

Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) network action on airlines' COVID-19 related cancellation practices

Implementation table submitted by Austrian Airlines AG

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[NB: The Commission and CPC authorities may decide to publish this implementation table]

In the context of the CPC network's coordinated investigation into airlines' COVID-19 related cancellation practices, 16 major airlines operating on the EU market have made wide-ranging commitments to clear their reimbursement backlogs, offer cash reimbursement for unused vouchers that had been pushed on consumers in the early stages of the pandemic and better inform consumers about their cancellation-related passenger rights.¹

This implementation table outlines the commitments made by Austrian Airlines AG, the measures taken by Austrian Airlines AG to implement its commitments, the state of play of implementation as well as any issues encountered by Austrian Airlines AG that still need to be resolved in order to achieve full implementation.

Commitment	Measures taken by the airline	State of play of implementation / currently remaining issues
<p>1. Clear remaining reimbursement backlog by 1 September 2021</p> <p><i>Which measures did the airline take to clear the backlog of pending reimbursement requests by 1</i></p>	<p><i>As stated before, Austrian Airlines (“Austrian”) has been compliant with the Reg. (EC) 261/2004 with regard to reimbursements to customers. We can confirm that on and after 01 September 2021 there has not been a backlog in reimbursements.</i></p>	

¹ [Airlines: reimbursement after flight cancellations \(europa.eu\)](https://european-council.europa.eu/media/en/press-communications/inline-photos/2021/09/10/P11123_en.pdf)

<p><i>September 2021? And what was achieved concretely?</i></p> <p><i>In case of remaining problems: Which measures did the airline take to address those problems and clear the remaining backlog of pending reimbursement requests? What is the expected timeline for full implementation?</i></p>		
<p>2. Refund passengers within 7 days as required under EU law (at the latest from 1 September 2021 onwards, since there should be no more reimbursement backlog from that date on [see point 1 above])</p> <p><i>Which measure has the airline put in place to allow all passengers to be refunded within 7 days as required under EU law? When was this achieved concretely?</i></p> <p><i>What is the current average time of reimbursement (in case it is above 7 days)? In case of remaining problems: Which measures has the airline put in place to tackle those problems and achieve the target of refunding passengers within 7 days</i></p>	<p><u>See above. Austrian is fully compliant with the 7-day limit of the Reg. (EC) 261/2004.</u></p>	

<p><i>and what is the expected timeline for achieving that target?</i></p>		
<p>3. Provide clear information to consumers about their passenger rights in the event of a flight cancellation by the airline</p> <p><i>How does the airline ensure such clear information in its communication to consumers about their cancellation-related passenger rights? (You may wish to detail by channel of communication, e.g. website, emails sent to passengers notifying them about a cancellation, flyers given at the airport, call centre routines, chatbot, ..)</i></p>	<p>As provided to the CPC, Austrian has improved its communication to customers on all channels and is continually reviewing information provided to passengers.</p>	
<p>4. Present the different options the passenger has in the event of a flight cancellation by the airline (rerouting, refund in money and – if offered by the airline – refund in a voucher), with equal prominence on the websites, e-mails and other communication to passengers</p>	<p>As provided to the CPC, Austrian is still compliant with respect to this item.</p>	

<p><i>How does the airline ensure that options that a passenger has when their flight is cancelled are presented with equal prominence?</i></p>		
<p>5. Clearly distinguish in the in the communication to passengers flight cancellations by the airline (and the passenger’s ensuing statutory rights) from flight cancellations by the passenger (and possible contractual rights that the passenger may have in those cases under the airline’s terms and conditions of carriage)</p> <p><i>How does the airline ensure that in its communication to passengers there is a clear distinction between flight cancellations by the airline (and the passenger’s resulting statutory rights) from cancellations by the passenger (and possible contractual rights that the passenger may have in those cases under the airline’s terms and conditions of carriage)?</i></p>	<p><i>As provided to the CPC, Austrian has improved its communication to customers on all channels and is continually reviewing information provided to passengers.</i></p>	

<p>6. Offering reimbursement in money to passengers holding unused vouchers that had been pushed on them (i.e. issued without the passenger having an effective choice to opt for reimbursement in money instead).</p> <p>NB: The CPC Network considers that vouchers that were issued by Austrian Airlines between 01/03/2020 and 28/02/2021 had been pushed on passengers. Austrian Airlines commitment to offering reimbursement in money therefore concerns all unused vouchers that were issued by Austrian Airlines between 01/03/2020 and 28/02/2021.</p> <p><i>How did the airline inform the holders of unused vouchers issued during the specified period?</i></p>	<p>As committed to the CPC, Austrian has informed all passengers holding outstanding flight value voucher.</p>	

<p><i>Has this information campaign been completed and which results had been achieved by the end of 2021?</i></p> <p><i>In case the airline encountered any problems: Which measures has the airline put in place to tackle those problems?</i></p>		
<p>7. Inform passengers about the possibility of requesting a refund directly from the airline and any conditions for requesting a direct refund on their websites, for passengers who booked their flights through an intermediary and are experiencing difficulties</p> <p><i>How does the airline assist passengers having difficulties obtaining a refund from the intermediary they bought their ticket from? How this is reflected in the relevant communication to passengers? (Please break down by channel of communication, e.g. website, routines for call centre, instructions in self-management tools, chatbot, ...)</i></p>	<p><i>As discussed before, Austrian will reimburse passengers who are entitled for a refund, regardless of how they purchased their ticket.</i></p> <p><i>As requests are handled on a case-by-case basis, there is no default routine to handle intermediary bookings in a specific way. If a customer is eligible for a refund, he will be reimbursed.</i></p>	

