

EU COMMISSION PLANS WEAKENING PASSENGER RIGHTS



The European Commission in Brussels is working on the revision of Regulation No. 261/2004, which has regulated the rights of airline passengers since 2005. A large part of the proposed changes will lead to a significant reduction in air passengers' rights.

This is pointed out by the consumer protection portal www.fairplane.net. In order to give passengers a voice and an opportunity to safeguard against the changes Fairplane suggests the use of the www.Angry-Passenger.org portal.

Lawyers at Angry-Passenger.org, travel rights specialists and consumer protection experts, show the impact the proposed changes will have on passengers. **The most dramatic changes include the extension of waiting times for a compensation claim.**

The commissioners propose differentiating between internal and external European flights. Up to now passengers could claim damages for a delay of three hours and over, in future airlines will only compensate delays of over twelve hours for transatlantic flights.

Apart from this, the Commission plans for the first time to regulate waiting times on the runway. What initially sounds positive turns out to be a substantial downgrade. Under the Commission's proposal, the airline can detain passengers in the aircraft for up to five hours before they have the right to disembark.

"If the Commission pushes this through, more than 70 percent of passengers will lose their entitlement to compensatory payment. Allowing airlines to confine future passengers in the aircraft on the tarmac for five hours verges on unlawful detention. However, consumers can and should fight back. Angry-Passenger.org gives them the opportunity to do this," says Andreas Sernetz, founder and CEO of Fairplaner.net, in combative mood.

Angry-passenger.org is supported by the governing body of the European Passengers' Federation (EPF) as well as leading lawyers and several consumer protection portals. Angry-Passenger.org has put forward a list of demands drawn up by lawyers which consumers can send to the appropriate authorities. Several hundred customers who oppose the revision have already followed the appeal to resist it.

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