

PRESS RELEASE

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Side 1 af 2

Eastern Europe has become the “heaven” of social dumping in aviation

Ghent University study shows the region can no longer remain under the radar

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Flight Personnel Union Romania (FPU Romania), part of the Danish organization FPU and a member of the European Cockpit Association (ECA), draws attention to the recent findings published by **Ghent University** regarding the social conditions of aircrew in European aviation.

According to the study, **Eastern Europe** – which includes Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria – records the highest rate of atypical employment in the entire European Union.

More than half of pilots and cabin crew in this region (approx. 52%) work under precarious or atypical employment arrangements, such as *bogus self-employment*, cooperation through intermediaries, or temporary work agencies – compared with only 7% in the rest of Europe.

The report also shows that workers from Eastern Europe experience higher levels of job insecurity and a lower willingness to report accumulated fatigue or safety concerns, clear signs of the lack of an effective oversight and protection system at both national and European levels.

These findings confirm a reality that FPU Romania has been highlighting for years, including through its involvement in the joint complaint submitted to the European Labour Authority (ELA) by the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) and ECA, addressing the extensive use of subcontracting through non-EU contracts and the abuse of wet-leasing models to bypass European labour legislation.

In this context, FPU Romania underlines the urgent need to revise Regulation (EC) No 1008/2008, so that it reflects current market realities and ensures the uniform application of labour and social protection rules for all aviation workers, regardless of their employment model. FPU Romania will actively participate in the public consultation launched by the European Commission, contributing official feedback and concrete data reflecting the situation in the region.

“Employment practices in Eastern Europe are no longer under the radar. This region has clearly become the new battlefield of European aviation, and our members are standing right in the heart of that storm. We carry a strong mandate to keep pushing for decent working conditions and fair competition across Europe,” said Mircea Constantin, Secretary General of FPU Romania.

FPU Romania is actively involved in European campaigns against social dumping in aviation, together with its partners from ECA and ITF/ETF, and supports the strengthening of the ELA's role in monitoring the enforcement of European legislation across all Member States, including in Eastern Europe.



Notes to editors:

Founded in 2020, [Flight Personnel Union România](#) (FPU Romania or FPUR) represents flight and cabin crew professionals in Romania, promoting decent working conditions and fair treatment. FPU Romania is part of [Flyvebranchen Personale Union](#) (FPU), the central aviation workers' organization in Denmark, and is a member of the [European Cockpit Association](#) (ECA).

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