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# Euro Newsletter Access

## Towards an Accessible European Transport Network...



*After several project meetings and a lot of work, Euro Access is drawing to an end.*

This second newsletter highlights the work conducted by the project regarding the persons with disability's point of view about accessible transportation and their needs, and regarding the best practices that can be identified in the EU in terms of services to the persons with disabilities.

The final step of our work is to develop a framework for the transferability of such best practices between different member states and set up recommendations for EU policies.

Outline of the Euro Access work and conclusions will be presented during the final workshop the 3rd of December 2008 in Brussels. We invite you to take this occasion to have a fruitful discussion and help us to provide EU services with good ideas for the improvement of accessible transportation in Europe.

## Focus on the issue of accessible public transit through a user perspective

The work led by Lund University, focused on the issue of accessible public transit through a user perspective. A literature review was conducted by screening various databases on research reports, targeting general issues of disability, accessibility and mobility, listing particular issues of modes and infrastructure, and describing issues for various user groups. More than 1300 references were collected and analysed, and 100 of them appear in the coming report. The second source was a questionnaire survey, targeting the needs and expectations of people with functional limitations and older people. User organisations were contacted through the European Disability Forum and the AGE-Platform Europe.

The results showed that there has been a major progress in research and development of accessible public transit over the past years. Vehicles must be accessible, systems must be reliable and seamless, and stops and terminal facilities must be proximate and user-oriented. However, there is still lack of both research and

implementation in several areas. E.g., increased emphasis must be placed on information and orientation. Trained and supportive staff is essential, particularly for cognitively impaired people and people with mental health problems. The results from the survey showed user awareness of existing policies, legislation, action plans and other local documents. According to users, policies often contain clear directions "towards all people", not only towards specific groups. However, the legal framework and the implementation tend to focus more on "traditional" physical aspects, thus neglecting "soft barriers". The user groups hesitated to label their own influence as important, particularly senior organisations. On a five-graded scale, the perceived accessibility state was described as "neither accessible nor inaccessible". Users also emphasised that current pricing strategies fail to meet their needs, and for them the policy work still seems to lie far ahead of the implementation processes. ●●●

## Focus on the best practices: costs and benefits

The report produced by CERTU and Ann Frye Ltd presents twenty best practice case studies from eight countries. These case studies, presented as generic examples from which lessons can be drawn, were selected from information provided in Work Package 1, supplemented by the in-depth expertise of the Euro Access partners and by literature reviews and web searches.

There are four main headings: Integrated Multi Modal Schemes; Specialist Schemes; Training, Information and Communication and Technology. Each case study has identified key factors of development; benefits to disabled people; economic factors; key issues for transferability of the scheme to other areas and the main recommendations for implementation.

Best practice cannot be neatly defined. What works well for one individual or group with disabilities may be impossible or difficult for others. The wide variations in both economic and cultural backgrounds in Europe also mean that generalisations are inappropriate without exercising caution. A further obstacle is the almost universal absence of scientific or systematic evaluation of schemes through, for example, cost benefit analysis. Judgements are therefore often subjective.

The Report has identified key drivers of success such as training, information and communication. Factors also include the importance of partnership between the transport providers and those responsible for the highway environment, an understanding of what accessibility means and political commitment both at national and local levels.

A key recommendation is that the engagement of disabled people from the earliest stages of planning and delivery is fundamental to its success. The key to a cost effective solution is to ensure that it is going to make a difference to disabled people. ●●●



For any further information  
<http://www.euro-access.org>  
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## Past and upcoming events

### Final workshop ●●●

The final workshop of Euro Access will take place on the 3rd of December 2008 in Brussels.

The results will be discussed with public transport authorities, policy makers and persons with disabilities.

The attendance to the workshop is free and the place is suitable for persons with disabilities.

Please find more information on our website:

[www.euro-access.org](http://www.euro-access.org)

or contact:

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### Dissemination activities ●●●

Tis.pt presented Euro Access during the 5th meeting of « Transportes em Revista », on July 9th 2008.

The event focused on the best practices founded all over Europe and discussed accessibility to public transport and integration.

Ann Frye presented Euro Access during the US European Accessibility Workshop.

The event took place in Amsterdam on 30 June and 1st of July 2008.

More information is available on:

[www.euro-access.org](http://www.euro-access.org)



**SIXTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME**

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