



EU PASSENGER RIGHTS

The closure of a large part of European airspace after the eruption of the Icelandic volcano Eyjafjallajökull in April 2010 laid bare the problem of **inflexible transport networks** in the European Union - trains were unable to take over from airlines and assist stranded passengers across national borders because of incompatible equipment and procedures from one European country to another. The consequences for passengers, workers and families stranded in different corners of the world, without adequate care or information, were severe.

This air transport crisis underlined the need for a **mobility action plan** to help the EU cope better during similar crises, and for stronger **EU passenger rights legislation** - something Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament have long fought for - not only in air travel, but in all modes of transport. Not only in times of natural disaster, but also in everyday life.

EU action to strengthen passengers' rights in the past decade:

- legislation between 1984 & 2004 provided increasing protections for aviation passengers' rights¹
- rail² passengers are protected by a regulation adopted in December 2007
- legislation followed in 2010 to extend comparable rights to passengers on buses and coaches³ and in the maritime sector⁴.

The problems experienced by European citizens travelling by buses, coaches, boats and ships have been the subject of repeated complaints. The S&D Group has therefore played the leading role in advancing the adopted laws and building on the rights already gained by travellers under EU law and making sure that:

- they are broad enough to cover most European users;
- the liability of carriers is clearly defined and covers all damage, whether to life and limb or to luggage;
- people with reduced mobility are guaranteed full access and appropriate facilities;

¹ For a summary of the passengers' rights legislation in aviation, see http://www.europarl.europa.eu/parliament/expert/displayFtu.do?language=en&id=74&ftuId=FTU_4.6.6.html

² Regulation (EC) 1371/2007 of 23 October 2007 on rail passengers' rights and obligations

³ Regulation (EC) 181/2011 on rights for passengers travelling by bus and coach was published on 28 February 2011 and its provisions apply as from 1 March 2013

⁴ Regulation (EC) 1177/2010 of 24 November 2010 concerning rights of passengers when travelling by sea and inland waterway entered into force on December 2012

- passengers affected by cancellations and long delays will receive compensation, as well as immediate help such as meals, refreshments, accommodation and alternative transport.

The S&D Group fights for an extension of the rules protecting passengers & for full implementation of passenger rights.

With our support the EU is now the first integrated area of passenger rights for all modes of transport in the world.

Passengers are in the core of the S&D transport policy - everyone in the EU deserves:

- full compensation for delays, cancellations, or denied boarding (including charters and package tours);
- clear and complete booking information when buying tickets - both at home and across Europe and better access to information in a transparent form;
- access to all facilities for people with reduced mobility;
- more effective enforcement of the legislation;
- timely assistance through a European mobility action plan to be put in action during unforeseen crises or natural disasters;
- measurable progress to complete [Trans-European Networks](#), especially high-speed rail.