

**Title of thesis:** Current Issues in International Air Transport

**Abstract:** Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council aims to provide adequate protection to passengers using air transport in the event that a flight for which they have purchased a ticket does not take place in full compliance with the contract of carriage. As a result of the case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union, the level of protection of passengers is constantly being extended, a trend that is generally welcomed in the literature. This thesis offers a view from the other party of the contract of carriage and uses examples from case law to demonstrate the practical problems that the Court's interpretation brings with it. In addition to analysing the CJEU's decisions, this thesis highlights the potential pitfalls of two aspects of passengers' claims under Regulation 261 against air carriers. The first is the identification of the person who is entitled to call upon the air carrier to fulfil its obligations under Regulation 261, in particular to pay compensation for a delayed or cancelled flight. The second aspect is the question of the limitation period for such claims and the consequences of their late assertion by the air carrier.

This thesis was written at a time when the entire civil aviation sector was struggling to recover from the hit suffered by the COVID-19 pandemic, which brought an unprecedented downturn in air travel. Even the world's largest air carriers could not survive without third-party, mostly state, assistance at this time. While the European Commission has presented a framework for the provision of state aid acceptable under EU law, the EU Member States themselves determined the specific form of state aid, and the extent of the aid provided often varied substantially. The last part of this thesis is therefore devoted to an analysis of the impact of the pandemic on civil aviation and the various options for dealing with the situation. As state aid to air carriers has already been subject to judicial review, it concludes with case law that sets certain limits to state aid.

**3 keywords:** air carrier, statute of limitations, state aid