



EDF Proposal for initiatives within 2021 European Year of Rail

European Disability Forum

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Who we are

We, the European Disability Forum (EDF), are an umbrella organization of persons with disabilities that defends the interests of over 100 million persons with disabilities in the EU. We are a unique platform run by persons with disabilities and their families, and a strong, united voice of persons with disabilities advocating for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) in the EU.

Our proposals for activities and initiatives

In addition to our general comments and suggestions to the European Commission's proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a European Year of Rail (2021) (see attached), **these are our proposals for specific activities and initiatives within the European Year of Rail 2021.**

Events

- High-level conference focusing on rail accessibility and related topics with participation of the Transport Commissioner, possibly in conjunction with the EDF General Assembly (May 2021)
- Workshop on transport accessibility with policy-makers, passengers' rights experts, industry, and disability-rights advocates from different Member States to discuss common transport accessibility and passenger rights issues, exchange best practice examples, and solutions.
- European Commission "Accessible Railway Awards" to the most accessible railway station in the EU/ the most inclusive operator

Studies

- Study on 'missed opportunities' in rail travel – the aim would be to study how many potential passengers the rail sector is currently missing out on because of lack of accessibility and adequate provision of assistance to passengers with disabilities (including barriers such as the 48h pre-notification for assistance). This could, incentivise the rail sector to see advancing accessibility and improve services to passengers with disabilities as long-term investment instead of extra cost
- Study on concrete measures to improve rail accessibility – especially focusing on the platform-train interface and the use of boarding aids to allow for independent travel similar to the original [COST 335 – Passengers' Accessibility of Heavy Rail Systems](#)
- Study on the potential of the introduction of a European Disability Card to facilitate cross-border travel for persons with disabilities

Awareness-raising campaigns

- Awareness-raising on the TSI-PRM (benefits of the TSI-PRM) – promoting good practice examples where the regulation advanced accessibility of rail for passengers. This can be



done through a video, published report or podcast, including interviews with transport experts, representatives of rail operators and passengers with disabilities

- Developing and updating training material for rail transport staff on assistance to rail passengers with disabilities, taking into account measures to protect passengers' and support staff health in post-Covid-19 period.
- Action day/week during which persons with different disabilities try to travel by train spontaneously and their experience is documented to identify and highlight barriers to spontaneous and independent rail travel for passengers with disabilities.
- European / National petitions calling for accessible, spontaneous and independent train travel for persons with disabilities – this can be on improving European and national legislation as well as on better enforcement of existing legislation.

Other activities

- EU Action Plan to make rail travel accessible for persons with disabilities by 2030, drawn up by national policy-makers, transport operators and organisations of persons with disabilities

Importance of accessibility and inclusive participation in 2021 European Year of Rail

As highlighted in our feedback to the European Commission's proposal on the European Year of Rail (2021), we emphasise that:

- All initiatives and activities must be fully accessible for persons with disabilities
- Meaningful participation of organisations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) must be ensured. This includes (but is not limited to), ensuring involvement of DPOs in national coordination committees, and diversity of speakers in public events by inviting speakers with disabilities to speak at mainstream events and conferences.

Useful resources:

EDF position papers on rail accessibility and passenger rights:

- EDF recommendations on the revision of the TSI-PRM 2019 - [PDF](#) | [Word](#)
- EDF Feedback on European Commission Consultation "Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) Guidelines – evaluation" [PDF](#) | [Word](#)
- [EDF Amendments on Rail Passengers Rights Regulation for Council negotiations](#)
- [Rail passengers' rights – why the pre-notification period for PRM assistance must be lowered](#)

Other relevant EDF publications:

- [EDF Open letter to EC Executive Vice-President Timmermans: an inclusive green deal must include accessible environments](#)
- [EDF resolution: calling for full accessibility of transport and built environment in the EU](#)
- [EDF Joint letter calling for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the next EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024](#)



- [DiscoverEU: How Javier, an 18-year old with disabilities, travelled across Europe](#)
- [EDF analysis of the European Accessibility Act](#)
- [EDF toolkit on transposition of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive](#)

EDF resources on accessible communication and events:

- [EDF Guide for accessible meetings for all](#)
- [Accessible online participation checklist](#)
- [Guidelines on accessible campaigns, including communication via web, mobile apps, and social media, accessibility of documents, and events.](#)

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