

Italian pilots approve deal with Ryanair

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Ryanair lands a deal on working conditions with its Italian pilots

Italian pilots have approved an agreement over working conditions with Ryanair in the first such deal the strike-hit low-cost aviation giant has fully concluded.

The agreement, reached earlier this month following eight months of

talks, gives Italy-based pilots working for Ryanair "protection and guarantees", according to the ANPAC union which negotiated the collective work contract.

"The contract was submitted for approval by the more than 300 [pilot](#) members and after a tallying of the results (Monday night) the contract received a very large majority" of votes, said the union.

The agreement is the first that Ryanair has signed and which has been approved by [union](#) members since the Irish airline caved in last year and said it would recognise trade unions.

The reversal came amid rising discontent among the airline's staff, which have continued to strike as negotiations dragged on.

Earlier this month, Ryanair pilots across Europe staged a coordinated 24-hour strike to push their demands for better pay and conditions, plunging tens of thousands of passengers into transport chaos at the peak of the busy summer season.

In July, strikes by cockpit and cabin crew disrupted 600 flights in Belgium, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain, affecting 100,000 travellers.

Ryanair welcomed the first approval of a collective work agreement among its pilots, and said it hoped Irish pilots would also soon approve their [agreement](#), which was concluded last week.

"We have invited our UK, German and Spanish unions to meet with us in the coming days so that we can negotiate and hopefully agree similar pilot collective labour agreements in these other larger markets," said Ryanair's Chief People Officer Eddie Wilson.

"These agreements demonstrate the real progress being made by Ryanair

in its negotiations with its pilots and their unions across different EU markets," he said in a statement.

Ryanair staff have been seeking higher wages and an end to the practice whereby many have been working as independent contractors without the benefits of staff employees,

Another key complaint of workers based in countries other than Ireland is the fact that Ryanair employs them under Irish legislation.

Staff claim this creates huge insecurity for them, blocking their access to state benefits in their country.

Ryanair has meanwhile said previously that it has offered its pilots a 20-percent pay increase this year, adding that the carrier is committed to giving all its pilots in Germany permanent contracts by the end of the year.

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