



Final Report

“How Can the Online Trip Planning and Booking Experience on Interrail.eu Be Improved?”

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Concepts, Measures & Methods, instructed by Alma Schaafstal

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Methods.....	4
2.1. Survey.....	4
2.2. Interview.....	5
2.3. Card Sort.....	6
2.4. Usability Test.....	7
3. Results.....	7
3.1. Survey.....	8
3.2. Interview.....	9
3.3. Card Sort.....	10
3.4. Usability Test.....	11
4. Answer to Research Question.....	12
5. Reflection on methods.....	13
6. Conclusion.....	14
Appendices.....	15
Bibliography.....	22
Annex table.....	23

1. Introduction

Interrail.EU is a website and mobile application that allows users to plan and book train journeys in Europe. It is by far the most widely used app for interrailing planning, and the app is commonly known for its interrailing pass, which the website claims to make organising and planning journeys cheaper and easier. At its core, Interrail.EU presents travellers with a selection of interrailing passes, which grant individuals the freedom to tailor their travel plan, ensuring that it aligns seamlessly with their travel ambitions. Using this pass, users can travel to any of the European countries available in a given period of time. Furthermore, the platform's travel experience describes itself as flexible (Interrail.EU, 2023), allowing for travellers to make on-the-fly itinerary decisions, empowering them to savour the serendipity of travel.

While Interrail.EU claims to make trip planning easier and cheaper, it is often criticised for its poor user experience. Negative user reviews, from sites like Trustpilot, often focus on the fact that the website is designed in a way that added costs to the already pricy interrail pass are poorly communicated, resulting in users feeling “cheated” for their money. Another common complaint is that while the app claims to make last minute planning possible, seat reservations for those with the pass are limited, meaning last minute planning can become very difficult. Furthermore, many users explain that while Interrail.EU tries to present itself as a middleman between travellers and train companies, there is actually very little integration between the site and external train companies, resulting in users constantly having to re-enter their personal information when reserving train seats and buying train tickets. Many individuals have resorted to seeking guidance from YouTube and other websites to help them understand how to navigate the app, which further underscores its poor design (TrustPilot, 2023). Adding to the negative user experience of the app, others have complained that the app randomly does not let them add countries to their itinerary, and that at times it will fail to show the scannable barcode, which is needed when leaving and entering train stations (Railforums, 2021).

These common complaints and issues that have been reported lead us to the research question **“How can the online trip planning and booking experience on Interrail.EU be improved?”** The main factors that contribute to a straightforward planning and booking experience on the website are:

- The layout/navigation of the website
- The pass purchasing experience
- The seat reservation experience

This paper employs four methods with the aim of gathering more information in what the problems of these areas are, and how these problems could be solved. The following chapters will present these used methods, show their results, and discuss them in further detail.

Finally, conclusions and possible solutions to the main problems of the site will be put forward based on these results. It should be noted that throughout this paper the words ‘app’ and ‘website’ can be used interchangeably, as both have essentially the same features and are ran by the same company.

2. Methods

Four user experience research methods will be used in order to answer the research question. The methods include: a survey, interviews, card sorts, and usability testing. Multiple distinct methods are used because this way the results of the paper will be more viable and reliable. The following section of the paper will introduce these methods, and the results of the methods will be discussed in the section after that.

2.1 Survey

The first research method that was deployed in this study was a survey. The purpose of the survey was to find out the main problems about the current product, and to learn how users interact with the site. Identifying these problems is important because then we would know in what specific areas the app has to be improved. The screening process of the survey involved asking people if they were over 18 years of age, and if they had prior experience with the Interrailing app. Only users who had prior experience with the app were allowed to take part in the survey. After the two screening questions, users were asked about how satisfied they were with the overall experience with Interrail.EU. The next few questions focused on the pass buying experience, how happy they were with it, and if they had experienced any issues in that regard. The next section asked similar questions, but focused on the seat reservation experience. In this section, they were also asked how well the information regarding seat reservation was communicated to them. They were then asked what features or changes they would make to the app to make for a better seat reservation experience. The final question

asked them if there were any features or changes the developers could make in general to the app to provide a better overall user experience.

Questions were kept brief and only a small number of rating questions were included to avoid 'straight lining' (Baxter *et al.*, 2015). To avoid satisficing, users were reminded how much their responses were valued at the start of the survey and near the end. The survey was sent to 30 people, and 12 responded, which was a response rate of 40%. The survey was sent to possible participants on the 21st of October, and users had 5 days to answer it. Regarding data analysis, the close-ended questions were analysed based on their counts and open-ended questions were grouped into meaningful categories and summarized. Thus, the survey collected both quantitative and qualitative data.

2.2 Interview

After the survey, interviews were conducted to understand in greater detail the main issues of the website. In these interviews, more brainstorming regarding problem solving was encouraged. The interviews were semi-structured; the initial questions were the same for both interviews that took place, however the topics of the interview were free to deviate relating to the different problems that users of the site were experiencing. Most of the questions asked in the interview were open-ended questions. The interview began with some general ice breakers. Here, the interviewees were asked their name, where they are from, and whether they are currently a student. In the next part of the interview the conversation was steered in the general area of the study, which was the topic of travelling. Here, the participant was asked how many times they used the site to book a trip, and what the favourite place they interrailed to was. The interview then moved on to ask the key questions about the users experience with the site. Here, the participant was asked what the main flaws or pain points of the experience with the site were. They were then asked to describe this problem in more detail than in the survey, and how specifically they would solve this problem. After the discussion regarding this problem was finished, they were asked if there was any other area the app could improve in, and how they could improve in this area.

Two participants were recruited through a convenience sample. The participants were screened as they had to be over 18 and have prior experience with the app. After the icebreaker and introduction section of both interviews, it turned out that both participants used the app to plan their 2022 and 2023 summer holiday. Their experiences with the app

were long, as they used it to book month long journeys each time. The interviews were conducted over the phone, as one participant was situated in Ireland and the other in Spain. Each one took around 10 minutes. Notes were taken on the main points the participants made. After the interviews, they were analysed, and emphasis was placed on finding the similarities and differences between what the interviewees had to say.

2.3 Card Sort

While the previous two methods focused mainly on identifying problems regarding the seat reservation and pass buying process, the card sorting exercise mainly focused on how the information on the website was laid out. The user friendliness of the app in this regard is an important contributor to the overall planning and booking experience in Interrail.EU. Card sorting typically involves representing each piece of information from the system on an individual card and then asking participants to arrange these cards into groups that are meaningful to them. In this specific card sort, all of the pages accessible from the home page of the app were written as cards, and users were asked to sort them into groups, and name these groups. The aim of this card sort was to understand how users associate certain aspect of the site with one another, and to understand if the layout of Interrail.EU can be improved to be more user friendly. The card sort was an open card sort, where participants were given the ability to create their own categories. This meant that a similarity matrix could be calculated to understand how often two cards were placed together in the same category.

Another way in which this method differed significantly from the previous two was the types of participants required. While the previous two required previous experience with Interrail.EU, the card sorts required people who did not have experience using the site. If participants who already have experience with the site were selected, they might associate terms with one another simply because they have seen them together in the app, even if it doesn't make logical sense to them. 6 participants took part in the card sort, and they took on average 8 minutes to complete.

2.4 Usability tests

The final research method which was used was a usability test. This UX research method involves observing users as they interact with a system to assess its usability. In this case, a person who had never used the site was tasked with completing a few objectives on the site.

The aim of the usability test was to help understand the main flaws of the user experience of the Interrail.EU website. The data collected included written notes on any particular struggles or thoughts that the participant had. After signing a consent agreement, participants took part in the test in person. This is because it is important to clearly communicate with the participant but also because it is beneficial to see if the participant is visibly struggling to complete a certain task in the test. After opening the home page of the website, the user will be asked to navigate to other parts of the website, for instance the seat reservation page or the Interrail pass purchasing page. There are a lot of options on the pass buying page (for instance the duration of the pass, trip destinations, and age of the pass buyer), and to help understand how users deal with this information, the participant will then be given slightly more complex tasks to complete. For instance: *“You and your friend who is 29 years old decide to go on a train journey from Nice to Madrid to Lisbon. Add to you cart the Interrailing pass that you think is most suitable for your journey.”*

Just as with the card sorts, for the usability test people who don't have prior experience with the site are required. This is to test whether the site is friendly for new users, or if they find it overwhelming or hard to use. Thus, participants have to be over 18 with no prior experience with the site in order to pass the screening procedure. 1 participant was recruited through convenience sampling, and they were screened in person.

3. Results

In this section the data collected through the four research methods will be presented and analysed.

3.1 Survey Results

The survey that was conducted (see **Annex 1**), began by asking users about their overall satisfaction with the navigation of the app (**Figure 1.1**). They were asked to rate it on a 5-point scale, from very dissatisfied to very satisfied. From the results it is clear that nearly half (41.7%) of the participants were dissatisfied with the navigation of the site. If participants had previously bought an interrailing pass through the website (91.7% answered that they did), they were then asked to explain how satisfied they were with pass buying experience and if they had any problems with it. If they answered that they had problems with it, they were asked to describe this issue. Common issues expressed by participants were that it was

complicated to decide which pass to buy, and that the timetable on the Interrail pass sometimes showed inaccurate train departure and arrival times. The next part of the survey asked about the seat reservation process, and begun by asking if they had experience reserving seats through the app. Those who had (72.7%), were then asked to describe their satisfaction levels, and it is clear that this is the area that users were dissatisfied with the most (66.7% were dissatisfied, and only 11% were satisfied). Most of the participants believed that information regarding seat reservation was poorly communicated to them.

How satisfied were you with the navigation of the Interrail.EU website?
12 responses

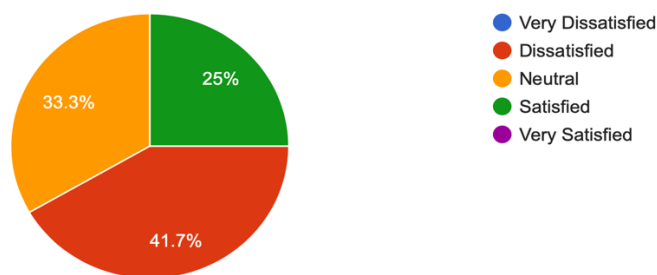


Figure 1.1

The final two questions required slightly more thought from the participant, as they asked users to come up with ideas how to improve the app. The first one asked what could be done specifically to improve the seat reservation process, and the final one asked how the app could be improved overall. While these questions were more demanding, a majority of the participants still answered both, and their answers provided insightful information. In relation to how the seat reservation process could be improved, the main ideas people had was to either allow for seat reservations within the app, or to have an Interrail.EU portal on external sites so that they would not need to upload their personal information with every seat they book. Two of the participants felt that the app could improve in relation to how they communicated seat reservation information to the users, as they felt that this information wasn't sufficiently communicated to them. Another participant remarked that they wished it was easier for group seats for multiple people to be reserved. In relation to the overall user experience of the app, some participants continued to express their frustration with the seat reservation process. One participant said they wished there was some sort of AI guide that could assist you in seat reservation, route planning, and pass buying. Furthermore, one user

expressed that while reservations remain his primary concern, another area that could be improved is the inconsistencies in the information provided from external train companies to Interrail.EU, mainly the live train schedules. Other concerns that were voiced included fixing technical issues, such as QR code scanning issues in train stations.

3.2 Interview Results

Interviews were conducted through phone calls and they lasted around 10 minutes. The two participants were interviewed on their experience with the app, and were encouraged to go into detail with the problems they said they experienced (See **Appendix B** and **Appendix C**). Both participants explained that they used the site extensively for around one month in the summer of 2022 and the summer of 2023. I thought this would be beneficial as I would have the possibility to see if the participants noticed any improvements using it a year later, but the users explained their experience with the app was essentially the same in both years. When asked to compare the two experiences of the app, P2 said “In fact, the countries I travelled to the second time had train bookings that were harder to navigate”. Both P1 and P2 expressed their dissatisfaction with the seat reservation procedure. P1 explained that the links Interrail.EU would send him to reserve seats often did not work, and P2 explained that many external train stations through which you had to reserve seats didn’t have online seat reservation facilities, and that they would have to book them in person, which was not communicated to them sufficiently. When asked to provide an example of when seat reservations were especially problematic, both were quick to recall one. P1 said that in summer of 2022, when he was going from Budapest to Lake Bled connecting through Zagreb, no external links for train stations that were provided by Interrail.EU worked, and that he had to book tickets in person for the second train in Zagreb. He was not provided this information by the site, and luckily found a Croatian speaking person at the station who told him where and how to buy tickets. He was fortunate enough to buy one of the last two tickets at the station, and if the tickets had been sold out, he would have had to spend the night in Zagreb central station, with no accommodation for the night. P2 also said that there were many examples when he had to go to a train station with exceedingly long queues and language barriers to book seats, instead of it being available through the app, which caused a lot of stress for him and the group he was travelling with. When asked how to solve this problem, P1 said he would provide a seat reservation pass alongside the Interrail pass to be able to board trains without seat reservations. P2 said he wished for further integration to the

other train companies' platforms. When asked if they faced any other issues with the app, P1 began to talk about his pass purchasing experience. He said that the process essentially made no sense to him. He had to purchase the pass on the website and had to add it to the app with a code. To fix this, he said that buying the pass on the app should be a possibility.

Furthermore, he explained that if a travel day is accidentally used up without actually travelling on that day, it should be reusable. In summary, the interviews revealed consistent user dissatisfaction with seat reservation and identified areas for improvement in the apps pass purchasing and usage policies.

3.3 Card Sorts Results

7 participants took part in the card sort, and there was a relatively high number of cards in the activity, meaning it was nearly impossible to analyse them by simply eyeballing them.

Therefore, a similarity matrix had to be generated, which was done using the website Optimal Workshop (**Figure 1.2**). There were several cards that were grouped together 100% of the time. For instance, a lot of the FAQ and customer help topics, which is unsurprising. The 'railway map' and 'trains & ferries' section were grouped together by all of the participants, and the 'trip ideas' and 'budget trips' section were grouped together 100% of the time as well. Topics regarding seat reservation were also commonly grouped together which was somewhat expected. The 'about interrail' section was grouped by some with 'pass information' but others grouped it with FAQ related topics. Moving onto the more distinct categories, 'Railway map', 'Trains & ferries', and 'Train times' had high similarity scores among themselves but less so with other categories, indicating they are distinct but related topics. 'Global pass' and 'One Country Pass' had similarities with other pass-related topics, but they are more distinctive. 'Global pass' and 'One Country Pass' have similarities with other pass-related topics, but they are more unique from the others. Some topics have moderate similarity across the board with many other topics, indicating there might be some confusion or overlap. An example is 'Pass format', which has varying degrees of similarity with many other cards. It might be worth examining how this content is presented to ensure clarity for users.

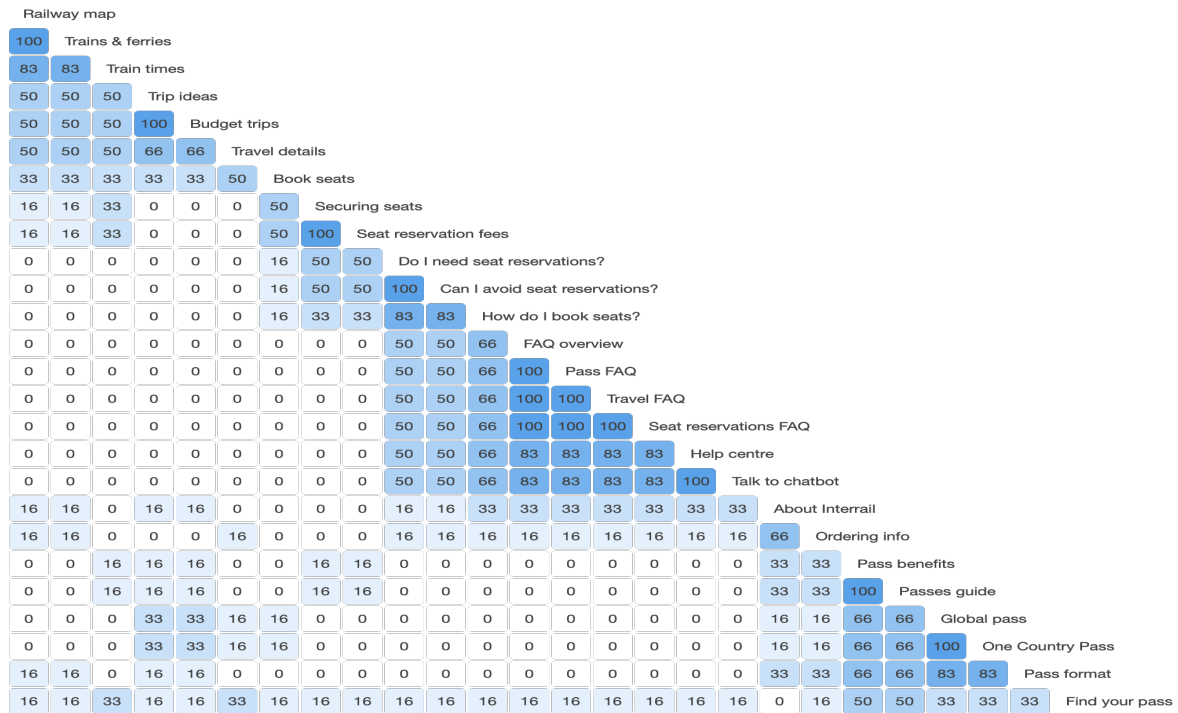


Figure 1.2

3.4 Usability Test Results

The usability test began with an explanation of what the site is, and the main services it provides. This is because people who had never used the app were needed for the test. The first task was to find where to find where seat reservation information could be found. It was a quick task, as it says ‘seat reservations’ in clear writing on the top of the website. Once I explained to the participant what an interrailing pass was, I asked him where he would find the option to buy one. He clicked the ‘passes’ button but was then slightly confused where to find the option to buy a pass. He was stuck between the ‘find your pass’, ‘global pass’, and ‘travel details’ options. When he clicked ‘global pass’ I asked him to buy the pass that would suit a trip with himself and a 29-year-old friend to go on a train journey that included Madrid, Lisbon, Nice and Rome as travel destinations. He correctly inputted two customers who are one youth and one adult (the participant explained he was 26, which counts as a youth on the interrail site). He then chose the ‘4 days within one month’ option, which was logical. He also explained he would maybe buy the 5 days within one month option just to be sure in case any incident or emergency happened. The user explained that he wasn’t sure if these 5 days had to be in a row, but assumed they didn’t. This was indeed true. The user was explained a fictional scenario in which his QR code would not scan and was tasked with

finding where to go to find help on the site. He was quick to go to the help section, then to the technical difficulties section. The participant was also quick to find the live chat option where he explained he would go if he couldn't find help in the technical difficulties section. The last task was to find out which countries exactly count in the pass. This took the user some time. After around 30 seconds of thought, and clicking on some wrong tabs, the participant clicked on the 'railway map' which he found under the 'plan your trip' options.

4. Answer to the research question

In relation to the research question, "**How can the online planning and booking experience on Interrail.EU be improved?**" the results obtained from the methods concluded that there were a number of ways the application could be improved for a better user experience and a more efficient pass buying and seat reservation process. Firstly, the main issue users had with their Interrail.EU experience, which came up a lot in the survey answers and the interviews, was the seat reservation process. People were frustrated with how poorly information regarding it was communicated to them, and they were frustrated with the fact they had to continuously re-enter information they had already given Interrail.EU to these external websites. The website needs to be re-designed so that information regarding the reservation process is more available, and perhaps pop-ups or reminders could be featured on the app during the pass buying process to remind users. There could also be a portal which would allow for more seamless integration between the Interrail.EU platform and that of other train companies, ensuring users information was saved and the external sites were more accessible. One answer a participant had in the survey described that group seat reservations were not possible, and to fix that the site should add group seat reservation bookings. Another idea on improving the seat reservation process was to provide a seat reservation pass alongside the Interrail pass in order to be able to board trains without seat reservations.

In relation to the layout and navigation on the site, there is also room for improvement. In the survey, a lot of participants said they were dissatisfied with the navigation for the app, and the card sort and usability test may have helped realise why this is. From the card sort, the FAQ groupings were pretty much consistent with how they were on the actual site, but there were other cards that have widespread moderate similarity with others. These include the 'find your pass' and 'pass format options'. For these categories, it may be beneficial to clarify the content or the naming to reduce potential confusion. Pages like ordering info seemed quite vague, in fact during the card sorts I often found myself having to clarify what exactly it

meant. The usability test also showed some room for improvement regarding the layout of the app. For example, there could be some page whose title makes it clear that it shows all the possible countries you can travel to. Furthermore, it could be made clearer that the 5 days in one month refer to 5 days of travelling, which can be used at any time within the one month. Other than these issues, there are some minor changes the app could make, such as fixing issues regarding glitches like QR codes not scanning.

5. Reflection on the methods

In this research, a combination of four user experience research methods were conducted. These included surveys, interviews, card sorts, and usability testing. This methodological approach aimed to provide a well-rounded understanding of the user experience and problems with the Interrail.EU website. Using multiple research methods like this enhances the reliability and validity of findings. These four different methods helped to capture a broad spectrum of user insights, covering everything from general satisfaction with the app to specific issues regarding navigation and seat reservation.

The response rate of 40% in the survey indicated a reasonable engagement and allowed me to collect a substantial amount of quantitative data. It provided an overview of user's satisfaction levels and specific pain points of the site. The interview allowed users to elaborate on these, as they were able to give specific problems regarding seat reservations and come up with solutions regarding how they can be fixed. The card sorts and usability tests were more focused on the layout and navigation of the app rather than the trip booking procedures. The card sorts were a valuable addition to the research, as they shed light on how the users associated different aspects of the sight. The main piece of information I concluded from the card sorts were that the names of the sections had to be re-named in a way that it was easier to deduct what information they included. The Usability testing was essential for evaluating how users interact with the home page of Interrail.EU. It was beneficial in the way it provided more in-depth information on the issues users could have faced from card sorts. It should be noted that participants in the study were sampled through convenience sampling, leading to most of the participants being students between the age of 18 and 23. Also, the data collected came from a relatively small sample size of people, so it could be true that there isn't as high of a proportion of users that have issues with the app.

6. Conclusion

To conclude, the four research methods used provided a well-rounded view of the user experience and issues with the Interrail.EU website. The combination of qualitative data and quantitative data, along with user suggestions, helped to make informed recommendations on improving the sites user-friendliness and booking experience. However, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of each method, such as the small sample size for usability testing and the interviews, which might affect the generalizability of the results. To sum up, the main ways the booking experience of the app could be improved was if there was more integration between the site and external train stations, and if group bookings were supported on external sites. Furthermore, a seat reservation pass could be introduced which would completely remove the tedious process of reserving seats. Other recommendations included featuring a map which shows the trip and data about the trip, and fixing issues regarding pass QR codes. Additionally, allowing users to buy their pass on the app instead of linking it from the website would also improve the trip booking process significantly. Finally, regarding app layout, the tabs on the home page should be more clearly defined what they actually mean.

Appendix A: Interview Structure

<p>Introduction</p>	<p>-Thank you for taking part -I am doing a research paper that focuses on the user experience of Interrail.EU -Where are you from? -Are you a student currently?</p>
<p>Warm up (turning steering the conversation to the topic of travel)</p>	<p>-Considering you have experience with the app, I take it you quite like to travel -Tell me about your favourite place you travelled to -Who did you go interrailing with?</p>
<p>Key Questions</p>	<p>-How often have you used Interrail.EU to book a trip? -What are the main pain points of the app/website? -Could you recall a specific example in which this issue proved to be especially problematic? -What features you changes could the developers make to improve this issue? -Aside from this main issue, were there any other issues you faced with the app/website? -Are there any other features you would add to improve the overall experience/interaction with the app?</p>
<p>Summary</p>	<p>-Lets summarize the problems you had and how you would change them -Is there anything we haven't discussed yet that you would like to discuss?</p>
<p>Wrap-up</p>	<p>-Thank you for participating, this interview was very helpful for my study</p>

Appendix B: Interview Transcript P1

Moderator (M): Welcome to the Interrail.EU user experience feedback interview. Could you tell me your name, where you're from, and if you're currently a student?

Person 1 (P1): My name is Jake Owen, I am from Dublin, Ireland, and I am currently a student at Trinity College Dublin.

M: I am doing a research paper that focuses on the user experience of the Interrail.EU app and website, interviews are one of the four research methods I am conducting. The aim of this interview is to gather some more detailed information about users' experiences with the app. I would also just like to remind you that there are no right or wrong answers in this interview, as everyone has had their own unique experience with Interrail.EU.

P1: Of course, well I'm glad to be of help.

M: So, I take it that you travel quite a lot considering you have prior experience with Interrail.EU. What was your favourite place you interrailed to?

P1: Yes, I do love to travel. I must say my favourite place I have interrailed to over the years is Lake Bled in Slovenia.

M: I have also been there a few summers ago! I have never seen anything like it.

P1: Yeah, I've been skiing before in Val Thorens in France, and before Lake Bled I was convinced there was no nicer scenery in the world, but Bled proved me wrong.

M: So, who did you go interrailing with the last time you went?

P1: I went with a small group of friends from my secondary school.

M: That sounds nice, how many times have you used the app to plan an interrailing trip?

P1: I have used the app to plan an interrailing trip twice. Once in 2022 and once in 2023, both during the summertime.

M: Did you notice any significant changes in the app within this year period?

P1: Honestly, not really. I mean, all applications change slightly every so often, but there was no major change or improvement I noticed. Maybe there was some small changes in the home page but I didn't notice anything major.

M: In your opinion, what are the main flaws or pain points you've encountered during your experiences with the app/website?

P1: The main pain points I encountered during my time using the Interrail.EU app revolved around seat reservations. It was easy to board a train with the pass, but booking a seat reservation was quite difficult. It required following external links to local train stations, which often didn't work.

M: Could you recall any specific seat reservation experience that was especially problematic?

P1: One particular experience I can remember was booking a reservation for a seat on an overnight train from Zagreb to Bled. It was actually a connecting train from Budapest to Bled, with Zagreb being the layover. None of the external links that Interrail.EU provided worked, and it was not communicated to me that I had to buy the ticket in person. I had spent the day traveling and only arrived in Zagreb at 11 pm, making this extremely inconvenient. Luckily, I managed to get one of last two available tickets, as I encountered a Croatian speaking person on the train platform who explained to me where to go.

M: That sounds like a challenging experience. If you could change the seat reservation process to prevent problems like these, how would you change it? What feature or functionality would you add?

P1: My suggestion for a solution to such an issue would be to provide a seat reservation pass, similar to the Interrail pass. This would be a separate pass that you can purchase to secure seats on a train, just as you can board a train with a purchased rail pass. The Interrail

company could buy out reservations for seats, similar to how they handle tickets, to provide this service.

M: That sounds like a practical idea. Besides seat reservations, were there any other issues you faced with the app?

P1: I found the layout a little confusing when it came to deciphering travel days and how to change trains and days once switched on. However, the scannable QR code was quite a positive experience, as it was quick and easy. Searching for train times was simple but changing them proved to be the difficult part.

M: Are there any other features or functionalities you would add to improve the user's overall experience with the website or app?

P1: It would be beneficial if you could purchase the pass directly on the app without having to add it from the website. Additionally, if a travel day is accidentally used up without using a train, it should be reusable, in my opinion.

M: Those ideas certainly are something that would improve the user experience of the website. So, to sum up, the main problems you had with the app were with the seat reservation experience, correct?

P1: Yeah, definitely.

M: You also expressed your desire for the ability to purchase the pass directly from the app and not have to buy it on the website.

P1: Yeah, this process was actually very confusing. Let me go into that in more detail; We had to buy a pass on the website then link it with our email and some code to the app. That simply makes no sense. Like, if the website and the app are owned and created by the same people, why not just add the ability to purchase the pass on the phone as well, considering you can basically do everything else on the app.

M: That process does sound quite illogical. You also said travel days should be reusable if used by accident. Could you elaborate?

P1: Yeah, the pass essentially gives you a limited number of travel days (mine was 7 in 30 days) and it was easy to accidentally activate one of the days without actually travelling, thus resulting in a wasted day essentially. They should have some way of telling if you actually did travel that day, for example whether or not the pass ticket gets scanned or not on a given day. This way people would not have to fear using up one of the days for no reason.

M: That makes sense. Was there anything else you wish to discuss that we did not already?

P1: Not really, I feel I have already discussed everything I would like.

M: I think we can start to wrap this up then, thank you very much for participating. The information you provided will be very helpful for my study.

P1: No problem at all!

Appendix C: Interview Transcript P2

M1: Welcome to the Interrail.EU user experience feedback interview. Thank you for taking part.

P2: No problem at all, how are you doing?

M: Could you tell me your name, where you're from, and if you're currently a student?

P2: My name is Mark Brophy, I am from Dublin, Ireland, and I am not a student at the moment. I actually work full time at the moment. Thank you for having me.

M: Just to give you more information as to why I am doing this; I am doing a research paper that focuses on the user experience of the Interrail.EU app and website, interviews are one of the four research methods I am conducting. The aim of this interview is to gather some more detailed information about users' experiences with the app. I would also just like to remind you that there are no right or wrong answers in this interview, as everyone has had their own unique experience with Interrail.EU.

P2: That sounds interesting, I am happy to be able to contribute to this. Is it for college?

M: Yeah, I am currently studying in a small town in Netherlands called Enschede, And am doing a masters in Human-Computer interaction.

P2: Fair play man! That sounds hard.

M: I mean, the experience so far has for sure been more demanding than my bachelors in UCD.

P2: I have a friend from Netherlands who studies in Eindoven, and also says its really hard. She never has time off.

M: Yeah, people I know who study here warned me of this previously. So, I take it that you travel quite a lot considering you have prior experience with Interrail.EU. What was your favourite place you interrailed to?

P2: Absolutely, I do love to travel. Berlin has been my favourite place I have interrailed to over the last few years. It has so much to offer I feel like the 3 days I spent there were not enough

M: I can relate to this heavily, I went for 5 days and still feel I didn't see enough. Anyway, How many times have you used the Interrail.EU app or website to plan your trips?

P2: Well, I have used the app twice, both during extended holiday periods lasting nearly a month.

M: Can you remember what years you used it?

P2: Yeah, this year and last year.

M: Sounds like you had some good adventures with interrailing, did you notice any changes or updates in the app the second time you used it to plan a trip?

P2: Not particularly, in fact the second time around I found it more challenging to navigate the train booking process, especially when travelling to different countries than the year before. It seemed like there could have been some improvement there.

M: Well that brings us nicely to our next topic. In your opinion, what are the main flaws or pain points you've encountered during your experiences with the app/website?

P2: One significant issue I faced was the inability to purchase seat reservations directly through the app. This meant relying on sometimes poor infrastructure of each train company, as they rarely included online seat reservation facilities. It was a real hassle at times.

M: I can imagine that being inconvenient. Could you recall a specific moment when this issue was particularly problematic during your travels?

P2: I vividly remember an incident when we had to go to the train station to book reservations in Lyon. This resulted in long queues and, I must say, caused a lot of stress for me and my friends. You know it can be chaotic when everyone is trying to secure their seat reservations last minute.

M: That does sound quite stressful, and I can understand why that would be a major pain point for travellers. If you had the opportunity to change the seat reservation experience to avoid situations like these, what changes or additional features would you suggest?

P2: I strongly believe that further integration with other train companies platforms would be a substantial improvement. It could save travelers a lot of money and last minute stress.

M: Your suggestion makes a lot of sense. Besides seat reservations, were there any other challenges you encountered throughout your experience with the app that you would like to share?

P2: Well, another challenge I encountered was not having one central place where I could view my journey, like a map or a some sort of hub. That would have been nice, like to track our progress on a map visually. The journeys could have been organised better in one place.

M: I understand that, having a clear overview of your journey would be useful.

P2: 100%, me and my friends were always trying to analyse how much of the journey we had left and how many more places we were going to visit and had already visited.

M: I can relate. Let's some up on the main points you made

P2: Sure.

M: So, you said you wished seat reservation was more integrated into the app/website. Correct?

P2: Yes, this was my main complaint with the app. I also said I wished there was a map with which to view progress and reservations made and left to make. Essentially, I wish it was organised better.

M: Was there anything else you wish to discuss that we did not already?

P2: No, I can't recall there being any other issue with the app.

M: I think we can start to wrap this up then, thank you very much for participating. The information you provided will be very helpful for my study.

P2: No prob!

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Annex Table

Annex 1	Survey Questions	Annex1_survey_questions.pdf
Annex 2	Survey Results	Annex2_survey_results.pdf
Annex 3	Statement of consent interviews	Annex3_interviews_consent.pdf
Annex 4	Statement of consent card sort	Annex4_cardsort_consent.pdf
Annex 5	Statement of consent Usability test	Annex5_usabilitytest_consent.pdf