Passenger rights in the context of multimodal journeys

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The Committee on Transport and Tourism adopted the report by Jens GIESEKE (EPP, DE) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on passenger rights in the context of multimodal journeys.

The Commission's proposal aims to strengthen the rights of passengers on multimodal journeys, which is an important step towards a more transparent, fair and enforceable framework for both passengers and carriers, as well as a prerequisite for more passengers to opt for multimodal journeys.

The competent committee recommended that the European Parliament adopt its position at first reading by amending the Commission's proposal as follows.

Communication of travel information to passengers

Prior to purchase, carriers and intermediaries offering transport contracts on behalf of one or more carriers for the purpose of a multimodal journey shall provide the passenger with general guidance on average **connecting times** between the different types of transport services offered in a multimodal journey. Such guidance shall also take into account the requirements of passengers with disabilities and reduced mobility.

The carriers and intermediaries concerned must establish their offer of single multimodal contracts or combined multimodal tickets taking into account the connection times offered by the multimodal platform managers.

Before the multimodal journey, carriers and intermediaries offering transport contracts on behalf of one or more carriers must provide the passenger with the following information:

(a) the general conditions applicable to the contract, including rights to reimbursement, re-routing and compensation in the event of disruptions;

(b) disruptions and delays to the multimodal journey, planned and in real time;

(c) the procedures for filing complaints.

During the journey, passengers must receive information about disruptions and delays (planned and in real time) and related rights to reimbursement, re-routing and compensation.

Common rules on vouchers

Vouchers shall correspond **at least to the amount** of the refund to which the traveller is entitled instead of a refund. They shall have a validity period of a maximum of 12 months from the day a traveller accepts a voucher and be extended once for up to 12 months subject to the explicit agreement of both parties in written form. The traveller may request a full or partial refund of the unused voucher, at any time before or after its expiration. The refund must be made within 30 days. The carrier or intermediary must clearly inform the traveller of their rights, the value of the voucher and the amount of the refund.

Support for single multimodal contracts

The report specifies that in the event of a delay, transport service cancellation, or disruption, the operating carrier shall promptly inform passengers of the situation, including the estimated departure and arrival times of the service or any replacement service, as soon as the information becomes available. Intermediaries shall also provide that information to passengers without delay upon receiving it.

Where the intermediary or carrier sells a combined multimodal ticket or a separate multimodal ticket, it must display the information on passenger rights explicitly and clearly on the tickets or electronically in a manner that allows the passenger to reproduce the information for future reference.

Common form for reimbursement and compensation requests

Carriers or intermediaries shall provide the passenger with the common form as soon as the passenger is entitled to a refund or compensation under this Regulation. They shall provide passengers with an acknowledgement of receipt, regardless of the means of communication used. Upon request, passengers shall also be provided with a complete copy of the communication sent to carriers and intermediaries, including the date and key information allowing consumers to assert their rights under this Regulation.

Assistance to persons with disabilities or reduced mobility

Carriers and intermediaries shall provide at the time of the booking of the transport contract the possibility of **notifying the need for assistance** to persons with disabilities or reduced mobility. Single points of contact for assistance at multimodal passenger transport platforms must provide information on accessibility.

Complaints

Passengers may submit a complaint to carriers or intermediaries regarding their respective fields of responsibility through the complaint handling mechanisms. Such a complaint shall be submitted within **one year** of the date on which the journey was performed or was scheduled to be performed. Within seven working days of receiving the complaint, the addressee shall confirm to the passenger that it has received the complaint. Within two months of receiving the complaint, the addressee shall provide a reasoned answer to the passenger. Where the addressee does not provide that full answer within that **two-month period**, it shall be deemed to have accepted the passenger's claims.

Where the carrier invokes **extraordinary circumstances**, it shall inform the passenger in its answer of the specific circumstances responsible for the cancellation or delay. The air carrier shall also demonstrate that it took all reasonable measures to avoid the cancellation or delay.

The **burden of proof** that the passenger was provided with the information shall lie with the carrier or intermediary that sold the combined multimodal ticket.

Details of the complaint-handling procedure shall be accessible to the public, including to persons with disabilities and to persons with reduced mobility.

The Commission may, where appropriate, adopt guidelines with a view to promoting uniform application and, where necessary, propose amendments to this Regulation.