

Euroconsumers calls on Volotea to refund passengers charged extra for fuel after booking

Brussels, 11 June 2026 – Euroconsumers and its national member organisations Altroconsumo (Italy), OCU (Spain), Testachats/Testaankoop (Belgium), DECO PROteste (Portugal), and Euroconsumers Polska (Poland) have sent a formal cease and desist letter to Volotea, demanding full refunds for all passengers affected by the airline’s “Fair Travel Promise” fuel surcharge policy, which has been applied to already paid bookings since March 2026.

Volotea pledged to offer fair and transparent travel, instead it capitalises on a global crisis to charge its passengers more

Since March 16, 2026, Volotea has been charging passengers an additional “fuel surcharge” or “fuel adjustment” of up to €14 per passenger per flight on tickets that had already been fully paid for. The airline imposed this extra cost just days before departure, leaving consumers with little choice but to pay – or risk being denied boarding. On June 10, 2026, Volotea announced that it would cease applying this surcharge, but has remained silent on what it owes the thousands of passengers already affected.

Euroconsumers has received complaints from consumers in Belgium and Italy who were asked to pay additional sums – in some cases exceeding 25% of their original ticket price – under threat of being unable to check in. In one case reported to Testachats/Testaankoop, a passenger was warned just days before their return flight that they would not be permitted to board unless they paid the surcharge. They paid. In Italy, Altroconsumo received multiple similar complaints, and the Italian competition authority (AGCM) has formally opened an investigation into Volotea’s practices.

The Unfair Travel Promise

Euroconsumers formally argues that Volotea’s practice is unlawful on multiple grounds: it violates EU price transparency rules under Regulation (EC) No 1008/2008; contradicts the European Commission’s own interpretive guidelines on fuel surcharges issued on May 8, 2026; and constitutes an unfair contract term under Directive 93/13/EEC. The “Fair Travel Promise” clause – which allowed Volotea to retroactively recalculate ticket prices based on the market price of Brent crude – is, in Euroconsumers’ view, null and void. Therefore, all Volotea customers that were pressured into paying the fuel surcharge should be fully refunded.

“When you buy a flight ticket, the price you pay should be the price. Volotea dressed up a retroactive price increase as a promise of fairness, and applied it to passengers who had already paid, offering no real way out. The Middle East energy crisis may have been unexpected, but business risk cannot simply be transferred to consumers holding a concluded contract. Stopping the practice today is not enough – every passenger who was forced to pay must be refunded.” said Marco Scialdone, Head of Litigation and Academic Outreach at Euroconsumers.

Stopping is not enough: consumers are owed a refund

Euroconsumers formally demands that Volotea:

- Permanently cease and desist from imposing or collecting retroactive fuel surcharges or similar supplements on tickets already booked and paid for by consumers;
- Ensuring the "Fair Travel Promise" adjustment clause is permanently deactivated for all past and future purchases
- Refund, in full and via the original method of payment, all sums collected as retroactive fuel supplements between March 16 and June 10, 2026.

Volotea has been given 30 days to execute the refunds and 15 business days to confirm in writing its intent to comply. Should it fail to do so, Euroconsumers will take all available legal and judicial action to protect consumers' collective interests.

Ensuring passenger rights during crisis

The Volotea case is one concrete illustration of the broader vulnerabilities Euroconsumers flagged in its May 2026 paper [Air Travel Under Pressure: Passenger Rights in the Energy Crisis](#), which warned that the energy crisis was creating real risks for passengers across the board, from opaque cancellation reasons to retroactive surcharges.

It is also part of Euroconsumers' broader effort to enforce air passenger rights across Europe: as EC261 reform negotiations continue, the organisation is pushing for stronger and more consistent enforcement.

"Consumer rights do not pause during a crisis, if anything, a crisis is when they matter most. Euroconsumers will continue to hold airlines accountable, whether through enforcement actions like this one or through the reform negotiations that will shape the rules for years to come," said Els Bruggeman, Head of Advocacy and Enforcement at Euroconsumers.

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About Euroconsumers

Gathering six national consumer organisations and giving voice to a total of more than 7 million people in Italy, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Poland and Brazil, Euroconsumers is the world's leading consumer group in innovative information, personalised services and the defence of consumer rights.