

More rights for passengers travelling by bus and coach

The Commission welcomes today's agreement reached by the European Parliament and Council, after a successful conciliation procedure, on the rights of passengers travelling by bus and coach. A set of basic rights including non-discrimination, adequate information to passengers, in particular those with reduced mobility will apply to all passengers. Additional rights (assistance, accommodation, compensation, etc.) will be granted to passengers travelling long distances (more than 250 km).

Commission Vice-President Siim Kallas, responsible for transport, said: *"These new passenger rights for bus and coaches will drive up quality service and allow people to travel with much greater peace of mind. This deal also puts in place the last piece of the jigsaw. Now there is a safety net of passenger rights in place for all transport modes, to protect citizens wherever and however they travel. These new rights are good news for passengers and good news for quality service providers across the EU".*

The Regulation was proposed by the Commission in December 2008, together with the Regulation on the rights of passengers travelling by sea and inland waterways recently signed in November. With the adoption of this new regulation, passengers will be protected by specific and sector-adapted rights when travelling by air, on water and on land, both on rail and on road.

Hence, passengers travelling by bus and by coach will enjoy the same rights wherever they travel in the European Union. In particular, people with a disability or reduced mobility will be protected when travelling by bus or coach. The new rules are also expected to increase the quality and competitiveness of the EU transport industry by creating a level playing field for operators in the bus and coach sector.

The passenger rights

The new rights applicable to long distance services (i.e. of more than 250 km) include amongst others:

- protection of passengers in case of death, injury, loss or damage caused by road accidents, particularly with regard to immediate practical needs in case of accident (with the possibility to offer up to two nights' hotel accommodation, for a total amount of €80 per night),
- specific assistance free of charge for disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility both at terminals and on board, and, where necessary, transport free of charge for accompanying people,

- guarantee of reimbursement or rerouting in situations of overbooking or in case of cancellation or following a delay of more than 120 minutes from the estimated time of departure,
- adequate assistance (snacks, meals and refreshments) in situations of cancellation or following a delay of more than 90 minutes in the case of a journey of more than three hours,
- more particularly, obligation in those cases, for carriers, if necessary, to provide two nights' hotel accommodation to stranded passengers, for a maximum amount of €80 per night, except in case of severe weather conditions and major natural disasters,
- compensation of 50% of the ticket price following more than 120 minutes' delay from the estimated time of departure, cancellation of a journey and if the carrier fails to offer the passenger either rerouting or reimbursement.

Additionally, the following rights will be applicable to all services (beyond or below 250 km):

- non-discrimination against passengers based - directly or indirectly - on nationality,
- non-discriminatory treatment of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility as well financial compensation for loss or damage of their mobility equipment in case of accident,
- minimum rules on travel information for all passengers before and during their journey as well as general information about their rights in terminals and online,
- a complaint handling mechanisms by carriers available to all passengers,
- independent national bodies in each Member State with the mandate to enforce the Regulation and where appropriate to take penalties.

Next steps

Conciliation procedures take place when the European Parliament and the Council have been unable to reach full agreement after two readings on a Commission legislative proposal. The agreement reached by the conciliation committee will now need to be endorsed by a plenary session of the Parliament (in February) and by the Council.

More information :

To find out more about passenger rights in all modes of transport, visit

<http://ec.europa.eu/transport/passenger-rights/>