



Ryanair reaches deals in Italy & Ireland. Is the best yet to come?

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A tentative agreement between Ryanair and Irish pilots and a Collective Labour Agreement (CLA) with Italian pilots – this is the current situation in the aftermath of a wave of strikes at Ryanair earlier this month. Both developments are meaningful steps forward for improving pilots’ working environment within Ryanair. But with negotiations in other countries still stalled Ryanair needs to show more will and ambition to address its pilots’ concerns and to resolve other disputes in a harmonised transnational manner.

“The CLA in Italy and the Irish tentative agreement should be seen as the beginning of the process and not the end result”, says ECA President Dirk Polloczek. “It would be premature to shout ‘Hurray!’ now. Pilots in Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden were on strike just a couple of weeks ago and the new deals will not make them wave off their many concerns. Equally, negotiations in Spain and Portugal are in a deadlock, and in Spain Ryanair has been taken to court by the local pilot union SEPLA over the use of Irish broker agency contracts for pilots living and operating in Spain. The path to a comprehensive, network-wide agreement, covering national and transnational issues, is still far ahead for Ryanair.”

While the CLA has been approved by ANPAC and its members as a positive outcome, this CLA framework is specific to the Italian particularities, especially as regards the financial aspects related to taxation, social security and related matters. As such, it does not cover some of the more generic issues that are of a cross-border / transnational nature, such as a Master Seniority Agreement and other key transnational issues.

The agreement reached in Ireland, still pending approval by IALPA members and Ryanair’s Board, is not a CLA like in Italy as it addresses the specific aspects of annual leave, base transfers and command upgrades – and the related seniority principles. These issues also topped the [list of key demands by the RTPG](#) – the Ryanair Transnational Pilot Group, representing Ryanair pilot unions from across Europe. Such transnational issues are logically to be negotiated on a European level because the company operates beyond the borders of one country and they affect crew the same way, irrespective of the country they work in.

Already in January 2018, national pilot associations from 12 countries invited Ryanair to joint talks and suggested a meeting for February 2018, but the invitation was turned down by Ryanair immediately.

“The deals in Ireland and Italy are good news for Ryanair and address some of the specific issues and concerns of its pilots in those countries, but they remain purely ‘national’ deals”, says ECA Secretary General Philip von Schöppenthau. “The airline is treading a thin line negotiating partial agreements on a country by country basis but is – so far – dismissing a much more efficient transnational negotiating approach. It seems as if the management has difficulties shaking off its previous habit of ‘divide and rule’. It is time for Ryanair and its shareholders to consider a more efficient, more effective, and more constructive cross-border approach – in order to achieve a lasting social peace within the company’s entire network.”

For further information, please contact:

Dirk Polloczek, ECA President, Tel: 32 2 705 32 93

Philip von Schöppenthau, ECA Secretary General, Tel: +32 2 705 32 93

Note to editors: ECA is the representative body of European pilot associations, representing over 38.000 pilots from across Europe, striving for the highest levels of aviation safety and fostering social rights and quality employment for pilots in Europe. Website: www.eurocockpit.be & twitter [@eu_cockpit](https://twitter.com/eu_cockpit)