
The passengers’ perspective
EPF: Who we are

International non-profit association

- 39 members
- 21 countries
- All modes: rail, road, waterborne, air
Main objectives

• Promote sustainable mobility
• Always ask ‘What’s in it for users?’
• Improved end-to-end journey experience
• Tackle transport poverty
• Better passenger rights
• Represent passengers’ views at European level
Peak rail

- Mid-’50’s British example
- ‘A Network of networks’
- Sustainable Mobility goals
- Think ‘end-to-end journeys’
- The value of Connectedness
- Making travel easier
Today’s patchy route system

• Source data incomplete
• IRG–Rail, pre-Covid, identified 331 international Origin/Destination (O/D) legs*. 
• Services not journeys (i.e., specific legs in many more complex journeys)

Static market share

• x-border traffic stuck at c.7% of total passenger-kms in EU, pre-2020 (RMMS*)
• Limited number of routes with frequent x-border services.
• 55% FR O/D; 15% SE O/D (Steer-KCW, 2021**)
• Note AT-BE-CH-DE-FR-SE-UK focus


** Source, Long Distance Cross-Border Passenger Services, 2021 https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/34244751-6ea3-11ec-9136-01aa75ed71a1
The main growth area

• Number of x-border High-Speed services (HS) almost doubled 2001-19, but overall service provision static (Steer-KCW, 2021*)

• But only 11% services are >160kph (HS) at any point on route (IRG-Rail*)

* op. cit.
Passengers’ priorities for improvement

• **Better value**: Affordable, Price competitive, Easy-to-find best fares
  > *Reduced industry unit costs (preferably by growing market rather than service cuts) or greater financial support*

• **Punctual and reliable**: Delivering the service as advertised (on-time-trains and (e.g.) working reservation systems, H&V, any catering promised, etc.)
  > *Resilience, disciplined operating, dependable systems and technology, address capacity pinch-points*

• **Travel comfortably at times convenient to them**: A seat when wanted
  > *Greater ability to manage demand fluctuations*
Barriers to passenger satisfaction

• Lack of easy access to journey information: Real-time information for planning, booking and completing journeys

  > Transparent, comprehensive, simple, one-stop-shops

• Poor service quality: Door-to-door journey times (connections), condition of assets (dirty WCs), wasted time (inadequate wi-fi)

  > Attention to ‘good housekeeping’ at stations and on trains

• Managing disruptions: ‘Useful’ information to offset poor performance.

  > Practical timely advice (enabling ‘work-arounds’), not token apologies

• Limited provision for Passengers with Reduced Mobility:

  > Accommodating PRM needs makes travel easier for all
What to prioritise

• A simple, accessible, all-relevant-options, no-hidden-costs, booking system
• Long booking horizon
• Operator collaboration to deliver benefits of wider network (connecting services)
• Through ticketing to facilitate end-to-end journey
• Delivering the service as advertised (on-time and with all facilities as promised)
• Real-time, practical information during the journey
• Get passenger to destination if journey disrupted, with no extra cost, whichever the operators, whatever the country
• Developing a passenger-focussed, industry-wide, service culture
Delivery options

• Do nothing?
  • Lose out on potential wider societal & environmental benefits of rail?

• Regulatory intervention?
  • More pressing government priorities; cumbersome; inhibits innovation?

• Leave it to the sector?
  • Fragmented and inclined to procrastination without government intervention

• Use improved passenger satisfaction as a KPI in determining public support for the sector
  • Passengers’ representatives, governments and sector need to work together
Thank you!

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