

Rail passengers' rights and obligations. Recast

2017/0237(COD) - 17/03/2021 - Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading

The Committee on Transport and Tourism adopted the recommendation for second reading contained in the report by Bogusaw LIBERADZKI (S&D, PL) on the Council position at first reading with a view to the adoption of a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on rail passengers' rights and obligations (recast).

The committee recommended that Parliament approve the Council position at first reading.

The Council position is in line with the provisional agreement reached during the interinstitutional negotiations.

The main elements of the agreement are as follows:

People with reduced mobility

From 30 June 2026, people with reduced mobility (PRM) should be able to receive assistance during their journey by giving the company only 24h pre-notification. A 36h pre-notification should apply in the meantime.

PRMs should be able to travel if needed with an accompanying person or an assistant dog free of charge.

Re-routing

In the event of a delay of more than 100 minutes, rail operators would be obliged to offer rerouting options to passengers, regardless of the circumstances, and help them find the best alternative. If circumstances require, meal and refreshment should be provided and accommodation costs reimbursed.

Bicycle parking

Railways should provide dedicated space on board for bicycles: all new or refurbished rolling stock should be equipped with at least four bicycle spaces, with the possibility of providing more. If bicycles are not accepted on board a particular train, reasons should be given and the passenger may be entitled to a refund.

Through tickets

Operators should be obliged to offer through-tickets for journeys involving successive rail services. This new obligation should apply from the date of application of the regulation for international and long-distance services and after five years also for regional services.

Passenger information and force majeure

Overall provisions on information to passengers have been strengthened, especially in case of delays where an obligation to keep them informed of developments as soon as the information is available will be mandatory. Operators would not be obliged to pay compensation for delays in cases of force majeure resulting from unforeseen circumstances such as extreme weather conditions, a major natural disaster or a major public health crisis outbreak. However, other reimbursements would still have to be made.

Application of the derogations

The new rules should apply after two years. The current derogations for domestic rail services should be eligible for a final extension of five years for those Member States that make use of them. Member States may decide, under specific circumstances to partly exempt cross-border regional, urban and suburban services.

However, Member States may not grant derogations to cross-border services with regard to the rights of persons with reduced mobility, the carriage of bicycles and the provisions on through-ticketing and re-routing.