



# EU Rail Accessibility Legislation for Beginners: Explaining the TSI-PRM

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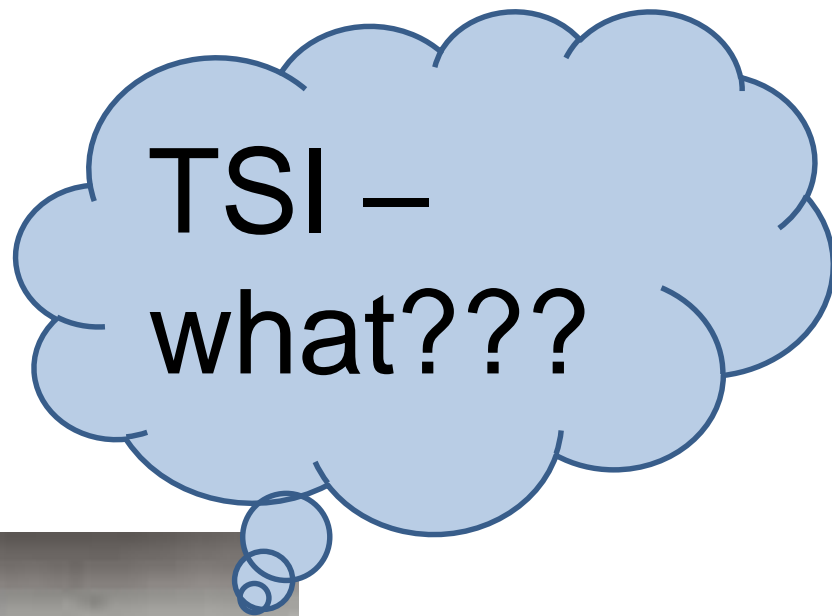
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**Before we start**



# Explaining some EU jargon

TSI PRM =

**T**echnical **S**pecifications for  
**I**nteroperability relating to accessibility of  
the Union's Rail System for Persons with  
Disabilities and **P**ersons with **R**educed  
**M**obility

# Background



# UN Rights Convention – UN CRPD

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) is an international treaty which the EU and its Member States are obliged to implement.

Art. 9 UN CRPD:

“States parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to (...) transportation, both in urban and in rural areas”.

This goes much further than the context of the TSI PRM but it gives the **general principle and intention to improve accessibility of rail travel.**



# Putting the TSI PRM in context of the UN CRPD

As passengers with disabilities we have exactly the same need for being able to travel by train as spontaneously and independent as everybody else.

The UN Convention on the Rights of PWDs states:

- the right to be able to travel by train in an equal way and based on the principle of Universal Design – article 9
- the right to be independent of other persons – article 3
- the right to be treated with dignity – article 3
- Etc.

→ **The TSI PRM are a practical tool to implement the UN CRPD.**

# What are the TSI PRM?







## What are the TSI PRM?

- an EU law (Regulation 1300/2014) that provides technical specifications on how to make trains and stations accessible
- part of the “EU interoperability legislation for railways” which through the tool of harmonized standardisation are developed to support the EU policies of ensuring the cross border free movement of people, goods, services, and capital within the internal market of EU.
- defining the **minimum technical and operational accessibility requirements** for the Member States to comply with in order to:

1. Include the target groups of rail passengers with reduced mobility or disabilities in the cross border rail system in Europe.
2. and to harmonize rail standards for infrastructure and trains, etc. to ensure the [interoperability of the trans-European railway system](#) for the European rail market to be able to cross borders.

I.e. the TSI PRM is one among other TSI tools designed to open the market, making it possible for rail operators in France, Germany or Sweden to take over rail sections in Denmark or Belgium, etc.

The TSIs are drafted by the European Railway Agency and adopted as a decision by the European Commission and the EU Member States.

# How do technical specifications work?



## What are they?

- Technical specifications are **binding technical rules** that reflect the EU overall accepted level of rail accessibility.
- They are supported by voluntary European Standards to give more details
- They are drafted by a working party of the European Railway Agency (ERA) with representatives from Member States, the European Commission, various **stakeholders** like Infrastructure Managers, Railway Undertakings, train manufacturers and passengers, inclusive of representatives from EDF and AGE.

## Why are they important?

- They are made into a **law that is directly applicable in the Member States** (“EU Regulation”)
- The TSI are a very powerful tool on EU level to implement the provisions of the UNCRPD and improve accessibility!



## Examples of the TSI PRM Requirements

- Obstacle-free route
- Tactile and contrasting walking surface indicators
- Visual and spoken information
- Safety information and safety instruction
- Level access and boarding device
- Interoperable wheelchair transportable by train
- Doors and entrances
- Ticketing, information desks, assistance points
- Priority seats and wheelchair spaces
- Toilets
- Lighting and contrast
- Etc.

## Example: Level access and handrail with braille and tactile arrows for direction and wayfinding





# Example: External "Monster Lift" and on-board ramp





# How did the TSI PRM come about?



# How it started

- This TSI PRM were conceived in 2003 as the development of the second group of TSIs. In essence moving from the industry-based regulations on operating to looking at the needs of the users
- It was one of three new ones covering: "Access to people with reduced mobility » , "Safety of railway tunnels« , and "Air pollution"
- The European Commission issued a draft mandate to create these TSIs and it was driven by the realisation that persons with disabilities contribute vastly to the economy, that older people are on the increase as demographic evidence showed and they also contribute to society

# History

- The mandate required that existing legislation be examined, requirement simply to "enhance" accessibility. Also "harmonise provision". It was essentially about consensus until the first TSI was drawn up.
- It is now under the ERA and has legislative powers which is long way from the beginning when many member states had little or no understanding or provision for PRM. It was definitely not about mandating best practice. Just an attempt to get acceptance of the needs.
- We have come a long way: legislators and industry now understand better that **accessibility is a right but it also has economic advantages.**

# Involvement of AGE and EDF

- EDF, AGE, and other societal stakeholders were not involved from the beginning
- We were first asked to give « priorities ». But prioritising between dementia, blindness, wheelchair user, very frail old person, etc. was not something organisations were keen on doing!
- After the publication of the first TSI PRM in 2007, EDF and AGE became official members of the ERA working party and started contributing to the drafting of the revised text
- Over the last years, we have therefore contributed to improving and revising the first TSI – however, we are NOT rewriting it.

# What is the situation today?



## The tasks at hand

Two different aspects of our work:

Next revision of the existing text (planned for 2019) within the ERA working party

Monitoring the implementation of current Regulation (in force since 2015), within the TSI-PRM Advisory Body of the European Commission, including

NIPs

Inventory of Assets

## The role of EDF and AGE in the revision of the text

- Revision of the text, not a complete rewrite
- Working Party discussions are based on **compromise** – we do not always get 100% of what we want but neither does the industry
- By discussion, we increase awareness and understanding among law-makers and industry stakeholders
- We provide good practice examples
- We “remind” the decision makers of their duties under the UNCRPD

# TSI PRM – EDF & AGE Position

The TSI PRM are important because:

- They provide clear, specific, and binding rules for rail accessibility that do not exist in any transport mode
- They force Member States to plan ahead and develop a long-term vision for accessibility
- Stakeholders such as EDF and AGE are actively involved in the drafting process (this is not the case for most other EU legislation!)



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# TSI PRM – EDF & AGE Position

## BUT...

- TSI PRM is a **step towards improved rail accessibility but not a “miracle solution”**. We are still far from fully implementing the UN CRPD principles of equal access and independent mobility; it is a compromise.
- Many requirements e.g. related to boarding devices and toilets, etc. **do not got far enough**. A large number of PRMs and PWDs in all age groups will remain excluded from rail travel because of these not up-dated measurements of for instance wheelchairs, mobility scooters, etc.
- Two **different platform heights** will continue to make it impossible to create dignified, safe and autonomous access solutions.
- There are still too many **exemptions**, e.g. for double-decker trains, restaurant cars, etc.
- **Implementation on national level is slow** and often delayed

# The role of EDF and AGE in the implementation process: TSI PRM Advisory Board

The Commission did establish an Advisory Board to:

1. Monitor the implementation of the TSI PRM (especially chapter 7)
2. Supporting Member States
3. Facilitating exchange best practices
4. Identifying common priorities and priorities for implementation of the TSI PRM
5. Making recommendations to the Commission.

Members: Member States that like to participate, Railway sector, Bodies of users (EDF, AGE...) and ERA

In our opinion the Advisory Board isn't as successful as it can or should be. Mainly the exchange of best practices and the supporting of Member States needs some improvement. AGE and EDF are discussing this with the Commission.

## The role of EDF and AGE in the implementation process: National Implementation Plans (I)

- The National Implementation Plans (NIPs) are **strategic plans** that shall contain a strategy to implement the TSI PRM
- They are an **obligatory** part of the TSI PRM (chapter 7)
- They shall including a **clear timeline, financing strategy, and prioritisation rule** laying down the criteria and priorities for stations and units of rolling stock to be designated for renewal or upgrading
- This strategy shall be formulated in cooperation stakeholders on national level, including **representative associations of users including disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility**

## The role of EDF and AGE in the implementation process: National Implementation Plans (II)

- NIP runs over a period of 10 year, update every 5 year
- Representative associations of users including disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility shall be consulted.
- NIP's are written by Member States (i.e. Ministry of Transport)

### → You can influence the NIPs by:

- Actively drafting or commenting the NIP
- Participating in workshops (in some Member States)
- Asking questions about the NIP: what priorities have been made (e.g. only big stations? Only in certain geographical areas?)? What is the timeline? How and how much will accessibility be improved and for which number of users?
- **Raise awareness! Tell the media! Ask your local governments!**

## The role of EDF and AGE in the implementation process: Inventory of Assets (IoA)

- The IoA will be a website with a database providing information to users about accessibility
- The aim is also to **record current obstacles to accessibility in order to remove them later**
- Kind of information: parking for PRM? Stairs, ramps ? Lift? Accesible ticket machines? Audible information? Universal Toilets? Assistance available? Etc. etc.
- Philosophy behind IoA: with this information/data it must be possible to judge the possibility to travel independantly or the assistance to be organised

# Looking ahead



## Next steps

- Next revision of the TSI-PRM is currently in the drafting process; EDF and AGE continue to be involved
- Implementation is ongoing and needs to be monitored (NIPs)
- Commission will publish web tool to plan accessible journey and collect data on accessibility of stations (“Inventory of Assets”)

## Remaining challenges

- Lack of resources of societal stakeholders to allow meaningful involvement compared to industry stakeholders
- Finding expertise and building capacity of societal stakeholders (finding an expert who knows about EU policy, engineering, the railway sector, has a disability, and is willing to commit his/her time is not easy!)
- Lack of transparency of some national authorities



## What can you or your organisation do?

- Join your national “Mirror Group” to give input
- Help shaping the EDF and AGE position by getting involved with our members and saying what is important for you
- Contact your national authorities to remind them of their obligations (see previous slide on the NIPs)
- Form alliances on national, regional, or local level (e.g. with Passengers’ Associations or Consumer Associations)

# Questions and Answers



## TSI PRM – Useful Links

- **Text of the Regulation: TSI PRM – Reg. 1300/2014** (all EU languages) - <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32014R1300>
- **TSI PRM – Application Guide** (all EU languages): <http://www.era.europa.eu/Document-Register/Pages/TSI-Application-Guide-PRM-TSI.aspx>
- **European Commission Website and NIPs – The National Implementation Plans** (In the national languages only) [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/rail/accessibility\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/rail/accessibility_en)
- **Rail Passengers’ Rights Reg. 1371/2007** (all EU languages) – <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32007R1371&from=EN>
- **EDF Website:** <http://edf-feph.org/rail>
- **AGE Website:** <http://www.age-platform.eu/policy-work/age-friendly-environments-accessibility>

# Thank you!



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