

## Council and Parliament reach landmark agreement on stronger EU air passenger rights

Air passengers across the European Union will soon benefit from simpler, clearer and stronger rights. A landmark agreement reached between the Council and the European Parliament updates the EU rules on air passenger rights and airline liability. The new framework reinforces passenger protection while ensuring a fair balance with airlines' operational realities. It also helps preserve connectivity across the EU and maintain a level playing field for airlines.

I'm proud that, after 13 years of negotiations, we reached a landmark agreement to strengthen EU air passenger rights. This modernized framework will deliver certainty, fairness and stronger protection for millions of European air passengers. The agreement strikes a fair balance for our airlines, helping preserve connectivity that is vital to the EU's internal market and its citizens.

*Alexis Vafeades, Minister of transport, communications and works of the Republic of Cyprus*

EU air passenger rights provide a high level of protection, notably in cases of denied boarding, delays or cancellations. The agreement strengthens and clarifies passenger rights, notably with regards to access to assistance and rerouting, the right to timely information, and entitlement to compensation in cases of cancellation or delay.

### Easier and smoother claims

The new rules will it easier for passengers to exercise their rights.

In case of a delay that could be ground for compensation, passengers will have to be informed electronically by the airline within 96 hours after arrival. The airline will need to provide information to passengers on their rights and clear instructions on how to submit a request for compensation.

Airlines will be required to immediately acknowledge receipt of a claim and then reply, within 30 days, by either paying compensation or providing a clear justification for refusing the claim.

### Right to compensation in cases of cancellation and delay

Passengers may claim compensation where:

- a flight arrives more than three hours late or
- a flight is cancelled less than 14 days before departure

**Compensation levels remain largely similar to those applicable today**, which means that as from 3 hours delay, a passenger could have right on a compensation of:

- 250 euro for all flights of 1500km or less
- 400 euro for all intra-EU flights or flights between 1500km and 3500km
- 600 euro for all other flights

## Right to assistance

The agreement clarifies passengers' entitlement to **assistance during disruptions**.

It indicates that in case of a disruption, air passengers are entitled to:

- refreshments every two hours of waiting time;
- a meal after three hours, and every five hours thereafter (up to three meals per day);
- internet access and two phone calls.

Where a stay of one or more nights becomes necessary, passengers should be accommodated in a hotel free of charge and get free transport from the airport to the accommodation and back.

If an airline fails to provide the required assistance, passengers may make their own arrangements and request reimbursement.

## New rights introduced

The agreement also introduces several new rights, such as the prohibition of denying boarding because a passenger didn't take an inbound flight ('**no-show**').

To create price transparency, air fares including **allowance for a piece of hand baggage** shall be displayed by default before the start of any booking process to facilitate fare comparisons between airlines.

The regulation also includes **specific and reinforced rights for persons with specific needs** such as persons with disabilities or reduced mobility, children, unaccompanied minors and pregnant passengers. Their rights will be protected stronger and extended. Families and PRMs and the persons accompanying them will for example be able to sit together at no extra cost. No-show will also be completely forbidden for passengers with reduced mobility (PRMs), pregnant travellers, and unaccompanied minors.

Moreover, PRMs will:

- have new compensation rights where airports do not provide sufficient assistance,
- have priority rights in case of assistance and rerouting
- can travel with their mobility equipment and assistance dogs without having to pay extra insurance
- get replacement for their mobility equipment at no cost should it get lost or damaged

## Right to information and easier communication with airlines

Passengers must be informed more clearly and comprehensively about their rights in the event of disruption. They must also be informed of the cause of the disruption as soon as that information becomes available.

Where an airline expects a flight to be delayed, passengers must be informed immediately when possible, and at the latest by the scheduled departure time indicated on the ticket. Air airlines must offer passengers at least one free and efficient way to communicate with them.

## Right to rerouting

Passengers choosing rerouting at the earliest opportunity following a cancellation or denied boarding (unless the denial is based on reasonable grounds) must be offered an alternative route within three hours.

This can include rerouting where appropriate to an alternative airport, by a different route, on another airline's services or on other transport modes.

Rerouting must be provided at the airline's expense and under comparable transport conditions. Passengers should, for example, not be forced to take multiple connecting flights if they booked a direct connection.

Passengers may also be rerouted in a higher class without additional cost. Airlines remain responsible for compensation for delays at arrival.

If an airline fails to offer rerouting within three hours, passengers may organise their own rerouting and claim reimbursement of up to 400% of the original ticket price.

## Greater clarity for passengers and airlines on extraordinary circumstances

The agreement further clarifies the concept of **extraordinary circumstances**, events beyond the airline's control and unrelated to the normal operation of its activities. A non-exhaustive list of such circumstances is included in the text. Where extraordinary circumstances apply, airlines may not be required to pay financial compensation.

If an airline invokes extraordinary circumstances to reject a compensation claim, it must provide passengers with a clear, substantiated and easy-to-understand explanation.

Extraordinary circumstances may only be invoked where they affect the flight concerned; or at most one of the three preceding flights in the aircraft's rotation sequence, and where there is a direct causal link between the extraordinary circumstance and the disruption.

The burden of proof remains with the airline, including proof that all reasonable measures were taken to avoid the disruption.

## Scope of application of the rules

The rules apply to passengers:

- flying within the EU, on flights operated by either EU or non-EU airlines;
- arriving in the EU from a non-EU country on an EU airlines; and
- departing from the EU to a non-EU country on either an EU or non-EU airlines.

Under the agreement, the Commission will assess within three years whether the scope of the regulation could be revised and possibly extended fully to third-country operators. To inform passengers better about which airlines are covered by EU passenger rights rules, a voluntary EU air passenger rights label will be introduced and displayed during the booking process. The Commission will further develop this label.

## Next steps

Today's agreement still must be formally adopted by both the European Parliament and Council following legal-linguistic revision.

## Background

EU air passengers have benefited from protection in cases of denied boarding, delays and cancellations since the introduction of the EU air passenger rights rules in 2004.

Over time, however, legal ambiguities and evolving case law created uncertainty for both passengers and airlines regarding the interpretation and application of the rules. In response, the European Commission proposed a revision of the framework in 2013.

- [Council sets position on clearer and improved rules for air passengers \(press release, 5 June 2025\)](#)
- [Consumer protection: travel rights \(background information\)](#)
- [Conciliation Committee](#)

**Press office - General Secretariat of the Council of the EU**

Rue de la Loi 175 - B-1048 BRUSSELS - Tel.: +32 (0)2 281 6319

[press@consilium.europa.eu](mailto:press@consilium.europa.eu) - [www.consilium.europa.eu/press](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/press)