



Important provisions for transport accessibility for all users under threat in Council discussions on the new TEN-T guidelines

Brussels, May 2012

Representing a wide coalition of European organisations acting on behalf of the transport industry and the transport passengers, ***we call upon the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament to uphold article 43 of the Commission’s proposal for the development of the trans-European transport network.***

On 19 October 2011, the European Commission published its proposal for revised TEN-T Guidelines and the Connecting Europe Facility. The Commission’s proposal reflects the commitment of the European Union to make transport accessible for all users.

In particular, in article 43 of the TEN-T Guidelines, the Commission stated that “transport infrastructure shall allow seamless mobility and accessibility for all users, in particular elderly people, persons of reduced mobility and disabled passengers”.

Mobility is a fundamental right for EU citizens. In this respect, accessible transport infrastructure is crucial for the provision of accessible transport services, is fundamental for freedom of movement and is vital for Europe’s socio-economic

welfare. In practice, it would allow older people, persons of reduced mobility and disabled passengers to participate in and benefit from the internal market as any other citizens in the EU.

Accessibility of transport has become a crucial societal challenge. It is also in the interest of the transport industry to work with accessible infrastructure in order to meet the needs of elderly people, persons of reduced mobility and disabled passengers, and to adapt to this increasing market opportunity. In addition, experience from countries that have made their transport systems accessible through, for example, a comprehensive network of accessible multimodal terminals, show that this has boosted the number of transport users and helped them improve their objective to make mobility greener.

As a consequence, the signatories of this document regret that the Council has removed article 43 that calls for concrete results to ensure accessibility for all users. Such a decision undermines the impact of the TEN-T on economic growth and social inclusion. Moreover, excluding transport accessibility for older people, persons of reduced mobility and disabled passengers contradicts the vision of the Transport White Paper to go toward a single European Transport Area that facilitates seamless mobility and accessibility for all transport users. It is also in contradiction to article 9 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), which has already been ratified by a very large majority of EU Member States and refers to accessibility for persons with disabilities. Finally, in view of Europe's demographic challenge, it is of crucial importance to ensure that transport services adapt to the needs of our rapidly ageing population in order to support longer working lives and independent living in old age, and thus reduce the impact of ageing on public budgets.

Therefore, we call on the Council and the European Parliament to maintain article 43 of the proposal [COM \(2011\) 650 final](#) concerning the accessibility of transport infrastructure for all users.

We very much hope that the recognition of the relevance of funding opportunities for projects enhancing transport accessibility will be kept, if not

strengthened, in the upcoming discussions on the new TEN-T Guidelines and Connecting Europe Facility.

Interest groups supporting this joint statement:

ACI Europe – Airports Council International

AGE Platform Europe

CER – Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies

ECC – European Cruise Council

ECSA – European Community Shipowners' Associations

EDF – European Disability Forum

ELA – European Lift Association

ENAT – European Network for Accessible Tourism

EPF – European Passengers' Federation

ESPO – European Sea Ports Organisation

IRU – International Road Transport Union Permanent Delegation to the EU

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