



# RAIL PASSENGERS RIGHTS

Experience and challenges SNCB

Tommy Zonnekein Accessibility program SNCB

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Onderweg.  
Naar beter.



# WHO AM I?

Name: Tommy Zonnekein

Function: Accessibility Manager @ SNCB (Belgian Railway Company)



**Coordinator**



**Firefighter**



**Preacher**



**Garbagecan**

# MOBILITY: AN ACCELERATOR TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY



**According to the latest BeMob survey (FPS Mobility and Transport, 2023), more than one Belgian in four experiences difficulties using public transport.**

Every traveler benefits from easily accessible platforms, ground-level boarding of trains, information displayed both visually and audibly, a digital platform where all relevant info is visible at a glance.

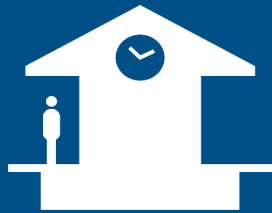
**SNCB plays a key role in making public transport more accessible for everyone.**

## ACCESSIBILITY TODAY

- **No match between rolling stock and infrastructure**
- **132 stations with assistance for everyone + 27 stations with limited assistance**
- **PRM have to book assistance 3 to 24 h in advance.**

# The 4 pillars of an ACCESSIBLE RAIL SYSTEM

## INFRA-STRUCTURE



- Autonomous Accessible stations

## ROLLING STOCK



- Accessible rolling stock

## SERVICES



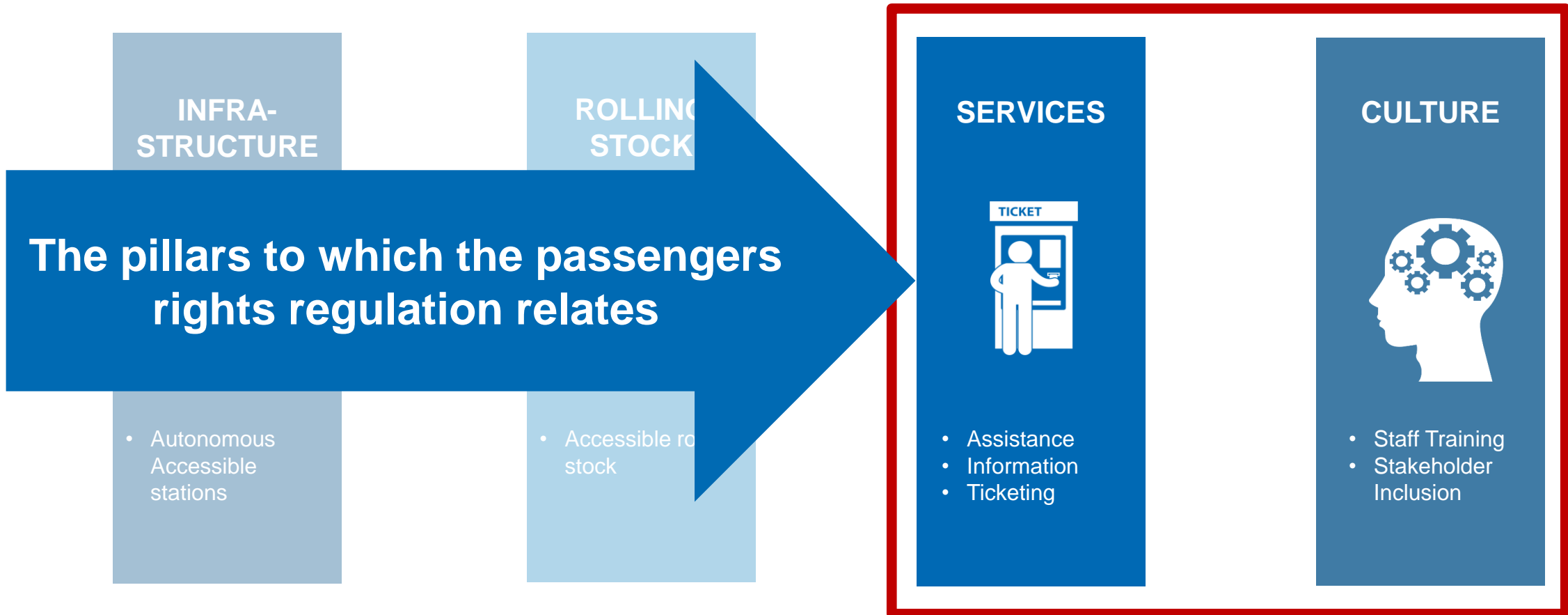
- Assistance
- Information
- Ticketing

## CULTURE



- Staff Training
- Stakeholder Inclusion

# The 4 pillars of an ACCESSIBLE RAIL SYSTEM





# SERVICES



Right to transport

Assistance

Services on board

Information on accessibility

Ticketing

# SERVICES



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**Where** and under which **conditions** assistance is provided is determined by the **National Implementation Plan Accessibility** from 2016 as referred to in the **TSI 1300/2014**.

It requires the involvement of

- public authorities,
- infrastructure manager,
- rail operators and
- stakeholder organizations.



# SERVICES



Right to transport

Assistance

Services on board

Information on accessibility

Ticketing

**132 stations with assistance free of charge**  
(limited assistance in 27 additional stations.)

Increasing the number of stations with assistance is planned during the course of our public service agreement.

**Reservation delay: 24h**

(3h between 43 stations if direct connection)

**Key Issues:** accessibility of the station & availability of staff

The **introduction of level access trains with automatic ramps** should allow people in a wheelchair to travel autonomously

# SERVICES



Right to transport

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**No extra services** on board such as bars or resto

Our **new and renewed rolling stock** are equipped with **accessible toilets** and **service and help buttons**.

Since 2020 we actively involve stakeholder organizations in testing and evaluating the usability of these equipments.

# SERVICES



Right to transport

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Ticketing

One of our biggest challenges.

Projects are ongoing in **making accessibility information available** for a wider audience.

- Info on Stations
- Info on Rolling stock

# SERVICES



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## Shift towards digital Channels

- Working together with AnySurfer to achieve WCAG compliancy

## Large stations: Travel Store

- Mobility guides assist every passenger while purchasing a ticket

## Small stations: Ticket Vending Machines

- Our future TVM (market is ongoing) will be equipped with an induction loop and allow users to contact an assistant when needed

# CULTURE



Staff Training

Stakeholder inclusion

User experience

# CULTURE



Staff Training

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## Customer facing staff

- **Customer centered training** through blended learning. It includes awareness on accessibility and handicap.
- **Function specific** training: procedures, how to... (both basic as on the job)

## Station design and maintenance

- **Awareness** training and interactive **simulation** on handicap
- Training on accessibility

Collaboration with **stakeholder organizations** in providing training and learning materials

# CULTURE



Staff Training

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## Stakeholder organizations

- Formal and informal platforms to discuss accessibility

## Users with disabilities or reduced mobility

- We aim to actively involve users to improve the accessibility of our services (eg. Ticket machines, mobile apps, rolling stock,...)
- **User test panel**

# CULTURE



Staff Training

Stakeholder inclusion

User experience

**The proof in the pudding is in the eating**

- Polling **user satisfaction** on a daily basis.
- Provide **feedback** to the different actors in the company



# FINAL THOUGHTS

We still have a long way to go, compared to some other European countries, and the speed of the transition will be the result of the efforts of all stakeholders in our society as a whole.

**Accessibility runs like a common thread through our public service agreement.** The idea that public transport should be accessible to all is gaining ground and **the passengers rights regulations helps us** realizing that idea.

Thank you!

En route. Vers mieux.  
Onderweg. Naar beter.

