

EN

E-000963/2025

Answer given by Mr Tzitzikostas
on behalf of the European Commission
(22.4.2025)

1. The Commission considers that airlines should be encouraged to ensure accessible and efficient communication channels with passengers, especially when they face challenges, such as flight delays, cancellations, or baggage issues requiring a swift resolution.

2. In its Interpretative Guidelines¹ on Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 on air passenger rights², the Commission included guidance for air carriers regarding complaint handling³; while this Regulation requires air carriers to provide to passengers affected by flight disruptions individual information on related rights, it does not prescribe the communication tools, which are under the discretion of the airlines.

The responsibility of enforcement of air passenger rights lies with the national enforcement bodies (NEBs) that oversee air carriers' compliance with the pertinent provisions of the Regulation.

To improve the existing rules the Commission included in its proposal of 2023⁴, amending Regulation (EC) No 261/2004, specific provisions to strengthen enforcement mechanisms including obligations of the air carriers regarding complaint handling and information to passengers. The Commission proposed that information shall be provided also by electronic means, where technically possible, ensuring that the passenger can preserve any written correspondence on a durable medium. In addition, airlines are required to enable the necessary means for swift and effective communication with the passenger. These proposals are being considered by the Council and the European Parliament⁵.

3. The Commission is aware that access to airlines' customer service may be problematic including for NEBs; yet this matter is rarely the subject-matter of complaints by passengers.

¹ See revised Interpretative Guidelines on Regulation (EC) No 261/2004:

https://transport.ec.europa.eu/news-events/news/commission-publishes-new-guidelines-more-clarity-air-passenger-rights-2024-07-22_en

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2004/261/oj/eng>

³ See section 8.1.

⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52023PC0753>

see esp. Art. 14a for air passenger rights (p.20), similar rules have been proposed also for bus, ship and rail, see p. 27, 31 and 33.

⁵ You can follow the legislative procedure here: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/procedure/EN/2023_437 and here: [https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/en/procedure-file?reference=2023/0437\(COD\)](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/en/procedure-file?reference=2023/0437(COD))