

Courtesy translation

As you know, the crisis linked to the COVID-19 pandemic is hitting airlines very hard : their traffic is currently more than 90% lower than last year. Many of them are in an extremely fragile situation and, as it is also a connectivity issue for our territories, we must take all the necessary steps to enable them to cope with this situation.

In this respect, France would like, as a matter of urgency, an adjustment of the airlines reimbursement obligation established in European Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 so as to enable them to make these reimbursements in priority in the form of credit notes (or « vouchers ») repayable after a period of several months to be defined (e.g. 12 months). Such an adjustment of the regulation would provide a concrete response to the current cash-flow constraints of airlines while establishing common criteria at European level to ensure a harmonised and adequate level of consumer protection.

In France, it has already been carried out for the travel agency sector since, following the European Commission's information of 19 March on the Package Travel Directive, the Government issued a regulation on 25 March providing for the possibility for such agencies to offer credit notes valid for 18 months and refundable in the event of non-use. However, this regulation does not apply to flight tickets alone, which are covered by Regulation (EC) No 261/2004.

A revision of this European regulation is therefore also necessary as a measure to ensure fair treatment of all economic actors contributing to mobility and tourism development.