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REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL

on the implementation and results of Regulation (EU) 2021/782 on rail passengers' rights and obligations

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction 2

2. Implementation and results of Regulation (EU) 2021/782 3

2.1. Exemptions (Article 2) 3

2.2. Equal treatment (Article 5) 6

2.3. Carriage of bicycles (Article 6) 7

2.4. Real-time travel information (Article 10) 9

2.5. Through-tickets (Article 12) 11

2.6. The right to self-rerouting (Article 18(3)) 15

2.7. Compensation - Force majeure (Article 19(10)) 17

2.8. Common form for reimbursement and compensation requests (Articles 18(7) and 19(6)) 19

2.9. Major disruptions and contingency planning (Article 20(6)) 19

2.10. Persons with disabilities or reduced mobility (Chapter V) 21

2.11. Complaint-handling and enforcement (Article 28 and Chapter VII) 24

3. Conclusions 29

ANNEX A OVERVIEW OF THE UPTAKE OF EXEMPTIONS UNDER REGULATION (EU) 2021/782 30

ANNEX B COMPARISON WITH MEMBER STATE EXEMPTIONS UNDER REGULATION (EC) NO 1371/2007 31

1. INTRODUCTION

Regulation (EU) 2021/782 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2021 on rail passengers' rights and obligations ([1]) ('the Regulation') entered into force on 7 June 2021 and has applied since 7 June 2023. It repealed and replaced Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 on rail passengers' rights and obligations which entered into force in 2009 ([2]). The Regulation amended and introduced provisions on: exemptions (Article 2), equal treatment (Article 5), the carriage of bicycles (Article 6), real-time travel information (Article 10), through-tickets (Article 12), a right to self-routing (Article 18(3)), *force majeure* (Article 19(10)), the common form for reimbursement and compensation requests (Articles 18(7) and 19(6)), major disruptions and contingency plans (Article 20(6)), the rights of persons with disabilities or reduced mobility (Chapter V) and complaint-handling and enforcement (Article 28 and Chapter VII).

Article 39 of the Regulation requires the Commission to report by 7 June 2026 to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation and the results of the Regulation. The purpose of this report is to fulfil this obligation. This report focuses on the new elements introduced by the 2021 revision.

This report is based on information provided pursuant to the Regulation, including reports by railway undertakings on their performance on service quality, and reports from the Member States' national enforcement bodies (NEBs) on their activities ([3]). The report is also based on the notifications submitted by Member States to the Commission under Articles 2(7), 11(4), 31(3) and Article 35(1) of the Regulation.

In addition, this report incorporates findings from a Commission-led supporting study ([4]), which gathered data across all Member States on the implementation of the Regulation. Since the study focused on the practices of the main railway undertaking in each Member State, the references in this report to findings on the application of the rules in a given Member State should be understood as referring to the practices of the main railway undertaking in that Member State, unless stated otherwise.

The findings of this report, in particular regarding through-tickets, are also relevant in the context of a new Commission proposal (COM(2026) 233) extending passenger rights in case of missed rail connections performed under a single ticket bought on one platform as part of a single transaction.

([1]) Regulation (EU) 2021/782 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2021 on rail passengers' rights and obligations (recast), OJ L 172, 17.5.2021, p. 1.

([2]) See Article 41 of the Regulation. Only Article 6(4) related to procurement procedures for new or major upgraded rolling stock for the carriage of bicycles applies as of 7 June 2025.

([3]) It follows from Article 32(3) of the Regulation that every two years the national enforcement bodies shall publish reports with statistics on their activity, including on penalties applied by 30 June of the following calendar year. Those reports shall be made available on the website of the European Union Agency for Railways.

([4]) Supporting study for the Report on the implementation and results of Regulation (EU) 2021/782 on rail passengers' rights and obligations by Ramboll Management Consulting A/S, Milieu Consulting SRL, and Transport & Mobility Leuven.

2. IMPLEMENTATION AND RESULTS OF REGULATION (EU) 2021/782

2.1. Exemptions (Article 2)

Article 2 of the Regulation defines its scope by setting out which rail journeys and services fall under the Regulation. It also specifies which rail passenger services Member States may exempt from particular rules under the Regulation. The reasons for exemptions must be included in notifications to the Commission. The 2021 revision of the exemption regime was intended to limit the excessive use of exemptions under the previous rules, progressively extend the Regulation's coverage to more services, and ensure that passengers' rights are more consistent and predictable. Member States must notify any such exemptions to the European Commission and provide the reasons for granting them ([5]).

An overview of exemptions per Member State under the current Regulation can be found in **Annex A**. A comparison of exemptions taken up per service and per Member State between Regulation (EU) 2021/782 and Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 can be found in **Annex B**.

Out of 27 Member States, two - Cyprus and Malta - have no railway network. Six Member States ([6]) with a railway network have not made use of any exemption. The remaining 19 Member States use the exemptions: the majority to a limited extent, and a smaller group more extensively ([7]).

Under Article 2(4) of Regulation (EU) 2021/782, the possibility of applying exemptions linked to **long-distance domestic rail passenger services** is limited to Member States that had already relied on a comparable exemption for those services under the previous Regulation up until 2024. In addition, the new Regulation has reduced the number of provisions that can be exempted for these services ([8]) and the extension can only be renewed once until 2029. In principle, this would have enabled up to ten Member States to maintain exemptions for these services until 2029 ([9]). However, only five Member States have notified that they will continue to apply the exemptions until 2029 ([10]).

This suggests that reliance on national exemptions for domestic long-distance rail services has significantly decreased in practice under Regulation (EU) 2021/782, which in turn could support a broader and more consistent application of passenger rights across Member States. At the same time, the actual scope of the exemptions varies between these five Member States ([11]).

In addition, the Regulation also allows Member States – as under the previous Regulation – to exempt (sub)urban and regional rail passenger services from the Regulation ([12]), but

([5]) Article 2 *(Scope)* paragraph (7) of the Regulation.
(6) BE, EE, EL, ES, IE, SI.
([7]) See Annex A.
([8]) Namely, Articles 15 *(Advance payments)*, Article 17 *(Liability for delays, missed connections and cancellations)* and Article 19 *(Compensation)*, Article 20 *(Assistance), in particular* points (a) and (b) of paragraph 2 thereof, and Article 30 *(Information to passengers about their rights)* paragraph 2 of the Regulation.
([9]) BG, EE, HU, IE, LV, LT, PL, PT, RO, SK.
([10]) BG, HU, PT, RO, SK.
([11]) A comprehensive overview of the national exemptions under Regulation (EU) 2021/782 can be found on the Commission's website: https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-themes/passenger-rights/rail-passenger-rights_en.
([12]) Article 2 *(Scope)* paragraph 6(a) of the Regulation.

with the exception of an increased number of mandatory core provisions from which there is no exemption and which must always apply as a consequence ([13]). There are comparatively more mandatory provisions for regional rail passenger services than for (sub)urban services ([14]).

Regional rail passenger services are subject to exemptions ([15]) in 12 out of 25 Member States. The same Member States have also made use of exemptions for **(sub)urban rail passenger services** ([16]).

In this regard, at the time 18 Member States ([17]) made use of the possibility under Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 to exempt (sub)urban and regional rail passenger services. This confirms the previously observed trend in long-distance domestic services that fewer Member States make use of the possibilities to exempt services under the new Regulation.

Four Member States have exempted (sub)urban services from most of the Regulation's provisions, therefore ensuring the application of the Regulation's core mandatory provisions ([18]). In three other Member States, a similar approach to exemptions is used (applying the core mandatory provisions), with the notable difference that some other non-mandatory provisions also continue to apply ([19]). Another group of five Member States have opted for more targeted, provision-specific exemptions ([20]). These trends are broadly confirmed for the same Member States when it comes to the exemptions for regional rail passenger services ([21]).

Seven Member States have exempted **international rail services to third countries** from the application of the current Regulation ([22]), compared to eight Member States under the previous Regulation. Moreover, 15 Member States have made use of the exemption **for services operated strictly for historic or touristic purposes** ([23]). In all of these countries, historic or touristic services are exempted from the application of the Regulation overall,

([13]) See Article 2 *(Scope)* paragraph 8 of the Regulation. In particular, this concerns Article 5 *(Non-discriminatory contract conditions and tariffs)*, Article 11 *(Availability of tickets and reservations)*, Article 13 (*Liability for passengers and luggage)*, Article 14 *(Insurance and coverage of liability)*, Article 21 *(Right to transport)*, Article 22 *(Information to persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility)*, Article 27 *(Personal security of passengers)* and Article 28 *(Complaints)* of the Regulation.

([14]) Article 5 *(Non-discriminatory contract conditions and tariffs)*, Article 6 *(Bicycles)*, Article 11 *(Availability of tickets and reservations)*, Article 12 *(Through-tickets)*, Article 13 (*Liability for passengers and luggage)*, Article 14 *(Insurance and coverage of liability)*, Article 18 *(Reimbursement and re-routing)* paragraph 3, Article 21 *(Right to transport)*, Article 22 *(Information to persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility)*, Article 23 *(Assistance at railway stations and on board)*, Article 24 *(Conditions under which assistance is provided)*, Article 25 *(Compensation in respect of mobility equipment, assistive devices and assistance dogs)*, Article 26 *(Staff training)*, Article 27 *(Personal security of passengers)* and Article 28 *(Complaints)*. However, exemption of regional rail passenger from the application of Articles 12(1) and 18(3) may apply until 7 June 2028 (see Article 2(8) of the Regulation).

([15]) AT, BG, DE, FI, FR, HU, LU, PL, PT, RO, SE, SK.

([16]) AT, BG, DE, FI, FR, HU, LU, PL, PT, RO, SE, SK.

([17]) AT, BG, DE, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, LT, LU, LV, PL, PT, RO, SE, SK.

([18]) HU, PT, RO, SK.

([19]) FR, LU, PL.

([20]) AT, BG, DE, FI, SE.

([21]) AT is the only Member State that distinguishes between urban and suburban rail passenger services. In Austria the exemption regime for suburban rail passenger services is generally aligned with the exemptions for regional rail passenger services.

([22]) BG, CZ, FI, HU, LV, PL, RO. The scope of the exemptions and the applicability to all or specific third countries may differ.

([23]) BG, CZ, FI, FR, DE, HU, IT, LV, LT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SK, SE.

except for Articles 13 *(Liability for passengers and luggage)* and 14 *(Insurance and coverage of liability)*.

Six Member States have exempted the applicability of Article 10 of the Regulation because it is not technically feasible for infrastructure managers to distribute real-time data to railway undertakings, ticket vendors, tour operators or station managers ([24]). In all cases the exemption applies until 7 June 2030 (Article 2(5) of the Regulation).

Eight Member States have made use of the possibility to apply **a longer pre-notification period of 36 hours instead of 24 hours for assistance to persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility** ([25]). In all cases the exemption applies until 30 June 2026, in line with the maximum period allowed for this exemption under Article 24(a), third subparagraph of the Regulation. In the majority of Member States, the maximum pre-notification period of 24 hours has already applied since the entry into application on 7 June 2023. In Denmark, the scope of the exemption is narrower, as it applies only to cross-border rail services to Germany rather than to all rail passenger services.

It follows from the above that the use of exemptions under the Regulation is relatively widespread but varies significantly in scope. Several exemption options are used by a sizeable number of Member States, notably those concerning urban, suburban and regional services, as well as the option for rail services operated strictly for historic or touristic purposes. By contrast, other exemption possibilities, such as those relating to long-distance domestic rail services and international rail services to third countries, are taken up by a smaller group of Member States.

If Member States decide to exempt certain rail services from the application of certain provisions of this Regulation, they must inform the Commission accordingly. When providing this information, Member States must present the reasons for granting such exemptions. Recital 10 of the Regulation clarifies that, when informing the Commission about exemptions that have been granted, Member States should also explain the measures which they have taken or envisage taking to comply with the obligations under the Regulation when the exemptions concerned expire. 26 Member States ([26]) have notified the Commission of national implementing measures, including exemptions that they had granted in accordance with the Regulation.

In comparison with the approach under the previous Regulation, this suggests a shift towards a more structured and differentiated use of exemptions. Under the earlier framework, exemptions were widely used across Member States and service categories, and were frequently broad in scope, with some also renewable over long periods. Under the current framework, exemptions continue to exist, particularly for urban, suburban and regional services, but there is a clearer distinction between a limited group of more extensive users ([27]) and a growing set of Member States making little ([28]) or (almost) ([29])

([24]) AT, HR, HU, LV, PL, RO.
([25]) BG, CZ, HR, DK, DE, HU, LV, RO.
([26]) Additionally, to 25 Member States with a railway network, one Member State without a railway network (MT) notified implementing measures to the Commission, the other (CY) did not do so yet. In particular, a NEB has to be designated to ensure the monitoring and enforcement of the obligations in the Regulation with regard to ticket vendors and tour operators that might be established on the territory of a Member State with no railway network.
([27]) BG, HU, RO.
([28]) AT, CZ, DE, FI, FR, HR, LU, LV, PL, PT, SE, SK.
([29]) In particular, several Member States only exempted from the Regulation services that are strictly operated for historic or touristic purposes.

no use ([30]) of derogations. In addition, exemptions are more often framed as targeted, provision-specific carve-outs or time-limited postponements, rather than broad, open-ended exclusions, which suggests a gradual narrowing of the role of exemptions and a corresponding expansion of the Regulation's reach in practice.

2.2. Equal treatment (Article 5)

Article 5 of the Regulation requires railway undertakings, ticket vendors and tour operators to offer contract conditions and tariffs without direct or indirect discrimination based on the passenger's nationality (of a Member State) or the provider's place of establishment in the EU. This provision is without prejudice to social tariffs and also applies to reservations under Article 11 of the Regulation. Similar non-discrimination provisions already existed for other modes of transport before the entry into force of the Regulation, whereas in the context of rail travel, recourse had to be made to the general non-discrimination provision of the Treaty (Article 18 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU).The introduction of Article 5 therefore increases legal certainty. In addition, this Article is one of the core mandatory provisions of the Regulation which cannot be exempted for (sub)urban and regional rail passenger services, nor can it be exempted for long-distance domestic services.

Based on the available evidence gathered in the context of the supporting study, there appears to be no direct discrimination based on nationality in any Member State. The consulted railway undertakings confirmed that, while different tariffs may apply (e.g. a social tariff, group discount, a price increase close to the date of travel, different prices according to the ticket vendor), no discrimination or different pricing is applied on the basis of nationality.

At the same time, there are also indications in the supporting study that non-nationals of a Member State may be subject to different treatment in practice due to the requirements to ensure access social tariffs, e.g. requiring national certifications. This may potentially limit access to such discounts for passengers who are not nationals of the Member State concerned, as even though they would usually qualify for the discount (e.g. because they are a person with a disability or a person with reduced mobility or a student), they may not have the national certification required to buy a discounted ticket. In accordance with the case law of the Court of Justice of the EU ([31]), each case concerning social tariffs for residents must be assessed individually and may be deemed acceptable under EU law if it is justified by objective considerations of public interest, independent of the nationality of the persons concerned, and the measure is proportionate to the objective pursued.

NEB reports under Article 32 of the Regulation from three Member State ([32]) mention Article 5 under the description of their enforcement activities. However, there are currently no complaints, investigations or penalties explicitly linked to Article 5 of the Regulation. Only one NEB report ([33]) lists 14 complaints as 'Discrimination of passengers based on nationality' out of 647 Regulation-related incidents in 2024, but there are no details on outcomes, investigations or penalties under the Regulation. Another NEB ([34]) report lists Article 5 of the Regulation under penalties but makes no mention of sanctions. This aligns

([30]) BE, DK, EE, EL, ES, IE, IT, LT, NL, SI.
([31]) See e.g. judgment of 1 October 2009, Gottwald, C-103/08, EU:C:2009:597, paras. 27 and 30.
([32]) BE, CZ, PT.
([33]) PT.
([34]) BE.

with interviews held in the context of the supporting study, indicating that discrimination issues based directly on nationality are rare or entirely absent.

2.3. Carriage of bicycles (Article 6)

The Regulation strengthens the pre-existing right to bicycle carriage under Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 by establishing that passengers shall be entitled to take bicycles on board (for a reasonable fee where appropriate). This includes the right to make a reservation for bicycle carriage on trains for which reservations are required, and the provision of remedies for unjustified denial of reserved spaces (re-routing under Article 18, compensation under Article 19, assistance under Article 20(2) of the Regulation). The Regulation further introduces stowage obligations (the use of designated spaces where available, otherwise passenger-supervised stowage that prevents harm to others or any hindrance to operations). Railway undertakings are also required to publish capacity limits and conditions on websites and in stations, applying the technical specifications for interoperability of telematics applications for passenger services. The Regulation also introduces a requirement that, as from 7 June 2025, procurement procedures for new rolling stock or major upgrades necessitating a new vehicle authorisation for placing on the market (excluding restaurant, sleeping or couchette cars) must incorporate an adequate number of dedicated spaces for assembled bicycles (as opposed to folded ones only) within train compositions. Furthermore, Article 6(5) and (6) permit railway undertakings or competent authorities under Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 to adopt plans for bicycle carriage following public consultation. In the absence of such plans or where the plans do not determine a number of dedicated spaces for assembled bicycles, a default of at least four dedicated spaces per train composition applies. This requirement can be subject to objectively justified exceptions (e.g. seasonal ski demand on low-bicycle routes), while Member States may impose higher minima for certain types of services.

The provisions of Article 6 can be **exempted** for urban and suburban rail passenger services (Article 2(6)(a)), international services of which a significant part operates outside the EU (Article 2(6)(b)), and services operated strictly for historical or touristic use (Article 2(2)). However, the provisions of Article 6 cannot be exempted and always apply fully to regional rail passenger services (Article 2(8), second subparagraph) and long-distance rail passenger services, which are defined as non-urban, non-suburban, and non-regional (Article 3(15)). This ensures that bicycle carriage requirements remain mandatory for these core network services. Overall, the possibility to exempt this provision has not been widely used across Member States: for urban or suburban rail services, exemptions were notified by seven Member States ([35]), whereas exemptions were notified by seven Member States ([36]) in relation to international services of which a significant part, including at least one scheduled station stop, is operated outside the EU.

In terms of findings, the supporting study suggests that five Member States require railway undertakings to develop **bicycle plans** ([37]). In two Member States, railway undertakings have developed such plans without national requirements ([38]). The number of bicycle spaces is outlined in the bicycle plans of railway undertakings operating in four Member

([35]) AT, BG, FR, HU, PT, RO and SK. For FR, the notified exemption does not apply to Article 6(3) and (4) of the Regulation.

([36]) BG, CZ, FI, HU, LV, PL,RO.

([37]) DE (as of December 2025), ES, FR, HU, LU; Art. 6(5) of the Regulation allows Member States to require competent authorities and railway undertakings operating on their territory to establish these plans.

([38]) NL and DE (in DE there were bicycle plans before the national legal requirement of having a plan started to apply).

States ([39]). The supporting study indicates that these plans were established in consultation with the public and relevant representative organisations.

Based on the available information, it also seems that one Member State (France) has passed **national legislation which sets a higher minimum number of bicycle spaces**: eight spaces for new and renovated trains destined for open access services, services of national interest and certain regional services ([40]).

The supporting study also found that the **minimum number of four bicycle spaces** is respected by incumbent railway undertakings operating in 17 Member States ([41]). In specific circumstances, however**,** fewer than four bicycle spaces may be available in services provided by railway undertakings in 14 Member States ([42]). This may be, for example, due to limited capacity on certain trains, routes or services, or because of limits set during specific seasons or when there is overcrowding. The minimum number of bicycle spaces made available by each railway undertaking may also vary according to the train or service. At the same time, in some situations, more than four bicycle spaces may be available in services provided by incumbent railway undertakings in 11 Member States ([43]). This may be, for example, when newer rolling stock is deployed.

As Article 6(4) of the Regulation came into effect in June 2025, in almost all Member States with rail services, railway undertakings which were assessed in the supporting study appear to now take minimum bicycle space requirements into account when **procuring** new rolling stock.

The supporting study also indicates that railway undertakings in nearly all Member States require a **fee** to transport a bicycle onboard a train. These fixed or variable fees are typically within the range of EUR 1.50 to EUR 7.95. Most railway undertakings also require **prior reservations**, particularly for services where seat reservations are mandatory.

Most railway undertakings covered by the supporting study appear to impose some form of **operational restriction** (e.g. peak hours, seasonal rules, on bus replacement services), including in relation to the weight and dimensions of transported bicycles (e.g. restrictions on cargo bikes or 'fatbikes').

In summary, there appears to be a generally good level of implementation that has also created a positive momentum to boost the carriage of bicycles on trains.

Based on the NEB reports, there has been a low incidence of bicycle-related complaints in the reviewed Member States. Two NEBs ([44]) each recorded two complaints, while another NEB ([45]) recorded one complaint; one NEB ([46]) indicated that 0,7% of the complaints it received were on bicycles. Another NEB ([47]) is monitoring whether information on bicycle carriage is displayed on the websites of carriers and has planned enforcement activities in the future. On the general monitoring of Article 6 of the Regulation by NEBs, continuous

([39]) DE, FR, HU, NL.
([40]) *Code des transports, Article D1272-5*, as inserted by the *Décret n 2021-41 du 19 janvier 2021 relatif à l'emport de vélos non démontés à bord des trains de voyageurs*.
([41]) BE, CZ, DE, DK, EE, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, PT, RO, SI, SK.
([42]) BE, BG, DE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, NL, PL, SE, SI.
([43]) BE, DE, EE, EL, FI, FR, HU, LU, LV, PL,PT.
([44]) BE, PT.
([45]) LT.
([46]) IT.
([47]) CZ.

monitoring is necessary and, where relevant, action must be taken on the minimum number of bicycles on trains and the information to passengers on the conditions for the carriage of bicycles.

2.4. Real-time travel information (Article 10)

Article 10 of the Regulation introduced the possibility to have access to real-time information on delays, reservations and availability to make the rail ticketing market more dynamic and to encourage the sale of more innovative tickets. This possibility should enable different rail carriers, ticket vendors and tour operators to sell bundled tickets from different carriers and for a variety of connections. Furthermore, the article removes the former discrimination between passengers where only those who bought the ticket directly from the railway undertaking obtain full information about delays (occurring in real time, if the carrier offers such information, for example in an app) and further connection possibilities to continue a journey.

Article 10 of the Regulation, building on Article 10 of Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007, contains two grounds for data-sharing between different actors in the wider rail sector. Firstly, it obliges infrastructure managers to distribute real-time train arrival/departure data to railway undertakings, ticket vendors, tour operators and station managers. Secondly, railway undertakings must provide other railway undertakings, ticket vendors and tour operators that sell their services with access to minimum travel information (Annex II, Parts I-II) and access to operations on reservation systems (Annex II Part III). As mentioned above, Member States may exempt this Article until 7 June 2030 if it is technically not feasible for the infrastructure manager to comply with the requirement to share real-time traffic data according to the rules set by Article 10.

If it is technically impossible for infrastructure managers to present real-time traffic data (i.e. this data cannot be provided to any entity), then a Member State may apply an exemption from this obligation until 2030. However, the Member State has to re-assess the situation and report to the European Commission every two years. This reporting obligation was introduced to make the difficulties transparent and to help accelerate the search for solutions to such technical problems.

In terms of the distribution of real-time data by infrastructure mangers under Article 10(1) of the Regulation, six Member States ([48]) have notified the Commission of a full **exemption to this Article until 2030**. Certain other Member States have notified specific exemptions to this Article for urban and suburban services ([49]); regional services ([50]); international services beyond the EU ([51]); and services for historic or touristic use ([52]).

In relation to the obligation imposed on **infrastructure managers** by Article 10(1) of the Regulation, the supporting study indicates widespread distribution of real-time traffic information to railway undertakings, but uneven provision of real-time information to other actors. According to the study, infrastructure managers appear to give real-time traffic information to railway undertakings in 22 Member States ([53]); to station managers

([48]) AT, HR, HU, LV, PL and RO.
([49]) FR, LU, PT, SK.
([50]) FR, LU, PT, SK.
([51]) BG, CZ, FI.
([52]) BG, CZ, DE, FI, FR, IT, LT, NL, PT, SE, SK.
([53]) BE, BG, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK.

in 11 Member States ([54]); to ticket vendors in 12 Member States ([55]); and tour operators in 10 Member States ([56]). The study also shows that infrastructure managers provide data free of charge in 12 Member States ([57]). Evidence of contractual relationships for the provision of such data was reported in some Member States ([58]). In France, the infrastructure manager displays data in two forms. The first is through open data, which is free of charge for all actors who wish to access it. In addition, the infrastructure manager also offers different types of data which can be integrated directly into the systems of each actor, such as ticket vendors and tour operators. This type of data is not mandatory for these ticket distributors, although the infrastructure manager encourages its use and availability.

As regards Article 10(2) of the Regulation, which obliges **railway undertakings** to provide other railway undertakings, ticket vendors and tour operators that sell their services with access to a minimum of travel information as set by the Regulation, it follows from Article 2(5) of the Regulation that an exemption by a Member State extends to all the provisions of Article 10. Hence, the same Member States that exempted Article 10(1) of the Regulation are also exempted from the requirements of Article 10(2) of the Regulation.

The available evidence from the supporting study indicates that in eight Member States, railway undertakings share the required information with other railway undertakings ([59]); in eight Member States with ticket vendors ([60]) and in five Member States with tour operators ([61]). The evidence further indicates that pre-journey information has been shared in 11 Member States ([62]); journey-related information in seven Member States ([63]); and access to the operations on reservation systems in 10 Member States ([64]). As regards charges, at least some fees are imposed by railway undertakings in two Member States ([65]), while access is free in 12 Member States ([66]). Formal contracts or other arrangements with railway undertakings for minimum travel information have been reported in four Member States ([67]).

The NEB reports indicate that some NEBs ([68]) have received complaints on information without specifying whether the complaint related to real-time traffic information. One NEB ([69]) has highlighted its enforcement activities on this issue in its report.

([54]) BE, BG, DE, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, RO, SE,SI.
([55]) BE, CZ, DE, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, RO, SE, SI.
([56]) BE, CZ, DE, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, SE, SI.
([57]) BE, BG, CZ, DK, ES, FI, IE, LT, PT, SE, SI, SK.
([58]) DE, EE, PT, RO, SK, SI. For FR, whilst no information could be obtained on the matter, the fact that the infrastructure manager charges the distribution of certain real-time data suggests that some contractual arrangements might exist.
([59]) CZ, DE, LT, LU, NL, SE, SI, SK.
([60]) CZ, DE, LT, NL, PL, SE, SI,SK.
([61]) CZ, DE, NL, SE, SI.
([62]) BE, CZ, DE, DK, LT, LU, NL, PT, SE, SI, SK.
([63]) BE, DE, NL, PL, PT, SI, SK.
([64]) BE, DE, DK, LU, NL, PL, PT, SE, SI, SK.
([65]) FR, NL.
([66]) CZ, DK, FR, HU, LT, LU, NL, PL, RO, SE, SI, SK.
([67]) LU, PT, SI, SK.
([68]) BE, BG, EL, ES, HR, PL, RO.
([69]) EL.

2.5. Through-tickets (Article 12)

2.5.1. Obligation to offer through-tickets for sole railway undertakings

Article 12(1) of the Regulation introduced a new obligation for long-distance or regional rail passenger services operated by a 'sole railway undertaking' ([70]) to be offered as a through-ticket ([71]) by those undertakings. The aim of this measure is to ensure more comprehensive protection of passengers who are confronted with missed connections during their journey and to increase the availability of through-tickets on the market. In particular, passengers with a through-ticket who miss a connection between rail services covered by that ticket have the right to be offered the choice between reimbursement of the ticket price or journey continuation/re-routing to the final destination; the right to compensation (except where the ticket was reimbursed); and the right to assistance (refreshments, meals, accommodation) ([72]).

Findings from the supporting study show that in all Member States where rail services are available, railway undertakings that qualify as a 'sole railway undertaking' generally offer journeys on their own long-distance and regional rail passenger services as a through-ticket. This overall compliance may be explained by the narrow scope of the obligation which is limited to services of a 'sole railway undertaking', i.e. of the same railway undertaking or of several undertakings under the same full ownership.

Furthermore, some particular features have been identified in some Member States. For example, in Luxembourg, second-class rail travel on passenger services operated by the main railway undertaking is free of charge and does not require a (through-)ticket ([73]). In the Netherlands, a national check-in and check-out system is in place. Passengers' journeys start when they check in at the station of departure and end when they check out at the station of the final destination, regardless of any transfers, the type of rail services used or changes of railway undertaking. In practice, this appears to function as a through-ticketing system.

2.5.2. Cooperation for other rail passenger services

For rail passenger services other than long-distance or regional services operated by sole railway undertakings, Article 12(1) of the Regulation states that railway undertakings shall make all reasonable efforts to offer through-tickets and shall cooperate with each other to that end.

As regards urban and suburban rail passenger services, the findings of the supporting study show that through-tickets are also offered for these services operated by railway undertakings in 17 Member States ([74]). They even appear to be offered by the main railway

([70]) The term 'sole railway undertaking' not only includes services of the same railway undertaking, but also of all railway undertakings which are either wholly owned by the same owner, or which are wholly owned subsidiary undertakings of one of the railway undertakings involved.

([71]) A through-ticket is defined in Art. 3(35) of Directive 2012/34/EU of 21 November 2012 establishing a single European railway area as '*a ticket or tickets representing a transport contract for successive railway services operated by one or more railway undertakings*.' See also Article 3(9) of Regulation (EU) 2021/782.

([72]) Article 12 *(Through-tickets)*, paragraph 3 of the Regulation.

([73]) Luxembourg exempted domestic regional rail passenger services from the application of Article 12(1) of the Regulation until June 2028. See the supporting study for the Report on the implementation and results of Regulation (EU) 2021/782 on rail passengers' rights and obligation, Section 2.6.4.1 *Availability of through tickets* in the final report.

([74]) BE, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, HR, HU, IE, LV, NL, RO, SE, SI, SK.

undertaking in two Member States that notified an exemption to Article 12(1) of the Regulation for (sub)urban services ([75]). These cases indicate that through-tickets may be offered in practice more widely for these services than might be inferred from the exemption framework alone. Conversely, through-tickets for (sub)urban services do not seem to be available in three Member States that did not notify an exemption to Article 12(1) of the Regulation ([76]).

As regards domestic rail travel (i.e. within a single Member State), evidence was found of through-ticketing schemes covering several railway undertakings in a limited number of Member States:

- In Czechia, under the *Oneticket* system, regardless of the number of railway undertakings, the entire journey is considered as a single transport contract when it is carried out within the railway network of the country. Passenger rights for travel disruption apply ([77]).

- In Germany, railway undertakings participate in a common fare system under the *Deutschlandtarif*. Tickets issued for a journey consisting of directly adjacent rail services of undertakings participating in the *Deutschlandtarif*, including temporary passes such as the monthly Deutschlandticket, are considered to be a through-ticket under the Regulation. The Deutschlandtarif mainly concerns regional and (sub)urban rail passenger services provided by around 50 public and private railway undertakings and does not include long-distance services from e.g. DB Fernverkehr AG, Flixtrain or Eurostar ([78]).

- In Hungary, all tickets for domestic journeys are considered as through-tickets, including tickets for journeys covering several different railway undertakings. Most domestic passenger rail services, however, are operated by MÁV and GYSEV. The latter operates only some railway services in the north-west of the country. GYSEV is also partially Hungarian state owned, like MÁV ([79]).

- In Poland, PKP Intercity cooperates with nine regional railway undertakings to offer joint tickets that integrate fares (*Wspolny Bilet*, or WB). The WB ticket does not extend to journeys on TLK ([80]) or Intercity (IC) trains in sleeper or couchette cars, or to rail services operated by railway undertakings who decided not to take part in this cooperation ([81]). In the event of delays or other obstacles causing missed connections, passengers can obtain a delay certificate for conditional continuation of their journey on the next available train of the participating railway undertaking, subject to seat availability, with a right to refund or compensation from the issuing railway undertaking for the whole integrated fare ([82]). The scheme does not,

([75]) HU, SK.
([76]) IT, LT, PL.
([77]) https://oneticket.cz.
([78]) See https://www.deutschlandtarifverbund.de/ueber-uns/ as well as parts A and C of the fare conditions (*Tarifbedingungen*; version of 14 December 2025).
([79]) https://www.mavcsoport.hu/sites/default/files/upload/page/vasuti_uzletszabalyzat_25.10.01.pdf.
([80]) TLK or *Twoje Linie Kolejowe* are long-distance trains with more stops and lower speeds than Intercity trains.
([81]) https://kolejedolnoslaskie.pl/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Zalacznik-nr-2-do-ZW-WB_dane-przewoznikow.pdf.
([82])https://www.intercity.pl/pl/dokumenty/wspolny-bilet/tekst_ujednolicony_ZW-WB_zm_1-20_2507_2025.pdf.

however, cover some independent railway undertakings active on the Polish market such as RegioJet and Leo Express ([83]).

- In Sweden, *Resplus* allows passengers the possibility to combine travel with several transport operators (train, bus, ferry, etc.) under one Resplus ticket, thanks to cooperation between Sweden's public transport operators. Every train that starts or ends in Sweden is covered by Resplus. In case of a missed connection during a Resplus journey, the *Kom-Fram-Garanti* (arrival guarantee) applies. This means that the transport operator causing the passenger to miss their connection is liable for: ensuring that the passenger can continue their journey; providing alternatives for rebooking; offering accommodation, food and beverages; and giving a partial or full reimbursement or compensation for the delay (for combined trips with a total distance of over 150 km), using the same thresholds and values as in the Regulation ([84]).

Domestic cooperation between railway undertakings to offer through-tickets does not seem to be taking place in other Member States. In some cases, this may be explained by the fact that only one railway undertaking currently provides domestic rail passengers on their territory.

Cooperation on cross-border rail passenger services is taking place on a voluntary basis to offer through-tickets for some journeys with one or more connections, but this cooperation does not seem to take place on a systematic basis within the EU ([85]).

2.5.3. Information to passengers on through-tickets

It follows from Article 12(2) of the Regulation that for journeys including one or more connections, the passenger shall be informed prior to purchasing a ticket or tickets whether that ticket or those tickets constitute a through-ticket ([86]). From the passenger's perspective, this requirement is key to understanding and anticipating the level of protection associated with the ticket(s) in case of travel disruption during a journey that affects the passenger's connection between different rail passenger services.

The supporting study for this report found a variety of means through which stakeholders (mainly incumbent railway undertakings) appear to comply with this pre-purchase information requirement. Examples mentioned by stakeholders include a label or notice at different points in time of the online booking process ([87]), oral information from staff at ticket offices, service desks or during telephone sales, and information in the railway undertaking's terms and conditions. At the same time, the study also reports that, in some Member States, passengers are not informed before purchase about whether or not the ticket or tickets constitute a through-ticket. For a couple of Member States, this may be explained by the fact that all domestic tickets purchased in a single transaction are considered as through-tickets, thereby reducing the need to explicitly inform passengers before purchase ([88]). It also follows from the supporting study that in at least one Member

([83]) Wspólny Bilet - Ministerstwo Infrastruktury - Portal Gov.pl.
([84]) https://samtrafiken.se/tjanster/resplus.
([85]) See SWD(2026) 233.
([86]) It follows from recitals 24 and 25 of the Regulation that this information needs to be 'clearly' given.
([87]) For example, only after the passenger has selected the journey and sometimes even only right before payment.
([88]) FI, SE.

State, the main railway undertaking and the passenger representative organisation dissented on whether this information was provided before purchase ([89]).

It would appear, therefore, that passengers may not always be consistently informed before purchase in a clear manner on whether the ticket or tickets they buy for a rail journey constitute a through-ticket. The range of potential means of communication across Member States to provide this information to passengers at different moments in the booking process – if the information is given at all – make it difficult for passengers to navigate the process to obtain the information and understand their rights. This is even more problematic where a passenger performs a journey with several railway undertakings (in the absence of an obligation to provide through-tickets), potentially across several Member States.

One NEB report mentions a complaint related to information on through-tickets, without giving any further details ([90]).

2.5.4. Liability for through-tickets

In line with Article 12(3) of the Regulation, and as already mentioned above, where a journey including one or more connections is sold as a through-ticket, the railway undertaking shall be liable to reimburse or reroute ([91]), compensate ([92]) and assist ([93]) the passenger if they miss one or more connections.

In the supporting study, whilst most stakeholders consulted across the examined Member States could not provide information on the issue, the available evidence, drawn primarily from incumbent railway undertakings, suggests that the vast majority of passengers opt for rerouting when they miss connections on journeys bought with through-tickets ([94]).

The Regulation also takes into account a situation where a railway undertaking, on its own initiative, sells a combination of tickets for a journey involving railway undertakings that are not part of the same railway undertaking, and does so in a single commercial transaction. In that case, there is a general assumption that this constitutes a through-ticket – unless the undertaking informs the passenger, before purchase, that the tickets represent separate transport contracts ([95]).

Correct information on the rail service is also essential when passengers buy tickets from a ticket vendor or tour operator. Where the ticket vendors or tour operators sell separate tickets as a bundle in a single commercial transaction, they should clearly inform the passenger before purchase that those tickets do not offer the same level of protection as through-tickets, and that those tickets have not been issued as through-tickets by the railway undertaking(s) providing the service. Otherwise, the ticket vendor or tour operator shall be liable to reimburse the total amount paid in that transaction for the ticket or tickets

([89]) In particular, the situation is disputed in the Netherlands: the railway undertaking reports that passengers are informed before finalising the purchase, whereas the passenger organisation considers that they are not systematically informed.
([90]) HU.
([91]) Article 18 *(Reimbursement and re-routing)* of the Regulation.
([92]) Article 19 *(Compensation)* of the Regulation.
([93]) Article 20 *(Assistance)* of the Regulation.
([94]) The supporting study also found that some passengers neither ask for reimbursement nor for re-routing but simply abandon their journey without asking for reimbursement despite being eligible. For example, Germany estimated that: 60-70% of passengers opt for rerouting, 10-15% for reimbursement, 20-30% for compensation and around 5% request assistance.
([95]) See Article 12 *(Through-tickets)* paragraph 4 and recital 24 of the Regulation.

and, moreover, to pay compensation equivalent to 75% of that amount in the event that the passenger misses one or more connections ([96]).

The findings of the supporting study seem to suggest that, in line with the conclusions made in Section 2.5.3 above, where information on the separate contractual nature of the tickets is given to passengers, it is done in various ways either before purchase (e.g. on a website or during the online booking process) or after purchase by a message on the ticket. In some Member States, no evidence could be found that this information was provided, which may be explained in some cases by the fact that all domestic rail passenger services in that Member State are considered as through-tickets.

To add to this complexity, the Regulation provides for an exemption regime under which Member States may, subject to specific conditions, exempt certain rail services ([97]) from the obligations in Articles 18 to 20 of the Regulation (i.e. reimbursement or rerouting, compensation, and assistance). These exemptions apply whether or not the passenger holds a through-ticket. As a result, there can be situations where railway undertakings are required to offer through-tickets for a given service type under Article 12(1), while the same service type is, to some extent, exempted from the corresponding liability rules for missed connections under Articles 18 to 20 ([98]).

Some railway undertakings have entered into multilateral sector agreements to assist passengers if they miss a connection between rail services of different undertakings which are not covered by a through-ticket (e.g. Agreement on Journey Continuation (AJC)[99]), Hop On the Next Available Train (HOTNAT) ([100])). The overall legal setup on liability and information provision to passengers appears to contribute to a situation where passengers have difficulties in knowing their rights in the event of a missed connection during their rail journey ([101]).

One NEB ([102]) report refers to two complaints related to liability for continuous journeys and whether the liability for through-tickets applies. In one case, this was deemed so, whereas this was not in the other case.

2.6. The right to self-rerouting (Article 18(3))

Article 18(3) of the Regulation introduces a right for passengers to 'self-reroute', which means that passengers can not only take the initiative to find an alternative travel plan when the railway undertaking does not (immediately) offer a viable alternative. This also means, more importantly, that passengers can get reimbursed by the railway undertaking for the

([96]) See Article 12 *(Through-tickets)* paragraphs 4 and 5, as well as recital 25 of the Regulation.
([97]) See Article 2 *(Scope)* of the Regulation, and Section 2.1 above.
([98]) For a more detailed analysis of the Member State exemptions applicable to through-tickets, see the supporting study for the Report on the implementation and results of Regulation (EU) 2021/782 on rail passengers' rights and obligations, Section 2.6.4.3 of the final report, on liability rules in the context of through-tickets.
([99]) See the latest information leaflet on the AJC on the website of the International Rail Transport Committee, published in December 2025: https://www.cit-rail.org/media/files/civ-products-april-2025/ajc_leaflet_2025-12-14_en.pdf?cid=437997 (Note: the full agreement is not public).
([100]) See Railteam's website: https://www.railteam.eu/en/services-on-your-journey/hop-on-the-next-available-train-hotnat/. HOTNAT involves only a limited number of high-speed rail operators belonging to Railteam (Deutsche Bahn, Eurostar, ÖBB, SNCF, SBB, SNCB/NMBS and NS). It only covers their high-speed network.
([101]) Targeted revision of Regulation (EU) 2021/782 on rail passengers' rights and obligations Call for Evidence.
([102]) DK.

costs of making their own travel plan. In the absence of such a right, passengers who reroute themselves would be entitled at most to reimbursement of the ticket price and would encounter difficulties in recovering the costs of last-minute arrangements at the applicable day rates (which may be significantly higher than the price of the original ticket when booked).

This provision of the Regulation contains a two-step approach for passengers.

The first subparagraph of Article 18(3) of the Regulation states that the railway undertaking may allow the passenger, at their request, to conclude contracts with other providers of transport services which enable the passenger to reach their final destination under comparable conditions, in which case the railway undertaking shall reimburse the passenger for the costs incurred. This presupposes that the railway undertaking agrees to the passenger's request.

The second subparagraph of Article 18(3) of the Regulation introduced a new right so that if a passenger has not been offered a timely solution by a railway undertaking within 100 minutes in the event of a disruption to their journey, the passenger can organise alternative public transportat by rail, coach or bus and be reimbursed by the undertaking for the 'necessary, appropriate and reasonable' cost of the additional ticket. After 100 minutes have elapsed, the passenger no longer needs the carrier's consent to organise alternative transport.

In seven Member States, **regional rail services** are currently explicitly exempted from the application of Article 18(3) ([103]). This exemption is supposed to expire on 7 June 2028 ([104]). For **urban and suburban services**, Article 18(3) does not apply in ten Member States ([105]). In six Member States ([106]), **international rail services** to third countries are exempted from the application of Article 18.

The supporting study shows a fragmented picture of the application in practice of the first subparagraph of Article 18(3) (i.e. where the consent of the railway undertaking to the passenger's request for self-rerouting is necessary). Whereas a majority of railway undertakings examined in the study appear to allow passengers to arrange their own alternative travel in the event of disruption, the exercise of this right and the corresponding reimbursement of costs may be subject to certain conditions by some of these undertakings. These include the last train of the day operating, long delays or absence of information, the railway's inability to offer a suitable option, or the right to reimbursement may be limited to certain means of transport (rail or bus/coach) or to low-cost alternatives. In a couple of Member States, it is also reported that railway undertakings seem to rely on their own capacity to organise alternatives, and they generally do not reimburse self-arranged transport ([107]). In a few Member States, differing views on the application of this new right have been reported between railway undertakings, on the one hand, and passenger organisations or NEBs on the other ([108]).

([103]) BG, LU, PL, PT, RO, SK, SE (for domestic rail services covering less than 150km). An exemption to Article 18(3) of the Regulation is only allowed until 7 June 2028, in accordance with the last subparagraph of Article 2(8) of the Regulation.
([104]) See Article 2 *(Scope)* paragraph 8, last subparagraph of the Regulation.
([105]) BG, FR, HU, LU, PL, PT, RO, SK, SE for domestic rail services covering less than 150km and AT for urban services.
([106]) BG, CZ, FI, LV, PL, RO.
([107]) FI, RO.
([108]) BG, NL, SI.

As to the second subparagraph of Article 18(3) of the Regulation (i.e. when the railway undertaking's consent is no longer needed after 100 minutes), the majority of railway undertakings claim that they reimburse passengers who exercise their right to self-rerouting. However, the findings of the supporting study alone do not demonstrate whether this right is actually consistently respected in practice.

These findings confirm the observations of ECC-Net pointing to challenges related to the application of Article 18(3) of the Regulation. For example, passengers are also often unaware of the 100-minute time limit and have identified it as impractical in last-train scenarios, night train disruptions, and complex cross-border journeys. ECC-Net also pointed to the lack of air travel as a valid alternative mode of transport for rerouting offers under Article 18(3) of the Regulation ([109]).

One NEB ([110]) observed in its biennial report that there was a greater need for explanations for enforcement, especially for Article 18. The provisions of Article 18 only provide limited possibilities for the passenger to organise their own journey. Another NEB ([111]) noticed during one event where there were several cancellations of long-distance train journeys due to a strike or track fault, passengers were not allowed to choose cost-free re-routing to replace the cancelled journey. After the intervention by the NEB, the railway undertaking took measures to align itself with the rules.

Given the above, the right to self-rerouting introduced by the Regulation does not appear to be consistently applied across the EU. The rules seem to lead to a variety of different reimbursement practices – if they are applied at all - which reinforce the perceived lack of clarity for passengers in relation to this right.

2.7. Compensation - Force majeure (Article 19(10))

Article 19(1) of the Regulation lays down the principle that a passenger is entitled to compensation from the railway undertaking if he or she faces a delay between the places of departure and final destination stated in the ticket or through-ticket for which the cost has not been reimbursed in accordance with Article 18 of the Regulation. The Regulation also sets the minimum compensation for delays, which is set as a percentage of the ticket price ([112]). Article 19(10) of the Regulation exempts railway undertakings from paying delay compensation in three scenarios: (1) if they prove that the delay, missed connection, or cancellation resulted directly from extraordinary circumstances unrelated to railway operations. These extraordinary circumstances may include extreme weather, major natural disasters, or major public health crises like pandemics, despite taking all reasonable measures to avoid or mitigate them; (2) the fault of the passengers; or (3) specific third-party acts (e.g. sabotage, cable theft), not including strikes by a railway undertaking's staff, or acts or omissions by other railway undertakings, infrastructure managers, or station managers. These provisions are unlike Article 17 of Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007, which imposed a strict liability without such exemptions (as confirmed by the Court's case law ([113])). It is also important to note that this 'force majeure' clause only applies to

([109]) Strengthening Rail Passenger Rights in the EU | European Consumer Centers Network.
([110]) DE.
([111]) FI, see https://www.kkv.fi/paatokset/kuluttaja-asiat/kuluttaja-asiamiehen-ratkaisut/rautatieyrityksen-uudelleenreitityskaytannot-kaukojunamatkojen-peruuntuessa-lakon-tai-ratavian-takia/.
([112]) In particular, the minimum compensation is 25% of the ticket price for a delay of 60 to 119 minutes and 50% of the ticket price for a delay of 120 minutes or more.
([113]) Judgment of 26 September 2013, *ÖBB Personenverkehr*, C-509/11, EU:C:2013:613.

compensation and does not affect the application of other passenger rights, such as re-routing and assistance.

No Member State has specifically exempted Article 19(10) of the Regulation. However, some Member States have exempted Article 19 entirely for long-distance rail services ([114]); regional rail services ([115]); urban and suburban rail services ([116]); rail services offered strictly for historic or touristic use ([117]); and international services to third countries ([118]).

The supporting study shows that the use of this exemption varies between Member States. It found that in 13 Member States ([119]) the railway undertakings analysed in the study reportedly do not apply the exemption in practice and pay compensation even where delays, cancellations or missed connections may be linked to extraordinary circumstances. In 10 Member States ([120]), the railway undertakings examined in the study have reported that they have invoked the exemption, with no compensation paid where delays, cancellations or missed connections are caused by events clearly beyond their control (such as severe weather, accidents or security threats).

The study also found that in 19 Member States passengers appear to receive compensation from the undertakings examined when delays, cancellations and missed connections are caused by strikes by the personnel of the railway undertaking, actions by other undertakings using the same infrastructure, or by infrastructure and station managers ([121]). In Greece, only multi-journey card holders are explicitly mentioned as eligible for compensation in strike situations. The study also found that the railway undertakings examined in four Member States ([122]) seem to exclude such delays, cancellations and missed connections from compensation altogether. The railway undertaking examined in Romania offers compensation only in case of strikes, but not for other actions by third parties on the network.

Overall, the available evidence gathered in the context of the supporting study shows that the 'force majeure' clause in Article 19(10) of the Regulation is not consistently applied across the EU. In particular, it would appear that the main railway undertakings in around half of the Member States forego the exemption grounds for paying compensation introduced by the revision of the Regulation in 2021 and continue to pay compensation for the events mentioned in Article 19(10) of the Regulation. Furthermore, it would appear that in a limited number of cases, a passenger's right to continue to receive compensation in the event of delays, cancellations and missed connections caused by strikes by the personnel of the railway undertaking, actions by other undertakings using the same infrastructure, or by infrastructure and station managers, is not applied in practice.

One NEB ([123]) stated in the report that the grounds for exclusion laid down in Article 19(10) of the Regulation led passengers to lodge a complaint more frequently after their claim for compensation was rejected.

([114]) BG, HU, PT, RO, SK.
([115]) AT, BG, FI, HU, LU, PL, PT, RO, SE, SK.
([116]) AT, BG, FI, FR, HU, LU, PL, PT, RO, SE, SK.
([117]) BG, CZ, DE, FI, FR, HU, IT, LT, LV, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SK.
([118]) BG, CZ, FI, LV, RO.
([119]) AT, BE, CZ, DK, EL, ES, FI, HR, IT, LU, NL, SE, SK.
([120]) BG, DE, EE, FR, HU, LT, PL, PT, RO, SI.
([121]) AT, BE, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, PT, SE, SI, SK.
([122]) BG, CZ, HR, PL.
([123]) DE.

2.8. Common form for reimbursement and compensation requests (Articles 18(7) and 19(6))

In accordance with Articles 18(7) and 19(6) of the Regulation, passengers have the right to submit their reimbursement and compensation requests to railway undertakings using a common form. To this end, the Commission adopted Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/949([124]). On the basis of the Annex to that Implementing Regulation, the Commission developed a common form in all official languages of the EU, and which is adapted to the needs of persons with visual disabilities. It is available on the Commission's website ([125]). The common form may be submitted as a physical document or by electronic means ([126]). The form is designed so that passengers can specify the nature of request and provide the necessary details to railway undertakings.

In this respect, the Commission notes a number of specific features related to the scope of empowerment contained in Articles 18 and 19 of Regulation (EU) 2021/782 to adopt implementing rules on this matter.

First, the common form can only be used in relation to railway undertakings and not ticket vendors and tour operators, who may also be liable to reimburse and compensate passengers under the very specific conditions described in Article 12 of Regulation (EU) 2021/782. This is because that provision does not contain an empowerment for the Commission to adopt implementing rules on the matter under that Regulation.

Secondly, railway undertakings may have their own online form or similar system in place on their website or via a mobile application to process reimbursement or compensation requests. These integrated forms or systems should allow for a more efficient and timely handling of requests. At the same time, the empowerment to adopt implementing rules contained in Articles 18 and 19 of the Regulation only allows for the creation of a separate form by the Commission ([127]) and does not provide a basis for regulating the content and presentation of the forms produced by railway undertakings.

One NEB ([128]) mentioned the common form under the enforcement activities in their report.

2.9. Major disruptions and contingency planning (Article 20(6))

Under Article 20(6) of the Regulation, where contingency plans are established pursuant to Article 13a(3) of Directive 2012/34/EU ([129]), the railway undertakings shall coordinate with station managers and infrastructure managers in order to prepare them for major disruption and long delays leading to a considerable number of passengers being stranded

([124]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/949 of 27 March 2024 establishing a common form for rail passengers' reimbursement and compensation requests for delays, missed connections and cancellations of rail services in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2021/782 of the European Parliament and of the Council, OJ L, 2024/949, 2.4.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2024/949/oj

([125]) https://transport.ec.europa.eu/reimbursement-and-compensation-requests-form_en.

([126]) Article 1 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/949.

([127]) In the period of 1 July 2024 to 30 March 2026, these reports have been downloaded 1.718 times on the Commission website, with most of downloads taking place over the last twelve months of this period.

([128]) EL.

([129]) Under that provision, Member States shall require railway undertakings operating passenger services to put in place contingency plans and shall ensure that these contingency plans are properly coordinated to provide assistance to passengers, in the sense of Article 18 of Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007, in the event of a major disruption to services.

in the station. Such contingency plans shall include requirements for the accessibility of alert and information systems.

In terms of exemptions, while long-distance rail services cannot be exempted from the obligation under Article 20(6) of the Regulation, regional rail services have been exempted in eight Member States ([130]); urban and suburban rail services have been exempted in ten Member States ([131]); historical or touristic services have been exempted in 15 Member States ([132]); and international services to third countries have been exempted in seven Member States ([133]).

The available evidence gathered for the supporting study indicates that railway undertakings in 18 Member States ([134]) appear to coordinate with station and infrastructure managers on contingency plans for major disruption, also formally accounting for the accessibility of persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility in alert and information systems. In four Member States, railway undertakings appear to coordinate with station and infrastructure managers, but lack either formal contingency plans or do not consider the issue of accessibility within them ([135]). In four other Member States ([136]) there are no contingency plans in place, or no clear information on the subject was obtained.

Such contingency plans are essential to ensure rapid, coordinated and passenger-focused responses to disruption, including timely information, assistance, and, where necessary, alternative transport arrangements. The question was also raised in the December 2025 meeting of the Expert Group on Passenger Rights (subgroup for the NEBs for rail passenger rights), where NEBs suggested sharing best practices as to how contingency plans are developed in their respective Member State ([137]). Sharing best practice is important for strengthening the quality and consistency of contingency planning across Member States, and for enhancing the overall resilience of the rail system. Contingency planning is an ongoing process rather than a one-off exercise, and several recent accidents in the rail sector have underlined the importance of having robust, tested contingency plans in place, both to protect passengers and to ensure continuity of services when serious disruption occurs.

Contingency planning is mentioned by several NEBs in their reports, referring to monitoring duties for contingency plans ([138]) as well as planned enforcement activities for the upcoming reporting period ([139]). One NEB ([140]) provided information about its activity to compare and examine the relationship between the Regulation and other EU and national legislation that sets requirements for contingency plans.

([130]) BG, HU, LU, PL, PT, RO, SE, SK.
([131]) AT, BG, FR, HU, LU, PL, PT, RO, SE, SK.
([132]) BG, CZ, DE, FI, FR, HU, IT, LT, LV, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SK.
([133]) BG, CZ, FI, HU, LV, PL, RO.
([134]) AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, DK, ES, FR, HU, LI, LT, LU, LV, NL, PL, PT, SI, SK.
([135]) EE, HR, IT, SE.
([136]) EL, FI, IE, RO.
([137]) See the Register of Commission expert groups and other similar entities , Expert group on Passenger Rights (E02861/5).
([138]) DE, EL.
([139]) CZ.
([140]) FI.

2.10. Persons with disabilities or reduced mobility (Chapter V)

One central principle of the EU passenger rights legislation, including rail passenger rights, is to give persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility opportunities for travel comparable to other people by establishing rules for non-discrimination and on assistance during their journey ([141]). Several new provisions in the Regulation enhance the pre-existing provisions on assistance for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility travelling by rail under Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007. Such assistance — provided by railway undertakings and station managers — is indispensable, given that many stations and trains across the EU remain inaccessible to this group. Until full accessibility is achieved across European rail networks, these passengers will continue to depend on dedicated assistance in order to travel.

In order to ensure that appropriate assistance is provided, railway undertakings and station managers often need time to deploy trained staff and proper equipment. Therefore, they may require persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility to pre-notify their assistance needs. A railway undertaking or station manager is only responsible for guaranteeing that a person with a disability or a person with reduced mobility can board the train, to transfer to a connecting rail service for which they have a ticket, or alight from the train if this person pre-notifies their assistance needs in due time. One of the main achievements of the revision of the Regulation in 2021 was to **halve the pre-notification time from 48 hours to 24 hours** ([142]). To allow railway undertakings and station managers to prepare for this change, the Regulation provides for a transition period: Member States may decide to apply a longer pre-notification period of up to 36 hours until 30 June 2026. To this end, they had to notify the Commission of this exemption while also providing information on the measures taken or envisaged to reduce the pre-notification period to 24 hours([143]) . Eight Member States ([144]) notified the Commission that they were using this exemption. Conversely, the supporting study found that several railway undertakings require prenotification times that are less than 24 hours ([145]). However, organisations representing persons with disabilities that replied to the stakeholder consultation undertaken in the context of the supporting study indicated that prenotification processes are often cumbersome and ineffective for many railway undertakings.

([141]) See recital 27 of the Regulation. See also the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council - A European vision for Passengers: Communication on Passenger Rights in all transport modes (COM(2011) 898 final).

([142]) See Article 24(a), first subparagraph of the Regulation.

([143]) See Article 24(a), last subparagraph of the Regulation.

([144]) BG, CZ, HR, DE, HU, LV and RO made full use of this exemption, while DK used it only for cross-border rail services to DE. In case of DE the exemption generally refers to international journeys where different notification period among Member States might have been set. In practice this exemption is applied in difficult individual cases.
However, the BG and CZ incumbent railway undertakings require persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility to pre-notify their assistance needs even 48 or (in case of certain trains in BG) more hours before their journey.
EE did not make use of this exemption, however its incumbent railway undertaking still requires persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility to notify assistance needs 36 hours in advance.

([145]) For example, the Belgian incumbent railway company requires three hours prenotification for services departing from or arriving at the 41 most important railway stations, the Austrian incumbent railway company requires 12 hour prenotification for all domestic services, the Luxembourg incumbent railway company requires one hour prenotification for domestic services (but for evening and night services it requires prenotification no later than 20h30 for same-day departures). In the Netherlands, the incumbent railway company requires one hour for domestic services, but at least 24 hours for international services and 36 hours for services to Germany. In Spain, prenotification of assistance needs is required 30 minutes to 12 hours before departure, depending on the type of station.

The Regulation also introduced the requirement that **where a railway undertaking requires that a person with a disability or a person with reduced mobility be accompanied on board a train**, which is permitted only where strictly necessary to comply with the railway undertaking's non-discriminatory access rules, such as for safety reasons, **the accompanying person is entitled to travel free of charge** and where feasible, be seated next to the person they are accompanying (Article 23(1)(b) read in conjunction with Article 21(2) of the Regulation). Persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility may transport their **assistance dogs** free of charge, in compliance with the relevant national law (Article 23(1)(c) of the Regulation). Stakeholders who responded to the consultation were broadly in agreement that these two provisions had been fully implemented.

The Regulation also provides that where there is no ticket office or no accessible ticketing machine in the station of departure and no other accessible means to purchase a ticket in advance, persons with disabilities are entitled to **buy tickets on board the train at no extra cost** (Article 11(4), first subparagraph of the Regulation). Although railway undertakings could limit or deny this right on justifiable grounds related to security or compulsory train reservation, most of the railway undertakings examined by the supporting study implemented this obligation without any restrictions ([146]). Only in Member States where all railway stations are equipped with accessible ticket machines ([147]), or where the railway undertaking offers several other alternatives (purchase of tickets online, on the phone, or in convenience stores in or near railway stations) ([148]), the railway undertakings do not allow anyone (not even persons with disabilities) to buy tickets on board the train.

The Regulation requires railway undertakings and station managers to pay **compensation for lost or damaged mobility equipment ([149])** based on the replacement or repair cost of the equipment (Article 25(1) of the Regulation), and rapidly make all reasonable efforts to provide immediately necessary temporary replacements for mobility equipment (Article 25(2) of the Regulation). While all the railway undertakings and station managers examined by the supporting study respected the obligation to pay compensation, most incumbent railway undertakings admitted that they cannot offer temporary replacements of mobility equipment.

The Regulation requires railway undertakings and station managers to provide **disability awareness training** to all customer-facing staff. Those who regularly provide direct assistance to passengers with disabilities or reduced mobility must additionally receive targeted training, equipping them with the skills needed to meet these passengers' specific needs (Article 26(1) of the Regulation). While the railway undertakings and station managers examined by the supporting study did implement such training, organisations representing persons with disabilities frequently raise concerns about the quality of the training. They also note that the Regulation does not require railway undertakings or station managers to involve them in designing or delivering these training programmes. Although no such obligation exists, most incumbent railway companies reported cooperating with

([146]) AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, PL, PT, RO, SI, SK.
([147]) The incumbent railway company in NL.
([148]) SE.
([149]) They also have to pay compensation for the loss of, or injury to, assistance dogs used by persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility (See also Article 25 *(Compensation in respect of mobility equipment, assistive devices and assistance dogs*) paragraph 1 of the Regulation).

disability organisations for this purpose, or involving their own staff with disabilities in such training.

The Regulation requires railway undertakings and station managers to **make 'reasonable efforts' to enable persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility to access rail transport at railway stations where there are no staff trained** to provide assistance to them, and the trains they want to board or alight from are also not accompanied by such staff (Article 23(1)(g) of the Regulation). According to organisations representing persons with disabilities this has not led to meaningful improvements in practice. These groups also criticise the Regulation for not requiring continuous assistance at stations staffed with personnel trained to assist persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility whenever trains are running. Instead, help is only required when trained personnel are on duty. The organisations argue that this severely restricts the rights of persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility to equal, independent rail travel and their freedom to choose any train ([150]).

A number of national enforcement bodies have pointed out that **certain provisions** concerning assistance for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility **lack clarity**, which in turn hampers their effective enforcement. The ambiguities highlighted include the definition of a station manager, the criteria for determining when a station or a train can be considered staffed (Article 23(1)(d) to (g)) ([151]), and the precise meaning of the provision guaranteeing free transport for a personal assistant accompanying a person with disabilities (Article 21(1)(a)).

Since the adoption of the previous Regulation on rail passenger rights, the fulfilment of railway undertakings' and station managers' assistance obligations has been significantly shaped by their **non-discriminatory access rules** (Article 23(2)), which must be developed with the active participation of representatives of persons with disabilities (Article 21(1)). The publication of such non-discriminatory access rules could ensure that persons with disabilities can readily familiarise themselves with access and enforce their rights. The supporting study noted, on the basis of desk research conducted by an organisation representing persons with disabilities, that only a handful of railway undertakings and station managers have made the non-discriminatory access rules publicly available on their websites.

A railway undertaking, station manager, ticket vendor or tour operator must provide **information** (including in accessible formats), upon request, about the accessibility of stations and their associated facilities such as parking spaces and shops, as well as trains. In addition, at unstaffed stations accessible information must be displayed so that the passenger knows how to obtain assistance and where the next accessible station can be found (Article 22 of the Regulation). The supporting study's desk research of several railway undertakings' webpages and apps revealed that they provide accessibility information to varying degrees, though organisations representing persons with disabilities were highly critical during the stakeholder consultation of the implementation of Article 22. Only a few (mostly national or regional) organisations representing persons with disabilities took part in the targeted consultation organised in the context of the study, focusing primarily on the practices of incumbent railway undertakings in their Member State. They highlighted multiple issues: incomplete coverage (e.g. details on the

([150]) https://www.edf-feph.org/content/uploads/2021/06/EDF-analysis-of-the-adopted-Rail-Passengers-Righs-Regulation-2021.pdf.

([151])See the Register of Commission expert groups and other similar entities, Expert group on Passenger Rights (E02861/5).

accessibility of stations but not trains), railway homepages are inaccessible to visually impaired users, information is hard to locate on the railway undertaking's homepage, and there is far more content in the Member State's official language(s) than in other languages. As the participation of disability organisations in the consultation was limited, broader input would be necessary to fully evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of the Regulation's rules in this area.

A core principle of disability inclusion is the involvement of persons with disabilities in decisions affecting their lives and leveraging their experiences. Accordingly, the amended service quality standards require railway undertakings to consult organisations representing persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility on how assistance is provided ([152]). The latest reports by railway undertakings about the implementation of their service quality standards that only nine incumbent railway undertakings and one new entrant fulfilled this obligation. Most of them have established permanent platforms for cooperation ([153]), some limit cooperation to investigate together the accessibility of stations and trains ([154]) or involve the organisations in the disability assistance training offered to railway staff ([155]).

Member States may require station managers and railway undertakings operating on their territory to cooperate in establishing and operating **Single Points of Contact for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility**. These Single Points of Contact would be responsible for receiving requests for assistance, forwarding them to the relevant station managers and railway undertakings, and providing information on accessibility. Such an arrangement would ensure that passengers with disabilities or reduced mobility are not required to submit multiple assistance requests, even where their journey involves several railway undertakings (Article 24(f) of the Regulation). So far only one Member State ([156]) has notified to the Commission the national legislation requiring station managers and railway undertakings operating in its territory to establish Single Points of Contacts ([157]).

In their activity reports, almost half of the NEBs ([158]) indicate that they carried out monitoring or enforcement activities (e.g. inspection of information about the accessibility of stations, the provision of assistance at railway station, information on the websites of railway undertakings, disability assistance training), while nine NEBs ([159]) reported receiving complaints about alleged breaches of the rights of persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility.

2.11. Complaint-handling and enforcement (Article 28 and Chapter VII)

2.11.1. Complaint handling by railway undertakings, station managers and ticket vendors/tour operators (Article 28)

The Regulation introduced an improved enforcement framework including new rules on **handling complaints**, such as clear deadlines (Article 28 (2)) and an obligation for legal entities other than railway undertakings to have a procedure to handle complaints,

([152]) See the last point of Annex III of the Regulation.
([153]) The incumbent railway companies of AT, BE, DE, DK, FR, LU, NL, SK .
([154]) The LV incumbent railway company.
([155]) An ES new entrant railway company, Ouigo Spain.
([156]) DE.
([157]) Art 10(a) of the German Railways Act - *Allgemeines Eisenbahngesetz.*
([158]) BE, BG, DE, DK, EL, FR, HR, HU, IT, PT, RO, SK.
([159])AT, DE, EL, ES, HR, IT, PL, PT, SE.

including for managers of stations that handle more than 10 000 passengers per day on average over a one-year period (Article 28 (1)). According to Article 28(1) of the Regulation, passengers may submit a complaint to any railway undertaking or station manager concerning the rights and obligations covered by this Regulation in their respective fields of responsibility. Such a complaint must be submitted within three months of the incident in question. Within one month of receiving the complaint, the addressee shall either give a reasoned reply or, in justified cases, inform the passenger that they will receive a reply within three months of the date of receipt of the complaint. Railway undertakings and station managers shall keep the data necessary to assess the complaint for the duration of the entire procedure to handle the complaint, including the procedures referred to in Articles 33 and 34, and must make that data available to national enforcement bodies upon request. Details of the procedure to handle complaints must be accessible to the public, including to persons with disabilities and to persons with reduced mobility.

The supporting study found that in 15 Member States ([160]) complaints must be submitted within three months of the incident that it concerns. In three Member States ([161]), the incumbent railway undertakings have set a one-year deadline to receive a complaint. In three Member States ([162]), railway undertakings have not set a deadline to submit complaints. In one Member State ([163]), national law establishes a six-month deadline for filing claims regarding domestic transport, but a consumer organisation consulted for the study noted that a three-month deadline is applied in practice. In one Member State ([164]), the deadline to submit a request for reimbursement or compensation in case of delay is 30 days, according to the general conditions of carriage of the incumbent railway undertaking.

Four Member States ([165]) have never made use of an extension period of up to three months for replying to a complaint, 15 Member States ([166]) have used this option only rarely, three Member States ([167]) have sometimes used the extension and one Member State ([168]) uses the extension regularly.

2.11.2. Establishment of national enforcement bodies (Article 31)

Article 31(1) of the Regulation requires that each Member State designates a **body or bodies responsible for the enforcement of this Regulation**. Each body shall take the measures necessary to ensure that the rights of passengers are respected. All Member States but one ([169]) have designated one or several NEBs for the enforcement of rail passenger rights. The designated NEBs should be independent in their organisation, funding decisions, legal structure and decision-making of any infrastructure manager, charging

([160]) BE, CZ, DE, EL, ES, FR, HR, HU, IT, LT, LV, PL, RO, SE, SI. In Belgium, however, the three-month deadline regarding the incumbent railway undertaking in Belgium concerns international services and compensation for delays. Other complaints concerning national services have no fixed deadline. In Italy, however, according to a passengers' association the deadline may vary according to the railway undertaking concerned.
([161]) AT, LU, SK.
([162]) FI, IE, NL.
([163]) BG.
([164]) PT.
([165]) AT, HR, LT, LU.
([166]) BG, CZ, DE, DK, EE, FI, FR, IE, LV, NL, PL, RO, SE, SI, SK.
([167]) ES, HU, IT.
([168]) PT.
([169]) CY. Even though it has no railway network on its territory (like MT), it still needs to monitor and enforce the rules of the Regulation on ticket vendors and tour operators. See Article 31(4) of the Regulation.

body, allocation body or railway undertaking ([170]). A list of the NEBs responsible for the application of Regulation (EU) 2021/782 is available on the Commission's website ([171]).

2.11.3. Enforcement by NEBs (Article 32)

According to Article 32(2) of the Regulation **national enforcement bodies** shall closely monitor compliance with this Regulation. Railway undertakings, station managers, infrastructure managers, ticket vendors and tour operators shall provide the national enforcement bodies with relevant documents and information at their request without undue delay and, in any event, within one month from receipt of the request. Railway undertakings shall give their contact details to the national enforcement body or bodies of the Member States in which they operate (Article 32(4) of the Regulation). The Commission has received no information from NEBs about non-compliance with these requirements.

2.11.3.1. Reporting

Article 32(3) of the Regulation sets the requirement for national enforcement bodies to publish biennial reports with statistics on their activity, including on penalties applied. Those reports shall be made available on the website of the European Union Agency for Railways ([172]). The same website also displays the service quality reports ([173]) of railway undertakings, as already required under Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007. NEBs have also to monitor whether railway undertakings establish service quality standards and implement a quality management system to maintain service quality. The supporting study found that most of the service quality standards listed in Annex III are widely covered in the service quality reports of the analysed railway undertakings. The study findings also suggest that railway undertakings operating in 23 EU Member States ([174]) have implemented a quality management system to maintain service quality.

Service quality standards reports are an important tool for enforcement. Several NEBs ([175]) reported that they refer to the service quality reports when monitoring the implementation of the Regulation and addressing passenger complaints. Other NEBs did not cover this aspect in their reports. More generally, NEBs are encouraged to monitor these reports and should ensure that undertakings publish them in a regular and timely fashion.

2.11.3.2. Submission and publication within the deadline

The first set of reports were due on 7 June 2025. One NEB from one Member State sent the report within the deadline ([176]), the NEBs of 25 other Member States sent their reports before the end of 2025 ([177]), and no report was received from one Member State ([178]).

([170]) See Article 31(2) of the Regulation.
([171]) National enforcement bodies (NEB) - Mobility and Transport.
([172]) National Enforcement Bodies (NEBs) Reports | European Union Agency for Railways.
([173]) Railway Undertakings Service Quality Reports | European Union Agency for Railways.
([174]) AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, EE, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI and SK – i.e. not in DK, EL, CY and MT.
([175]) HR, PL, BG, IE, HU, RO.
([176])BE.
([177]) AT, BG, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI.
([178])CY.

2.11.3.3. Content of the reports

These regular submissions play an important role in ensuring a consistent and transparent enforcement system. They allow both the Commission and the NEBs to maintain a cross-cutting, EU-wide perspective on how rail passengers' rights are being implemented, monitored, and enforced on the ground. This broader overview is essential for identifying trends, improving coordination, and strengthening the overall effectiveness of the regulatory framework. The reports supplement annual expert group meetings on rail passenger rights organised by the Commission, where NEBs exchange their experiences on enforcement practices, emerging issues and possible solutions.

The first set of reports received in 2025 reveals several trends. NEBs are increasingly moving beyond purely reactive complaint handling towards a more proactive enforcement model based on inspections, audits and thematic checks (for example on delays and cancellations, information obligations and assistance to persons with disabilities and with reduced mobility). Complaint data are being used more systematically to identify recurring problems, with delays, missed connections, cancellations and compensation emerging as the most frequent sources of disputes, alongside persistent shortcomings in the provision of information and, to a lesser extent, accessibility. Some NEBs have been using structured online forms and hotlines to categorise complaints, distinguish between issues covered and not covered by the Regulation, and target investigations on areas with patterns of non-compliance.

The Commission has provided a **template for the report** which NEBs can use on a voluntary basis. Few NEBs used the template when preparing their 2025 report but several NEBs summarised the information per section as suggested in the template. The suggestions on what could be included in the report were aligned, when feasible, with recommended reporting templates for bus and coach, and waterborne passenger rights. The Commission stresses that having common reporting requirements helps to provide qualitative and comparable information for the enforcement of rail passenger rights. Also, the regular reporting cycles in the coming years will help to track the emerging enforcement trends more precisely, to monitor whether penalty regimes remain effective, proportionate and dissuasive in practice, and to provide greater visibility of problems on the ground, including cases where further guidance, coordination or legislative adjustment may be needed.

2.11.4. Complaint-handling by national enforcement bodies and other bodies (Article 33)

The supporting study shows that most NEBs receive documents electronically (via email, online platforms or official correspondence) and that the reply from the NEB to the passenger's complaint is provided within ten working days to one month, with the possibility to extend to up to three months in complex cases ([179]). A smaller group operates with very short deadlines by default, such as ten to fifteen days ([180]), while others set case-by-case or agreed timeframes ([181]). The practice is less clear in only in a few systems, because there have been no cases so far ([182]).

([179]) AT, BG, CZ, FR, HR, IT, PT.
([180]) EE, HU, LT, PT, RO.
([181]) AT, EL, FI, LV, NL.
([182]) Research suggests this is the case in seven Member States (IE, LU, LT, LV, NL, SI, SK).

Based on the supporting study, an alternative dispute resolution body also appears to be available for passengers in 21 Member States ([183]).

2.11.5. Exchange of information and cross-border cooperation between NEBs (Article 34)

Article 33, paragraphs (4), (5) and (6) and Article 34 of the Regulation reinforce an **obligation for cooperation between the National Enforcement Bodies:** where different bodies are designated under Articles 31 and 33 the exchange of information between them must be ensured. Across the Member States, cross-border cooperation between NEBs appears to remain limited in practice. This may be due to the fact that the cross-border rail market constitutes around 7% of all rail traffic in the EU([184]), slightly above the rate of 6% in 2013 ([185]). The supporting study found that only three NEBs ([186]) reported concrete difficulties in determining which Member State's NEB should handle a cross-border complaint, while 19 NEBs indicate that they did not experience such issues ([187]). Only one transfer of complaint to another Member State's NEB was reported ([188]).

([183]) AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LU, LV, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SK. It should be noted, however, that stakeholders consulted provided different answers about whether an alternative dispute resolution in Ireland handles transport related complaints.

([184]) Ninth monitoring report on the development of the rail market under Article 15(4) of Directive 2012/34/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, COM(2025) 439 final, p. 4.

([185]) Report on the Application of Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on Rail Passengers' Rights and Obligations, COM(2013) 587 final, p. 3.

([186]) AT, BE, DE.

([187])BG, CZ, DK, EE, ES, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK.

([188]) CZ.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The application of the Regulation is still relatively recent as it only took effect on 7 June 2023, and many of its intended effects will necessarily take time to materialise in practice. The findings to date should therefore be regarded as preliminary only.

Nevertheless, it appears that the pattern of exemptions has become more structured and more limited than under the previous Regulation. While derogations do still exist, especially for urban, suburban and regional services, they are now more often targeted, time-limited and specific to certain provisions. This indicates a gradual narrowing of exemptions and a corresponding expansion of the Regulation's effective scope in practice.

The Regulation's effects also appear to have led to an improved environment for rail passengers in the EU. The application of the expanded rules on the carriage of bicycles on board trains shows that the minimum requirements for bicycle spaces on trains are attainable in most Member States. Increased sharing of travel and traffic information between different actors also serves the interests of passengers, in particular where they need real-time information about their journey. The recently adopted Commission Implementing Regulation on TEL TSI, which sets different milestones until 2029, will also support actors in achieving this goal ([189]). Furthermore, thanks to the common form, whose use needs to be further promoted, passengers now also have an additional tool to demand their rights. Findings show that work is also underway in most Member States to prepare contingency plans for major disruption.

Nonetheless, certain areas where more rapid progress could reasonably be expected have not yet shown sufficient improvement. In particular, issues linked to ticketing and through-tickets continue to persist and require action in the short term. Therefore, this report is accompanied by a proposal for a targeted revision of the Regulation to ensure that passengers who buy a single ticket for a journey with one or more connections operated by several railway undertakings are ensured a level of protection similar to those passengers with a through-ticket ([190]). The application of the rules on non-discriminatory contract conditions and tariffs, the right to self-rerouting and on the exemption to the right to compensation (*force majeure*) also warrant further scrutiny. Continued attention will also be necessary to ensure that persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility will be in a position to travel in a manner comparable to other passengers.

More generally, this report also shows the need for improved monitoring of the rules at Member State-level. Effective and consistent enforcement will also be essential to ensure that the different actors – railway undertakings, station managers, ticket vendors and tour operators – properly apply the rules so that the Regulation's objectives are actually achieved in practice. The Commission will continue to oversee the implementation of the Regulation and take action where required.

([189]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/253 of 6 February 2026 on a technical specification relating to the telematics subsystem of the rail system in the European Union for interoperability of data sharing in rail transport (TEL TSI) and repealing Regulations (EU) No 454/2011 (TAP TSI) and (EU) No 1305/2014 (TAF TSI), OJ L, 2026/253, 10.2.2026, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2026/253/oj. See in particular the milestones under Appendix G thereof.

([190]) COM(2026) 233.

Annex A Overview of the uptake of exemptions under Regulation (EU) 2021/782([191])

Exemption category	AT	BE	BG	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	NL	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	SE	Total
Long-distance			√										√								√	√		√		**5**
Urban/suburban	√		√		√					√	√		√				√			√	√	√		√	√	**12**
Regional	√		√		√					√	√		√				√			√	√	√		√	√	**12**
Historic or touristic use			√	√	√					√	√		√		√	√		√	√	√	√	√		√	√	**15**
International to third countries			√	√						√			√					√		√		√				**7**
Access to traffic and travel information	√											√	√					√		√		√				**6**
Pre-notification period for persons with disabilities and reduced mobility			√	√	√	√						√	√					√				√				**8**
Total	**3**	**0**	**6**	**3**	**4**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**7**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**4**	**1**	**5**	**4**	**7**	**0**	**4**	**3**	

([191]) Legend: √ - Exemption used.

Annex B Comparison with Member State exemptions under Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007([192])

Regulation (EU) 2021/782 on rail passengers' rights and obligations *(exemptions applicable at the time of publication of the report)*

Exemption category per service	AT	BE	BG	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	NL	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	SE	Total
Urban/suburban	√		√		√					√	√		√				√			√	√	√		√	√	**12**
Regional	√		√		√					√	√		√				√			√	√	√		√	√	**12**
International to third countries			√	√						√			√					√		√		√				**7**
Long-distance domestic			√										√								√	√		√		**5**
Total	**2**	**0**	**4**	**1**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**3**	**2**	**0**	**4**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**1**	**0**	**3**	**3**	**4**	**0**	**3**	**2**	

Regulation (EC) No 1371/2007 on rail passengers' rights and obligations *(exemptions applicable at the time of its repeal on 7 June 2023)*

Exemption category per service	AT	BE	BG	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU	IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	NL	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	SE	Total
Urban/suburban	√		√		√		√		√	√	√		√	√		√	√	√		√	√	√		√	√	**18**
Regional	√		√		√		√		√	√	√		√	√		√	√	√		√	√	√		√	√	**18**
International to third countries							√			√			√			√		√		√		√				**8**
Long-distance/domestic			√				√						√	√		√		√		√	√	√		√		**11**
Total	**2**	**0**	**3**	**0**	**2**	**0**	**4**	**0**	**2**	**3**	**2**	**0**	**4**	**3**	**0**	**4**	**2**	**4**	**0**	**4**	**3**	**4**	**0**	**3**	**2**	

([192]) The comparison was carried out on the basis of the information available to the Commission. Only exemptions common to both Regulations are shown. Legend: √ - Exemption used by Member State.