

**Priority question for written answer P-001940/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Isabel García Muñoz (S&D)

Subject: Refunds for vouchers issued for flight cancellations during COVID-19

COVID-19 and the restrictions on movement resulted in thousands of flights being cancelled. Airlines and travel organisers were faced with an abrupt liquidity crisis and put refunds on hold, giving passengers only limited information and in some cases offering vouchers as the only option available to them.

The Commission issued recommendations on the use of vouchers in order to make them a more attractive option for travellers and ultimately guarantee travellers the right to a refund. It also confirmed that if a voucher were not redeemed by the end of its validity period, it should be automatically reimbursed.

In a 2021 Special Report, the Court of Auditors concluded that passengers were not well informed about their rights, with the associated risk that they could lose money. In actual fact, many citizens have been refused refunds on the grounds that their vouchers have expired.

1. Can the Commission confirm that companies must issue an automatic refund even if a voucher has expired?
2. Does it know what percentage of vouchers have not been refunded?
3. Does it intend to take legislative action in the future to mitigate liquidity problems faced by companies and ensure that passengers are refunded in critical cases such as the pandemic?

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