BREXIT: 28% OF EUROPEAN AIR PASSENGERS DEPRIVED FROM COMPENSATIONS

News / Airlines



Brexit is almost a year away, but it's still unclear how the prospective withdrawal will affect British flyers. The current air passenger law protects air travellers against cancelled, delayed and overbooked flights but with Britain set to leave the union in March 2019, such rights will no longer apply to UK citizens. Just like any other EU law, the regalement will lose its powers leaving 28% of European passengers without a chance for flight compensations.

The British airlines will quit air passenger rights agreement as well as lose all aviation rights set under internal EU aviation market policy in 1990. The intra EU market was established to ensure the freedom of air transport setting rights to fly to, from and within any country in the bloc, yet Britain now has less than two years to renegotiate access or come up with an alternative system. Yet instead of waiting for the authorities' decision, some British carriers have started to abort the sinking ship by taking individual action.

EasyJet has already established its new headquarters in Austria, while Ryanair applied for a UK aviation licence which would allow it to continue flights in the UK regardless of the aviation agreement that will be reached in a Brexit deal. Others are updating their websites to warn the future flyers about the possible changes for post-Brexit bookings – in case of a

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no deal, there might be a chance of massive cancellations, as UK carriers will no longer have free access to operate commercial services throughout the EU.

Airlines are not the only businesses to suffer from the Brexit deal. Dutch bank Radobank has found that quitting the 30 year old agreements might cost the economy up to £400bn. However, the exact figures are hard to guess, as it is still unclear if British airlines will save their rights to fly to and from the EU.

“The liberal aviation market we have today is one of the main factors that led to the lucrative development of LCCs such as EasyJet or Ryanair. Both sides will have to come to new agreements and UK carriers are at risk of losing free access to their markets. However, it’s not only airlines that should take action before it’s too late. UK citizens have no time left to hesitate over flight compensations and should start fighting for it as soon as possible. It’s only a year until present and past flight disruptions will lose its right to compensations ranging from £221 to £532,” says Marius Stonkus, the CEO of global flight compensation company SKYCOP.

According to the local laws, the UK citizens have 6 years to bring action against flight disruptions. This means that 2018 is the last chance to get up to £532 flight compensations for all cancelled, delayed or overbooked flights that happened since 2012. “According to our calculations, the total amount of rightful flight compensations in Britain per year reaches about £879 million. With success rate of all claims taken straight to the carrier reaching only 5% there might be a sum of £5 billion unpaid rightful flight compensations waiting to be claimed. And if the UK government won’t choose to introduce equivalent domestic protections, British flyers might very soon lose the chance to get their money back,” says M. Stonkus.

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