Beat: Travel

60,000 rail passes to young Europeans

European Commission

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USPA NEWS - The Commission will provide free travel rail passes to 60,000 Europeans aged from 18 to 20 years, thanks to DiscoverEU. Applications are open now and close on 26 October, at noon, for a travel period in 2022, which will be the European Year of Youth.

Vice-President for the European Way of Life, Margaritis Schinas said: “Over the past 18 months, in a true spirit of solidarity, our young people have sacrificed valuable youthful and defining moments of their lives. I am delighted that the Commission offers today a European boom of mobility with the 60,000 train passes. This European boom of mobility and opportunities will be further fostered by Erasmus+ and many more initiatives coming for the European Year of Youth in 2022.”

Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, Mariya Gabriel, said: “I am very glad to open this new round of DiscoverEU to give 60,000 young people the chance to discover the richness of our continent. In the spirit of the Commission designating 2022 the European Year of Youth, DiscoverEU is back, bigger than ever, with new opportunities for young people to take a train, broaden their horizons, extend their learning, enrich their experiences and meet fellow Europeans while travelling by rail as of March 2022.”

This application round is open to young Europeans born between 1 July 2001 and 31 December 2003. Exceptionally, 19 and 20 year-olds can also apply after their rounds were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Successful applicants can travel between March 2022 and February 2023 for up to 30 days. As the evolution of the pandemic remains unknown, all travellers will be offered flexible bookings through a new mobile travel pass. The departure date can be changed right up until the time of departure. The mobile travel passes have a one-year validity. The Commission advises all travellers to check potential travel restrictions on ReopenEU.

Young people with special needs are strongly encouraged to participate in DiscoverEU. The Commission will put information and tips at their disposal and cover the costs of special assistance, such as an accompanying person, an assistance dog, etc.

Successful applicants can travel alone or in a group of up to five people (all within the eligible age range). To reinforce sustainable travel - and thereby support the European Green Deal, DiscoverEU participants will predominantly travel by rail.

However, to ensure wide access across the EU, participants can also use alternative modes of transport, such as coaches or ferries, or exceptionally, planes. This will ensure that young people living in remote areas or on islands also have a chance to take part.

Every Member State is allocated a number of travel passes, based on its population, as a proportion of the overall population of the European Union.

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