

New rail passenger rights proposal is a backward step for the competitiveness of new entrants

New release

ALLRAIL believes that better access to rail travel information should become a passenger right

It is crucial that passengers

(1) can see ALL rail options

(2) can book ALL rail options and

(3) have the confidence that - whatever kind of rail booking they make - they will reach their final destination even if there is a missed connection during the journey.

Last week, a new proposal for the regulation on EU rail passengers' rights and obligations (recast) was released by the European Commission.

While we welcome the progress in many areas, **we are very worried that the travel information proposals will jeopardise further growth in above Rail competition**, for the following reasons.

1. The proposal contains no obligation on sales channels of established, dominant rail incumbents to enable impartial access to ALL rail options – they will still be able to exclude new entrant operators from what the passenger can **see**.
2. 'Through tickets' (i.e. change of operators under one single journey contract) will continue to only be 'desirable', rather than mandatory.

But digitalisation does not wait! Tech innovators already enable passengers to **book** options where combining separate tickets of connecting operators provides cheapest & fastest journeys between any two stations (even if the operators have no through tickets with each other).

3. But passengers will continue to **only** have the right to missed connection protection for connecting journeys *if they buy a through ticket*.

Through tickets will remain a privilege of large rail incumbents, who can pick what other operators they want to offer these with. This shuts out new entrants from being part of connecting bookings with missed connection protection. Passenger choice will be hindered.

Erich Forster, President of ALLRAIL, states: "Digital innovation can already provide integrated, pan-European ticketing today, in 2017! This can be a bonus for passengers! But far from embracing this, the travel information proposals seek to create an additional advantage for large rail incumbents"

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