

The European Passengers' Federation (EPF) calls for a **harmonization of health safety measures** imposed in **Public Transport within each European country** and **clear information for cross-border travelers**.

As governments across Europe lift the travel restriction measures taken this spring to control the spread of COVID-19, public transport (PT) is slowly returning to normality and regaining its passengers. However, the “new normality” is very different from the reality we once knew. From rules on social distancing between passengers, to the enforcement of using non-medical masks and even to the necessity of equipping vehicles with hand sanitizer: **the new rules can be both confusing and overwhelming for passengers**.

These rules also vary from country to country and even, within the same country, from one mode of transport to the other. Overall, wearing mouth masks has become a widespread measure in European public transport. However, this has not been implemented in the same way everywhere. In some countries, wearing a protective mouth mask is mandatory in all public spaces. In others, this is limited to public transport or to certain modes of (public) transport. These differences create misunderstandings and result in a less pleasant traveling experience.

Once crossing borders, this can make travelling on public transport even harder for passengers. The rules are very diverse and without prior knowledge of the differences, passengers might be infringing the social distancing norms and other rules without realizing.

In order to avoid confusion among passengers and to create a level-playing field between modes, EPF proposes some suggestions:

- Overall, measures taken should be **temporary, proportionate** to health risks and as **consistent** as possible.
- **Strong coordination between national and regional governments and PT operators** is necessary, in order to have the same rules for all transport modes within each country.
- All passengers should receive **enough and timely information** on all the safety measures that are put in place during their journey, and the rules they need to obey. This information – a core passenger right – should be provided in the most accessible format possible. This is particularly important for **passengers crossing borders**. These should be informed in a timely manner of the possible changes in the safety measures during their trip so that they can prepare accordingly.

A coordinated national effort to harmonize health safety measures and improve communication to passengers will reinforce passengers' rights, potentially increasing their satisfaction and trust, which in turn can accelerate the return to public transport.