



YOUR GUIDE AS A CONSUMER IN GREECE



Help and advice
for consumers
in Europe



European Consumer Centre Romania



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1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Greece's currency is Euro

Banknote denominations: 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 euro.

Coins: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 and 50 cents.

Foreign currencies may be exchanged at banks or authorized exchange offices.

ATM

ATM machines are available at main banks and at airports and shopping centres.





2. ARRIVING IN GREECE BY PLANE OR BY CAR

2.1. BY PLANE

New regulations from the European commission, and the Montreal Convention, have strengthened air passengers' rights. Here you will find the main information that you need if you decide to travel by plane to Greece.

Before departure

You realise you have to change or cancel your flight:

- What happens if you reserved and paid a ticket for a scheduled flight and you cannot take it due to personal reasons, for example? You should inform the airline company or the travel

agency where you reserved the ticket as soon as possible. If you make your request early, you may be able to avoid the cancellation costs.

- If you wish to postpone your journey and use the ticket later, you are able to do so, as long as



it is still valid, but you have to pay an administration fee to change your booking.

- If you wish to cancel your flight, you usually have to return the unused ticket in a period of time in order to be reimbursed. These rules may be different for special price tickets or flights subject to special conditions.



You should ask your travel agency or the airline on this point.

- Important! If you planned to travel with a non regular flight (“charter”) and you need to cancel your journey, you will not be able to get any reimbursement – unless you signed a cancellation insurance, which covers you in certain cases.
- Nevertheless, if you cancel your flight within a certain time in advance, it will be sometimes possible to obtain a partial refund. You should refer to the general terms and conditions of different airlines.

At the time of departure

- The airline company must comply with the announced schedules, unless they can

prove a “force majeure”. In certain circumstances their liability can be limited, for



example if the customer or a third party is at fault.

- When it is the case, the tickets price must be reimbursed within 7 days, in cash, by bank transfer or cheque. A voucher refund can be made only with your written agreement.

Damages

- In case of delay, if you suffer additional damages, articles 19 and 22 of the Montreal Convention of June 28th 2004



allow a right to compensation. The compensation for damages suffered by passengers is, though, limited to 1000 special drawing rights (SDR), about 1000 € (1SDR=1,18€).

- In case of loss or delay of luggage, you have to report it first to the baggage service at the airport and fill in a complaint form. If the luggage is found, the company has an obligation to deliver it to the address mentioned on the complaint form and should do this without charging any fee. If because of the delay in delivery, you have extra expenses (you were obliged to buy clothes, basic necessities, etc.) the carrier would have to pay you compensation of up to a maximum of 1000 SDR. However, you have to be able to

prove the damage. Therefore remember to keep any receipts and invoices.

- Your request for compensation must be sent to the airline at the latest 21 days following the



recovery of the luggage.

- In the case of a strike, the airline company will not respond if: the strike is caused by staff who are not directly paid by the airline, the strike was unpredictable or the company demonstrates that it took all the necessary steps to avoid the damage.
- When the staff of an airline goes on strike, the airline is directly responsible, and so you should be compensated.



In case of a delay:

- if the departure is from within the European Union (EU) or if the departure is from a third country outside the EU to an airport within the EU, and the flight is made by a European company, you have the right to immediate assistance from the airline company, provided that the delay is of:
 - o 2 hours or more for flights up to 1500 km
 - o 3 hours or more for the flights of more than 1500 km inside the EU and those between 1500 km and 3500 km outside the EU
 - o 4 hours or more for all the flights of more than 3500 km outside the EU
- The assistance consists of



supplying food and drinks in a sufficient quantity, taking into account the delay, as well as paying for the means of communication so that you can inform your relatives or any

other person of the delay (telephone, e-mail and fax). If the delay is of one or several nights, you must be offered accommodation and the transfer from the airport to the hotel.

- In any case, when the delay is announced to be more than 5 hours, the company has to offer you a reimbursement of the full cost of the ticket at the price at which it was bought, for the part or parts of the journey not made, and for the part or parts already made if the flight is no



longer serving any purpose in relation to the passenger's original travel plan. If needed the company has to offer a free return flight to the first point of departure, at the earliest opportunity.

In the case of a cancellation

- You have the right to assistance from the airline company as in the case of a delay.
- The airline company has to give you the choice between:
 - o a reimbursement of the full cost of the ticket at the price at which it was bought, for the part or parts of the journey not made, and for the part or parts already made if the flight is no longer serving any purpose in relation to the passenger's original travel plan. If needed the company has to offer a free return flight to the first point of departure, at the earliest opportunity.
 - o a re-routing, under comparable transport conditions, to their final destination at the earliest opportunity; **OR**
 - o a re-routing, under comparable transport conditions, to their final destination at a later date at the passenger's convenience, subject to availability of seats.
- Besides these, you have the right to claim compensation of:
 - o 250 € for all the flights of less than 1500 km,
 - o 400 € for flights between 1500 and 3500 km within the EU,
 - o 600 € for all other flights.
- If another flight is offered to you, and if the time of your arrival is not later than the time of arrival of the original reserved



flight, this compensation can be decreased with 50 %.

- **Please Note!** You cannot ask for this compensation if you were warned of the cancellation of the flight:

- o At least 2 weeks before date of the flight you booked **OR**

- o Between 2 weeks, and less than 7 days before, if an offer of re-routing was made to you for the same date, but, with a departure schedule allowing you to leave no more than two hours before the scheduled time of departure and to reach your final destination less than four hours after the scheduled time of arrival **OR**

- o Within less than 7 days, if a re-routing was offered to you for the same date; but with a departure schedule allowing you to leave no more than one

hour before the scheduled time of departure and to reach your final destination less than two hours after the scheduled time of arrival.

- The airline company will not have to pay the compensation if the cancellation is due to a case of force majeure.

In case of an “overbooking”

- You reserved a plane ticket but when arriving at the check in desk, they told you there were no more seats available on the plane? You have the right to receive the assistance, refund or re-routing, compensation (as listed above).



2.2. BY TRAIN

The railway transport in Greece is assured by a single public company, TRAINOSE.

International passenger transport

- The international railway transport can be realized only based on a valid train ticket, having specified route and chosen class for the journey.
- The tickets can be obtained from different sources (international pay offices for long journeys, credited agencies, Internet).
- The ticket has to compulsorily contain, besides indication of the transporter or transporters,

the following remarks:

- o Serial, number and security elements; the route, the class; the fee, validity dates – year, day, maybe time, and data of this kind.
- Besides these compulsory elements, the ticket may also contain other remarks related to its usage way, like the name and photograph of the passenger.





Usage conditions of the international travel ticket

- The international travel tickets are valid for a period of two months

Exceptions:

- o The tickets related to a particular train, or a reservation is valid only for the train and date written on the ticket.
- o Tickets issued based on special offers, which can have a different validity period.
- The tickets are valid beginning with the date indicated by the cashier for the start of the journey until the moment the train by which the journey was started – respectively the last related train – arrives to the

station, the validity being longer with the interruption period for which the ticket is considered as valid.

- The passenger not presenting a valid travel ticket on the train is obliged to pay the fee on the train.

Occupation and reserving seats

- On trains with seat reservation regime the passenger can occupy only the seat indicated on the ticket.
- The passenger can use a seat in a superior class, superior services or a train of superior category to that indicated on the ticket, or an ask for modification of the itinerary only by **paying the differential taxes.**



- The passenger who cannot obtain a seat and does not want to stand during his journey has the right to ask for refund of the ticket value for the remaining part of the journey, visa for postponing the journey, or change for a superior class by paying the differential taxes. In case the passenger cannot occupy the seat indicated on the ticket, he must receive another seat, in the limit of available seat on the train, or the fee of the reservation ticket must be returned to him. In case of the trains without reservation regime entire compartments can be reserved. These can be



labeled at a certain station, indicating the emitted ticket. The persons who effectively occupy the reserved compartment can present any kind of ticket – free, with reduced prices, whole fee – valid for the respective train, but the completion to the number of seats available in the compartment can be made only after the integral payment of the tax valid for the train and the respective class.

- In case the compartment is not fully occupied until the moment the train leaves the station the made reservation is considered annulled. The seats in the compartment are available to passengers immediately after the train left the station.
- On trains with facultative reservation regime of seats for a



certain distance, seats can be reserved in the stations on the route the train travels without reservation regime, paying the reservation ticket. The reservation of the seat can be made in the anticipatory period to the sale itself, but not on the day of the journey.

Returning the ticket

- The return of the ticket represents the fact that an emitted ticket is returned by the passenger before the start of its validity with refund, without any penalties.
- The return cannot be made only in the period settled by the transporter and only in the emitting agency.

Change of ticket

- The change of the ticket represents the fact that a ticket is changed by the passenger, with or without tax for another ticket.
- The change cannot be made only in a certain period settled by the transporter. If it is the case, the rest of the money is returned to the passenger; otherwise he has to pay the difference.

Refund of the ticket price

- The tax can be returned totally or partially in the following cases:
 - o the ticket was not used or was used partially;
 - o due to lack of seats, the ticket was used on an inferior train or class to that mentioned on



the ticket, except the cases when the passenger asks for change to an inferior class or train

- The **transportation fee** is returned integrally, including the reservation ticket in case the train for which the ticket was emitted does not circulate, or in cases of major force.
- **The transportation fee** is returned partially in the following cases:
 - interruption of circulation;
 - annulment of trains;
 - missing of relations;
 - cases of illness;
 - giving up effectuation of the whole journey, but only for the not used route.
- The fee of tickets emitted at the station or agencies are returned minus the processing fee, representing 10% of the transportation fee. The refund is made at the verbal request of the passenger, irrespective of the motives, on the condition of presenting the ticket to the operating agent in the emitting unit in a maximum period of 1 hour after the train for which it was valid left.
- The tickets emitted at agencies can be returned by presenting them to the chief of the agency, in a maximum period of 2 hours after the train left.
- The tickets emitted for trains leaving after the closing of the agencies have to be presented to the operator agent in an hour after the train left in the railway station, to be taken into evidence as unused, then to the chief of the agency to approve refund on the first work day in 2 hours after the opening of the agency.
- The fee for the reservation ticket cannot be returned.
- After the expiration of these periods the refund can be



requested only by a written request, to which the ticket has to be attached, taken into evidence or not as unused, as well as an official act from which it results that the respective person could not be present in time to apply for the unused visa or to request refund because of illness, accident, etc.

- The request has to be presented to the operator agent of railway transportation from the emitting unit, respectively to the chief of the agency for tickets issued by agencies in three days after the train for which the ticket was issued, left.
- The commission paid to agencies is usually not returned.
- The transporters will return the money in a period not longer than 3 months after receiving the request and the justifying documents presented by the

passenger.

- In case the passenger lives in another country, the sum that has to be returned and transferred in the currency of the particular country: the taxes of the payment are supported by the transporters making the refund.
- If a ticket was emitted by an agency the transporters has to pay the sum that has to be returned with the mediation of that particular agency. In this case, the sum that has to be returned is paid by the agency, without any penalties, except the costs of expedition.

Find out everything about the offers of TRAINOSE that interest you, in combination with the guarantee offered by our company, a result of the railway's historically established role:



1. Inter RailCard:

The InterRail card ensures train transportation to 30 European countries and discounts. Visit <http://www.interrailnet.com/>.

You can find this card at the train stations of Patra, Athens, Thessaloniki, travel agencies and TRAINOSE's Travel Agency (6 Sina Str., Athens) and in Thessaloniki (18 Aristotelous Str.).

trips for 5, 10 or 15 days, which must take place within one month, to 7 Balkan countries (Bulgaria, Greece, Former Yugoslavic Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Turkey, Serbia and Montenegro). Special prices apply for 1st and 2nd Class when buying tickets of the Balkan Flexipass offer at sales points in Greece and the other countries participating in the offer.

2. Balkan Flexipass Card

This card offers unlimited 1st class

City Star

Offer for groups of 6 people, that travel from Greece to Slovenia / Slovakia / Hungary / Bulgaria / Czech Republic with return.



Railplus

Get a 25% discount for most European countries, travelling with regular trains.



ISIC (International Student Identity Card)

Benefit from the unique prices for journeys to and from Greece.

2.3 BY CAR

The minimum age for driving in Greece is 18 years. Children must be at least 12 years old to sit in the front seat. If the children are under 12 years, they must be seated in the rear and, as in front, use a safety belt, or an approved child seat (for children under 3 years).

It's compulsory to carry your driving license, car registration papers and insurance documents. The driving licenses issued by the European Union Member States are accepted in Greece. Also the driving licenses issued by other countries (other than EU) are accepted, but only if

they comply with the rules set out in international treaties.



Speed limits

The general speed limits on the Greek roads are:

- 50 km/h inside localities
- 90 km/h outside localities (regular roads)
- 130 km/h on highways
- 100 km/h on expressways and national European roads

Please note! In Greece there are fixed radar traffic detectors all over the country which identify the vehicles not complying with the speed limits. The position of these



radar detectors are indicated using this sign. The fines for exceeding the speed limits can go from 40 € to 350 € and from two to six penalty points. Be aware also, that for speeds equal to or exceeding 50 km/h over the limit, the driving license will be suspended for 60 days.

- The sanctions can be disputed in front of the court in the territorial area of which the infringement has been ascertained, in at most 15 days from the moment the sanction has been communicated.
- Priority to traffic coming from the right applies, unless there is a road marking indicating that you have priority.

Safety

- The wear of safety belts is compulsory for all the

occupants of the vehicle. There must be one safety belt per passenger. The fine for the



infringement of this obligation is 200€.

- The use of mobile telephones while driving is forbidden, unless you are using a “hands free” system. In case of infringement the sanction the fine is 100 €, three penalty points and the driving license will be suspended for 60 days.

Alcohol and drugs

- Driving under the influence of alcohol or narcotics is forbidden in Greece and is



sanctioned.

- If the level of alcohol in blood is 0,25 ml/lit - 0,40 ml/lit the sanction is 200 € and five penalty points.

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- If the level of alcohol in blood is 0,40 ml/lit - 0,60 ml/lit the sanction is 700 €, nine penalty points and the driving license will be suspended for 90 days.
- If the level of alcohol in blood is exceeding 0,60 g/l the infringement is considered an infraction the sanction is 1.200€ and the driving license will be suspended for 180 days. The same punishment is applied for driving under the influence of narcotics.

Toll roads

- If you are driving to Greece, please note that on entry you are required to pay a road toll to allow you to use the national roads. Tolls are charged on motorways and main roads out of town, payable in Euros. Upon payment, ensure you receive the receipt confirming you have paid the toll. Please note that failure to pay the road toll or to display the receipt upon request may lead to a heavy fine.
- The cost for cars depends.

Petrol/Fuel

- Please note, that most of the petrol stations use commercial denomination.
- Most of the petrol stations accept major credit cards. Generally you can pay at a booth.



Traffic accident

- If you are involved in an accident in Greece, your insurance should cover any injury or damage that you may cause to another party. Please check details with your insurer before traveling to Greece.
- Your agent should provide you with a green card which must be displayed in the car windscreen. This serves as proof of valid liability insurance and is accepted throughout Europe in countries which are signatories of the Green Card System. It is not mandatory to have a Green Card when traveling within the EU if you bring your certificate of insurance.
- In the event of an accident with no serious injuries the parties must present themselves in no more than 24 hours from the accident to the police unit in the territorial area of which the accident has taken place. The police unit will make verifications and will issue a document which can be used with the insurer.
- If it is a serious accident and you need to go to hospital, the authorities will deal with the paperwork.
- In case of an accident in Greece, as a general rule, the Greek law will apply to determine responsibilities and compensation for the damages.
- If you are not responsible for the accident, the directive 2000/26/EC allows you to demand compensation in your country of place of residence.
- Your insurer, or yourself, should contact the representative of the other insurance company in



your country. Every European insurer has to appoint a competent correspondent in the other member states. You should receive an offer of compensation in the three months following your demand. If you have difficulties to find the coordinates of this correspondent, you should contact the body created for this purpose in your country.

3. CUSTOMS DUTY

Purchases made for personal use during a trip within the EU do not require any custom declaration when arriving in Greece. No additional taxes will be charged on goods bought with taxes included in other EU countries, provided these goods are for your personal use.

For certain types of goods, if your purchases are equivalent or less than the quantities shown below, in

general, they will be regarded as goods for personal use. If you exceed these quantities, you may have to prove the goods are for personal use; otherwise you will have to pay the custom duties.

Tobacco:

Cigarettes	800 pieces
Cigarillos	400 pieces
Cigars	200 pieces
Tobacco	1 kg

Alcohol:

Spirits	10l
Intermediate products	20l
Wine	90l
Beer	110l

4. HOTELS

According to the National Tourism Organization, accommodations officially categorized as follows: Hotels, Rented Rooms, Rented



Apartments, Camping, Youth Hostels,

- Hotels are classified into five categories of stars: 5 ***** , 4 **** , 3 *** 2 ** 1 *.
- The hotelier is obliged to provide all services advertised in case of cancellation or of shorter stay than the agreed period, the consumer must compensate the hotelier. The compensation amounts to half of the total hotel cost. Yet, if the hotelier is informed of the changes in reservation 21 days prior to the arrival of the guests, then there are no extra charges for the customers. Furthermore, if a hotel reservation is

cancelled 21 days prior to the arrival of the customers, the hotelier must return the deposit.

5. PAYMENTS

For your purchases, you should always ask for a receipt.

In case you buy a faulty product, you have the right to ask for replacement, repair, price reduction or refund. Consumers can exercise these rights 2 years after the purchase of products.

Traders are required to display the prices of their products.

Prices include VAT of 21%. Only some product categories such as VAT on some products is 10%). Consumers can pay either cash or by credit card. In the latter case, the trader may ask you to show your ID, as a means of precaution. Yet, this measure is not mandatory. Hence, if



you lose your credit card, anyone can use it rather easily. Keep your credit card in a safe place, signed, and immediately inform the bank in case of loss or theft.

6. CURRENCY EXCHANGE

You can find many offices who offer you currency exchange services, usually for currencies which are more commonly used like Euro, US Dollars or UK Pounds. Other currencies can be exchanged in banks.

7. VAT

The basic VAT rate in Greece is 24% and it is charged on most Greek goods and services in our country.

A lower rate, 13%, applies to books, medicines, and certain other goods and services. The V.A.T rate for hotel



accommodation, books and newspapers is 6.5%

The prices in shops are always including this tax, except are the shops that are selling engross.

8. OPENING HOURS

Stores

Opening hours:

09.00-21.00 (weekdays)

Saturday: 09.00-20.00

Sunday: closed

Bank

Opening hours:

08.00-14.30 (Monday-Thursday),



Friday 08.00-14.00,
Saturday, Sunday: Closed
Post Opening hours:
07.30-14.00 (weekdays).

9. PRICE REDUCTIONS

Any price reduction must be indicated in a clearly, readable and non-equivocal manner for each product or group of identical products:

- by mentioning the new price next to the old price, which will be barred, or
- by mentioning “new price”, “old price” next to the corresponding values, or
- by mentioning the reduction percent and the new price next to the old price, which will be barred.

Some rules must be obeyed when announcing a price reduction. First, the reduction is made by rapport to

a reference price. The reference price must have been applied for at least a month before the reduction. Second, for some situations the prices reductions cannot be made outside the legal periods (the sales).

10. SALES

There are two periods for sales, winter and summer sales. The periods are established government announcement and vary.

11. PRODUCT EXCHANGE

If a product is not faulty, the seller has no legal obligation to exchange it. Some sellers allow the consumers to exchange a product, even if it is not faulty, in a limited period of time from the delivery (24-48h). In this case it is advisable to ask for a written confirmation of the seller's agreement to exchange the



product, e.g. on the receipt, a flyer

12. YOUR RIGHTS AS CONSUMERS

Legal warranty

If the good you bought presents a lack of conformity (it doesn't function properly, it hasn't the characteristics you asked for or you expected, seeing the advertising made for that good), then you have the right to have that good brought to conformity.

This is done by the seller, in a first step, either by repairing or by replacing the good affected by the lack of conformity. The reparatory measure should be free of charge and will be taken in a reasonable time period, established by common agreement. The existence of the lack of conformity must be announced to the seller no later than two months from the moment

it was observed.

If you do not benefited from the repair or the replacement, or the reparatory measure was not taken in a reasonable time period or it caused you a significant inconvenient, then you can ask for the reimbursement of the price you paid or for the reduction of that price.

Time limit

The legal warranty applies for any good purchased from a Greek trader, for a period of two years starting the delivery moment.

Burden of proof

Any lack of conformity which becomes apparent in the first six months from the delivery, it is presumed to have existed at the moment of delivery. In this case you do not have to prove the good has



been defective at the moment of delivery.

If the lack of conformity becomes apparent after this six months period, you must prove it has existed at the moment of delivery.

Commercial guarantee

Besides and not excluding the legal warranty, the seller or the producer can offer you a so called “commercial guarantee”.

The commercial guarantee must state that the consumer has legal rights under applicable national legislation governing the sale of consumer goods and make clear that those rights are not affected by the guarantee.

The commercial guarantee must be set out in plain intelligible language and must contain at least the product identification elements, the guarantee period, the trader's

obligations – maintenance, repair, replacement – the name and address of the trader and the service unit.

On request by the consumer, the guarantee shall be made available in writing or in another durable medium available and accessible to him.



13. ADDRESSES

If you need free of charge assistance to solve your cross border dispute
you can contact:

EUROPEAN CONSUMER CENTRE GREECE

Ευρωπαϊκό Κέντρο Καταναλωτή

L. alexandras 144, 114 71, Athens

Tel.: +30 2106460862, +30 2106460814

Fax: +30 2106460784

info@eccgreece.gr

www.eccgreece.gr/en/

SAU

Centrul European al Consumatorilor România – ECC Romania

Str. Maior Aviator Ștefan Sănătescu nr. 44, et. 1, ap. 2

Sector 1, București

Tel. 021 315 7149

Fax. 021 315 7149

Email: office@eccromania.ro

Web: www.eccromania.ro

Orar – de Luni până Vineri de la 9.00 am până la 5.00 pm.

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