

Article – Coronavirus: facts about your passenger rights



A number of EU countries have introduced containment measures – such as travel restrictions, quarantine zones and lock-downs – to deal with the corona pandemic. These measures are having a major impact on the transport sector, so be sure you know your passenger rights.

On 18 March, the European Commission presented detailed [guidelines to guarantee that EU passenger rights are applied in a coherent way](#) and passengers are protected across all EU countries.

What if my flight is cancelled?

Airlines cancelling flights have the obligation – in all cases – to offer passengers the following options:

1. Refund
2. Re-routing at the earliest convenience
3. Re-routing at a later date, chosen by the passenger

If you choose re-routing at the earliest convenience, take into account there may be considerable delays given the limited number of flights that currently operate due to national measures to contain the virus.

Do I have the right to a hotel and meals in case of cancellation?

Air carriers have the obligation – without exception – to provide free meals, refreshments and hotel accommodation for passengers whose flight is cancelled

and have chosen re-routing at the earliest convenience.

Am I entitled to compensation?

Air passengers have the right to compensation if their flight is cancelled less than two weeks before the departure date, unless there are “extraordinary circumstances”. This exception may apply in the case of the corona outbreak, where the measures taken by public authorities prevent the normal activity of airlines.

What if I want to cancel my trip?

If you cancel your trip on your own initiative, the refund depends on the type of ticket you purchased, as specified in the terms and conditions. Consult the carrier for more details.

The European Union is the only place in the world where everyone travelling by plane, rail, ship and bus is protected by a full set of passenger rights.

[Find out what the European Parliament is doing to protect passenger rights across the EU.](#)

Avoiding empty flights

Airport rules oblige airlines to operate most of their take-off and landing slots, if they do not want to risk losing them.

On Thursday 26 March, Parliament will debate and vote on a Commission proposal to temporarily suspend [EU rules concerning airport slots](#), in order to stop so-called ghost flights.