

European travel industry agrees on EU passenger rights rules

ECTAA, ETOA and IRU adopt a common position for more practical and adapted passenger rights in EU bus and coach transport services.

Brussels – ECTAA, ETOA and the IRU*, the three associations representing European tour operators, travel agents and bus and coach operators, have adopted [a common position](#) emphasising the paramount importance of balanced EU rules, to reflect the concerns of both operators and customers.

This common position was agreed on the eve of a Council and Parliamentary debate on the recent EU Commission proposal on the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport in the European Union.

The European travel industry calls upon the European institutions to carry out a thorough impact assessment of the overall cost implications resulting from the implementation of the proposed rules, in order to guarantee an informed debate and decision-making.

Akis Kelepeshis, President of ECTAA, said: “We support the proposal that will introduce similar rights for bus and coach passengers to those granted in other modes of transport. However, the foreseen liability regime would have a disproportionate negative impact in particular on small and medium sized coach tour operators, who would have to face ruinous insurance costs and financial exposure”.

Tom Jenkins, ETOA's Executive Director, said: “Of course we want safety. Of course we want our clients to be compensated in the unlikely event of an accident. But Europe's competitiveness as a destination is dependent on having attractive services. Nothing is more unattractive than an over-regulated industry. The imposition of huge administrative and financial burdens on small coach operators is just such an over-regulation.”

Graham Smith, IRU's Vice President, said: “The European bus and coach industry can only welcome feasible rules, adapted to the industry structure. We call upon the EU legislator to take the necessary time to make a proper impact assessment and clarify the wording, to avoid potential disastrous consequences for both operators and the customers themselves.”

* **The European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Associations** (ECTAA, www.ectaa.org) is the voice of European travel agents and tour operators. It counts travel agents' and tour operators' associations of 26 EU Member States, of two EU candidate countries, as well as Switzerland and Norway.

The **European Tour Operators Association** (ETOA, www.etoa.org) offers European level representation for the interests of inbound and intra-European tour operators, wholesalers and their European suppliers. Today, ETOA is the voice of European Inbound Travel, with over 400 Members.

The **International Road Transport Union** (IRU, www.iru.org), through its national associations, represents the entire road transport industry world-wide. It speaks for the operators of coaches, taxis and trucks, from large transport fleets to driver-owners.

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