

European Parliament and Council Clash Over Air Passenger Rights Reform

"This proposal would strip millions of travellers of fair compensation," warns Tom van Bokhoven of Flight-Delayed.com amid EU battle over passenger rights.

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The European Parliament and the European Council are locked in a major dispute over the future of EU Regulation 261, the cornerstone law protecting passengers in cases of flight delays and cancellations.

While the Parliament pushes for stronger, long-overdue protections, the Council's proposal would dramatically weaken them, marking what critics say could be the biggest rollback in passenger rights since the law's introduction in 2004.

Council proposal could strip millions of passengers of compensation

In June, the Council approved its draft [EU261 reform](#), prompting alarm among consumer groups and passenger-rights advocates. If adopted, the changes could disqualify up to 60% of passengers who currently qualify for compensation.

- Raising the delay threshold for compensation from 3 hours to 4–6 hours, depending on flight distance.
- Reducing compensation amounts, meaning passengers would receive less money even when airlines are clearly at fault.

"Europe's passengers deserve protection — not punishment," says Tom van Bokhoven, the CEO of Flight-Delayed.com and AirRefund.com, websites helping passengers claim compensation for their disrupted flights. "This proposal would strip millions of travellers of their right to fair compensation — a clear win for the airlines, and a huge loss for the people who already pay the

price when flights go wrong.”

European Parliament fights back in defense of passenger rights

The European Parliament has opposed the Council’s proposal since its announcement. Now, after months of preparation, the Parliament has proposed its own plan that aims to modernise and strengthen EU261 rather than weaken it. Its draft keeps the 3-hour rule intact and even raises minimum compensation for short flights to €300, with longer flights maintaining the €400 and €600 tiers.

Other key measures include:

- Indexing compensation to inflation every three years.
- Banning hidden fees for carry-on luggage, name corrections, and check-in.
- Guaranteeing refunds of airport taxes when passengers cancel their own flight.
- Preventing airlines from cancelling return flights if the outbound leg was missed.
- Creating a central EU list of “[extraordinary circumstances](#)” to ensure fair and consistent decisions.

“The Parliament is doing what the Council won’t — standing up for passengers,” adds van Bokhoven. “Keeping the 3-hour rule and adjusting compensation for inflation are simple, fair, and logical steps. Air travel has changed dramatically since 2005 — but the rules protecting passengers haven’t.”

What happens next

Negotiations between the Parliament and the Council are set to begin on 15 October, under the Danish EU presidency. Lawmakers will have four months to find common ground.

The outcome will determine whether the EU continues to set the global standard for air passenger rights — or takes a step backwards.

“All eyes are now on Brussels to see which side prevails,” says van Bokhoven. “Will Europe choose to protect passengers, or airlines?”

Over 80,000 Europeans join petition to defend passenger rights

Public support for maintaining strong protections is growing rapidly. More than 80,000

Europeans have already signed the "[Say No to worse passenger rights](#)" petition, calling on EU leaders to reject any rollback of existing rules.

As one signatory, Steven, put it:

"Weakening these rights doesn't just inconvenience travellers — it encourages corporate neglect and leaves millions of consumers vulnerable. Keep the 3-hour rule. Keep compensation fair. Keep passengers protected."

About Flight-Delayed.com and AirRefund.com

Since 2010, Yource B.V. — parent company of Flight-Delayed.com, AirRefund.com, and others — has helped over two million passengers fight for their rights in cases of delayed, cancelled, and overbooked flights. Operating in more than ten countries, the company has won 98% of its court cases and works entirely on a no win, no fee basis.

The Flight-Delayed.com service is available in 10+ countries under local domains, including Vlucht-Vertraagd.nl, Vol-Retarde.fr, Flug-Verspaetet.de, Volo-In-Ritardo.it, and others.

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