

Contribution for the European Passengers' Federation (EPF) publication

In the area of transport the European Union aims at providing European citizens and businesses with competitive, sustainable, secure and safe transport services. Thanks to the single market, long queues at the border are a thing of the past and barriers to travel have been removed. The Commission will work towards further connecting Europe's networks, while promoting intelligent transport systems to improve the use of existing infrastructure. Read about 20 examples of how Europe has made your life easier and safer through better transport here: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/static/pdf/success-stories_en.pdf

A competitive transport sector also means better prices for passengers. We have seen this development in aviation where European rules have increased competition in the transport sector across Europe. The result is cheaper flights and better connections for us as passengers.

To encourage the same development in rail, the Commission is now proposing in its **4th railway package** adopted in January 2013 that domestic passenger railways should be opened up to new entrants and services from December 2019 while ensuring that coordinated selling and integrated tickets are preserved. Experience from Member States with open markets has shown improvements in quality and services with increased passenger satisfaction.

In 2001, the Commission committed to set up comprehensive passenger rights for all transport modes- which is unprecedented in the world - first with air and rail in 2009 then on ships since 2012 and finally in March 2013, on long-distance bus transport. These passenger rights are based on three key principles: the protection from discrimination, the right to information and the right to care.

In June 2012 the Commission published **interpretative Guidelines to improve the application of Regulation 1107/2006¹** on the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air. These guidelines, developed in cooperation with all stakeholders, aim at facilitating its application and put a strong emphasis on non-discrimination, accessibility of information and adequate training of staff.

In March 2013, the Commission proposed **a revision of Regulation 261/2004 on air passengers' rights²** in case of denied boarding, long delays and cancellations, to bring further clarification to the rights. It ensures that air passengers have new and better rights to information, care and re-routing when they are stranded at the airport. There will also be better complaint handling procedures and enforcement measures.

A new campaign on passenger rights will start in June 2013. The passenger rights smart phone application, launched in 2012 as part of the Commission's "Your passenger rights at hand campaign", keeps being updated with the latest information³. See also the website (<http://ec.europa.eu/transport/passenger-rights/en/index.html>).

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/passengers/air/doc/prm/2012-06-11-swd-2012-171_en.pdf

² http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/kallas/headlines/news/2013/03/passenger-rights-air-revision_en.htm

³ <http://ec.europa.eu/transport/passenger-rights/en/mobile.html>