



Deutsche Bahn
Quality Report 2023

Quality report

In the year under review, DB Fernverkehr AG continued its activities to implement Deutsche Bahn Group's (DB Group) Strong Rail, DB Group's overarching strategy. This provides significant support for the achievement of key traffic and climate policy targets of the Federal Government, as the focus is on the target of a significant shift in transport towards rail. The aim is to increase volume sold to over 70 billion passenger kilometers. At the same time, customer satisfaction and product quality are to be increased.

The expansion of services required for the growth in passenger numbers, among other things, is being systematically driven forward by the gradual introduction of Germany in sync with new connections to regions and an increase in the frequency of train services on existing lines. The recovery in passenger numbers continued in 2023, as the first quarter of 2022 was still significantly influenced by measures to contain the Covid-19 pandemic. With the aim of delivering on the service promise of greater comfort and operational excellence during the journey, DB Fernverkehr AG continued to work on increasing vehicle availability and vehicle quality in the year under review. This included continuing the modernization of older ICE vehicles and adding further new ICE 4 trains and ICE 3 trains of the 408 series to the vehicle fleet. The retrofitting of various series (including ICE 1 and ICE 3) with the European Train Control System (ETCS), which continued in the year under review, will enable these trains to be used on ETCS routes in the future.

Overall, the punctuality development in the year under review was severely impaired by the poor condition of the track infrastructure, the persistently intensive construction activity and, as a result, unstable construction planning processes as well as the overall high network utilization. The tense personnel situation for skilled labor and disruptions to operations due to individual events (e.g. the freight train accident in Geseke and the overhead wire failure in Munich) also had a negative impact.

For DB Fernverkehr AG, the fulfillment of its customers' expectations is in the foreground. As a service provider, the focus is on good transport services and thus the achievement of defined quality criteria. In addition to customer satisfaction, these include, above all, the reliability of transport services and compliance with service standards. The quality of the services and processes is controlled using key figures via regular performance dialogue, and the achievement of the annually agreed targets is monitored using the quality management system. The key figures are analyzed and improvement measures are derived for the underlying processes.

Production in long-distance transport is certified in accordance with internationally recognized standards for quality and environmental management as well as occupational health and safety. The provision of food and beverages on the trains is subject to the strict requirements of a certified food safety management system. DB Fernverkehr AG therefore complies with the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2021/782 of the European Parliament and of the Council of April 29, 2021 on rail passengers' rights and obligations (recast of Regulation (EC) 1371/2007).

CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

Customers and their expectations and satisfaction are at the center of DB Fernverkehr AG's service provision. The company receives feedback through direct contact during the journey or at the station, via social media channels, personal letters, complaint management and committee work with the Customer Advisory Board and the representatives of passengers with reduced mobility in DB Group's program-related working group. In addition, regular customer surveys are commissioned from independent institutes. Representative customer groups are involved in the development of new product and service ideas.

INFORMATION AND TICKET SALES

Customers are offered a comprehensive range of information and advice via various media before, during and after the journey.

- The Web site bahn.de/en and the DB Navigator app together recorded an average of 42 million visitors per month in 2023 (previous year: 36 million visitors per month). bahn.de/en is one of the most visited mobility portals in Germany. In the year under review, bahn.de/en recorded about 650 million visits (previous year: 600 million visits) and more than 44 million online bookings¹⁾ (previous year: 48 million online bookings). DB Navigator is one of the most popular German mobility apps (including the WirtschaftsWoche award in February 2023) with over 70 million downloads (previous year: 60 million downloads). In the year under review, 96.5 million cell phone bookings were made via DB Navigator (previous year: 91.3 million cell phone bookings), and more than 1.5 billion travel information requests were made (previous year: 1.3 billion travel information requests).
- The year under review was a year of renewal for the digital sales channel bahn.de/en and DB Navigator. In September 2023, bahn.de/en was converted to the newly developed sales platform, which offers leaner processes and faster provision of new functions and improvements. bahn.de/en has since been available to private customers with an optimized design and more intuitive user guidance. The new DB Navigator was made available shortly afterwards. Further optimizations have already been implemented based on initial customer feedback.
- Comfort Check-in enables DB Long-Distance passengers to travel contactless without ticket control. The service was also further developed in the year under review and its use by our passengers increased. The figure of 80 million check-ins was exceeded in 2023. Key functional enhancements included, for example, easier access to the check-in process, simplified seat changes and extended BahnCard support. Comfort Check-in was also migrated to tickets on the new sales platform and to the new DB Navigator.

In addition, an option was created to extend Comfort Check-in to tickets and offers that cannot currently be checked completely digitally (e.g. if proof of age is required). Since the year under review, Comfort Check-in can also be used for tickets for children between the ages of 6 and 14.

- The DB voice application for Amazon Alexa (Deutsche Bahn Skill) was further developed during the year under review. In addition to optimizing stop recognition, the focus was on setting up favorites. Users can now save personal favorites, a train or a route in their profile by voice command or via the Web site, which speeds up the information process. Other changes included simplified user guidance with a maximum of two selection options in the dialog, greater integration of DB Navigator through the send-to-phone function and simple integration into Alexa routines.
- As a virtual assistant on bahn.de/en the DB Smile chatbot provides passengers with information on all aspects of passenger transport. It answers questions about Deutsche Bahn's offers, products and services. The chatbot focuses on the topics of ticket exchanges, passenger rights, BahnCard and Germany-Ticket. DB Smile complements the self-service offer on bahn.de/en as well as the classic contact channels, especially when passengers need information at short notice. The number of chats conducted with customers via the DB Smile virtual assistant rose to about 1,041,000 chats in 2023 (previous year: about 830,000 chats). On average, 90% of chats were conducted automatically by the chatbot. If the chatbot was unable to process the request, agents advised customers in live chat.
- The City-Ticket is available in 130 cities in the respective area of validity for super saver fare, saver fare and flexible fare tickets with DB Long-Distance. The City-Ticket is already included in the ticket price for flex price tickets. The City-Ticket is valid for travel to the station at the place of departure or for onward travel at the destination by public transport.
- About 5,000 stationary ticket vending machines are available at about 3,000 locations nationwide for timetable information and ticket sales.

¹⁾ Number of bookings bahn.de: The sale of the Germany-Ticket is leading to a shift in orders towards subscription sales and thus to a decline in orders in digital sales. Example: customers take out a subscription in subscription sales and use it for the whole month instead of buying several local transport tickets per month via bahn.de as before.

- In the about 300 travel centers throughout Germany, DB Group employees are in direct contact with customers to provide travel information and sell tickets at the ticket counter. In addition, about 1,600 agencies are available to customers for personal advice and ticket sales. The first completely redesigned long-distance travel center was opened in Düsseldorf. Another 25 will follow in the coming years.
- With the video travel center, DB Group operates a video-based sales product. The video travel center enables personal advice and sales, especially in rural regions, as an alternative to travel centers or agencies. At the end of 2023, it was available at 110 locations.
- About 2,000 service staff members of DB InfraGO AG (formerly DB Station & Service AG) support passengers at large and medium-sized stations. They provide guidance and up-to-date information on timetables, trains and any irregularities.

A total of seven sales channels (DB ticket machines, online sales, mobile applications, DB travel centers, DB agencies, subscription centers and DB dialog telephone travel service) were available to customers to purchase tickets in the year under review. As in the previous year, the online sales and mobile applications sales channels accounted for the largest share of revenue in the year under review.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS

Regular and systematic feedback from customers is a prerequisite for ensuring adequate product and service quality. In the year under review, about 240,000 passengers and about 2,700 business partners were surveyed in 34 studies on their perception of rail passenger transport services. A distinction is made between the individual process steps of the travel chain, from information and ticket booking to the customer's impression as a buyer, collector or passenger at the station, as well as the perception on the train and any support required at the destination station or the handling of complaints and passenger rights. The results of the studies are evaluated in a structured manner in order to take targeted countermeasures in the event of weak spots.

With a grade of 2.7, customer satisfaction for the current long-distance journey in 2023 is exactly at the same level as the previous year. After a positive start to the year, customer satisfaction decreased towards the middle of the year and remained at the previous year's level due to unsatisfactory punctuality and the strike situation, despite better ratings for comfort and service. Customer satisfaction was measured via the online-based customer survey, which replaces the previous customer satisfaction survey with paper questionnaires on the trains, and communicated in a more publicly understandable grading system. The studies and their evaluation are carried out by independent market research institutes.

In 2023, the focus was once again on improving communication, particularly in light of the tense operational situation. In addition, the commissioning of further new ICE trains continued and individual aspects of comfort on the train were improved, such as Comfort Check-in and seat availability. Regular customer satisfaction surveys are used to measure the product and service quality of rail passenger transport in a timely manner.

CLEANLINESS OF TRAINS AND STATION FACILITIES

A sharp increase in train utilization due to the recovery-related rise in passenger numbers and the tense operational situation also posed a challenge for cleaning services. Delays in the arrival of incoming trains required a high degree of flexibility on the part of those involved in the cleaning process by rescheduling capacities and resources at short notice. When cleaning the trains before each train journey, the main focus was not only on the toilets but also on the contact surfaces, such as handles and bars, which were disinfected. Intensive cleaning (weekly, basic and annual cleaning) was also carried out at regular intervals. In addition, the entire long-distance fleet underwent an extended cleaning program in the first half of 2023. Particularly sensitive areas (e.g. parent-and-child compartments) were cleaned more intensively.

The cleaning and quality assurance system was continued in 2023. The cleaning system standardizes the cleaning performance before each train journey. The quality assurance system then checks that the mobile and stationary cleaning services meet the quality and hygiene standards. Qualified inspectors at random check the quality of the cleaning services with a focus on customer-relevant areas. In particular, compliance with hygiene/cleanliness requirements in the sanitary facilities is an important part of the quality inspection. In 2023, it was assessed with a degree of compliance of 92.2% (previous year: 92.3%) and is just below the target value of 93%. In total, over 44,000 cleaning inspections were carried out in the year under review (previous year (value adjusted): over 38,000 cleaning inspections).

As in the previous year, en-route cleaning was carried out on about 80% of all trains during their journey in 2023 in order to ensure that passengers' cleanliness requirements were also met during the train journey. The additional measures for disinfecting contact surfaces from previous years were continued.

Overall, the cleanliness at the seats was given a grade of 2.4 (previous year: grade of 2.3) and the train toilets were given a grade of 3.0, as in the previous year.

The number of exterior washes of trains carried out in 2023 fell to about 1,000 washes per month (previous year: about 1,400 washes per month), as several cleaning facilities were unavailable due to renovation and modernization measures. In order to partially compensate for the system downtime, more manual exterior cleaning was carried out in 2023. About 130 trains were washed manually from the outside every month in 2023 (previous year: about 40 manual washes per month).

The air quality inside the trains is determined by the amount of fresh air supplied. This always complies with the relevant normative specifications such as EN 13129 and UIC 553 and is verified by measurement on each vehicle type during acceptance. Long-distance trains have a high air exchange rate as standard. This means a high volume of inflowing air in relation to the volume of the passenger compartment. In an ICE, the air is exchanged every seven minutes.

The specifications of the EN 13129 and UIC 553 standards are also taken into account for thermal comfort. The inside temperature is based on the outside temperature. At low temperatures below 19°C, an interior temperature of 23°C is aimed for. As outside temperatures rise, the temperature inside is adjusted so that the temperature difference is perceived as pleasant when entering and leaving the train.

Food safety, and in particular the quality of drinking water on board, is regularly checked by a non-Group service provider.

The Infrastructural Facility Management (IFM) production concept was continued in the area of station cleaning in 2023. The aim is to align cleaning with the needs of passengers based on identified core needs. From the second half of 2023, the cycle for floor cleaning and waste disposal was increased and mobile cleaning teams were introduced across the board. In 2023, it was also possible to report soiling via WhatsApp and have it removed. This service is offered at 66 top stations and 158 stations on the Berlin S-Bahn (metro). The Berlin and Munich S-Bahn (metro) also offer the option of reporting soiling on trains.

RELIABILITY OF TRANSPORT

Punctuality and cancellation of trains

At 64.0%, the punctuality of DB Long-Distance trains in 2023 was below the previous year's figure (65.2%) and therefore lower than expected.

The reasons for this were, in particular, the poor condition of the rail infrastructure due to outdated and fault-prone facilities, as well as the high volume of short-term construction requirements. In addition, disruptions on the highly utilized sections and transport hubs led to disproportionately high congestion that had an impact on the entire rail network. In addition, the replacement of damaged concrete ties and the associated setting up of restricted speed sections is a core challenge for operational quality. A positive point worth mentioning is that the number of vehicle faults has decreased, while vehicle availability is increasing.

Load-related delays (especially train sequence conflicts) were the main cause of delays in 2023 and increased again by 4% from the previous year's high level. The number of trains affected by construction work increased again compared to the already high level of the previous year. Overall, 62% (previous year: 53%) of all long distance trains were affected by at least one construction measure. The tense operating situation led to additional disruptions in operational processes, for example due to delays in staff and vehicle transfers and the need to secure connections.

Individual events such as bridge damage and the associated line closure at the Frankfurt hub as well as weather-related restrictions (onset of winter in southern Germany in December 2023 and storms), some of which led to long-lasting infrastructure damage, had an additional negative impact on punctuality development. In addition, negative effects resulted from a low punctuality of train run starts and personnel shortages, which led to understaffing in interlockings, among other things. Strikes by the Railway and Transport Workers Union (EVG) and the German Train Drivers' Union (GDL) led to severe restrictions for passengers in 2023 as well as a high level of additional burdens, particularly due to necessary rescheduling and passenger information.

As a result, whole journey punctuality also deteriorated slightly to 68.9% in the year under review (previous year: 69.3%). Whole journey punctuality reflects the customer's complete travel experience, taking into account all delays, cancellation of trains, replacement trains and alternative travel options. Reaching all connections is also taken into account. Customers are considered to be punctual if the planned arrival time at their destination is exceeded by less than 15 minutes.

At 83.2%, the passenger-weighted rate of connections made in long-distance transport in 2023 was roughly at the level of the previous year (83.1%). All booked transfers that were not affected by cancellations without replacement were taken into account.

Key figures according to Regulation (EU) 2021/782

	2023	2022
Average total delay (per stop) - total (minutes) ¹⁾	9.6	9.5
Punctuality ²⁾ (%)	64.0	65.2
Delays due to circumstances within the meaning of Article 19 (10) ³⁾ - total (%)	8.3	8.5
Delays due to circumstances within the meaning of Article 19 (10) ³⁾ - domestic traffic (%)	8.1	7.9
Delays due to circumstances within the meaning of Article 19 (10) ³⁾ - international traffic (%)	9.3	10.5
Departure delayed at train start (5:59 minutes) - total (%)	12.4	11.7
Departure delayed at train start (5:59 minutes) - domestic traffic (%)	12.6	11.9
Departure delayed at train start (5:59 minutes) - international traffic (%)	11.5	10.8
Arrival at train end delayed - total (%)	43.3	42.1
Arrival at train end delayed - domestic traffic (%)	43.7	41.9
Arrival at train end delayed - international traffic (%)	41.9	42.8
Delays < 60 minutes (proportion of stops ≤ 60 delay min ⁴⁾) - total (%)	97.5	97.4
Delays < 60 minutes (proportion of stops ≤ 60 delay min ⁴⁾) - domestic traffic (%)	97.5	97.4
Delays < 60 minutes (proportion of stops ≤ 60 delay min ⁴⁾) - international traffic (%)	97.7	97.4
Delays of 60 to 119 minutes (share of stops 60-120 delay min ⁴⁾) - total (%)	2.2	2.2
Delays of 60 to 119 minutes (share of stops 60-120 delay min ⁴⁾) - domestic traffic (%)	2.2	2.2
Delays of 60 to 119 minutes (share of stops 60-120 delay min ⁴⁾) - international traffic (%)	2.0	2.3
Delays > 120 minutes (share of stops ≥ 120 delay min ⁴⁾) - total (%)	0.3	0.4
Delays > 120 minutes (share of stops ≥ 120 delay min ⁴⁾) - domestic traffic (%)	0.3	0.4
Delays > 120 minutes (share of stops ≥ 120 delay min ⁴⁾) - international traffic (%)	0.3	0.3
Train cancellations - total (%)	2.7	2.3
Train cancellations - domestic traffic (%)	2.2	2.0
Train cancellations - international traffic (%)	0.5	0.3
Cancellation of a train due to circumstances within the meaning of Article 19 (10) ³⁾ - total (%)	0.4	0.7
Cancellation of a train due to circumstances within the meaning of Article 19 (10) ³⁾ - domestic traffic (%)	0.3	0.6
Cancellation of a train due to circumstances within the meaning of Article 19 (10) ³⁾ - international traffic (%)	0.1	0.1

In relation to stops within Germany.
Differentiation between international (long-distance lines that cover a relevant part of the line abroad; international traffic) and national traffic (domestic traffic).

¹⁾ No differentiation by service type possible.

²⁾ A stop is considered to be operationally punctual if the scheduled arrival time was exceeded by less than six minutes.

³⁾ Force majeure.

⁴⁾ Minutes of delays.

Coping with disruptions

The aim is to minimize disruptions and their effects with early and reliable passenger information. In 2023, the focus was on projects increasing the punctuality of trains and customer satisfaction.

For example, a project was implemented to improve the management of traffic control centers with the aim of making better scheduling decisions for the majority of passengers and providing passengers with better information and management.


Established processes in the traffic control centers ensure reliable and stable operations management and optimal passenger information in the event of disruptions. Operational concepts geared towards major disruptions can be implemented immediately when a disruption occurs, so that alternative measures (such as the use of reserve trains in metropolitan areas) can take effect immediately.

ASSISTANCE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND LIMITED MOBILITY

DB Group has been making great efforts for years to enable passengers with disabilities to enjoy self-determined mobility. In doing so, the DB Group is acknowledging its social responsibility towards the more than ten million German citizens with disabilities, who represent an important customer and target group for DB Group.

The aim is to consistently implement accessibility measures in trains and buses in long-distance and regional transport as well as in stations and travel centers, which are laid down in “Deutsche Bahn AG’s accessibility programs.”

The accessibility programs form the basis for future work on equal participation of people with disabilities in DB Group’s range of services and each covers a time horizon of five years. The action plans described therein are a voluntary commitment by DB Group and show important milestones on the way to the future vision of accessible travel. The programs are part of a change process that takes particular account of the specific needs of people with disabilities within the framework of legal requirements and in cooperation with interest groups.

The fourth program, which has a time horizon from 2020 to 2025, was published in May 2021 (further information at bahn.de/programm-barrierefrei .

In a constructive dialog based on partnership, representatives of the target group can contribute their expertise right from the start and DB Group can take the specific needs of customers with limited mobility into account.

In terms of self-determined travel for passengers with limited mobility, a particular focus is on the accessible expansion of the infrastructure and the procurement of accessible vehicles.

All new long-distance vehicles to be procured will be equipped with a vehicle-bound boarding aid or have level access. For example, every ICE 4 train has an on board wheelchair lift. The commissioning of additional ICE 4 multiple units in the year under review will enable more passengers with wheelchairs to travel on the connection of their choice due to the capacity to carry up to four wheelchairs per train.

The modernization program for the older ICE 3 trains (403 series) was completed in July 2024. It included the inclusion of a second wheelchair space with an electrically height-adjustable table at both seats, as well as the addition of tactile orientation signs from boarding to the seat number.

During the year under review, nine additional ICE T trains were equipped with tactile seat numbers as part of the modernization program.

In addition, further modernized ICE 1 vehicles were put into operation. Among other things, they now have a modern passenger information system, modernized interiors and toilet areas as well as tactile orientation signs.

After the first four new ICE 3neo trains were put into operation at the end of 2022, a further 12 ICE 3neo trains were added in the year under review. Among other things, ICE 3neo trains have a newly developed wheelchair lift that is more robust and user-friendly, so that wheelchair users can board and disembark more reliably and quickly.

All double-decker Intercity 2 trains have one wheelchair-accessible car each. Due to the floor height of about 55 cm in the boarding area, passengers who are dependent on a wheelchair can board and disembark at platforms with heights between 38 and 76 cm. A mobile ramp compensates for the height difference between the platform and the train. At platforms with a height of 55 cm, an automatically extending gap bridging system ensures level boarding and disembarking.

The Intercity 1 trains currently still in use are to be successively replaced by ICE trains, Intercity 2 trains and new ICE L trains from the Spanish manufacturer Talgo. For the first time at DB Long-Distance, the ICE L trains will have level access for platforms with a height of 76 cm.

The following tables provide an overview of the proportion of the accessible fleet in use at DB Fernverkehr AG (as of December 31, 2023):

ICE TRAINS (MULTIPLE UNIT BASIS) / as of Dec 31	Accessible, new procurement according to TSI PRM	Largely accessible, modernization in accordance with TSI PRM	Partially accessible (e.g. suitable for wheelchair users)	Not accessible	2023
ICE 1	-	29	29	-	58
ICE 2	-	43	-	-	43
ICE 3 (403/406 series)	-	49	13	-	62
ICE 3 (407 series)	17	-	-	-	17
ICE 3neo (408 series)	16	-	-	-	16
ICE 4 (412 series) 12-car trains	50	-	-	-	50
ICE 4 (412 series) 7-car trains	35	-	-	-	35
ICE 4 (412 series) 13-car trains	50	-	-	-	50
ICE T (411/415 series)	-	-	70	-	70
Total	168	121	112	-	401
Share (%)	42	30	28	-	100

INTERCITY PASSENGER CARS ¹⁾ (SINGLE WAGON BASIS) / as of Dec 31	Accessible, new procurement according to TSI PRM	Largely accessible, modernization in accordance with TSI PRM	Partially accessible (e.g. suitable for wheelchair users)	Not accessible	2023
Intercity mod with wheelchair spaces	-	174	-	-	174
Intercity mod without wheelchair spaces	-	-	432	-	432
Other Intercity passenger cars with wheelchair spaces	-	-	10	-	10
Other Intercity passenger cars without wheelchair spaces	-	-	-	50	50
Intercity 2 (Stadler-KISS)	84	-	-	-	84
Intercity 2 (Alstom-Twindexx)	305	-	-	-	305
Total	389	174	442	50	1,055
Share (%)	37	16	42	5	100

¹⁾ Without service/coupling cars.

Due to the different platform heights in most networks in regional rail passenger transport, the public transport authorities set the vehicle boarding heights so that all passengers can board and disembark safely on all platforms in the respective network. About three-quarters of the regional transport vehicle fleet is already accessible for the most commonly used platform height. Other platform heights are achieved with a vehicle-based boarding and disembarking aid in accordance with the technical specification for interoperability for passengers with reduced mobility (TSI PRM).

These vehicles are also equipped with wheelchair-accessible toilets and digital information systems. The proportion of low-floor vehicles (level compensation to 55 cm platforms) has increased in the last year, as non-accessible vehicles have been replaced.

CARS IN REGIONAL TRANSPORT / as of Dec 31	Accessible, new procurement according to TSI PRM	Largely accessible, new procurement before TSI PRM	Largely accessible through modernization	Partially accessible (e.g. suitable for wheelchair users)	Not accessible	2023
Electric multiple units	1,008	444	746	748	4	2,950
Diesel multiple units ^{1), 2)}	215	420	219	-	259	1,113
Single-deck cars ²⁾	-	90	-	5	41	136
Double-deck cars	233	-	848	-	627	1,708
Total	1,456	954	1,813	753	931	5,907
Share (%)	25	16	31	13	15	100

Multiple units are counted as a unit regardless of the number of cars. In contrast, each locomotive-hauled trainset is counted individually.

Locomotive-hauled trainsets always run with at least one car that is accessible, largely accessible or partially accessible.

¹⁾ Incl. vehicles of the Usedomer Bäderbahn.

²⁾ Exclusively regular service cars.

As the largest provider of bus transport in Germany, DB Group operates about 5,800 own buses (previous year: about 5,400 own buses), of which about 93 % are low-floor buses (previous year: about 90 % low-floor buses). The low-floor buses have a boarding aid for wheelchair users. All buses are equipped with a passenger information system based on the two-senses principle. All employees with customer contact are regularly trained in working with people with reduced mobility.

Accessibility is also constantly being promoted in the equipment of the about 300 travel centers of DB Group throughout Germany and is geared towards the needs of passengers with reduced mobility. At over 100 locations, customers have accessibility counters with height-adjustable table tops, wheelchair accessibility, inductive hearing loops, pictograms, forearm support holders and connections to the tactile guidance system.

In about 30 large and busy travel centers, a call system has been installed that is also accessible, designed to be user-friendly for passengers with reduced mobility and in which a separate waiting area has been set up for them. Pressing the symbol for passengers with reduced mobility – visually impaired and blind people can find the symbol by reading Braille – leads customers to the appropriate counter by the shortest route using voice prompts. Other important components of an accessible travel center are, for example, special door foils, seating modules and a tactile guidance system that is connected to the guidance system in the station.

Since September 2023, customers have been able to use the travel center in Düsseldorf, which has been converted according to a new concept with additional components. In addition to a personal reception area (at large locations), the new concept also includes other features such as loudspeakers integrated into the armrests of the furniture to call the waiting guests, swivel monitor arms at the counter and

acoustically effective walls and ceilings to reduce disruptive background noise. In the coming years, further travel centers will be converted according to the new concept. The principles of room design for passengers with reduced mobility will also be taken into account when modernizing small and medium-sized locations.

DB Group has been successfully operating a video-based sales and advisory format since 2013 with its video travel center and video vending machine. The video travel center enables personal advice and personal sales, especially in rural regions, as an alternative to travel centers or agencies and was available at 110 locations at the end of 2023 (end of 2022: over 100 locations). In addition, video machines are used at 30 locations of the special purpose association Nahverkehr Westfalen-Lippe. The video vending machine is a ticket machine where an employee from the head office intervenes on request during opening hours and assists and advises customers when purchasing tickets.

DB Group's vending machines are also constantly being further developed in terms of their accessibility and user-friendliness. The machines currently installed in the awarded networks are modular in design and have standard interfaces so that the constantly growing heterogeneous customer requirements, including those relating to accessibility, can be implemented more quickly and flexibly. The machines take the needs of passengers with reduced mobility into account to the highest degree and meet, among others, the requirements of the EU directive TSI PRM. The display and controls as well as the collection tray of these vending machines are positioned lower for seated or small people, for example. The controls are also provided with tactile Braille signs.

The user interface also takes into account the needs of customers with reduced mobility, for example by using larger buttons and fonts as well as high-contrast menu navigation.

With the help of regular market research, customer surveys and market observations, we analyze opportunities to optimize our ticket machines and continuously adapt the user interfaces and operating processes accordingly.


DB Group offers a boarding, transfer and disembarkation service for passengers with reduced mobility at the most important stations throughout Germany. There are about 2,000 service staff members at the stations to support this customer group, who receive special training as part of annual qualification measures. The stations are equipped with more than 1,100 mobile lifting devices, ramps, stair lifts or electric scooters. Additional mobile teams at about 30 small and medium-sized stations that are not staffed by employees ensure that passengers with reduced mobility can get on and off the train safely and comfortably. The mobility service provided by the mobile teams can be organized as required.



In 2023, about 594,000 assistance services (previous year: about 560,000 assistance services) were provided for boarding, transferring and disembarking. DB Group's Mobility Service Center has been organizing assistance with boarding, changing and disembarking at about 300 stations staffed by employees since 1999.

Accessibility is also being constantly promoted in the equipment of the more than 85 DB Information centers throughout Germany, which are available to customers for personal advice on their journey, in the event of irregularities and for other numerous forms of assistance, and are geared towards the needs of customers with reduced mobility. Almost all DB information desks are equipped with a lowered and extendable tabletop for wheelchair users and people of small stature, as well as induction loops to support people with hearing impairments.


In recent years, vehicles in regional transport have been continuously equipped with train-bound boarding and disembarking aids. This makes boarding and disembarking easier or generally possible for passengers with reduced mobility. Customer service staff are primarily responsible for operating the boarding and disembarking aids. If there are no service staff on board and the operating situation allows it, the traction unit drivers are also available to help. Customers can choose to make use of this assistance service spontaneously or by pre-registering. For passengers in wheelchairs, this means universal accessibility at about 1,700 stations without stationary service staff. For other passengers with reduced mobility (e.g. parents with baby carriages,

senior citizens, and visual- and hearing-impaired people), these assistance services are also available at other stations that cannot be reached without steps. DB Regional recorded about 185,000 assistance services in the year under review (previous year: about 180,000 assistance services). The use of new vehicles and modernized trains will continue to expand the service of vehicle-based boarding and disembarking assistance in the future. Severely disabled persons can use all local trains (RE, RB, IRE and S-Bahn) of DB Group nationwide without an additional ticket using their disabled person's pass and the supplementary sheet with a valid token.

On the Web site bahn.de/reiseziele-barrierefrei  the consortium "Easier traveling: Barrier-free vacation destinations in Germany" and the "Accessibility Austria" project, together with DB Group, present mobility packages that include accommodation at the vacation destination as well as a possible excursion and cultural program.

In cooperation with DB Group, museum.de/en  has carried out a survey on accessibility in museums. The comprehensive reference work provides an up-to-date overview of appropriately equipped cultural institutions, such as accessible audio guides, guided tours in sign language or tactile and acoustically accessible exhibits (bahn.de/reiseziele-barrierefrei .

DB Group offers various apps for digital travel assistance, which provide support at different stages of travel planning or during the journey.

The DB Bahnhof live app offers travel information for about 5,400 stations. Particularly helpful for passengers with reduced mobility is the detailed information on station equipment (e.g. on the usability of elevators and the provision of step-free access to the station), contact information and service times for central contact points at the station as well as information on the car sequence of ICE, Intercity and Eurocity trains. Detailed information on the DB Bahnhof live app can be found at: bahnhof.de/en/discover/db-bahnhof-live .


COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT

With the customer dialog, DB Group provides its customers with a contact point that is available around the clock. Here, customers can make suggestions and express praise and criticism by telephone or in writing. Legal claims arising from delays or cancellations of a train are processed by the passenger rights service center.

In 2023, the volume development in customer dialogue and the passenger rights service center was influenced in particular by the following topics:

- Higher passenger numbers in DB Group's rail passenger transport.
- Restrictions and capacity bottlenecks in the rail network as a result of continued high construction activity. At DB Long-Distance, this affected both important hubs and lines.
- Impact of special events such as EVG strikes in spring 2023 and GDL strikes in the fourth quarter of 2023 as well as weather-related restrictions due to the onset of winter at the beginning of December 2023 (especially in southern Germany) and storms, among other things.

The number of complaints in the customer dialog for long-distance transport increased slightly in 2023 to about 207,000 complaints (previous year: about 202,000 complaints).

As a result of delays and cancellations of trains in accordance with the Passenger Rights Regulation, about 5.6 million applications for compensation were processed in the year under review (previous year: about 3.8 million applications for compensation) by about 40 rail companies participating in the procedure in the service center for passenger rights as well as in travel centers, agencies and sales outlets of non-state-owned railway companies. The passenger rights form can be submitted in analog and digital form at bahn.de/en , or in the DB Navigator app. In the digital application, much of the data is already automatically pre-filled, so that only a few clicks and information are required from the customer. It only takes a few minutes to submit the digital application. About 65% of applications were submitted digitally in the application year (previous year: about 60%). About half of the digitally submitted applications were processed completely and fully automatically within two days of receipt. The compensation rate in the year under review was about 88% (previous year: about 89%).

Customer satisfaction with the overall processing of compensation applications by the passenger rights service center declined in 2023, mainly due to significantly longer processing times in some cases as a result of the volume, and was rated with a grade of 2.6 (previous year: grade of 2.4).

The number of complaints completely processed on-site in travel centers rose to 29,000 (previous year: about 21,000 complaints) as a result of the tense operational situation.

COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT	2023	2022
Long-distance complaints in thousands	207.9	201.9
DISTRIBUTION OF COMPLAINTS BY CONTACT CHANNEL (%)		
Correspondence ¹⁾	88	89
Telephone	12	11
SERVICE LEVEL		
Correspondence ¹⁾ : processing within 72 hours (%)	28	64
Telephone: average waiting time until the call is answered (in seconds)	217	174
APPLICATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PASSENGER RIGHTS REGULATION / in thousands		
	2023	2022
Processed cases	5,614	3,759
Cases rejected as unfounded	687	400
Compensated cases	4,927	3,359

¹⁾ In 2022, the contact channels e-mail and letter/fax were still reported separately. From 2023, all channels in writing will be reported as correspondence.

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