

Citizens Omnibus Initiative

EPF response to the Call for Evidence – June 2026

The [Citizens Omnibus Initiative](#) aims to reduce administrative burdens in EU legislation that have a direct impact on the daily lives of people legally residing in the EU. Its objective is to ensure that citizens can fully benefit from the Single Market without facing disproportionate administrative or legal barriers, particularly in cross-border situations. The initiative is intended to create opportunities for targeted amendments to EU legislation that reduce unnecessary “red tape” and simplify applicable rules. In the context of the Call for Evidence, the European Passengers' Federation (EPF) wishes to highlight several issues of particular relevance to citizens' experiences in the transport and tourism sectors.

Simplifying regulation is welcome, but reducing existing rights is not.

A key overarching principle is that simplifying regulation is welcome, but reducing existing rights is not. While efforts to reduce administrative burdens are important and can improve efficiency, they must not come at the expense of weakening established consumer and passenger rights. Any simplification measures should fully preserve the current level of protection. It is essential that passengers and travellers do not lose existing rights, benefits, or access to effective redress mechanisms as a result of regulatory reform.

Passenger rights should be easy to understand, access, and apply.

Despite the EU's comprehensive passenger rights framework, awareness remains low, and many travellers still face difficulties in exercising and enforcing their rights. Greater legal certainty, simplified procedures, and stronger enforcement should ensure that passengers can effectively benefit from the protections available to them. EPF recommends:

- Targeted information campaigns to increase public awareness
- Clear, user-friendly summaries of rights and obligations, including visual tools
- Simplified complaint procedures and automatic reimbursement/ compensation
- Strengthened enforcement and monitoring.

The late-2023 “Enforcement/ Omnibus” proposal addresses some existing shortcomings, but delivers incremental improvements rather than the stronger, more transformative enforcement measures needed (see EPF evaluation and recommendations [here](#)).

Simplify planning and booking trips involving multiple operators and/ or modes.

Planning, booking, and undertaking journeys that involve multiple operators and/ or modes – particularly long-distance and international trips – remains complex and time-consuming. Passengers may miss suitable options due to a lack of awareness and the absence of a true one-stop shop, including seamless first- and last-mile connections.

EPF strongly supports the objectives of the proposed “Passenger Package” published on 13 May 2026, which seeks to make multimodal and, in particular, multi-operator rail travel, easier to plan and book, while also strengthening rail passenger rights throughout the journey (see EPF's initial reaction [here](#)). Although the Multimodal Booking proposal falls short of expectations, the rail proposals are ambitious and, taken together, represent an important step forward. Key issues remain to be addressed during the legislative process, to which EPF intends to contribute actively.

Harmonisation of rules and definitions.

Passenger and consumer rules should use clear, consistent definitions across all transport modes to reduce confusion and legal uncertainty. Importantly, any harmonisation efforts must maintain – and where possible strengthen – the highest level of passenger protection.

Key concepts should be harmonised and defined in a citizen-friendly way, for example: “Package” and “Linked Travel Arrangement”; “through ticket” and “single ticket”; “personal item” and “hand luggage”; “extraordinary circumstances”; re-routing “at the earliest opportunity” and “under comparable circumstances”, etc.

For passengers with reduced mobility, cross-border recognition of disability status (e.g., through the Disability Card) and harmonised rights, such as the entitlement to travel with an accompanying person, would be beneficial. Common categories such as “child”, “senior”, or “student” should also be harmonised to facilitate smoother cross-border travel.

Greater coherence should be ensured across passenger rights regimes. To make multimodal travel a convenient, reliable and safe choice, EPF considers that core passenger rights should in principle also apply to multimodal journeys (EPF position [here](#)). Alignment between package travellers’ and air passengers’ rights would also be welcome, in particular regarding airline insolvency protection and right to self-cancellation, potentially to be addressed in the context of the revision of the Air Services Regulation (EPF position [here](#)).

Additional considerations for seamless cross-border and sustainable travel.

ETIAS and the Entry–Exit System (EES) must not become a disproportionate burden on passengers or undermine the ease of cross-border travel into the EU. Adequate preparation time for implementation is essential to ensure smooth operations and avoid disruption. Particular attention should be paid to the risk of increased waiting times and procedural complexity, especially for international rail services, where border formalities already add significantly to overall journey times and diminish the benefits of high-speed connections.

In the **tourism sector**, greater use of public transport within destination regions should be encouraged through better integration between long-distance and local transport. This requires closer cooperation between public transport operators, accommodation providers, and leisure services. While good practices exist, integrated public transport-inclusive tourism offers remain limited. Stronger EU-level support could help scale up such initiatives and promote more sustainable visitor mobility.

Bridging gaps between citizens and EU policy.

As a horizontal issue, it should be acknowledged that up to **44% of European citizens lack basic digital skills** (Digitalisation in Europe – 2025 edition, [link](#)). With increasing reliance on digital tools in both policy, research and innovation and everyday practice, including in the transport sector, care must be taken to ensure that digitalisation does not widen existing inequalities or create new barriers, but instead genuinely improves accessibility for all users.

Bridging the gap between citizens and EU policymaking requires **accessible participation channels** and stronger **support for Civil Society Organisations**. While tools such as Eurobarometer surveys provide valuable input, direct participation in public consultations remains limited. CSOs, including passenger organisations, play a key role in representing citizens’ perspectives but often face barriers such as inaccessible information, complex policy processes, and administrative burdens. More flexible funding, improved outreach, and a stronger EU Civil Society Strategy (see EPF contribution [here](#)) would help strengthen citizen engagement and ensure that policymaking better reflects citizens’ needs.