Enhancing rail journeys across Europe – more flexibility offered to passengers

2023/03/23 10:31 στην κατηγορία INTERNATIONAL

The CER 2025 Ticketing roadmap, published in October 2021 by the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER) commits European railway undertakings to improve international ticketing for rail in the broadest sense, and to provide a seamless passenger experience.

In order to achieve this, enhance journeys across Europe and increase multimodality options for passengers, International Union of Railways (UIC)'s Global Passenger Forum has undertaken significant work on the implementation of effective IT distribution channels for integrated multimodal ticketing.

One of the results is the electronic Ticket Control Database (eTCD), a centralised, real-time passenger ticket management system developed by UIC for use by railway companies around the world. In operation since February 2020, it is an important cornerstone of both UIC's international rail distribution eco-system as well as of the CER Ticketing roadmap.

How does this improve things for passengers?

All international tickets that do not have obligatory reservations will be automatically registered by the sales channel in an online UIC shared database (eTCD) and their status kept up to date. Access will of course be restricted only to the relevant stakeholders of that ticket (seller, carrier, ticket control organisation) and personal information included only if strictly necessary. It is already in use by a number of European ticket issuers and passenger carriers with many more expected to utilise the system in 2023, with an anticipated EU wide adoption by 2025.

In the future, eTCD will play a crucial role in creating a journey protection system for passengers, by combining real-time information, such as delays and cancellations, with the ticket(s) a passenger holds (eTCD), and with a robust timetable (MERITS database). This will allow railways to automatically register delays directly with the ticket information, to offer alternative journeys for passengers to reach their destination, inform them of their rights, and even potentially rebook a reservation ona later train.

UIC and CIT members continue to discuss the possibilities for the digitalisation of processes (e.g. delay confirmation, manual annotation on the ticket etc.) to further enhance support of passengers during disruptions as defined in the Agreement on Journey Continuation (AJC). Together with the current implementation of the Open Sales and Distribution Model (OSDM) solution, which will unify compensation procedures around the EU, passengers will be provided with peace of mind and a more seamless travel experience.

CER Executive Director Alberto Mazzola said:”eTCD is an important part of delivering the commitments of the CER Ticketing Roadmap, which addresses all aspects of the passenger experience. CER members are fully committed to providing passengers by 2025 with a seamless experience when searching, selecting, buying and using rail services. Together with the implementation of complementary solutions, the CER Ticketing Roadmap is delivering tangible solutions step by step for rail passengers.”

UIC Director General François Davenne said: “UIC is pleased to be able to bring to its members and stakeholders all the necessary IT tools and technical specifications through its suite of IRSs (e.g. eTCD and OSDM), to facilitate the journeys of European passenger travellers. UIC technical documents and IT solutions for a sustainable rail transport system make a positive contribution to the environmental, social, and economic sustainability of the communities served by railways.”

More information on the **CER Ticketing Roadmap** can be found here.

(CER)