

# BEUC'S TRILOGUE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE MULTIMODAL PASSENGER RIGHTS INITIATIVE

## Why it matters to consumers

Consumers combining different transport modes do not currently benefit from harmonised rights at EU level, making them completely dependent on operators' terms and conditions. The European Commission proposed creating a framework in 2023 and both the European Parliament (EP) and the EU Council have reached their positions. It is now essential that the final compromise delivers a high-level of consumer protection.

This two-pager sums up BEUC's main recommendations for trilogue negotiations. For more information see our [position paper](#).

TOPICS	BEUC'S RECOMMENDATIONS
THE <b>SCOPE</b> NEEDS EXTENDING	<p>Multimodal <b>journeys that are part of a package</b> should be included in the application of new rules (contrary to what was proposed by the <b>Council</b>).</p> <p>BEUC opposes introducing <b>national exemptions</b> applicable in sectoral legislation on passenger rights (e.g. for buses or trains).</p>
KEY <b>DEFINITIONS</b> NEED CLARIFYING	<p>The distinction between "<b>combined multimodal tickets</b>" (i.e. combined on a carrier or intermediary's own initiative) and "<b>separate multimodal tickets</b>" (i.e. combined by passengers themselves, bought through separate payments) needs to be clarified (<b>EP</b>).</p>
<b>COMBINED MULTIMODAL CONTRACTS</b> LACK PROTECTION	<p>Combined multimodal contracts constitute around 95% of all multimodal tickets sold on the market. <b>Both the EP and Council fail to include minimum rights</b> like re-routing or care and assistance if something goes wrong for consumers buying these tickets.</p> <p>Instead, refund and compensation rights will only be triggered if a carrier or intermediary do not inform them about this lack of protection. In this case, consumers should also be entitled to rerouting (<b>EP</b>).</p>
<b>SINGLE MULTIMODAL CONTRACTS'</b> TERMS NEED STRENGTHENING	<p><b>1. ASSISTANCE</b></p> <p>Assistance should remain free and unlimited. We support granting assistance to passengers after a <b>60-minute delay (EP)</b> but would clarify that this delay is applicable at <b>any point</b> during the journey. Passengers with special needs should receive specific attention (<b>EP</b>). In case of disruption, passengers should receive information about the situation or any replacement services from carriers and intermediaries (<b>EP</b>).</p> <p><b>2. REFUNDS</b></p> <p>Refunds should be paid within <b>14 days, free of charge (Commission and EP)</b> and the same deadline should be applied to refunding <b>vouchers</b>.</p> <p>If a refund concerns a ticket bought through an intermediary, it should also include the intermediary's fees. Intermediaries should keep consumers and carriers informed about the refund status and share the money transfer references (<b>EP</b>). They should also be liable if something goes wrong (<b>EP</b>). Policymakers should also create refund rules for other types of multimodal tickets (i.e. "combined" and "separate" tickets).</p> <p><b>3. RE-ROUTING</b></p> <p>BEUC supports requiring carriers to make "<b>all reasonable efforts</b>" to avoid additional connections (<b>EP</b>). The <b>contracting carrier</b> should remain fully liable towards consumers even if they commission another one to perform refund and re-routing obligations. (<b>Council</b>).</p>

## VOUCHERS CALL FOR CLEAR RULES

BEUC supports introducing clear rules on vouchers' issuance and use **(EP)**. They must remain **voluntary** and **expressly accepted** by consumers. If a consumer does not use up its voucher, the issuing entity should **proactively** take care of the refund.

## POLICYMAKERS SHOULD INTRODUCE A STANDARDISED REFUND AND COMPENSATION FORM

Passengers should proactively receive a **standard refund/compensation form** with a valid email address to send it back to **(EP)**. They should also receive an **acknowledgement of receipt** from carriers or intermediaries.

Carriers or intermediaries responsible for refunds should **ask passengers for clarification** if their refund/compensation request lacks preciseness **(EP)**.

## COMPLAINTS MUST BE EASY FOR CONSUMERS TO PROCESS

BEUC supports the **EP's position**:

- Carriers or intermediaries should have a **complaint-handling mechanism** for all types of multimodal tickets. They should also provide passengers with **complaint-handling information in case of disruption**, including the detailed procedure and timeline to file a complaint.
- A passenger's complaint should be accepted **after two months** if a carrier or intermediary does not respond to it.
- If carriers claim extraordinary circumstances prevent passengers from receiving compensation, they should prove that they took **all reasonable measures to prevent the disruption** in their response to consumers.

## TRAVEL INFORMATION MUST BE CLEAR AND COMPLETE

Carriers and intermediaries must provide consumers with free of charge information about **average connecting times**, and any disruptions and delays planned and in real-time **(EP)**. They should also inform consumers about specific **schedule for all transport services** which are part of the multimodal journey **(Council)**.

## CONSUMERS NEED ACCESS TO PROPER ENFORCEMENT AND REDRESS

To make National Enforcement Bodies' (NEBs) work more effective, we recommend:

- That passengers can complain to any **NEB (EP)**
- That NEBs must have **oversight** on both carriers and intermediaries' websites and apps.
- Giving the Commission a **stronger interpretational role** in case of divergences, including the possibility to adopt guidelines **(EP)**.

## POLICYMAKERS SHOULD INTRODUCE A REVIEW CLAUSE FOR COMBINED TICKETS

Policymakers should **review the rules on liability for combined tickets** within one year of any future ticketing proposal, as the current rules fail to adequately protect consumers for 95% of all multimodal journeys **(EP)**.