



Varieties of Industrial Relations in Aviation Lockdown

KICK OFF MEETING MINUTES Rome, 20-22 October 2021

VIRAL. Varieties of Industrial Relations in Aviation Lockdown.

Participants:

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David Mangan (National University of Ireland, Maynooth – NUIM).

The kick-off meeting of the project “*VIRAL. Varieties of Industrial Relations in Aviation Lockdown*” VS/2021/0188 was held in Rome, during the days of the 20th, 21st and 22nd October 2021.

The first two days are dedicated to the work of the working group, while the third half-day hosts a seminar at the National Economic and Labour Council (CNEL) to present the VIRAL project with contributions from experts and social partners at European and national level (see attached programme). The event has been announced in the local press and on the official CNEL website.

The lead applicant University D'Annunzio of Chieti-Pescara (Unich) opened the first half-day meeting introducing the objectives and added values of the project. After the presentation of each organization, the Working Group (WG) started with the discussion of the agenda's items.



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1. Discussion on WPs groups 2 and 3: organization of the work, structure and content of the national reports.

WP number 2 is in charge of Polish Unit – SGH Warsaw School of Economic, while WP number 3 is in charge of Danish and German Units – University of Copenhagen and University of Erlangen respectively, regarding the timeframe and coordination responsibilities, the organization of the work and the structure and content of the national reports.

SGH Warsaw School of Economics is responsible to realize an economic analysis of the air transport sector and its value chain in Europe (WP2). They will analyze, at European and national levels, 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. Each country needs to provide data (for comparison) regarding the reaction to Covid-19 crisis of airports and aircraft.

Regarding WP2, the Warsaw unit presents its proposal on how to define the economic framework of the sector, the methodology and the databases used. A long and passionate discussion opens on the notion of value chain to be accepted for research purposes.

The economic unit points out that the economic data on the air transport sector are general: they include airlines and airports, as well as activities that are closely related to them.

The discussion leads to which meaning of value chain is accepted in the field of industrial relations: some would like to deal only with airlines, while others want to include airports and services directly related to passenger transport.

The question is what to include and what to exclude from the field of research. One proposal suggests considering the time of the transport service, which includes services directly functional to the flight (cleaning of the aircraft, check-in, baggage control, lunch on board) and excludes airport services outside the flight.

Given that the supply chain has to be included because it is foreseen in the project, a different notion of value chain can be given from an industrial relations point of view, which can also be differentiated by country. Maybe case studies can highlight the diversity of industrial relations systems regarding the accepted notion of value chain. Some consider it too broad a task to investigate beyond airlines, which is difficult to do with the available resources.

At the end of the discussion, David Mangan offers to define a value chain hypothesis for our purposes, indicating the services included and those excluded. This starting hypothesis will be validated (or not) in the course of the research. It is nevertheless decided to exclude cargo flights, even though the pandemic has not stopped cargo transport. The possibility of drawing up a box justifying this exclusion is considered.

Regarding WP3, University of Erlangen and University of Copenhagen are responsible to realize an analysis of industrial relations in the air transport sector in Europe and project countries pre-



Covid-19. As such, WP3 consider the role of European and national industrial relations actors' played in the sector prior to Covid-19 (the power balance was in favour of management, due to diverse and uncoordinated Industrial Relations systems across European countries). As Professor Whittal presented, the WP3 will serve as the background landscape (mapping exercise) to understand the Industrial Relations changes taking place in the aviation industry since the outbreak of Covid-19. At this aim:

- All partner countries: will produce a short general description of national Industrial Relations pre-Covid-19 and describe Industrial Relation's practices 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;
- Lead Applicant (UdA) will 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;
- Erlangen and Copenhagen Units will produce a cross-national analysis of pre-Covid-19 Aviation Industrial Relations in the seven partner countries involved within the framework of the European sectoral social dialogue.

On the VIRAL website, in the reserved area accessible to the working group, there are the format of the reports to be produced by each partners.

The results of WP2 and WP3 will be discussed and presented during the International Plenary Conferences with local Policy Platform (the second one) that will take place in Seville, Spain (and not in Warsaw) in April 2022.

The working group then discussed the organisation of the seminar at the CNEL, considering it useful to meet with stakeholders at the start of the project, both to involve them in the work and to receive suggestions and avenues for further research, including relevant case studies. The working group considers the direct dialogue with stakeholders as a method to be followed in future meetings, in order to discuss and disseminate the results. The members of the different units are called to play a role in presenting and animating the round table with stakeholders from different countries (Italy, Spain, Ireland, Germany).

2. Rescheduling of subsequent workshops

The partners decided to reschedule the subsequent workshops as follows: the 2nd International Conference will take place in Spain (Seville) on 6-7-8 April 2022; while the 3rd International Conference was rescheduled in September 2022 (week from 19 to 25 of September, dates to be confirmed) and it will take place in Poland (Warsaw).

3. Presentation of the WP6 regarding dissemination and communication phase

WP number 6, regarding the dissemination and communication activities, will be led by D'Annunzio University. The general objective of this WP is to raise stakeholders' awareness



regarding the findings of the Project and to advertise this EU initiative. The specific objectives of the dissemination and communication activity are summarized in slide n. 1 as follows: to realize these purposes, the project foreseen 3 main tools: the creation of a project website and a brand identity, a social media strategy and the sharing of branded communication materials. Regarding the project website, it will be available in English, and it will be the essential element of the internal and external project communication, providing the project overviews and highlights, up - to - date information on project results, including public and periodic reports, additional information on project events, including meetings, conferences, and contact.

About the structure of the website, we foreseen 7 sections: the home page with the description of the project; the 2nd section is dedicated to the partnership, with the list of partner organizations and associate organizations involved in VIRAL project, plus the list of the members of Scientific committee with their photo and a short bio; the 3rd section is dedicated to news, that means news in real time or about the events that will be realized time to time; in the 4th section we foreseen the archive, where will upload all the materials produced, such as reports, publications, papers, presentations or also legislations and relevant best practices to be highlight; a gallery with photos and videos at the 5th section; the 6th section to contact us and finally a place reserved to the working group for internal documents or drafting documents need to be worked jointly, for example. It is possible access to this area with log in and password available for each of us. The partners decided that all the partners organizations will be involved also in the communication activities.

According with the detailed work program, in the communication strategy there are 2 other tools to be considered: the social media strategy and the production of a newsletter. Regarding the social media, we will create a dedicated account on TWITTER useful to posting news and information that each partner or also each of us with personal accounts could re-post and sharing from the official page of the project. Partners does not agree about the creation of FACEBOOK and LINKEDIN profile. Finally, the project foreseen: reports on the local workshops for circulating results among partners and the publication of 4 Scientific Reports, looking for publication opportunities on peer reviewed specialized journals at national level and / or at international scale.

The coordinating unit recommends that all units appoint a junior researcher who, in addition to collaborating in analysis and reporting, should contribute to feeding news and documents from his or her country into the project website.