

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2573/07
by Íñigo Méndez de Vigo (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Airline practices contrary to Regulation (EC) No 261/2004

On 7 June and 2 October 2006, I submitted Questions E-2646/06 and E-4349/06 respectively on behaviour by the airline Iberia which possibly infringed Regulation (EC) No 261/2004¹. On 4 August and 23 November 2006 respectively, the Commission replied that it would wait for the report being drawn up by experts before taking any steps.

Appendix B of the report of February 2007 drawn up by Steer Davies Gleave for the Commission on the application of Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 notes a significant increase in passengers' complaints to the Spanish Civil Aviation Directorate-General – from 8396 in 2005 to 25 755 in 2006.

What explanation has the Spanish authorities given for this 206% increase? Does the Commission think that this increase might be due to Iberia's habitual practice of presenting cancellations as delays, so as to avoid having to pay compensation? If so, what does the Commission intend to do to put an end to this practice, which is an obvious legal fraud?

¹ OJ L 46, 17.2.2004, p. 1.