

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Rail ticket reform in Norway - A role model for EU rail passenger rights**

As part of its intention to grow passenger rail, Norway's government has separated the in-house sales division of the state-owned incumbent NSB from the operator and it turned it into an entity that will show & sell ALL passenger rail operators impartially – regardless whether the incumbent or a different operator.

This new state-owned entity has a neutral brand (“Entur”) and this month – in October 2018 – Entur took over selling rail tickets at railway stations (ticket offices and machines).

Norway is doing this precisely to ensure that rail “distribution channels and ticket machines do not give preferential treatment to one specific operator”<sup>1</sup>.

ALLRAIL's rail operators welcome this & think it should be a role model for the rest of Europe:

- **Passengers should have the right to access ALL ticket options at ALL sales channels.**

However, EU state-owned rail incumbents know that, if they refuse to sell all rail options at their in-house sales channels (with the inherited brand equity), fewer passengers will find out about other operators on the tracks.

Nick Brooks, Secretary General of ALLRAIL, says: **“Other operators would gain more exposure and be able to help raise the attractiveness of rail vis-à-vis less sustainable transport modes if the state-owned incumbent ticket sales channels were transparent and impartial”.**

Particularly alarming are the many cases of double standards. For example:

- Swedish incumbent SJ wants to expand to Norway - where it will benefit from impartial rail ticket sales - but in Sweden its in-house sales channels refuse to do the same.
- German incumbent DB has benefited from impartial rail ticket sales in the UK for many years – such as its subsidiary “Grand Central” that competes against state-owned LNER. Meanwhile, DB's in-house sales channels in Germany refuse to do the same.

**The new EU Proposal for a new Regulation on Rail Passengers' Rights & Obligations Recast COM(2017)0548 from 2017 should finally deliver impartial solutions.**

Nick Brooks states: “European Parliament and Council *still have the opportunity* to affect the new COM(2017)0548 proposal. On this specific issue, the proposal is still much too vague”.

**Passenger transparency should be the biggest priority.** No operator should face sales obstacles when running on European rail networks. **EU institutions should introduce a clear framework ensuring that ALL rail ticket options can be purchased at ALL sales channels.**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dn.no/samferdsel/slutt-med-billettsalg-fra-nsb-pa-stasjonene/2-1-440945>