



Best practices guide on the carriage of persons with reduced mobility

Executive Summary

Specific Contract N° MOVE/B5/2017-2017-197 under
the Multiple Framework Service Contract
MOVE/ENER/SRD/498-2016 Lot 6

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Transport
Directorate B — Investment, Innovative & Sustainable Transport
Unit B5 Social Aspects & Passenger Rights

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Executive Summary

Accessibility for persons with reduced mobility (PRM) in transport is about using transport services easily and on an equal footing with other users. Accessibility is a key element in transport systems, since it is an expression of mobility in terms of people, freight or information. Well-developed and efficient transport systems offer high levels of accessibility. Thus, accessibility is linked with an array of economic and social opportunities.



Figure 1: Phases of travelling (based on Google's five stages of travel. Extension to mobility issues)

The main objective of this study is to increase awareness of all stakeholder groups and thus improve the implementation of measures and policies that enhance the accessibility of transport services for users with reduced mobility and strengthen their passenger rights before, during and after their journey. This was achieved by elaborating:

- ▶ **A structured compilation** of the 30 best practices that facilitate travel for PRM (covering all modes of transport and their different aspects, such as infrastructure, vehicles, technical solutions, processes and personal assistance).
- ▶ **A guide** to support the further development of policies, actions, measures or strategies with the goal of increasing accessibility for PRMs.

User Needs

The right for everyone to be able to enjoy seamless travel independently and without the need of any assistance is addressed by the **EU treaties that guarantee the right to free movement for all citizens**, as well as by Article 9 of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** and Articles 21 and 26 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU.

In the context of the **"European Disability Strategy 2010 – 2020"**, accessibility for PRMs to goods and services (including public services and assistive devices) is regarded as a precondition for participation in society and in the economy. The same applies for the upcoming **European Accessibility Act**, which "aims to improve the functioning of the internal market for accessible products and services by removing barriers created by divergent legislation, facilitating the work of companies, and bringing benefits for people with disabilities in the EU". Provisions for PRMs should be fully integrated into the services of such companies, as well as into all transport services and infrastructure.



European countries, cities and regions should be without barriers, so goods, services and persons can move freely.



It is estimated that **one in six Europeans** has some form of disability – a market of about 80 million potential customers. Moreover, that figure increases to 35-40% of the population when travellers accompanying PRMs and people with temporary mobility restraints (such as young parents with baby buggies or heavy luggage) are also taken into account.

People with disabilities or reduced mobility therefore represent an important share of the European population, and their desire to travel thus implies a major revenue potential for both transport operators and the tourism sector as a whole. What is more, given that reduced mobility is highly correlated with age (around two thirds of PRMs are elderly) and that the elderly share of the population is expected to increase significantly in the decades ahead (their 21% share of Europe's total population in 1999 is expected to rise to some 31% by 2020, and to around 34% by 2050), the business case for ensuring that PRMs can use transport on an equal basis with others will only get stronger. Not to mention the fact that improved service provision to PRMs – for example through application of the principles of Universal Design – often also boosts travel appeal for all travellers.



© Design for All Foundation

Figure 2: Design for All
(<http://designforall.org/design.php>)

Persons with disabilities or reduced mobility need to be treated with respect, just like everyone else. All services offered to PRMs should therefore be provided on equal terms, with equal quality and in full dignity. In practice, these people face numerous challenges related to transport services, including with regard to everyday movements. Some of the most important challenges are: lack of skills among customer service staff, inadequate infrastructure, inaccurate/inadequate information and difficulties encountered while in transit.

Methodology

The core activities of this study were:

Gathering information from two main sources
(literature and stakeholders) on good
practices for PRM.



Assessing the practices based on a number of
criteria to narrow them down to a selection of
best practices regarding the accessibility of the
European transportation system.

For the literature review:

- ▶ More than 60 sources (papers, reports, regulations, etc.) were analysed, relating both to European accessibility status, legislation and good practices and to relevant information concerning the individual EU Member States.
- ▶ For the stakeholders' contribution:
- ▶ More than 90 stakeholders completed the survey, while an additional 10 personal interviews (CAPI, based on the questionnaire) were conducted.
- ▶ Over 100 others partially completed the survey, some providing interesting responses nonetheless.

The compilation of best practices

The selection of the examples included in the initial list of good practices concerning transport accessibility was mainly based on the following parameters (according to the information found in the literature):

- ▶ Compliance with regulation, and possibly going beyond minimum compliance.
- ▶ Effectiveness, or the degree to which the practice has a tangible positive impact on the accessibility of the relevant transport service for PRMs.
- ▶ Transferability, or the ease of implementing the practice in other contexts (in terms of location as well as transport modes).

An internal evaluation of the extensive list of good practices (containing 110 examples of good accessibility application measures across Europe and from all transport modes) and an additional evaluation in conjunction with external experts helped narrow the list down to the project's final 30 Best Practices.

Considering the heterogeneity and occasionally differing purposes of the initiatives included in the longlist, specific weighted criteria (with comparison analysis by 18 experts) were used to define the best practices, namely the following:

1. Effectiveness
2. Relevance
3. Functional diversity

4. Efficiency
5. Multimodality
6. Maturity

7. Sustainability
8. Transformability
9. Transferability

10. Innovativeness
11. Co-Benefits

The final list of the study includes the best practices below:

Transport mode	Best Practice	Country
Air transport	Airline accessibility planning & coordination	Finland
	Transport services website accessibility check	Germany
	Holistic airport accessibility services in Athens	Greece
	Special services for passengers with special needs	Latvia
	Coordinated PRM services across Spanish airports	Spain
	Support to passengers with hidden disabilities	UK (and USA)
Maritime transport	Standards on the accessibility of ships and terminals	Denmark
	Accessible waterbuses in Venice	Italy
Multimodal transport	Wiener Linien's accessibility strategy	Austria
	Next and second next stop announcement in Prague	Czech Republic
	Transmitter of the blinds	Czech Republic
	Accessibility through digitalisation of public transport in Tallinn	Estonia
	Accessibility of driverless local transport in Rennes	France
	Integrated seamless travel in Bochum	Germany
	Barrier-free design of the infrastructure	Germany
	Accessibility training and services	Germany
	Seamless assistance to PRMs	Italy
	Accessible travel and tourism	International
	Extensive accessibility services in London	UK
Rail transport	Accessible rail info tables on the web and in a mobile app	Czech Republic
	Coordinated accessibility measures in Toulouse	France
	Infrastructure monitoring, staff training and info for accessible urban rail	France
	Accessibility training for rail staff in Luxembourg	Luxembourg
	On demand spontaneous assistance at railways stations	The Netherlands
	Co-design of public transport with PRMs	Sweden
Road transport	Awareness raising for bus drivers in Prague	Czech Republic
	Wheelchair access on long-distance buses	Finland
	Easily transferable training for bus drivers & managers on accessibility	France
	Uber assistive applications	International
	Amico Bus – a door-to-door call accessible service	Italy

Guide to future actions, policies and strategies towards a PRM-inclusive transport system in Europe

A separate report was drawn up within this study, offering guidance on promoting the access and mobility needs of persons with reduced mobility throughout Europe's transportation system, as well as aiming to raise awareness about proven good practices in setting policies and strategies.

More specifically, the following recommendations of strategies and policies were put forward, alongside a detailed list of 31 cost-efficient measures aimed at creating an inclusive transport system.

Policies	Strategies
Legislative issues	
▶ Extend the applicability of Regulation (EU) No 181/2011 on bus and coach passenger rights to include local and urban transport. ▶ View long-distance and local transport as a continuum and apply the same legal requirements for accessibility across the board. ▶ Apply the staff training requirements of Regulation (EU) No 181/2011 on bus and coach passenger rights to all public transport operation staff across all modes of transport. ▶ Regulate and enforce the role of National Enforcement Bodies (NEBs). ▶ Connect European and national accessibility Regulations to national and local transport.	▶ Progressively extend assistance to PRMs to include real time and spontaneous travel requirements. ▶ Develop a National Transport Accessibility Strategy.
Key monitoring indicators and enforcement schemes	
▶ Include transport accessibility in in the SUMP of the cities, linked to specific KPIs and monitoring processes. ▶ Link transportation services accessibility compliance enforcement to penalties and sanctions for violations.	▶ Link each transport service to a user (PRM) feedback mechanism. ▶ For each transport service define KPIs of accessibility.
Multisectoral and multimodal practices	
▶ For each multimodal hub, nominate an "Accessibility Manager", agreed upon by adjacent modes, to coordinate accessibility issues and services among and between the nodes.	▶ Provide realistic and adapted intermodal routing services, taking into account the movement pace of various PRMs. ▶ Coordinate with local tourist services sector for combined accessible travel and tourism services, utilising also the relevant paratransit vehicles as accessible DRT services. ▶ Coordinate with local MaaS (car rental, sharing, pooling or other (i.e. Uber) services), to utilise vehicles adapted to PT-(paratransit) accessible feeders and first/last-mile bridges.

Policies	Strategies
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Training and awareness

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Organise and standardise transport services staff training courses, with annual refreshment schemes and even knowledge assessment at the end of training sessions. ▶ Organise expert walkthroughs, user visits and awareness sessions with PRM Associations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Set up an accessibility training scheme for transport service staff. ▶ With the help of local PRM Associations, organise awareness and training campaigns on optimal mobility for PRM groups. |
|---|--|

Information policies for inclusive transport

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide public transport information via at least 2 channels (e.g. audio and visual format) to cover the needs of various PRM groups (whether at the station or on board). ▶ Support adaptability or personalisation information provision through specialised apps, use of PRM remote controllers or button-operated functionalities, such as change in height or screen fonts. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Require all public transport information web and mobile services to be accessible at WACAG2.0 level. ▶ Provide all public transport information services with the required useful content for PRMs (e.g.. on accessible vehicles, stations, procedures, etc.). |
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Business schemes

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use transport service violations by operators or travellers to finance further accessibility attributes. ▶ Set up a mobile maintenance team for accessibility maintenance, to remove eventual temporal barriers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Mobilise volunteers that are properly trained in serving/supporting travellers with reduced mobility. ▶ Implement Design For All principles and co-development with PRM experts/representatives. |
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Mode	Proposed intervention
Multimodal transport Across modes	- Train all staff members in accessibility issues and have them follow an annual refreshment course. - Also make use of PRM trainers.
	PRM awareness raising through transport system visits and training in new technologies (using travel mentors).
	Use multiple info channels for station/vehicle announcements.
	Use part of ticket cost on accessibility violation penalties to enhance transport service accessibility.
	Support PRM-controlled info stations adaptation (changing fonts on the screen or changing lighting level).
	Support personalised info accessibility and services operation through accessible mobile apps.
	Train and use volunteers to assist PRMs.
	Nominate an "Accessibility Manager" for each modal hub.
	Provide support in cross-modal transfer for PRM travellers and their luggage.
	Offer free transport to required assistants travelling with PRM.
	Teach some employees sign language.
	Provide focused support to travellers with hidden or cognitive disabilities via adequately trained staff or volunteers.
	Have a support team available for accessibility barrier removal and accessibility equipment maintenance.
	For all information outlets (web site, mobile services, etc.), offer WCAG 2.0 accessibility level at the very least for all PRM groups.
	Embed accessibility through co-design simulation and testing in new vehicle infrastructure design.
	Connect throughout transit to accessible tourist services in order to share budgets and enhance seamless travel and user experience for PRMs.
Air	Airport-to-airport and airline-to-airline automated dispatch information on travelling PRMs to ensure improved and faster assistance.
	Fully compensate the cost of lost or damaged assistive devices.
Maritime	Inland waterways and especially waterbuses need to be made accessible as a priority.
	All new or renovated passenger maritime terminals should be made accessible.
	Do not charge more than the standard fair for an accessible cabin. Transfer the cost to the general ticket fare.
	Enhance accessibility of excursion boats.
	Offer accessibility to all services on board, not just ingress/egress and cabin.
Long-distance rail	Support spontaneous travel of PRM by offering assistance at all stations with just 30-60 minutes pre-booking.
	Accessible toilets should be installed in or next to accessible wagons.
Long-distance bus or coach	The relevant services need to become accessible, in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 181/2011.
Urban transport (metro, bus, tram, rail, etc.)	Adapt driverless lines to make them accessible.
	Include accessibility in SUMP.
	Enhance urban PT accessibility, applying Regulation (EU) No 181/2011 voluntarily in urban PT.
Paratransit (DRT, MaaS, Uber, etc.)	Make paratransit and MaaS services accessible.
	Develop accessible DRT services to feed and complement mainstream accessible PT.

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