected to a race to the bottom in job quality. For decades we have seen the end of decent work and the introduction of jobs with low pay, bad conditions and high workloads. It has been brought on by the push for 'free market' economic policies of the EU, which have prioritised the maximisation of profits for business owners at the expense of aviation workers across Europe.'*

In 2021, the [ETF called for a number of changes to be made to the aviation sector](#) to ensure the industry could recover quickly from the pandemic. We called the regulators to ensure that people would be at the heart of the aviation sector and repeatedly asked to maintain the staffing levels. Unfortunately, nobody listened. **We hate when we have to say again and again: we told you so!**

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