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Press release | 21.01.2026

European Parliament stands up for air passenger rights against Council's push to weaken them

Today, MEPs voted on an update of the Air passenger rights regulation, rejecting the Council's attempt to weaken air travellers' rights in favour of the corporate interests of major airlines. The Parliament refused to water down already consolidated rights, including compensation for delays of three hours or more and pushed for free cabin luggage, as well as strengthened protections for vulnerable travellers.

Vicent Marzà MEP, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur in the leading transport committee, comments:

"Today the European Parliament chose to stand with its citizens, not with corporate greed. This vote allows air passenger rights to move forward despite the Council's attempt to roll them back. The Greens/EFA Group secured real improvements for families, people with reduced mobility and passengers more broadly, especially on compensation, hand luggage, and access to information and assistance during travel.

"Thanks to cross-party unity, Parliament is speaking with one clear voice in defence of passengers. Now, we must keep up the pressure on national governments in the Council to deliver a strong final outcome for travellers."

Virginijus Sinkevicius MEP, Greens/EFA First Vice-Chair of the transport committee comments:

"When people board a plane, they are not asking for special treatment. They expect fairness and predictability. To arrive within a reasonable time. To sit next to their child without paying extra. To carry a small bag without hidden fees. And for those with disabilities, to receive proper assistance from start to finish.

"These are not radical demands. They are basic expectations. Weakening passengers' rights would mean asking people to accept less than they already have today, and that is not acceptable. Parliament is ready to negotiate constructively, but we will not step back from defending citizens against a race to the bottom in air travel."

More:

This vote will bring negotiations into a Conciliation procedure (final legislative step) with the Council for the first time in 12 years. Since Parliament made proposals on air passenger rights reform in 2014, the progress to update these rules has stalled for 11 years in Council.

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Responsible MEPs



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