

## **AGCM Decision Against Ryanair's Abusive Practices – A Milestone for Fair Airline Distribution**

Today, the **Italian Competition Authority (Autorità Garante della Concorrenza e del Mercato – AGCM)** adopted its final decision in **Case A568** against Ryanair, finding that the airline abused its dominant market position in the Italian air transport markets to implement an abusive strategy to hinder distribution of Ryanair flights by travel agencies and online platforms. The Authority has imposed a very significant **fine of €255 million** on Ryanair for abuse of dominant position related to distribution practices affecting travel intermediaries.

As stressed by the Authority, Ryanair implemented a complex strategy to block or hinder the distribution of Ryanair flights by Online Travel Agencies. The targeted practices were varied and increasingly intensive: facial recognition procedures, blocking of payment methods, imposition of restrictive partnership agreements, aggressive communications campaign targeting OTAs...

All those practices pursued one single goal: preventing consumers from easily comparing and combining travel options on online platforms. The AGCM's decision thus marks an important enforcement step in addressing exclusionary conduct by Europe's largest airline, which has long impeded fair access to its tickets for third party travel sellers.

"Today's decision demonstrates that competition rules do apply with full force to dominant transport operators like Ryanair whose practices harm intermediaries and consumers alike," said **Emmanuel Mounier, Secretary General of eu travel tech**. "Ryanair's significant power and abusive conduct led to a clear market failure. The AGCM has rightly decided to address it head-on. Thanks to this decision, Italian consumers will be able to benefit from fair competition, getting access to lower fares, that they could freely combine with other airlines' offers or additional travel services".

The AGCM's decision also underscores the broader relevance of ticket distribution issues throughout Europe's transport sector; a theme reflected in other regulatory actions and investigations across transport modes, notably rail, and jurisdictions. Ensuring that dominant operators cannot unfairly restrict the distribution of their tickets is vital for the ability of travel technology providers to offer integrated, multimodal solutions that deliver real benefit to consumers.

eu travel tech therefore continues to call on European policymakers and regulators to adopt systemic solutions at the EU level that address structural barriers in transport distribution, including with the upcoming Single Digital Booking and Ticketing Regulation (SDBTR).

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## **About eu travel tech**

eu travel tech represents the interests of travel technology companies. eu travel tech uses its position at the centre of the travel and tourism sector to promote a consumer-driven, innovative, and competitive industry that is transparent and sustainable. Our membership spans Global Distribution Systems (GDSs), Online Travel Agencies (OTAs), Travel Management Companies in business travel (TMCs) and metasearch sites.

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