



Questions and answers on the Passenger Package

Brussels, 13 May 2026

What are the benefits for citizens, in particular travellers? How will the benefits be achieved?

The Passenger Package will make it easier for citizens to find, compare and book their journeys across borders, transport modes and operators. The Passenger Package will improve the availability of rail tickets across ticketing service providers. This will help passengers combine tickets of different operators, while providing full passenger rights when a rail traveller misses a connection on a multi-operator rail journey purchased as a single ticket.

To achieve this, the European Commission proposes to require all online ticket platforms to display offers in a neutral and transparent manner. In addition, platforms holding a strategic position in the market will have to ensure fair treatment of transport operators.

To increase the availability of rail tickets, the Passenger Package obliges railway operators to make their tickets available to online ticket platforms that would like to sell them. At the same time, the online ticketing services of incumbent railway undertakings with a market share of 50% or more of the rail passenger market will have to display all available railway services that are operated in their country and include them in their search results. When requested by other operators, they will have to offer tickets for services run by other railway undertakings. This should also help to ensure competitively priced rail tickets, benefitting all travellers.

The Commission also proposes that travellers with a single ticket for a rail journey will have full passenger rights protection if they miss a connection – even when these connecting services are operated by different railway companies. This means that passengers will not only have a new right to be re-routed to their final destination without having to pay for a new ticket, but will also be able to get compensation for the overall delay incurred.

Why is the EU intervening in the rail ticketing market?

Currently, the ticketing market lacks transparency. Competition cases at EU and national level show that actors with a strong position in the market sometimes have the power to impose unfair contract conditions on smaller players. In the rail ticketing market, the most important and visible online ticketing services are owned by rail operators, who have an incentive to limit the visibility of their direct competitors. Given the powerful position of these operator-owned ticketing platforms, it can be very difficult for new entrant operators to find a good alternative to distribute their tickets. In addition, operators who own their own online ticketing services have little incentive to distribute their tickets via independent platforms. The result is an incomplete offer on both independent and operator-owned platforms. This makes it unnecessarily hard for consumers to find the best travel options.

An EU-wide approach to dealing with these problems avoids a fragmented market that causes increased costs and reduced benefits.

What does a 'single ticket' mean in practice? How will it impact passenger rights?

Passengers will have a single ticket when they buy a multi-operator rail journey on a single platform, in a single commercial transaction. That single ticket may comprise services operated by different railway undertakings.

With a single ticket, a rail passenger will have full passenger rights protection in the event of a missed connection between different rail services, even if these are operated by different railway undertakings. In practice, passengers will benefit from assistance, rerouting, reimbursement and compensation rights. Currently, the obligation to provide protection for missed rail connections only applies to through-tickets offered by sole railway undertakings or where rail operators cooperate on through-ticketing.

Furthermore, the new rules state that single tickets cannot be segmented into several separate tickets. For example, when a platform offers a ticket from station A to station B, and another ticket from station B to station C, a passenger must have the opportunity, on that same platform, to buy a single ticket for a journey from station A to station C, via station B.

Who is responsible if a rail journey involves multiple operators and something goes wrong?

If a passenger misses a connection during a rail journey covered by a single ticket, the railway undertaking that caused the disruption will be liable for ensuring the following rights:

- The right to choose between re-routing to the final destination at no additional cost or, alternatively, reimbursement of the single ticket;
- The right to assistance, which may include refreshments, meals or even accommodation where an overnight stay becomes necessary due to the missed connection;
- Compensation for the delay incurred under the single ticket (unless the passenger asked for reimbursement).

In addition, those railway undertakings whose connections were missed due to this disruption must offer journey continuation on their next service. This way, passengers can take the next available train, to continue their journey.

What happens if the minimum connection times are not respected?

When passengers book a single ticket for a rail journey with different legs, minimum connection times need to be respected to ensure a reasonable transfer time for the passenger between different rail services. Where these minimum connection times are not respected by ticket vendors and tour operators at booking, railway undertakings are no longer liable for passenger rights if the passenger misses a connection during the rail journey. In that case, the passenger can turn to the ticket vendor or tour operator for either a full reimbursement of the single ticket, or for reimbursement of the costs incurred to continue the journey. In addition, they would have to compensate the passenger for 75% of the single ticket value.

What are the benefits for businesses?

With this package, the Commission aims to create a level playing field in the ticketing market and ensure that small businesses can compete fairly with bigger players. Competition cases at both EU and national level have shown that this has sometimes been a challenge, in particular for rail ticketing services.

Smaller operators will be able to secure fair deals with prominent online platforms, which will need to respect clear rules in commercial agreements. Moreover, smaller platforms will be able to negotiate better deals with dominant railway operators, thereby enabling them to offer a wider range of rail tickets to consumers.

Travel agents (both online and offline) will benefit from their commercial partners having to display travel options in a neutral manner. This will allow travel agents to choose the best travel option for their customers more easily.

What are the benefits for rail operators?

This package makes rail travel more accessible and more convenient for consumers, which is likely to substantially increase the number of people opting for rail.

Rail operators will also gain the opportunity to have their tickets sold on major domestic ticketing platforms, when they are owned by incumbent railway undertakings with significant market presence. These changes will ensure that new entrant operators' services can be easily found and safely combined with services run by other operators. As a result, new rail services will be much better integrated into the overall rail offer. Furthermore, as consumers gain the ability to sort travel options by greenhouse emissions on ticketing platforms, rail services will become more visible.

Overall, as rail tickets become more accessible and rail passenger rights improve, rail will become a more attractive transport mode, generating additional passengers for rail.

Do these rules require companies to sell competitors' tickets?

The Passenger Package only imposes a hosting obligation on a limited number of online ticketing services: those that belong to railway undertakings, which hold a market share of 50% or more in a domestic passenger rail services market. When a railway undertaking (even a direct competitor) asks that its tickets are sold on such a platform, the platform is obliged to offer the tickets of this railway undertaking alongside its other services. The railway undertaking can also choose to request a relink to its own ticketing platform.

Will the obligation to make rail tickets available on online platforms apply to all rail operators?

The obligation to make their own tickets available, when requested by an online ticketing platform, applies to all railway undertakings and entities in charge of organising railway transport services. However, there are three exceptions:

- Services operated by SMEs;
- Services that are operated for strictly historical reasons or touristic use, and which do not usually serve normal transport needs;
- Services on standalone networks intended only for the operation of urban or suburban rail services.

The sharing obligation covers both domestic and cross-border services.

The obligation does not apply to multimodal tickets (which are, for example, common in urban transport), provided that the relevant rail tickets can be bought separately (i.e. as rail-only tickets).

When would railway companies have to start selling tickets, and could they still change prices or add new services later?

Under the new rules, railway operators must make tickets available for sale at least five months before the operation of a railway service, provided the service has been included in the working timetable. This will give passengers greater certainty and flexibility to plan their journeys well in advance.

The requirement will not prevent railway operators from adjusting fares or adding new services over time. Tickets for newly added services must be made available for sale without delay after they have been included in the working timetable.

Change in rail ticketing seems to depend entirely on platforms and rail undertakings finding an agreement. What if they don't?

The new rules oblige online ticketing services and railway undertakings to enter into commercial agreements on ticketing distribution when requested. They specify conditions for these agreements, which have to be fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory, including with respect to fees. Should the

parties not be able to come to an agreement within 8 months, the national regulator can set out the terms of such agreement within 6 months from receiving a complaint.

Moreover, irrespective of any agreement, within 12 months of the Regulation entering into force, all indispensable railway online ticketing services will have to display all available railway services that are operated in their country and integrate them into their search results.

How will the Commission ensure 'neutral display' of travel options in practice?

This package guarantees that all transport options are displayed neutrally, by defining criteria (price, duration, departure time, greenhouse gas emissions, etc.) that platforms should use as default settings in the first display. However, platforms remain free to offer additional filtering options, allowing users to customise their search based on personal preferences.

For more information

[Press release](#)

[Factsheet](#)

QANDA/26/1057

Press contacts:

[Anna-Kaisa ITKONEN](#) (+32 2 29 57501)

[Anni JUUSOLA](#) (+32 2 29 60 986)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)