

Question for written answer E-003369/2017/rev.1
to the Commission
Rule 130
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Subject: Protecting the rights of European consumers in the event of denied boarding

European carriers are still engaging in 'overbooking', which is a practice consisting of selling more tickets than seats available for a given flight. Airlines argue that they want to minimise the number of so-called 'empty seats'. Pursuant to EU rules, if a passenger is 'denied boarding', the carrier should rebook the flight for the next possible one, provide care while the passenger waits for the substitute flight and pay him/her compensation.

Usually, airlines first look for volunteers, who surrender their reservations in exchange for these benefits. Nevertheless, where there are no volunteers, they use their own criteria to pick passengers who are to be left at the airport. Therefore, negative consequences of unreasonable ticketing policies are borne almost solely by passengers, who have legally bought their tickets (often paying a lot for them) that allow them to travel on a given flight.

Will the Commission aim to drastically curb this practice or prohibit it completely? Will the Commission take any action with a view to raising awareness among European consumers with regard to their rights in the event of denied boarding?