



National Transport Authority

Republic of Ireland National Enforcement Body

Activity Report 2023 & 2024

Regulation (EU) 2021/782 on rail passengers' rights and obligations

June 2025

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Introduction

Under the provisions of Article 32 of the Regulation (EU) 2021/782, the National Enforcement Bodies (NEBs) of each EU Member State are required to publish a report on their activities in the previous 2 calendar years. The National Transport Authority is the designated National Enforcement Body for rail passenger rights in Ireland.

The NTA's role as the Irish NEB is prescribed in national regulations (S.I. no. 271 of 2023). These regulations also set out the penalties that can be imposed in cases of non-compliance.

The Irish National Enforcement Body

The National Transport Authority is a statutory body established by the Minister for Transport on 1 December 2009. The Authority's remit is provided for under the Dublin Transport Authority Act 2008, the Public Transport Regulation Act 2009 and the Taxi Regulation Act (2013) for securing the provision of public passenger land transport services, licensing of public bus passenger services, regulation of the small public service vehicle sector, the provision and operation of a smartcard integrated ticketing scheme and integrated information schemes for public transport and all associated administrative activities. The Authority is also the national enforcement body responsible for the rights of passenger travelling by rail or on sea and inland waterways and bus and coach. The commission for aviation regulation is responsible for air passenger rights in Ireland.

The NTA also has responsibility for the development of an integrated transport system within the [Greater Dublin Area](#) (GDA). The principal functions of the NTA with respect to the GDA are:

- Strategic planning of transport;
- Development of an integrated, accessible public transport network;
- Promoting cycling and walking;
- Provision of public transport infrastructure generally including light rail, metro and heavy rail;
- Effective management of traffic and transport demand.

In addition to its statutory responsibilities, the Authority has various arrangements with the Department of Transport to discharge functions on its behalf with regard to the following:

- Regional cities traffic management grants
- National Accessibility Programme
- Smarter Travel Workplaces and campuses
- Smarter Travel schools
- Rural Transport

The Authority is financed by central government. We currently have staff across a range of areas, planners, engineers, economists, accounts, IT, admin and communications.

Background to the Rail Sector in Ireland & Accessibility

Iarnród Éireann (Irish Rail) is Ireland's national railway service provider, developing and operating the country's rail network and passenger and freight rail services, and Port Authority for Rosslare Europort. At year end 2024 Iarnród Éireann's had

- Completed 50.7m passenger journeys (46.1m in 2023), the highest ever total on the company's services.
- Timetable enhancements were delivered on Dublin/Galway, Dublin/Waterford and Dublin/ Wexford in August, as well as additional weekend services on the Cork Commuter network.
- Expansion of Dublin/Belfast services to hourly frequency was introduced in October, as well as timetable revisions to address punctuality issues on Dublin area commuter services.
- Continuing infrastructure and fleet investment and enhancement to support the future growth of a sustainable rail network.

Under the Accessibility Retrofit Funding Scheme, funding was approximately €7 Million between 2019 to 2021 each year. This funding increased to €15 million in 2022 and to €24 Million in 2025. It includes funding for projects to increase accessibility for people in wheelchairs, but also for people with vision impairments, hidden disabilities and for older people. There has been additional funding invested over the years which has helped to improve the public transport service for all passengers including people with disabilities too. In relation to rail improvement works NTA have been providing funding to Irish Rail to install new footbridges and lifts at their stations to ensure all people can access both sides of the platform. It is hoped to complete four stations in 2025, along with accessibility improvement works will be completed in those stations also.

Other improvement works include:

- 52 stations have had their lifts renovated or replaced since 2020.
- "Changing Places" toilet facilities have been installed in three rail stations.
- Improved Wayfinding and Signage has now been installed in all 147 rail stations.
- Irish Rail provide a "Quieter Coach" on their Dublin to Cork service and give out free Sensory Packs to customers on request.
- A Sensory Pod Pilot is in operation in Kent rail station in Cork.

In October 2024 New Accessibility training contract signed with Vision Ireland for the provision of disability awareness training for 1600 staff over three years.

Complaint handling process

Passengers should make their complaint to the operator within 3 months of the incident taking place. A reply should be received within 1 month or in more complex cases 3 months.

If the complainant is unhappy with the response they can complain to the National Enforcement Body (NEB), by e-mail, phone or post. Details are provided on the NTA website. This should be done within 3 months of getting a rejection or in the case of no reply.

The complaint to the NEB will be acknowledged within 2 weeks. The NEB aims to resolve the complaint within 3 months (or 6 months for complex cases). If legal action is required it may take longer to resolve.

Table 1 - Statistical data of complaints submitted to the National Enforcement Body				
Year	Number of complaints	Reason for complaint		
		Delays, missed connections and cancellations (Chapter IV)	Security, complaints and quality service (Chapter VI)	Comments
From 1 January to 31 December 2024	2	1 (Article 19)	1 (Article 29)	Chapter IV complaint – decision by NTA that carrier (Irish Rail) did not breach Article 19(2) of the regulation. Chapter VI complaint - resolved by carrier (Irish Rail).
From 1 January to 31 December 2023	0			

Penalties

Under EU Regulation 2021/782, the National Transport Authority (NTA) monitors rail service providers to ensure they meet their legal obligations to passengers. When issues arise, the NTA may take action through Improvement Plans or Compliance Notices.

Improvement Plans

If the NTA believes a provider is carrying out—or is likely to carry out—activities that breach passenger rights regulations, it may issue a written direction requiring the provider to submit an Improvement Plan. This plan must outline the steps the provider will take to fix the issue and must be submitted within a specified timeframe.

Once the plan is received, the NTA will review it and respond within 30 days:

- If the plan is satisfactory, the provider will be informed.
- If the plan is inadequate, the provider will be asked to revise and resubmit it.
- The NTA may withdraw or extend the direction at any time, provided no appeal is in progress.

Compliance Notices

If a provider fails to comply with the Regulation or does not submit or implement an acceptable Improvement Plan, the NTA may issue a Compliance Notice. This notice outlines the breach and sets out the actions the provider must take to resolve it, along with a deadline.

Before issuing a Compliance Notice, the NTA will notify the provider of its intention. The provider then has 21 days to respond or make representations, which the NTA will consider.

If a Compliance Notice is issued, the provider has 14 days to appeal to the High Court. The court may:

- Confirm the notice (with or without changes), or
- Cancel it.

The court's decision is final, except for legal questions which may be appealed to the Court of Appeal. The provider must also inform the NTA of the appeal and its grounds. The NTA has the right to participate in the hearing.

If an appeal is made, the notice takes effect after the appeal is resolved or withdrawn, or on the date stated in the notice—whichever is later.

If no appeal is made, the notice takes effect after the appeal period ends or on the date stated in the notice—whichever is later. The NTA may withdraw or extend the notice if no appeal is pending.

Penalties for Non-Compliance

If a provider fails to comply with a valid Compliance Notice, it may face legal penalties:

- A Class A fine for minor offences, or
- A fine of up to €250,000 for more serious breaches.

No penalties were imposed in 2023 or 2024.

Conclusion

Over the 2023–2024 reporting period, the National Transport Authority has continued to uphold its responsibilities as Ireland’s National Enforcement Body under Regulation (EU) 2021/782. While the number of formal complaints and penalties remained low, significant progress was made in enhancing accessibility, improving passenger information, and strengthening oversight mechanisms. The Authority acknowledges the positive developments in service delivery by Iarnród Éireann, particularly in accessibility upgrades and staff training initiatives.

Looking ahead, the NTA remains committed to proactive monitoring, stakeholder engagement, and continuous improvement to ensure that passenger rights are fully protected and that rail services in Ireland remain inclusive, reliable, and compliant with EU standards.