

Minutes of the Warsaw Meeting, 28-30 September 2022

SGH – Warsaw School of Economics

Present: Hanna Kinowska, Izabela Buchowicz, Lukasz Sienkiewicz (SGH Warsaw School of Economics); Izabela Florczak, Marta Otto, Wincent Chrapowicki (University of Lodz); Piera Campanella, Marco Tufo (University of Urbino Carlo Bo); Davide Dazzi (Ires-ER); Magdalena Nogueira Guastavino (UAM Madrid); Steen Navrbjerg, Mikkel Krogh (University of Copenhagen FAOS); Michael Doherty, David Mangan (National University of Ireland); Fausta Guarriello (University of Chieti-Pescara, Project Coordinator)

Remotely present: Jesus Cruz-Villalòn, Patrocinio Rodriguez-Ramos (University of Seville); Rafael Gomez Gordillo (University Pablo de Olavide, Seville); Marco Rocca (University of Strasbourg).

At 3.30 p.m. on 28 September Hanna Kinowska, chairperson of the meeting, presented the agenda of the first day's proceedings and introduced Professor Malgorzata Poniatowska, Deputy Dean of the Collegium of Business Administration at the SGH Warsaw School of Economics for the welcome address. After that Prof. Pawel Zagrajek made remotely an introductory presentation on the evolution of business models in the air transport sector, followed by a discussion with the participants. After a short coffee break, one of the leaders of WP4, Jesus Cruz-Villalòn, recalled remotely the contents and objectives of the WP4 and opened the presentation and discussion of the ongoing European and national reports on the impact of Covid-19 on working conditions and industrial relations in the air transport sector.

The project coordinator presented the European sectoral social dialogue framework, asking the national partners to highlight whether and to what extent national industrial relations take place in a coordinated European framework. The European framework seems to be characterised by a revival of social dialogue during the health emergency period, through a series of joint statements addressed to European and national institutions and national social partners. However, the recommendations contained in these joint statements were not followed up at the national level after the first lockdown phase, as well as after 2021, and in the face of the new challenges of climate change and sustainable mobility, there seems to be no common position of the social partners, but rather a growing concern on the part of workers' trade unions about the social consequences in terms of employment and deteriorating working conditions.

The entire day of the 29th was devoted to the presentation and discussion of the national reports: starting with the French report, then the Spanish and Italian reports, followed by the Danish, Irish and Polish reports, all partners emphasised the changes that had taken place during the Covid-19 emergency in the air transport sector, in particular the role played by the state as regulator or as owner of airlines, the employment picture of flight and ground personnel, the different income support measures used and their duration, the collective agreements negotiated to cope with the emergency situation at company level.

The national reports illustrated the current situation in the post-pandemic period, presenting the strengths and weaknesses of the sector and its supply chain and the strategies of the actors in the industrial relations system, which is experiencing a high level of conflict in relation to the negotiation of new collective agreements. The trade unions are demanding wage increases and an improvement in working conditions, which have deteriorated

since the pandemic also due to staff reductions. After the pandemic phase, the resumption of bargaining relations did not take place under the banner of “business as usual”, but is showing several critical issues concerning the fragmentation of industrial relations systems, rivalry between trade unions, and user discomfort often directed against the trade unions calling the strike. The great rift between flag and low-cost airlines remains open, with heated legal disputes in many countries.

The discussion that followed concerned which trend lines to highlight and which lessons to draw from the comparative analysis in order to draw recommendations from it. One of the coordinators of WP4, Michael Doherty, attempted to draw some lines for the comparative analysis, including:

- Points of convergence and divergence
- Innovation: things that happen in individual countries that do not match the traditional model
- Inter-union fights/difficulties in maintaining unity amongst different groups (e.g. pilot vs cabin crew)
- Health and safety: Bologna protocol, Spain - aggression, psycho-social
- Workers vs passengers: public narrative (Poland) communication of message (soft law aspect of labour law? - isn't this about collective bargaining PR?)
- Solidarity funds - protocols
- Pre-covid schemes that were in place and then became relevant (i.e. Great Recession measures).
- Conditions attached to State money provided?
- Sectoral approach in aviation industrial relations is possible (pilots as compared to ground crew). (Some unions not for it.)
- Strike patterns
- Gender issues?
- Self-employed - covid income support (and use of 'false' self-employed....)

The final day of the meeting was devoted to further reflection on the comparative elements for WP4 and to define the **deadlines** for the delivery of national reports to the coordinators, Doherty and Cruz-Villalòn, set for **4 November 2022**.

After this date, the coordinators will prepare a comparative draft, which will be sent to partners by **9 December**: partners will send their comments by **19 December**. The final version of the WP4 comparative report will be discussed in an online meeting on **16 January**.

Following this, WP5 coordinators Marco Rocca and Davide Dazzi explained the criteria for choosing the cases to be investigated, reminding that there must be at least 2 case studies per country. The case studies must address the heart of the project, i.e. the impact of Covid-19 on industrial relations and/or employment and working conditions in air transport and its value chain. The criteria for choosing cases should highlight the degree of innovation or continuity with existing practices, the degree of coverage of the value chain, the level of inclusiveness, i.e. the degree of involvement of social partners and the public actor, and the short- and medium-term effects. The case studies should be covered in 5-10 pages each, with key words and clear links to WP3 and WP4. The WP5 coordinators will prepare a synopsis of the case studies. Lessons learnt from each case study (even concerning a negative industrial relations case) will be integrated into the national reports. The selection of the case-studies should take place by October: Rocca and Dazzi within two/three weeks will give their feedback. End of March the case studies should be concluded in order to have enough time to prepare the comparative synoptic to be

presented at the general conference in Brussels in May 2023.

The discussion then covered the dissemination practices of the project, the publication of a collective volume and individual contributions in specialised journals. Many speakers emphasised the importance of publishing the book with an internationally recognised publisher, also for the purpose of scientific evaluation of the quality of the research. In the end, David Mangan was asked to prepare an editorial proposal and an index for the book together with the coordinator, to be submitted to an international publisher. Alternatively, the same proposal will be made to an Italian publisher to publish the volume in a series of studies on labour law and industrial relations.

The last item under discussion is the organisation of the final conference in Brussels: someone suggests to first hear from the Commission to verify the willingness to collaborate in the organisation of the final meeting, to make the results of the project known. The coordinator undertakes to contact the Commission officials following the Viral project and to let the partners know the outcome of these contacts as soon as possible. Another possibility to be explored, also very useful for the dissemination of results through a policy brief, is that of the ETUI, whose director Nicola Countouris is also a member of the project's scientific committee. The two hypotheses could also be combined, if dates permit. Regarding the date of the final conference in May, it seems more realistic to first check the availability of the possible location: all partners are invited to favour through their personal network the success of the final event.

The meeting closed at 1.30 p.m. with a commitment to immediately upload all the materials presented on the project website.

