

Low-cost carrier Blue Air fined over 10 ml RON for flights cancelled since June 15

The National Consumer Protection Authority (ANPC) has sanctioned low-cost carrier Blue Air with over 10 million RON for the flights canceled starting from June 15, 2022 until now, ANPC said in a release.

According to the conclusions of the investigations conducted by ANPC commissioners, Blue Air Aviation SA has failed to propose any commitments or a plan of remedial measures for customers within the deadline set by the competent authorities. In the period covered by the investigation, specifically June 15 - September 12, 2022, 150,227 consumers from 23 EU member states were affected, and the company's practice was repetitive.

"Following these findings, the ANPC investigation team decided to hand down two fines, one in the amount of 2,000,000 euros, equivalent in RON at the exchange rate of 4.10.2022, for the large-scale impact on consumers across the EU, and another in the amount of 200,000 RON for repeated violations. The fines total 10,094,200 RON," the release states.

The fines also come with complementary sanctions: remedial measures; the company is required to cease unfair commercial practices, in the sense of no longer putting on the market misleading flight offers it doesn't have the resources to deliver; the suspension of services is proposed until the termination of the misleading commercial practice or until the completion of the ordered measures.

Blue Air first announced on September 6 that it would suspend all scheduled flights until September 12 on grounds that its accounts had been seized by the Ministry of the Environment.

Although one day later the Environmental Fund Administration announced that it had decided to suspend the seizure of Blue Air Aviation's financial assets and the establishment of a 12-month schedule for the pay-off of the debt, the low-cost airline operator announced that it would resume flights only from October 10, because it lacked the necessary funds to pay for fuel and other operational expenses related to the flights planned starting from September 12.

Later on, at the end of September, the airline announced that it would not resume flights from October 10 and that it was in talks with potential investors, lenders and the government of Romania to restructure its capital profile.