

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003825/25
to the Commission
Kosma Złotowski (ECR)
(1 October 2025)

Subject: Ryanair to cease issuing paper boarding passes

From 12 November 2025, Ryanair will scrap paper boarding passes in favour of digital boarding passes via its app. It will no longer be possible to download and print traditional paper boarding passes — only digital versions will be accepted.

According to Ryanair's statement, if a passenger does not have an electronic ticket, they will be identified on the basis of their identity document, but only if they have checked in beforehand, which is only possible online. If they have not checked in, they will be denied boarding or charged additional fees. The requirement to have a smartphone and be able to use the app may lead to discrimination against people who are digitally excluded or have limited digital skills.

The airline's efforts to reduce paper consumption and its carbon footprint must not lead to discrimination and inequality in access to transport services.

1. Is the total elimination of paper boarding passes and the introduction of the requirement to have a smartphone and be able to use the carrier's app in keeping with the principles of non-discrimination enshrined in EU law, especially with regard to people who are digitally excluded or have limited digital skills?
2. In the light of EU consumer protection law and air passenger rights, in particular Regulation (EC) No 261/2004, can airlines impose such restrictions as a condition of travel?
3. Does the Commission envisage control mechanisms or sanctions against carriers who introduce such barriers to access to transport services in order to protect the rights of persons who are unable to comply with the requirement to use a mobile application?

Submitted: 1.10.2025

Answer given by Mr Tzitzikostas on behalf of the European Commission
(27 November 2025)

1. The policy of certain airlines to discontinue printed boarding passes in favour of smartphone-only boarding passes could raise issues of compatibility with relevant rules of the EU, notably as regards general consumer protection, accessibility and non-discrimination, depending on the way in which this policy is implemented.
2. Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 ⁽¹⁾ does not address the question raised by the Honourable Member. As regards the European Accessibility Act ⁽²⁾, this aims to ensure that all products and services in the EU are accessible to persons with disabilities, which could require that airlines offer reasonable accommodation for passengers who may not be able to use a smartphone for boarding. Banning printed boarding passes and making smartphone apps mandatory could also lead to discrimination against passengers who do not use smartphones, adversely affecting in particular older passengers, those with disabilities, or passengers from socioeconomic backgrounds where smartphone use is less common.
3. The Commission will monitor the situation and — within its competence — ensure that the relevant EU rules are duly respected.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2004/261/oj/eng>.

⁽²⁾ Directive (EU) 2019/882 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on the accessibility requirements for products and services.