ЕВРОПЕЙСКИ ПАРЛАМЕНТ   PARLAMENTO EUROPEO   EVROPSKÝ PARLAMENT   EUROPA-PARLAMENTET
EUROPÄISCHES PARLAMENT   EUROOPA PARLAMENT   ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΟΥΛΙΟ   EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
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Passenger rights: "We are determined to close the loopholes in the present legislation"

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Article

Passenger rights are a great way to protect people travelling through Europe, but current legislation is far from perfect. Parliament is looking how to beef up rules on anything from compensation to helping customers from bankrupt airlines. Brian Simpson, chair of the EP's transport committee, discussed in a Facebook chat on 27 February what they would focus on: "We will be determined to close loopholes in the present legislation. The enforcement bodies have not been doing their job properly."

Compensation

Many Facebook fans asked how the compensation rules for cancellations and delays could be improved. Mr Simpson said this could be achieved by closing the loopholes that exist at the moment. He added he believed that airlines have been using a clause known as force majeure, or unforeseen circumstances, to avoid paying compensation.

Liquid ban

People also raised questions about when the liquid ban, which limits how much liquid air passengers can take with them on flights, would be ended. Mr Simpson, a British member of the S&D group, replied: "We have developed machines that can detect explosives in liquids, which is why I'm confident we can start lifting the ban next January."

Buying tickets online

Mr Simpson admitted there was a problem with buying tickets for a flight online: "When you book online the first price you see should be the final price. Problem is, airlines show the cheapest flight and then add the bits on as you go through the process. What I would like to see is regulations that make the highest possible price be the first price you see!"

Bankrupt airlines

One of the questions was about what Parliament could do for passengers stranded with no help of compensation due to the airline going bankrupt. Mr Simpson said: "The EP has called for a fund to be set up administered by the Commission to repatriate EU citizens in the case of airline bankruptcies. That fund could be paid for by adding just one euro to every airline ticket, but unfortunately the Council of Ministers and airlines are not fans of this idea."

Body scanners

The chair of the transport committee also believed there were good reasons for using body scanners at airports. "I oppose X ray body scanners because of the risk to health that these machines could pose. I have no problems with other scanners used," Mr Simpson said. "The issue is security. Whether we like it or not, terrorists still see aviation as a target. We have to remain vigilant and the airport is the last line of defence. It is important that the various national intelligence agencies do their work in preventing terrorist attacks. Airport machines are just one tool in the box for keeping aviation safe, but they are needed in the current climate."

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