



EU Aviation Summit – amid calls for better social standards

Major European airlines, pilots and cabin crew organisations are joining forces to demand decent social standards and clear rules for the industry to abide by. [The call comes](#) when aviation stakeholders & decision-makers meet in Vienna for the high-level European Aviation Summit under the Austrian Presidency. Just a day before, [several Transport Ministers urged the EU Commission](#) to come up with concrete measures to achieve a ‘socially responsible connectivity’ and to ensure healthy and fair competition on Europe’s aviation market.

After years of operating in a Single Market with economic freedom but segmented labour law and social security systems, the evidence of detriment to the industry is mounting. Certain airlines are no longer competing based on services and products but on [‘engineering’ their social and employment practices](#). Crew are faced with deteriorating working conditions and precarious atypical contracts, as a result of ‘inventive’ employment set-ups that were born out of legal gaps and grey areas in the EU and national frameworks. However, the European ‘Social Agenda’ for aviation – promised since 2015 by the EU Commission as a countermeasure – has not taken much form or shape yet.

In [a joint statement airlines and employees](#) therefore fill this gap by proposing several measures to be taken and call upon decision-makers to act swiftly.

“It is time to take urgent steps to clarify the definition of Home Base for crew and to ensure pilots and cabin crew are covered by the local labour and social security law of the country where they are based,” says ECA President Dirk Polloczek. “It is time to explicitly prohibit bogus self-employment for air crew, to limit the systematic use of atypical employment – such as broker agency or zero-hour contracts – and to undertake legislative changes,” continues Dirk Polloczek. “The revision of the EU Air Services Regulation 1008/2008 will be a key opportunity to embed social protection within Europe’s legal framework in future, but we cannot wait until then. Action is needed – and possible – already now”.

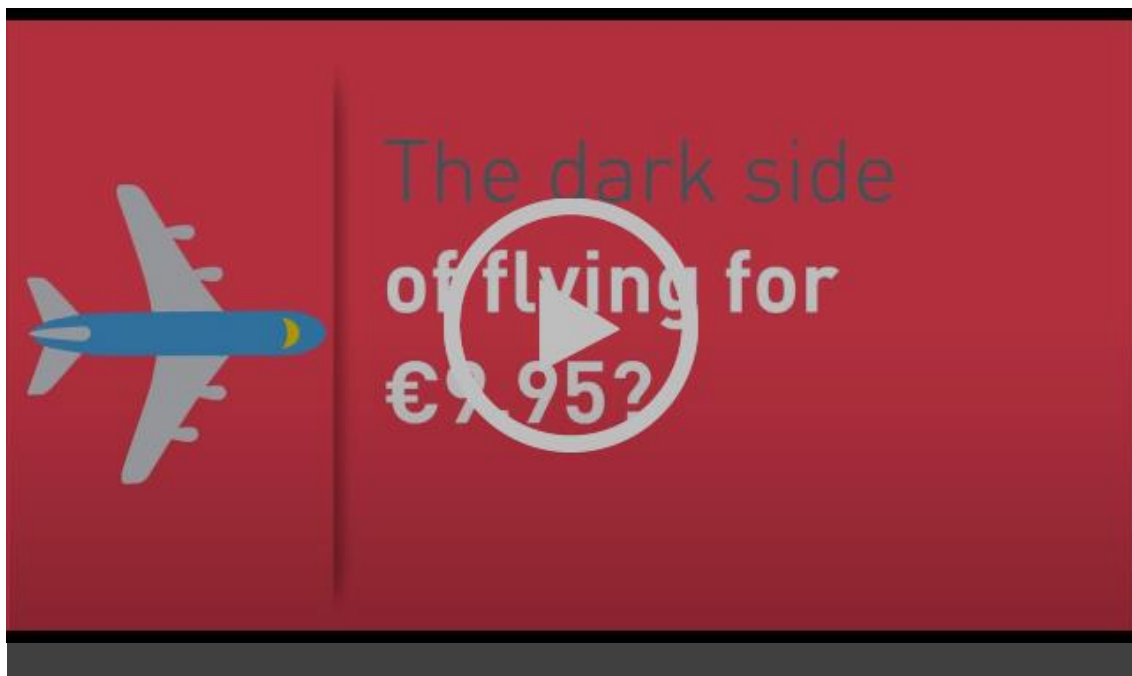
“Only last week, EU Employment Commissioner Thyssen said that the Single Market is not a jungle and there are clear rules that govern it,” says ECA Secretary General Philip von Schöppenthau. “But what has been concretely done since the [“Social Agenda for Transport”](#) Conference in June 2015 – and the subsequent [Aviation Strategy](#) – where EU Commissioner Bulc committed to tackle the many social problems in our sector? Very little! And in the meantime, the most striking difference we see is that the list of misuses has become even longer and even more wide-spread.”

The call for action comes as **several European Member States signed a Joint Declaration, urging the EU Commission** to present concrete and effective measures by end of 2018. [“The Social Agenda in Aviation – Towards Socially Responsible Connectivity”](#) has been signed by the **Ministers of Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands**. It draws attention to recurrent problems linked to the multiplication of operational bases, crew recruitment through agencies, bogus self-employment and other atypical forms employment, warning against social dumping, rule-shopping, unfair practices and an unlevel playing field.

“It is promising and refreshing to see such a political message coming from Transport Ministers from across Europe,” says Philip von Schöppenthau. “It is a welcome and timely initiative that must serve as a wake-up call to the European Commission.”

Download Ministers' Declaration [The Social Agenda in Aviation – Towards Socially Responsible Connectivity](#)

[Download the Joint Statement by ACP - ECA - ETF](#)



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