

EPF-Bulletin #20 – June 2016

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INTRODUCTION

Bienvenu(e) au vingtième numéro du bulletin d'activités de la Fédération européenne des Voyageurs (EPF) et son grand nombre d'associations adhérentes.

Ici vous pouvez lire de nos efforts au niveau européen concernant les droits des passagers en divers moyens de transport et la communication des nouvelles de la bonne pratique au domaine de l'information et de la billetterie - et comment nous nous sommes occupé(e)s de thèmes tel que la sécurité, les voyages multimodaux et l'avenir des trains de nuit.

Vous pouvez aussi lire de la collaboration parmi nos associations adhérentes et aussi de notre assistance aux congrès et nos contributions aux débats. Souvent vous pouvez suivre des liens pour obtenir des informations supplémentaires.

Quelques-uns de ces rapports vous donneront peut-être, aussi qu'à vos collègues ou des membres de votre association, des idées pour encore d'actions, de recherches ou de voyages

EINLEITUNG

Herzlich willkommen zur 20. Ausgabe des Bulletins über die Tätigkeit des Europäischen Fahrgastverbandes EPF und seiner vielen Mitgliedsverbände.

Sie finden hier mehr über unsere Arbeit auf europäischer Ebene im Bereich der Fahrgastrechte in verschiedenen Verkehrsmitteln und über die Verbreitung guter Praxis im Bereich Fahrgastinformation und Fahrscheine. Wir haben uns auch mit den Themen Sicherheit, multimodalem Reisen und der Zukunft der Nachtzüge beschäftigt.

Ferner finden Sie Informationen über die Zusammenarbeit unserer Mitgliedsverbände sowie unsere Teilnahme an Tagungen und Beiträge zu Debatten. Wir haben Links eingebaut, damit Sie weitere Informationen finden können.

Vielleicht geben Ihnen und Ihren Kolleg(inn)en oder den Mitgliedern Ihrer Verbände einige

dieser Berichte auch einige Ideen zu weiteren Aktionen, Forschungen oder Reisen.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the twentieth issue of the bulletin of activity of the European Passengers' Federation (EPF) and its many member associations.

Here you can read about our work at European level concerning passenger rights in various modes of transport and for spreading the news of good practice in the field of information and ticketing - and how we have concerned ourselves with such topics as security, seamless travel and the future of night trains.

You can also read about co-operation between our member associations as well as our participation in conferences and contributions to these. You can also follow links in order to obtain more information.

Perhaps some of these reports will also give you and your colleagues some ideas for further actions, research or travel.



*Trevor Garrod
President, EPF*

PUBLIC TRANSPORT USERS GATHER IN BERLIN

The European Passenger Federation's 14th Annual Conference was held in Berlin on April 8th/9th and attracted over 80 representatives of 16 public transport users' organisations in 11 countries.

The Friday afternoon was devoted to reports by colleagues from EPF member associations in seven countries; while on the Saturday we welcomed speakers from the rail industry and consumer bodies plus two Members of the European Parliament, covering urban transport, ticketing, bus users' rights and cross-border rail. The project and campaigning work of EPF at European level was also featured.

Our Annual General Meeting, following the conference, received and discussed reports and elected Board members. As a result, our Board now consists of Josef Schneider (Chairman), Rian van der Borgt (Treasurer), Anne-Marie Ghémard, Kurt Hultgren, Arriën Kruyt, Michel Quidort and Willy Smeulders. Trevor Garrod was re-elected President. Tribute was paid to Christopher Irwin who stood down as a Board member but will continue most of his key work at EU level. A full report of the conference is on our website www.epf.eu as are the speakers' presentations. Some paper copies are also available from trevor.garrod@epf.eu.

EPF's 15th Annual Conference will be held on March 18th 2017 in the Netherlands - for the first time in that country since 2006. Navetteurs.be, which promotes the interests of many commuters in Belgium, has been an associate member of EPF for several years and at the Annual General Meeting was welcomed as a full member.

EPF SUMMIT CONFERENCE IN BRUSSELS



110 people registered for EPF's second Summit Conference at the headquarters of the Airports Regional Conference in Brussels on May 26th. A Belgian rail strike led to some cancellations and some participants were thus unable to reach Brussels, but the room was still well-filled.

Speakers included transport industry professionals, researchers, MEPs and European Commission officials as well as members of EPF-affiliated organisations.

The conference focused on three topics -

- Passenger safety, security, comfort and convenience - what is achievable and what is acceptable?
- Challenges in delivering EU-wide multimodal travel services
- How to put passengers at the heart of EU aviation and travel policy.

The event was sponsored by Amadeus, Deutsche Bahn, Travelport and Airport Regions Conference; with the European Technology & Travel Services Association and Of"Cores as partners.

Summing up the presentations and discussion, EPF President Trevor Garrod highlighted five key messages:

1. When dealing with security problems in public transport, it is important to keep a sense of proportion and not to overreact. EPF was participating in discussions of practical actions to reduce risks and cope with disruption.
2. Staff training was one such step. and there were also other reasons for having well-trained, well-

informed and well-motivated staff - for example to help and advice actual and potential passengers.

3. Multimodal information and ticketing to make door-to-door journeys easier required many operators to "come out of the silo." It was important to identify where there were unmet needs in this respect.

4. To obtain improvements in services, should we "leave it to the market"? There were cases where competition led to better services. But on the other hand better public transport could be a public service, help in regeneration or encourage modal shift in the interests of the environment - and so intervention by public authorities also had a role to play.

5. Transparency in fares was important and public transport operators should give value for money, while surcharges and "hidden extras" could deter usage.

Mr. Garrod said that these and other matters discussed at the summit conference would be borne in mind by EPF in its work over the coming year.

RAIL PASSENGER RIGHTS - EPF RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

Regulation 1371/2007 on rail passengers' rights is being reviewed by the European Commission and in April/May EPF took part in that consultation.



We accepted that the regulation had to a limited extent improved protection for rail passengers and had generally standardised this. However, we pointed to a shortage of information about rights or ticket prices and about help to which they were entitled in the event of disruptions or cross-border journey problems - such as to whom to complain.

Problems also arose because delays were often measured per train or per ticket, rather than for the total journey. In our submission

we urge that "all tickets for one journey (should) constitute a through contract of carriage" - which would help in cases of missed connections.

The trend towards smartcards with check-in and check-out can make it difficult to apply this regulation. For example, on a journey from Rotterdam to Groningen, in the far north of the Netherlands, you check in for your Inter-City journey with NS (Dutch Railways) and check out and check back in for your local journey with Arriva. The Regulation may need amending to keep pace with such technical developments.

On service disruption, we argue that all operators should be obliged to have contingency planning. Research may be needed to determine how different aspects of the Regulation are handled in different countries and by different operators. Information and assistance in such cases reduced passenger dissatisfaction - as research in the UK has shown. Operators should not be allowed to use "extraordinary circumstances" (or "force majeure") as an excuse not to have contingency plans or to offer compensation.

We also state "Clarification is needed as to what circumstances can be regarded as "force majeure" and what cannot be regarded as such, to prevent operators from making up their own rules.

Finally we stress "Compensation schemes (and other provisions) for different modes of transport (rail, air, ship and bus/coach) should be harmonised. This does not mean that they should be exactly the same and that the legal framework should be exactly the same, but there should be a consistent logic. Further, passenger rights for multi-modal journeys should be introduced."

Thank you to Rian van der Borgt for co-ordinating EPF's response to this consultation and to all other colleagues who contributed to it. EPF's complete submission is available on www.epf.eu.

BORDER CONTROLS - REPLY FROM THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT

As reported in Bulletin 19, EPF wrote to the Swedish Ministry of Enterprise & Innovation expressing concern about the border controls being imposed on the Oresund Link to and from Denmark.

We received a reply on April 29th, stating that the controls would continue and that they "established preconditions for measures that if necessary can be used to maintain public order and domestic security."

The reply goes on to assure us that "EU law does not prevent a Member State from taking such measures if a real and sufficiently serious threat exists." and concludes, "We therefore consider that ID control checks are compatible with EU law under the present circumstances."

When these controls were introduced in late 2015 they did not apply to cars - but now all cars are also checked on the Swedish side. Since the introduction of these controls, travel times between Copenhagen and Malmo have increased by some 25 minutes and it is reported that numbers of train and bus passengers have fallen by 11%

NIGHT TRAINS UPDATE

In our last Bulletin we reported on the intention of Deutsche Bahn to withdraw night services later this year. A petition calling for the night trains to continue attracted over 14,000 signatures and was due to be presented to Mr. Martin Burkert MdB, Chairman of the Bundestag's Transport Committee, on May 31st. Thank you for members of EPF affiliated associations who supported this petition.

Our Austrian member association ProBahn Österreich issued a press statement putting the case for continuance of night trains in Europe; while Pro Bahn in Switzerland has joined our Swiss organisations is writing direct to the Transport Commissioner, Violeta Bulc.

Meanwhile, EPF wrote to all members of the European Parliament's Transport & Tourism Committee stating that, while the role of night trains has changed over the past 30 years, with developments such as the construction of new high-speed lines, they do still have a part to play. "For cities, conurbations or tourist centers that are at least 8 hours' travelling time apart, we consider that a night train should be an option.

Our letter continues, "What is required at this stage is an independent study of the demand for night trains in general, where these are most needed, and the wider social, economic and environmental benefits which they bring to European citizens; while keeping their costs under reasonable control.

"The study should also recommend steps which the European Commission and Member States should take to secure whatever user-friendly network of night trains it agrees are needed."

REPRESENTING EPF AT EUROPEAN LEVEL

1. Rail Passenger Security In The EU - Willy Smeulders represented us on May 10th at the Brussels conference on this topic.

EU Transport Commissioner Violeta Bulc, opening the event, highlighted four key areas of action-

- sharing intelligence and good practice;
- better training for staff;
- smart digital technologies;
- security programmes for rail companies and stations.

Ms Bulc said that a coherent EU-wide strategy was currently lacking. However, we must accept that there will always be some element of risk in an open mass transit transport system and that "we need proportionate, effective actions " - which reflects EPF's own views on the matter.

2. Digitalisation On May 3rd our chairman, Josef Schneider spoke at the Florence School of Regulation on the European Railway Agency on the Digitalisation of Railways and how this could benefit passengers.

3. Passenger Rights - Air: On April 5th Jaroslaw Nowicki of Friendly Flying (Przyjazne Latanie)

represented EPF at a European Commission meeting in Brussels on monitoring the enforcement of air passengers' rights. He has also submitted the results of the organisation's research in Poland and made recommendations about how complaint handling can be improved. For more information, log on to www.friendlyflying.org Meanwhile, the group of Green MPs in the German Bundestag has tabled a detailed question on delays and cancellations at German airports and passenger claims and complaints.

4. Passenger Rights - Bus And Coach - Following EPF's comments on the 3-year review of EU bus and coach passenger rights (see our last Bulletin), Peter Cornelius and Willy Smeulders attended a European Commission meeting in Brussels on April 27th to discuss the topic in more detail.

5. UITP - We in EPF have regular dialogue with the public transport operators in the Union internationale des Transports Publics, and Trevor Garrod and Willy Smeulders are due to meet them again on June 8th. Meanwhile, Arriën Kruyt also attended their recent conference in The Hague.

6. Trevor Garrod attended the March 15th meeting of the **European Citizens' Mobility Forum** in Brussels, concerned principally with buses, coaches and taxis; and on April 7th he spoke at the Regiomove conference in Leoben, Austria. The topic was how passengers can benefit from telematics. For more information, visit www.regiomove.at

6. Persons With Reduced Mobility - Kurt Hultgren and Peter Cornelius represented EPF at Brussels meetings on the Technical Standard for Interoperability on April 25th /26th.

7. Peter Cornelius has also represented us at a conference on **Single & Innovative European Transport System** and had a meeting with the assistant of Gesine Meissner MEP, a member

of the European Parliament's Transport & Tourism Committee.

8. Christopher Irwin represented us at the **Transport Research Area** conference on May 10th in Warsaw and at a further Shift2RAIL meeting.

"THE FINAL MILE - AND THE MILE IN THE MIDDLE"

In 2013 EPF published a 6-page guide, in three languages, about add-on tickets for passengers on long-distance train journeys (and sometimes also on other modes), who need to use local public transport to reach their final destination. It was compiled by members of our Working Group on Long-distance Travel.

Our Working Group on International Long-distance Travel are now updating that document to reflect new developments and, in some cases, prices. For example, you can now arrive in London on an Inter-City train from Edinburgh and go "contactless", using your bank card to travel on the Underground. In the reverse direction, you can buy a train ticket to "Edinburgh buses" and also now continue your journey on one of the city's new trams to your final destination.

In France, on the other hand, SNCF proposes taxis, hire cars and car-sharing to its long-distance customers - anything except an urban transport add-on. On the other hand, the Region Rhone-Alpes has introduced a OuRA card allowing you to buy local public transport tickets in numerous towns. People planning or making a long-distance journey should be informed about such things.

We plan to issue an updated version of the EPF guide in the autumn. Do you have any new add-ons or easy payment facilities to report? If so, Aljoscha Labeille will be pleased to hear from you this summer. aljoscha.labeille@vcd-bayern.de

Meanwhile the challenge of finding a hotel near a railway station in a strange town or city has also been discussed by EPF's Working Group on Long Distance Travel. Our colleagues in ALACF (Association luxembourgeoise des amis du chemin de fer) now have a list of 40 such hotels, which have been used by members of EPF affiliated

organisations. The hotels are either within a short walking distance of the station or are within easy reach by public transport.

More names are welcome. The hotel should be in a large town or city or at a railway junction. You should if possible give the address, phone number and website/email address. Send details to Albert Lambert at alacf.rail@pt.lu. Our Luxembourg colleagues will make the list available to everyone in the EPF member associations.

WHAT WE LEARNED IN NICE

In April a party of 18 members of Railfuture, one of EPF's British affiliates, travelled by high speed trains from London to Nice. For some it was their first visit to the Cote d'Azur, of French Riviera, and all were impressed by the frequent modern trams of Nice, introduced in 2007, linking the city centre to a major hospital and to a park-and-ride site in the hills. They also learned about a second line being built, partly in tunnel, from the airport to the harbour. Such investment is needed if Nice, the fifth largest city of France, is to reduce its high car usage.

The British visitors also sampled the scenic rail route through the mountains to Breil-sur-Roya, Tende and on to Cuneo in Italy. seeing its role for commuters but also how a comité de ligne (Line Committee or Community Rail Partnership) was promoting its tourist potential. They also travelled on the metre-gauge Chemin de fer de Provence which has a comparable role.

Most interesting was a discussion with M Philippe Cretin, regional President of EPF's French affiliate FNAUT, who explained the need for more rail capacity through the heavily populated coastal strip east of Marseille and the importance of high speed trains continuing to serve city centres.

A full account of the trip can be found on the website www.railfuture.org.uk.

TRAIN / SHIP / TRAIN - HOW SEAMLESS IS IT?



For over 130 years the Harwich - Hoek van Holland route has been a model of integration and in some respects it still is. Trains link with ferries and through ticketing is possible.

However, the walkway from station to ship at Harwich has been out of action since the spring of 2015 and foot passengers have had to board a small bus to take them in and out of the car deck of the ship. This process is inconvenient and time-consuming.

Railfuture wrote to the General Manager of Harwich International Port and was informed that a new bridge into the vessel, complying with new safety standards, had to be constructed and should now be in operation by the end of June.

Railfuture and Rover (the Dutch affiliate of EPF) have, in the meantime, been working together on a longer-term issue on the other side of the North Sea.

On April 1st 2017, the rail link to Hoek van Holland will no longer be operated by NS (Dutch Railways) but transferred to RET (the Rotterdam city transport authority), who will incorporate it into the city's metro system. There is logic in this move, as the great majority of traffic on the line is short-distance urban transport.

However, what about longer-distance international travellers? Will they have to book and indeed rebook again if they want to travel from England to Rotterdam, The Hague or beyond? Amsterdam is a popular destination for many British visitors - and indeed to visitors from other parts of the world who may have flown to England but then want to continue their European travels by other modes.

Rover and Railfuture have made a co-ordinated approach to RET, the Rotterdam-The Hague Metropolitan Region and other relevant bodies,

urging them "to explore various ticketing options and ensure that easy ticketing is in place from April 1st 2017."

Options could include a rail ticket compatible with RET ticket barriers; an NS day ticket that includes RET; sale of the OV chipcard on the ferry; and development of the Tourist Day Ticket for short public transport journeys around Hoek van Holland including the bus link to Delft and The Hague.

REVIEW OF RAIL PASSENGER RIGHTS - THE EU ASKS THE CITIZENS!

Peter Cornelius writes - By the time that this bulletin appears the public consultation by DG MOVE (The European Commission's Transport Directorate) concerning the passenger rights of rail users will be over.

Perhaps we as EPF will have already received feedback on how many citizens. how many associations and how many anonymous replies have come in. It will be interesting to see these replies because -

- This public consultation was very extensive, especially when a citizen wanted to make use of the option of open-ended comments (with 1500 or in two cases 3000 characters) - the necessary time was certainly comparable to that of a train journey of several hundred kilometers and therefore several hours.

- The questions in this public consultation were only in English. It was possible to insert a direction that answers in all official languages were possible, but it remains a moot point how this would work out.

EPF welcomes the fact that this consultation has taken place, but it also has doubts as to whether in this way many passengers in all Member States across the EU were reached.

Perhaps these doubts will be refuted through the Commission's statistics about participation in the various countries - which would please us.

We shall certainly be approached by the European Commission when the detailed evaluation of these results is available. We shall report that in future issues of the bulletin.

THE MILJOENENLIJN - WHAT A HERITAGE RAILWAY SHOULD BE

Trevor Garrod writes: I first experienced South Limburg in the far south of the Netherlands on a cycling tour in 1976. Historic Maastricht and the resort of Valkenburg in the wooded hills of South Limburg are well worth a visit.

The past 25 years have also seen the development of another attraction the Zuid-Limburgse Stoomtrein Maatschappij (South Limburg Steam Train Company) from Schin op Geul to Kerkrade plus a branch to Vetschau in Germany, with its centre of operations in Simpelveld.



This year I visited it for the first time and was impressed by the friendly and enthusiastic staff (nearly all volunteers) and well-maintained steam and vintage diesel trains. There is easy interchange with the frequent Veolia electric trains at Schin op Geul and through ticketing from Maastricht; whilst at holiday time the steam service is extended to and from Valkenburg. This summer connecting coaches are planned to Aachen and Monschau in Germany. The line is seen as making an important contribution to the tourist industry of South Limburg and so has been supported by the Dutch Ministry of the Economy, the European Regional Development Fund and the provincial government. For further information, visit www.miljoenenlijn.nl
Note: Why is it called the "Millions Line?" Because part of it was originally built at great expense to

serve the former Dutch coal mines which closed over 40 years ago.

EPF'S NEXT GENERAL MEETINGS

For representatives of all its member associations, will be on June 18th in Copenhagen, October 22nd in Ghent and January 14th. The Copenhagen meeting is due to discuss, among other topics, decarbonisation, in the light of an expected EU Communication on this issue.

Our next bulletin is due to appear in September. Material should be sent to trevor.garrod@epf.eu by August 20th.