



*"[air navigation control, [...]] is a task involving the exercise of public authority and is not of an economic nature, since that activity constitutes a service in the public interest which is intended to protect both the users of air transport and the populations affected by aircraft flying over them".
(Extract of decision C.364/92 of the European Court of Justice).*

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PRESS RELEASE

Is this the way, in Albania, they put Safety first?

Brussels, 10th April 2021

If you ever wanted to know how a government can terrorize its citizens, have a look at Albania.

After Albcontrol ignored the rights of the workers and the Union for one year, the Government is lashing out at the Air Traffic Controllers now.

Last week, five Air Traffic Controllers declared their provisional inability, in line with the National Competency Program of Albania and the EU Regulation 2015/340. Those Air Traffic Controllers were immediately fired without any valid reason stated.

Three of those Air Traffic Controllers were in Police custody for over 48 hours before seeing a judge. This judge decided today that the female controller will stay under house arrest and the male controllers will stay in prison with no time limit.

They performed their duties according to an EU Regulation and it seems they are imprisoned for that. Is it a crime in Albania to follow EU Regulations?

Air Traffic Controllers in Albania are forbidden to talk to any news outlet or other media under the threat of losing their job.

ATCEUC calls on every EU Institution to watch closely what is happening in Albania.

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Such a behaviour is disqualifying any country to become a member of the European Union, a Community where we embrace human rights, where we have a pillar of social rights.

ATCEUC calls on the aviation community to watch closely what is happening in Albania.

Air Traffic Controllers under enormous stress fearing for their freedom and for the livelihood of their families could not be fit for doing their job.

Air Traffic Controllers from foreign countries with no training in the sectors, in the procedures and with no valid ratings are not fit for doing the job. "Safety first" seems not the goal for Aviation in Albania in this time.

ATCEUC is calling on CANSO to reassess if they really want to have Albcontrol as a member, when Albcontrol is so clearly stamping over the Toolbox for Successful Social Dialogue in Air Traffic Management in boots. It took a great effort by CANSO, ETF and ATCEUC to find this agreement and it was highly welcomed by all European Institutions.

As IFATCA already warned this week, ATCEUC reminds the Airlines that flying over Albanian Territory poses a heightened risk due to the conflict between the government and the local staff as well as the fact that not properly endorsed foreign personnel might be working in Tirana now.

The European Regulation on licensing was designed to protect the safety of the flying public and the European citizens on the ground. There is no shortcut to obtain a valid license with valid ratings for the airspace an Air Traffic Controller has to work.

For this reason, ATCEUC recommends the pilots to use extreme caution when deciding to fly through Albanian airspace.

END OF PRESS RELEASE

Air Traffic Controllers European Unions Coordination (ATCEUC) was created in 1989 and is currently composed of 32 professional and autonomous trade unions representing more than 14000 Air Traffic Controllers (ATCOs) and Air Traffic Safety Electronics Personnel (ATSEPs) throughout Europe. ATCEUC is part of the "European Union Sectoral Social Dialogue - Civil Aviation" in the air traffic management field and it is recognised as a full member of the ICB. ATCEUC with its experts participates in every work group where the voice of its Members can and have to be expressed: SESAR JU, TSG, EGHD, EASA STeB, EASC, ASPReT, ATM Partners and other workshops or programmes within the framework of EUROCONTROL and the European Commission.