

Moving in Europe

PROTECTING CITIZENS' RIGHTS: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EU PASSENGERS



This document is one of the activities promoted by the European project “Joint Citizen Action for a Stronger, Citizen-Friendly Union” (JoiEU), which focuses on coordinating debate and action in 13 European countries on a set of issues focused on citizen participation and strengthening the citizen base of a deeper European integration. The project is being delivered by a Group of partners led by ProInfo.

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For further information:

- <http://www.activecitizenship.net/civic-activism/projects/148-joint-citizen-action-for-a-stronger-citizen-friendly-union-joiEU.html>
- <http://joiEU.net/>

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Day of Citizens for Europe in Rome, Italy

Protecting Citizens' Rights: challenges and opportunities for EU passengers

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"Protecting Citizens' Rights: challenges and opportunities for EU passengers¹" is the title of the Roundtable and Webinar organized in Italy by the European branch of Cittadinanzattiva², Active Citizenship Network³, in collaboration with its structure (called PIT-Integrated project of citizen protection⁴) that provides guidance, information and citizen protection for those citizens who have experienced inadequate services in public and health services and in the area of justice.

The initiative is part of the European project JoiEU, which stands for "Joint Citizen Action for a Stronger, Citizen-Friendly Union", funded by the European Union through the Europe for Citizens Programme⁵ and implemented by a group of civic organizations⁶.

In the framework of the protection of citizens' rights, we have decided to talk about the protection of rights of European citizens as passengers, for the following three reasons:

- 1) Among consumer policies⁷ promoted by Cittadinanzattiva, the mobility and transport sector is a historic area of intervention⁸. By years, in this field we have promoted political initiatives, projects at National and European level, information campaigns and other activities that outline a new approach to the role of consumers and customers: a role that tends to go beyond the idea of "delegating" one's own responsibility on the part of the citizen towards consumer organizations, instead favouring a total involvement in the accessibility, quality and care of the services of mobility and transport.

In other words, our intent is indeed to promote civic participation in the policy making and to provide citizens with procedures and instruments to protect, enforce and assert their own rights, because – as we say – “to do citizens is the best way to be citizens”.

¹ <http://www.activecitizenship.net/list-all-articles/26-consumers-rights/events/156-protecting-citizens-rights-challenges-and-opportunities-for-eu-passengers.html>

² <http://www.cittadinanzattiva.it/>

³ <http://www.activecitizenship.net/>

⁴ <http://www.cittadinanzattiva.it/corporate/istituzionale/4131-pit-integrated-project-of-citizen-protection.html>

⁵ <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/>

⁶ <http://www.activecitizenship.net/civic-activism/projects/148-joint-citizen-action-for-a-stronger-citizen-friendly-union-joiEU.html>; <http://joiEU.net/>.

⁷ <http://www.cittadinanzattiva.it/corporate/consumatori/4129-the-citizens-advocates.html>

⁸ <http://www.cittadinanzattiva.it/approfondimenti/consumatori/trasporti/4681-the-policy-of-cittadinanzattiva-on-mobility-and-transport.html>

- 2) Because, in the same day of the Italian “Day of Citizens for Europe”, it starts across Europe, in hundreds of cities, the European Mobility Week, awareness campaign in which Active Citizenship Network is an official partner⁹.
- 3) First of all, because Transnational Mobility is the concrete application of one of the main citizens' rights, the free movement of people, guaranteed by the Treaties to EU citizens' since the beginning of the European construction. It is one of the factors which have contributed to the building of a common European identity.

Over the years, the EU has developed a strong policy in this area, which aims at fostering clean, safe and efficient travel throughout Europe, underpinning the internal market of goods and the right of citizens to travel freely throughout the EU.

Mobility is a major challenge for the development of a sustainable economy, which is one of the 3 primary objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20% does actually entail the development of a new mobility strategy, promoting transport modalities with a low impact on the environment.

Finally, public transports are a key question for many European citizens, who use them daily to reach their workplace and/or to carry out their other activities. They are thus interested in the development of accessible and efficient public transports, respectful of passengers' and users' rights. This is the reason why civic activism is especially developed in this field through informal groups (such as commuters groups) or more structured and permanent organizations (e.g. Public transport users associations, Consumer associations, etc.). To sum up, the Mobility is:

- a common concern for most European citizens;
- a field in which the EU has a large competence and influence capacity;
- a policy which has to evolve to contribute more and more to the development of a sustainable economy;
- a paradigm of European citizenship, inasmuch as it embraces many of its aspects (common identity, European citizens' rights, etc.);
- a field in which everyday citizens experience the ability of the European Union as well as of their own Country to account for a needs to move and, simultaneously, to know how to best protect their rights.

⁹ <http://www.mobilityweek.eu/join-us/about/>

Starting from the daily needs and the complaints of EU passengers, commuters and public transport users in the field of mobility, the conference it will be an occasion to:

- better understand the commitment of the EU Institution in the field of Mobility & Transport and passenger rights;
- share concrete experiences from National Countries (Romania, Italy, etc.);
- promote the protection of passenger rights in the framework of European Mobility Week;
- promote a “call to action” in order to strengthen the civic participation in this field.

Based on the conference results, a set of recommendations will be made to institutions and stakeholders to facilitate mutual communication and citizen participation.

All participants will receive leaflet in English and Italian language of the EU campaign “Your Passenger rights at hand”¹⁰ and will be invited to fill the online quiz available in 9 language: “What type of traveler are you?”: ([EN](#) - [IT](#) – [RO](#) – [SK](#) - [LT](#) – [ES](#) - [BG](#) – [SH](#) – [PT](#) version)

The “Protecting Citizens' Rights: challenges and opportunities for EU passengers” international conference is part of the “Joint Citizen Action for a Stronger, Citizen-Friendly Union” (JoiEU) project, which focuses on coordinating debate and action in 13 European countries on a set of issues focused on citizen participation and strengthening the citizen base of a deeper European integration. The project is funded by the European Union and implemented by a group of international partners led by ProInfo (Bulgaria).

¹⁰ <http://ec.europa.eu/transport/passenger-rights/en/mobile.html>

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