

Press release

Open letter to EVP Timmermans on the Multimodal Digital Mobility Services – Friends of MDMS call for ambition, halfway measures are unacceptable

A broad coalition of stakeholders representing a significant part of Europe's mobility ecosystem, including consumers and passengers, environmental groups, independent rail operators and ticket intermediaries have sent an open letter to Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice President of the European Commission regarding the upcoming Regulation on Multimodal Digital Mobility Services (MDMS) calling for an ambitious proposal in the interest of European travellers and to reach the EU climate goals.

Brussels, 08 June 2023 – As part of a broad coalition, ECTAA has advocated since the inception of this Regulation for the EU to ease the booking of (multimodal) transport journeys involving different transport offers across all modes and operators into a single booking. An ambitious Regulation would facilitate the transition towards a more sustainable mobility and transport system by enabling convenient combinations of different modes and operators in an easy, flexible and integrated way.

The coalition has recently become aware that the Commission is considering to downgrade its ambition and put forward a weak proposal that would discard this central aim of the initiative. The coalition therefore strongly urges EVP Timmermans to ensure that the Commission maintains a high level of ambition for the Regulation, with the interests of European travellers and the EU's climate goals at the heart of the initiative.

Only “re-linking” to transport operators’ websites instead of broadly enabling integrated booking and ticketing would mean that the MDMS initiative would fail its fundamental objectives – making consumers lives easier, facilitate new services and reduce emissions through a modal shift towards more sustainable transport. It would mean no progress for consumers and the environment and a continuation and possibly increase of dominant operators’ anti-competitive practices of preventing integrated booking via independent distribution channels. The limitation of comparison and combination across transport operators and modes to the benefit of dominant operators, but to the detriment of consumers and the environment would not be addressed.

Instead, the EU should unleash the huge potential of MDMS as a modal shift and competition enabler by obliging booking/ticketing through third-party channels based on fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory conditions.

-ENDS-

About ECTAA

ECTAA represents some 80,000 travel agents and tour operators in Europe, which provide consultancy and sell transport, accommodation, leisure and other tourism services as well as combined products to leisure and business customers.

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