

Driving innovation in rail: the passengers' perspective



Delphine Grandsart
European Passengers' Federation
Paris, 14 April 2026

Main objectives

Advocate passengers' views at EU level

Promote sustainable mobility

Improve end-to-end journey experience

Tackle transport poverty

Defend better passenger rights

Always ask *'What's in it for users?'*



**European
Passengers'
Federation**

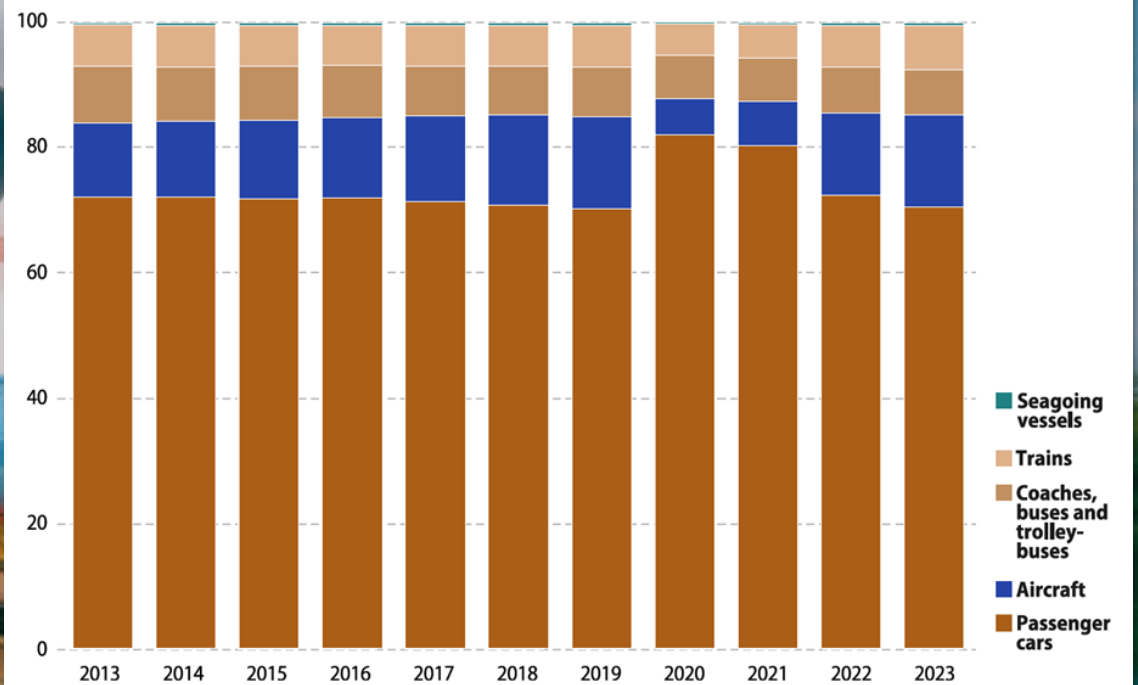
**We are the voice of public
transport users in Europe.**

Strengths of rail

- Large volumes
- High speed
- Very safe
- Sustainable & energy efficient
- Backbone of a seamless multimodal mobility system

Modal split of passenger transport

(% based on passenger-kilometres, EU, 2013–23)



Source: Eurostat – Key figures on European transport – 2025 edition – available <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-key-figures/>

People are willing to switch, but ...



Children and youth



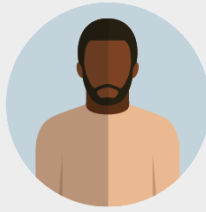
Elderly



Women



People with reduced mobility



Migrants and ethnic minorities



People living in rural and deprived areas



Low income and unemployed

Source: Maslow's pyramid, applied to public transport (CIPTEC, Peek and van Hagen) (left)
 © HiReach project (right)



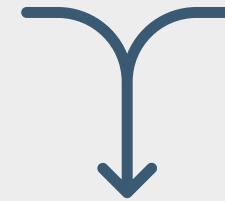
Passengers are confused and frustrated!

How do I book a trip cross-border in the EU?

Why do I see different prices on different websites? How do I get to the cheapest one?

What happens if my train to the airport is delayed?

Is there any bus connection in the airport or station of my arrival or should I take a taxi?



**They might take the easiest solution.
But... Sometimes that's not the most sustainable!**

Transport is an integrated system

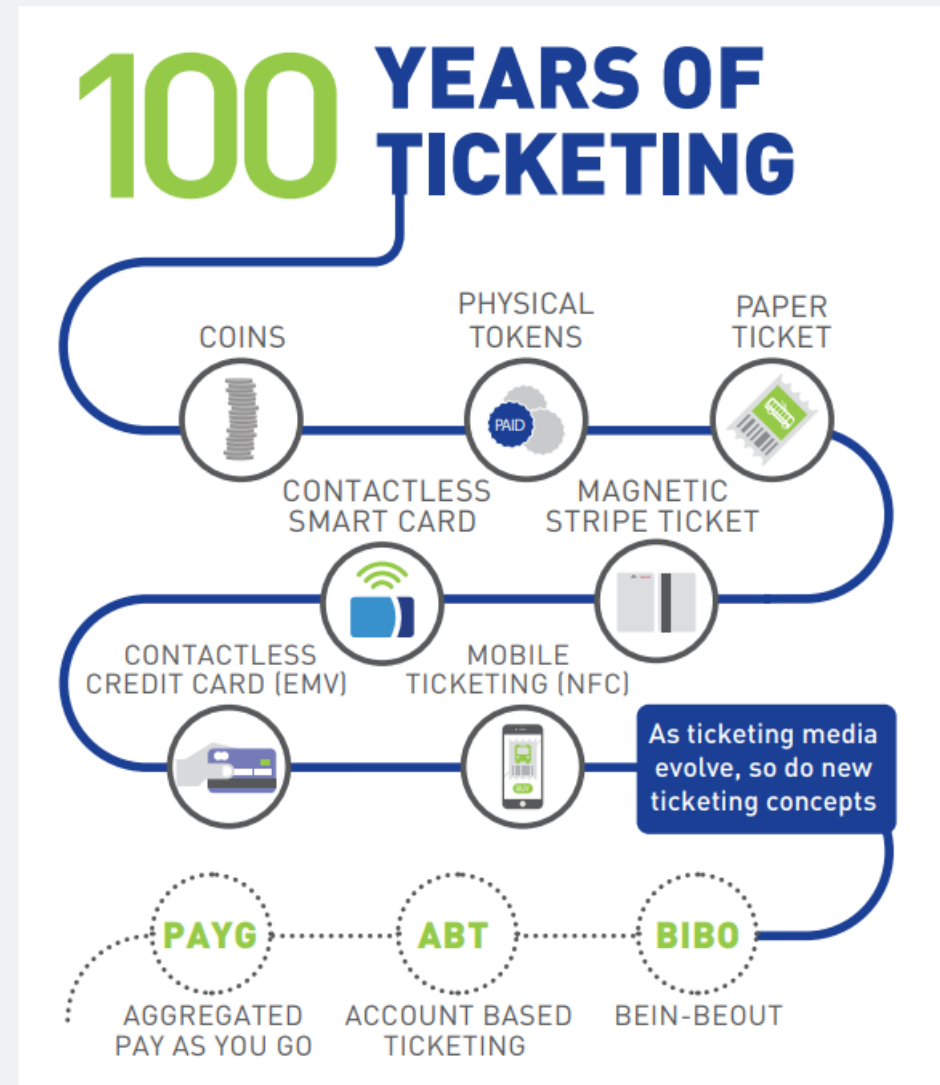
- A seamless European passenger transport system
- Integrated information and ticketing
- Passenger protection
- Overcoming administrative and political boundaries
- Better informed decision making
- A greater focus on end-users

<https://www.epf.eu/wp/epf-priorities-for-eu-action/>



Information & ticketing: State of play

- **Local-regional-national public transport**
 - Unified tickets, valid on all or most national PT, introduced in several EU countries
 - Dramatical evolvement of ticketing & payment systems in PT (e.g., smart cards, account-based ticketing)
- **Long-distance (& cross-border) travel**
 - High drop-out rate for international rail bookings: many barriers
 - Planning & booking is complex, difficult, risky and time-consuming

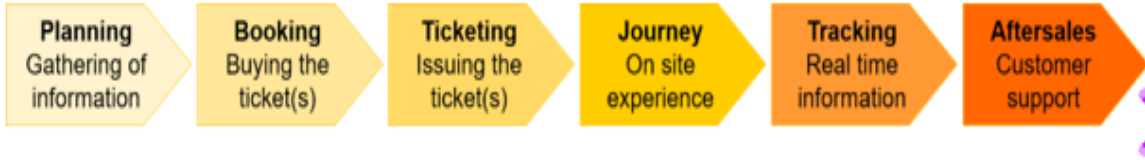


Source: UITP & Messe Karlsruhe for IT TRANS

Source: UITP report [Demystifying ticketing and payment in public transport](#) (2020)

An illustrative example of the current limitations for international railway passengers in the EU was given by an anonymous traveler (slightly adapted):

"Last year, I travelled by train from my hometown in the Netherlands to Stresa on the shore of Lago Maggiore in North Italy. A few days later I continued from Stresa to Florence. I travelled back in one day from Florence to my hometown. I had to consult the websites of NS, DB, SBB, FS and Trainline to find the most suitable schedules and the best prices. I discovered that for me a global rail pass would be the best solution. To buy one, I needed yet another website. In the end I paid much less than for a plane ticket. But it took me hours to get the information and book my ticket."



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INTERVIEW

Booking an international train journey fails 10 times more often than a flight, why is it more difficult?

Published on 09-06-2022 at 10:21



Platform International Rail Passenger Transport

Better rail connections for Europe's passengers

A common agenda

Progress report following the June 4th 2020 Ministers declaration on international rail passengers transport



25 May 2021

Simplifying European Ticketing
A chance for a green transformation of public and multimodal transport in the European Union



"Planning and purchasing tickets for multimodal journeys is cumbersome, as a conducive framework for EU-wide, integrated, multimodal information, ticketing and payment services is lacking"
Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy (09.12.2020)



European Commission




Rail passenger rights

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Mobility and Transport

Passenger rights

however you travel

1. Non-discrimination
2. Access and assistance for disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility
3. Information
4. Choice to cancel trips due to disruption
5. Rerouting or rebooking
6. Assistance in event of long delay
7. Compensation
8. Carrier liability
9. Easy complaint handling
10. Effective enforcement of rights



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Source: European Commission Communication: A European vision for passengers: communication on passenger rights in all transport modes



European Commission

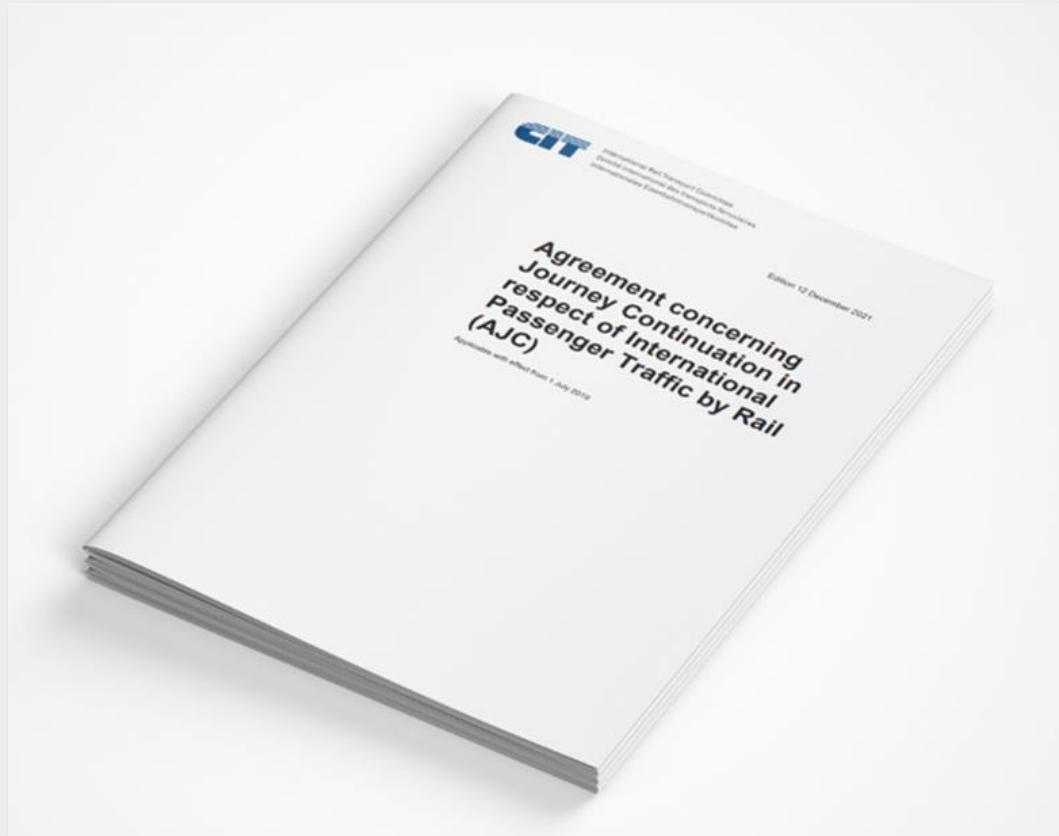



Air passenger rights

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Mobility and Transport

Voluntary agreements in rail





Articulated with modal developments:

TAP-TSI (rail) and CRS-Code of Conduct (aviation)

And horizontal developments:

Data Act, Digital Markets Act, Data Governance Act, European Mobility Data Space

Revision of the **ITS** Directive and **MMTIS**
Delegated Regulation

Revision of the **TEN-T** Regulation;
High-speed rail Master Plan

New proposals on Ticketing:
MDMS - SDBTR

Revision of **air & rail** passenger rights;
enforcement;
multimodal journeys

“Single Ticketing Package” (Q2 2026)

Desired outcomes for passengers:

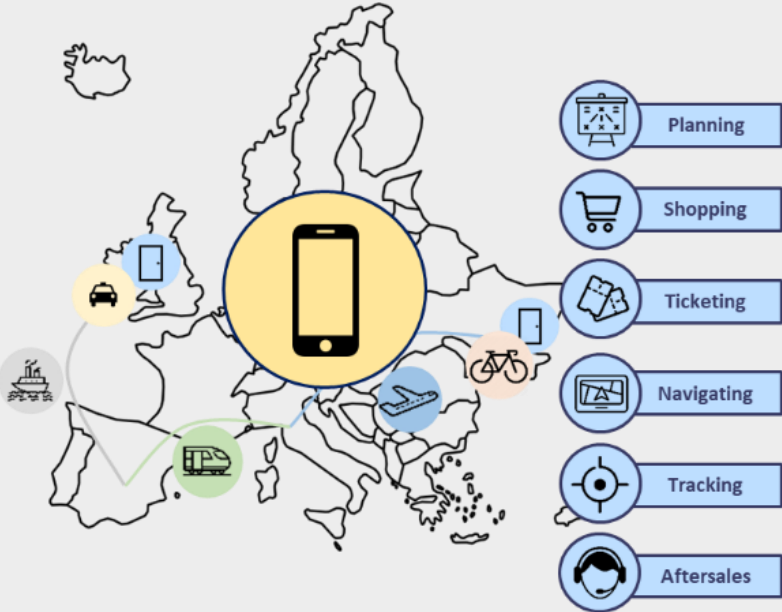
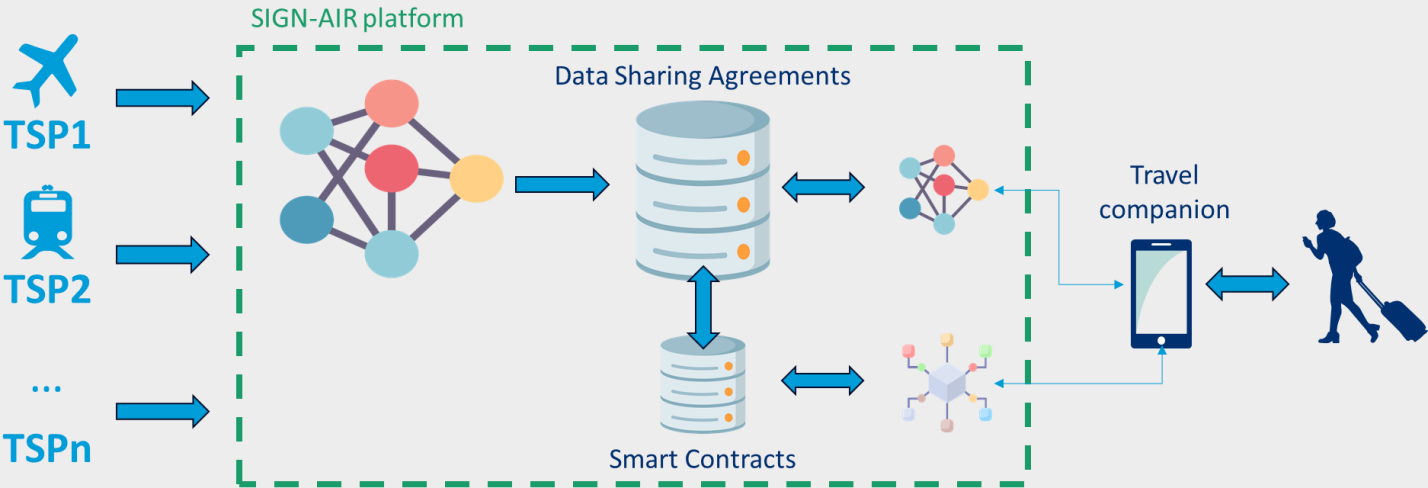
1. Journey information
2. Ticket purchase
3. Disruption protection

“You will prepare a proposal for a **Single Digital Booking and Ticketing Regulation** to ensure that Europeans can buy one single ticket on one single platform and benefit from passenger rights protection for their whole trip”



https://commission.europa.eu/about/organisation/college-commissioners/apostolos-tzitzikostas_en

R&I projects – EPF involvement



Major themes:

- Public transport on the local & regional level;
- Cross border public transport;
- Doubling international passengers by 2030;
- Ticketing and passengers' rights;
- Funding and financing sustainable mobility



**CONFERENCE
2026
MAASTRICHT**

23rd Conference of the European Passengers' Federation

5-6 June 2026

<https://www.epfconference.eu/>



Thank you

Delphine Grandsart, Senior Researcher

delphine.grandsart@epf.eu

