

Compensation for delays

IMPLEMENTING A FAIR AMENDMENT PROPOSAL

Passengers are entitled to substantial compensation for delays and flight cancellations. The basis is the EU Air Passenger Rights Regulation of 2005. In the Lufthansa Group, we are improving transparency and procedures for affected customers. Simultaneously, we are appealing to government to tackle an overdue reform.

Inform passengers better about their claims

Consumer advocates criticise that air travellers are insufficiently informed about their rights and entitlements. The Lufthansa Group takes this criticism seriously and wants to improve. If a flight is delayed, we inform our passengers in particular via SMS, email or app and point out the entitlements. In 2018, the processing of incoming inquiries took too long. That’s why we have hired several hundred new employees to reduce the response time to a few days.

Reform the regulation

The lump-sum compensation payments are substantial: In case of a delay of more than three hours – unless an “extraordinary event” has occurred – airlines have to pay travellers on short journeys 250 euros, 400 euros on routes between 1,500 and 3,000 kilometres and 600 euros on long-

haul routes. In addition to this, meals and possibly overnight accommodation are provided as well. In many cases this exceeds the ticket price, which the EU Commission now also considers disproportionate.

In addition, there is the question about adequate clarity and finality of the Air Passenger Rights Regulation. Again and again, courts had to clarify which events are considered “extraordinary” and therefore not subject to compensation. The legal uncertainty is great, especially since the regulation is interpreted in contradictory terms.

Years ago, the European Commission presented a balanced draft amendment, which the German government declared to support. This draft should be quickly implemented.

COMPENSATION SUMS SUBSTANTIALLY EXCEED TICKET PRICES

On routes up to 1,500 kilometres, the average one-way ticket price is 125 euros. The flat-rate compensation at 250 euros is twice as high, unless there are “extraordinary circumstances”. Unlike the train: With a delay of 60 to 119 minutes, they must refund 25 percent of the fare, for a delay from 120 minutes, it is 50 percent.

