Questions and Answers on the revision of the passenger rights Regulations

Brussels, 29 November 2023

**What are the Passenger Rights Regulations? Why do we need them?**

Passenger rights are at the heart of EU transport and consumer policy. The EU is the only area in the world where citizens are protected by a full set of passenger rights – whether they travel by plane, train, ship, bus or coach. A solid EU framework has been in place for all transport modes since 2004, with the adoption of four Regulations for air, waterborne, bus and coach and rail transport, plus a fifth Regulation addressing air transport for passengers with disabilities and reduced mobility.

Prior to the adoption of the Regulations, passenger rights were given little attention in the terms and conditions of the contract between the passenger and the carrier. This meant that it was often costly, cumbersome and frustrating for passengers to defend their rights. The introduction of passenger rights Regulations covering all modes of transport removed these obstacles and created a level playing field by ensuring the same rules apply across all Member States. These rules cover rights for passengers when a disruption occurs, information provision to passengers both before and during travel, rights of non-discrimination for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility, and complaint options if rules are not followed.

The 'Your Europe' website and the passenger rights app (Google Android, Apple iOS) provide detailed information and advice for passengers on their rights and how they can exercise them.

**Why are the Passenger Rights Regulations being revised?**

Certain gaps that undermine the effectiveness of the passenger rights Regulations were identified in evaluations of the current Regulations (2021), the 2020 Eurobarometer on passenger rights, and reports by the European Court of Auditors published in 2018 and 2021. They found that shortcomings in implementation and enforcement are preventing passengers from fully benefiting from these rights. For flights booked via an intermediary, air carriers will receive the contact details of passengers (respecting GDPR) in order to contact them directly for important matters such as re-routing, reimbursements, compensation payments, providing care and information about disruptions. The proposal to revise the Regulations addresses these problem areas by strengthening the enforcement mechanisms and introducing rules for air passengers who booked their flights via an intermediary.

**Why do we need a new Passenger Rights Regulation for multimodal journeys?**

The Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy is a roadmap towards achieving the European Green Deal ambition of a 90% reduction in transport emissions by 2050. A key element of making transport more sustainable is achieving effective multimodality, whereby passengers combine several modes of transport during a journey, using the most sustainable and efficient mode for each leg.

However, while passengers who travel with one mode (i.e. only by plane, train, bus or ship) currently enjoy rights in the event of travel disruptions, they are not entitled to similar rights if they switch to another mode. Consequently, passengers undertaking multimodal journeys lack information on possible travel disruptions and on the extent of their rights. There is also a lack of assistance (e.g. reimbursement, re-routing, accommodation, meals and refreshments) in the event of a travel disruption that occurs when switching between transport modes during a single journey; it is difficult to complain to carriers and other possible relevant actors (e.g. terminal operators, ticket vendors) about the lack of information or assistance, and clarity on which national authority to contact regarding multimodal travel disruptions is lacking.

Insufficient passenger rights rules for multimodal journeys also means that persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility (PRM) are not entitled to particular assistance under EU law when...
transferring between transport modes, including at multimodal connecting points such as air-rail hubs. In the absence of such assistance, these passengers are unable to benefit from the seamless travel experience available to other passengers.

The proposal for a new Regulation on Passenger Rights in the context of multimodal journeys aims to address these gaps in the current EU legislation on passenger rights.

How will the revision of the Passenger Rights Regulations benefit passengers?

The ultimate beneficiaries of this initiative are passengers: the proposed revisions will ensure that they are more aware of their rights, which will be better applied and enforced as a result of action by carriers, terminal managers, intermediaries and enforcement authorities. In particular:

- Passengers seeking individual redress will face fewer obstacles when claiming their rights. Passengers will be able to use standard EU-wide reimbursement and compensation forms provided by the Commission: these will be easy to understand, accessible for persons with disabilities, and available in all official EU languages. Passengers will not be obliged to use such forms, but if a carrier receives a request via such a form, it will not be allowed to refuse it.
- Passengers will be able to make more informed decisions about which carrier to travel with, as carriers will have to regularly publish reports on their implementation of passenger rights (e.g. provision of information, handling complaints, punctuality of services, assistance for persons with disabilities).
- Passengers will benefit from more effective work by the national enforcement bodies to detect potential non-conformities by carriers and terminal managers when implementing passenger rights.
- For air travel,
  - Passengers can receive all relevant information for their journey (including delays, cancellations, provision of care, re-routing, reimbursement, compensation requests) directly from the air carrier, even if they booked through an intermediary: intermediaries have to transmit the contact details of the passengers to the air carrier – but for this purpose alone. Air carriers will face sanctions if they use these data for any other purpose, and must respect strict data retention periods in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
  - Passengers will also benefit from full clarity on whom to contact for the reimbursement of their tickets when they book through intermediaries, and clear upfront information from both the air carrier and any intermediary on how the reimbursement procedure will be carried out, free of charge.
  - If the reimbursement is processed via an intermediary that paid for the ticket from its own bank account, both the air carrier and the intermediary will need to ensure that the passenger receives the reimbursement within 14 days. The air carrier has to reimburse the intermediary within 7 days, and the intermediary the passenger within another 7 days.
- If passengers communicate their phone number or email address, they will receive all important information in digital format.

How will the new passenger rights Regulation for multimodal journeys benefit passengers?

For the first time, passengers will have rights when they travel using different types of transport, like buses, trains, and planes, all in one trip. These new rights add to the ones passengers already have when they travel using just one type of transport.

Passengers will get better information and will be more protected when they travel on a single ticket that covers their entire journey. If there's a problem with their trip, they can get their money back or be rerouted, and they'll get help if they need it. This could save them a lot of money.

If passengers buy a combination of separate tickets for different transport modes in one payment and miss a connection, they can get their money back from the seller or operator from whom they bought these combined tickets if they weren't told that the tickets were separate. In that case, they should also get 75% of the ticket price on top.

People with reduced mobility will get help when they switch from one type of transport to another at big transport hubs. They'll only have to ask for help once, and they won't have to wait as long to get
Lastly, passengers can, as proposed for the mode-specific rules, use standard reimbursement and compensation forms provided by the Commission.

**How does this proposal benefit travellers with disabilities or reduced mobility?**

Special attention is paid to the needs of passengers with disabilities or reduced mobility. Persons with reduced mobility who switch from one transport mode to another during their journey will be assisted at connecting points by carriers and terminal operators when they travel under a single contract of carriage or when they travel through multimodal passenger hubs. If an airline obliges a passenger with disabilities or a person with reduced mobility to travel accompanied by someone because the passenger needs assistance to comply with aviation safety requirements (e.g. to fasten the seatbelt), the airline will be obliged to transport the accompanying person free of charge, and when practical, seat this person next to the passenger they are assisting. This right already exists when travelling by rail, ship or bus/coach.

Carriers will be obliged to adopt service quality standards and publish reports on the implementation of such standards. These reports will provide *more transparency* on various issues, including a **carrier's compliance with rules on the rights of persons with disabilities**: they will be obliged to report on the number of persons with disabilities to whom they deny transport, the amount of mobility equipment lost or damaged, the number of complaints received and the outcome of the complaints.

**For More Information**

- [Press Release](#)
- [Factsheet](#)
- [Proposal](#)

---

Press contacts:

Adalbert JAHNZ (+ 32 2 295 31 56)
Deborah ALMERGE RUCKERT (+32 2 298 79 86)

General public inquiries: **Europe Direct** by phone **00 800 67 89 10 11** or by **email**