



Economic Commission for Europe**Inland Transport Committee****Working Party on Rail Transport****Group of Experts on International Railway Passenger Hubs****Second session**

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Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**Identification of the technical and service parameters necessary
for the definition of an international passenger railway hub****Identification of the technical and service parameters
necessary for international railway passenger hubs****Submitted by the secretariat****I. Introduction**

1. At the first session of the Group of Experts on International Railway Passenger Hubs participants asked the secretariat to develop a document on potential technical and service parameters for international railway passenger hubs (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/HUBS/2021/2). This document sets out possible parameters for discussion. In preparing this document it was agreed that the parameters need to consider both passenger facing parameters and characteristics that would be necessary for the railway undertakings.

II. Key parameters for international railway hubs

2. It is important to underline the different but related users of station infrastructure – railway operators as “back office” customers of station services and the passengers as ultimate users of the international railway hubs. The technical parameters that need to be considered for further discussion are divided into the following categories:

- Necessary railway infrastructure for operators
- Station facilities
- Demand considerations
- Connectivity and accessibility.

3. These parameters are discussed in more detail below.

A. Passenger facing station facilities

4. Based on discussions at the first meeting and subsequent analysis, the following characteristics and services should be included in relation to station facilities in international railway passenger hubs:

1. Waiting areas

5. Appropriate waiting areas should be provided within stations, proportionate to the size of the station. These waiting areas should be climate controlled and have relevant support facilities such as toilets. Consideration should be made on where the waiting areas are placed given other requirements such as border and security controls (mentioned below).

2. Toilets

6. A minimum number of toilets in the international railway hubs is essential to ensure the appropriate level of quality of services of the stations for the passengers.

3. Ticketing facilities

7. Each international passenger railway hub should also have a minimum number of ticketing facilities. This should be composed of both in-person ticket booths and automatic vending machines. Both these types of ticketing facilities should be available in the local language and at least one other language. These facilities should also be easily accessible to all passengers.

4. Information office

8. Each international passenger railway hub should have a dedicated information office that is able to provide information for national and international travellers in multiple languages. Information on rail services and station facilities should be available in this office as well as information on other transport connections available in and around the station.

9. The information office should have a clear plan in place to deal with customer enquires following extended delays and missed connections.

5. Assistance to passengers with disabilities and with reduced mobility (PRM) for boarding and leaving the train

10. It is very important for an international railway hub to give the possibility to travel without barriers for all the passengers with disabilities or reduced mobility. Dedicated services for PRMs (provided by rail operating or station staff) should be allowed for in all these hubs. It is likely that dedicated waiting areas need to be defined to support this service.

6. Service information at the hubs

11. International service information in the hubs should be available on a board or a screen in multiple languages along with public announcements in multiple languages. Printed timetable information (e.g. on noticeboards) should also be available in multiple languages. In addition, signage in the station should be available in multiple languages. It should be easily recognizable and repeated throughout the station to facilitate access. Common pictograms and format could be considered along the lines of those proposed by UIC.

7. Wireless connectivity

12. In addition to printed and staff assisted information, wireless connectivity should be available in stations to allow passengers to find information on services and station facilities as well as information on connections to other modes of transport.

8. Safety and security

13. A high level of security should be guaranteed in stations through appropriate lighting as well as security cameras and security staff on hand and visible to provide comfort for passengers at all times of the day and night.

9. Customs, passport and border controls

14. Sufficient security, customs and passport control facilities should be provided in hubs to reflect the international nature of services.

10. Premium Services

15. The waiting area of an international railway hub could be complemented with the possibility of a reserved lounge for long-distance customers. The possibility of a fast track line for controls (tickets, passport, security, etc.) may be necessary for an international railway hub and the passengers that use these stations.

11. Commercial services (restaurants etc.)

16. Additional services within stations will need to be available for international travelers to facilitate departure, arrival and transit. A minimum amount of food and ancillary outlets should be provided in stations to provide these facilities to passengers.

17. All these common facilities need to ensure that there is an appropriate level of lighting throughout to guarantee the safety and security of passengers.

B. Connectivity and accessibility for passengers

18. Accessibility and connectivity are important element to be considered for international railway hubs in terms of connections to international as well as regional or long-distance domestic services. Furthermore, having a good network of public transport, is a key element for a good connection to the catchment area of international railway passenger hubs.

1. Connection to public transport

18. High quality, simple and accessible local public transport solutions need to be provided at the hub. This will depend on what is already available and could include subways, coaches, buses, trams, ride sharing etc. Ticketing facilities for the public transport network should also be available in the hub and this should be available in multiple languages. Appropriate signage should be available indicating what options are available.

2. Taxi

20. Taxi and other similar services should be available outside the hub.

3. Private transport parking

21. Private transport is still one of the most used travel modes and the possibility to have a private transport parking is important for the connectivity of an international railway hub. It may be necessary to introduce minimum requirements in terms of parking spaces present in international railway passenger hubs. These parking facilities need to be for bicycles, motorbikes e-mobility solutions as well as private and shared cars.

4. Airport/port connections

22. Building on the intermodal opportunities set out in the previous point an international railway hub should also have direct connectivity with airport and/or port services in the catchment area. Ticketing facilities for these services should also be available in the hub and this should be available in multiple languages. Appropriate signage should be available indicating what options are available

C. Necessary railway Infrastructure for railway operators

23. The main service providers in international railway hubs are the railway companies themselves. These railway undertakings need a minimum level of service to ensure a good service for the international passengers and therefore need the following:

1. Access to a maintenance depot

24. Access to a maintenance facility nearby facilitates the preparation of rolling stock for international services and helps in the solving of simple problems thus improving the quality for the final customer. The availability of a depot also gives operators more flexibility and productivity in their services.

2. Pre-heating and climatization for railway companies

25. Closely linked to the previous point, ancillary services such as pre-heating and climatization for rolling stock are fundamental for high quality passenger services. A certain minimum level of these services for the rolling stock is essential.

3. Rolling stock stabling facilities

26. Stabling facilities at stations are necessary for an efficient turnaround of rolling stock. The distance between the parking of the trainsets and the platform of the stations could be another element to consider having an impact on the productivity of the railway undertakings. These facilities also need to allow for the operators who need to couple or decouple their rolling stock during operation.

4. Water supply

27. To have water supply for rolling stocks is a minimum requirement for the operation of trains. International railway hubs need to provide this to railway undertakings.

5. Catering supply

28. To allow for catering services on international services it is important to have facilities in stations that allow operators to resupply their catering offer.

6. Number of tracks and platforms for international passenger services

29. It may be appropriate to require that there are a minimum number of tracks available for and dedicated to international passenger services. The number of platforms is also important to be considered in the capacity of a stations. As in airports where the number of runways is a key element to consider a hub, for stations the number of platforms is a key driver of the capacity of station. A minimum number of platforms could be introduced as minimum requirements to consider a station as international railway hub. At the same time, the capacity of a stations is also given by the technology adopted by the traffic manager. The number of railway paths for international long-distance travel could be a proxy of the specific capacity of the infrastructure.

7. Station size (net public surface)

30. The net public surface area could be an element to consider for the international railway hubs. It may be appropriate to introduce a minimum level of station size to define the international railway hub. Some exceptions to this may be necessary in relation to border stations.

III. Next steps

31. Experts are invited to review this list and consider which of the parameters should be included within the further analysis of the Group. Experts may wish to consider if any of these should be categorized as optional parameters. Following discussion and agreement of which of these parameters should be included in the technical requirements for international railway passenger hubs Experts should also consider if, and to what extent, these parameters should be defined in more detail.
