Subject: Flight cancellations and refunds

As air travel in the EU has decreased by up to 90%, more and more consumers are demanding refunds. However, some airlines are attempting to issue vouchers instead, pressurising consumers into choosing vouchers over refunds. These airlines are constantly changing their policies and invoke lengthy waiting times to defer refunds. Some are even making it extremely difficult for consumers to contact them.

Under the EU guidelines on the COVID-19 crisis, passengers should be able to choose either a voucher or a refund. Nonetheless, several EU countries are persistently pushing for the already failing airline-passenger compensation schemes to be relaxed.

While recognising the important role of the airline industry in the economy, we must also recognise that EU citizens should not suffer further financial losses if they are denied refunds.

1. Does the Commission intend to set up an EU emergency travel fund to support airlines and guarantee consumer rights?

2. How will it ensure the rights of those citizens who want a refund but are forced to give up their rights indirectly because of confusing protocols and unnecessary obstacles?

3. How can consumers protect their rights if an airline or travel agency goes bankrupt?