

Disabled Passengers in Public Transport in Poland – Road and Railways



Izabela Bergel - Transport Department

Warsaw School of Economics

Workshop VF 4 – Pardubice – 25.11.2014



AGENDA

- Introduction
- Disabled people on transport market
- Accessibility of rail transport services
- Disabled passengers in road transport
- The rights of disabled passengers in road transport in Poland in the light of UE regulations
- The rights of disabled passengers in rail transport in Poland in the light of UE regulations
- Conclusions



Introduction - Passenger rights as consumers of transport services

- Unfavorable balance in the protection of passengers' rights - The European Commission *White Paper* from 2001 declares placing users of transport in the spotlight
- The need to strengthen the rights of passengers in terms of:
 - Special tools for people with reduced mobility,
 - Automatic protection and immediate solutions when travel is interrupted,
 - Liability for death or injury of passengers,
 - The handling of complaints and protection remedies
 - Informing passengers



Disabled People on Transport Market

- In passenger service, because of different needs of individual persons among disabled passengers (the blind, the deaf-muth, the mentally impaired, persons in weelchairs, persons with temporarily reduced mobility and finally older persons and the elderly) it is necessary to develop and deliver such solutions that will assure easy movement for all passengers
- The implementation of suitable solutions in public transportation means necessity of adaptation of transport means and infrastructure elements to the needs od disabled persons



Population of disabled people in Poland

- According to The 2002 National Census of Population (NSP 2002) - share of disabled people in total population was at the level of 14,3%
- According to last Census - The 2011 Polish Census of Population and Housing (NSP 2011) there are 4,7 mln disabled people in Poland, which means 12,2 % of total population
- We observe ageing of Polish population - stable growth of older people (in age of 65 and more) from the level of 5 mln people in 2005 to 8,5 mln in 2030
- Ageing of Polish society means growth of share of the above defined group – during last 25 years - from 13,3% to 23,8% of total population
- As a result of ageing process in Europe, during 20th century woman's average age increased by 33 years and man's age increased by 29 years



Accessibility of rail transport services (1)

- Implementation of adaptation actions on rail requires development and systematic implementation of the long-term programs and large financial investments
- The first adjustment programme in Polish State Railways aimed at supporting people with disabilities was developed in 1995
- In 2007 there was another initiative (Government Plenipotentiary for people with disabilities) on the implementation of the accessibility programme of rail transport for the disabled
- In 2008 a critical assessment of the adjustment of Polish Railway to the needs of people with disabilities was published by organizations of persons with disabilities and Supreme Audit Office (report of the inspection of Polish State Railways)



Accessibility of rail transport services (2)

- Railway stations and stops - barrier between platform and car
- Fleet - only a few trains adjusted for disabled persons
- Key elements of the availability of railway stations:
 - Parking spaces for the disabled
 - Glass-made and properly marked and constructed doors
 - The main pedestrian routes free of obstacles
 - Adapted toilets, ticket offices, ticket machines, information kiosks
 - The visual and spoken information available
 - Assistance of machines helping in overcoming differences in levels of rooms



Assessment of implementation of the rights of passengers with disabilities in rail transport in Poland

- Report of Integration Association of Metropolitan Communications (SISKOM) "*The availability of Warsaw's railway stations and stops.*„
- The main objective of this report was to gather knowledge on all kinds of obstacles and architectural barriers occurring in the Warsaw Railway Junction
- On the basis of architectural audits on many stations, conducted by members of the Association, there were three maps of railway stations established, according to the availability of its facilities.
- A research conducted by SISKOM confirms the thesis about the inadequacy of rail infrastructure to the needs of users who require special assistance. Because of that, not only people with physical disabilities, but also parents with children and the elderly are excluded



Disabled Passengers in road transport (1)

- Lack of financial resources for investment raising the standard of the equipment of bus stations and vehicles
- Important role of State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons (PFRON) in Poland which functions from 1991
- In the whole period of its existence PFRON realised among others the program of eliminating the transport barriers for disabled persons by co-financing or financing purchase of such vehicles as :
- Low-floor buses adjusted for carriage of disabled persons in urban area .
- Buses or minibuses specially equipped with accesses or a lift
- Minibuses -called taxis for disabled persons -equipped with a lift for carriage of persons on wheelchairs for paratransit
- Purchase of adapted individual cars and special equipment for disabled persons



Disabled Passengers in road transport (2)

- In the EU the power to use reserved parking spaces are only those who are given judgment of the serious limitation to walk
- The rules, payment and bodies issuing parking tickets in different countries are defined by national rules
- Existing legislation in Poland concerning the use of the parking card needs to be improved due to insufficient protection for the disabled (counterfeiting of cards, unauthorized use of the reserved parking spaces etc.).
- According to the changes in the Law on road traffic and other acts of November the 15th 2013, the Polish Parliament has made significant changes to the system of assigning parking cards to persons with disabilities.
- Under the new law, parking cards for authorized persons are to be issued for 5 years – the existing ones remain valid until July 2015
- A nationwide register of holders of parking card is to be implemented in 2015
- Following the example of western countries heavy fines (until 2000 PLN) for unauthorized use of parking cards are to be introduced



Disabled Passengers in road transport (2)

- In the EU the power to use reserved parking spaces are only those who are given judgment of the serious limitation to walk
- The rules, payment and bodies issuing parking tickets in different countries are defined by national rules
- Existing legislation in Poland concerning the use of the parking card needs to be improved due to insufficient protection for the disabled (counterfeiting of cards, unauthorized use of the reserved parking spaces etc.).
- According to the changes in the Law on road traffic and other acts of November the 15th 2013, the Polish Parliament has made significant changes to the system of assigning parking cards to persons with disabilities.
- Under the new law, parking cards for authorized persons are to be issued for 5 years – the existing ones remain valid until July 2015
- A nationwide register of holders of parking card is to be implemented in 2015
- Following the example of western countries heavy fines (until 2000 PLN) for unauthorized use of parking cards are to be introduced

Disabled Passengers in road transport

(3)

Parking spaces for people with disabilities

The minimum number of parking spaces in parking lots:

6 -15 parking places - minimum 1 place

Parking 16 - 40 places- a minimum of 2 places

41- 100 parking places - a minimum of 3 places

Parking over 100 places- a minimum of 4% of the total





The rights of disabled passengers in railway transport in the light of UE regulations (1)

- **EU Regulation No. 1371/2007** - sets minimum rights for those traveling by train, and imposes a number of obligations on railway companies specifying their responsibility to their customers
- **Regulation** requires to inform disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility about the accessibility of rail services, access conditions of the fleet available and equipment in trains
- For the best possible information delivery about delays to passengers with sensory disability, visual and audible information systems should be applied
- Disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility should be able to buy tickets on the train at no extra charge



The rights of disabled passengers in railway transport in the light of UE regulations (2)

In accordance with **Regulation (EC) 1371/2007**:

- Follow the Technical Specification for Interoperability for disabled persons or persons with reduced mobility (PRM TSI), railway companies and railway station managers should take into account the needs of disabled persons or persons with reduced mobility
- Provide, in accordance with EU public procurement rules, all buildings and fleet for the use of disabled persons, through the progressive elimination of obstacles when buying new equipment, while carrying out construction or major renovations



Rights of disabled passengers in railway transport in Poland

- **Railway Transport Office (Polish: UTK)** is responsible for compliance with the regulations concerning the rights of persons with disabilities in rail transport in Poland.
- UTK document from 2013 „Handling of persons with reduced mobility in the market of passenger rail transportation-recommendations of the President of the Office for Railway Transport”
- To ensure that all passengers have equal access to passenger rail transport
- Highlighting the need for immediate implementation of innovative solutions that meet the functional and organizational needs of passengers with reduced mobility



Rights of disabled passengers in road transport

- The EU regulation concerning the rights of disabled passengers in bus and coach transport - **Regulation (EC) No 181/2011**
- In terms of the use of road infrastructure, an important option for disabled passengers introduced in the European Union is so called ***parking card***- the recommendation of the Council 98/376 / EW on 04/06/1998



The rights of disabled passengers in road transport in Poland in the light of UE regulations

European regulator imposed on the member states to designate a body to monitor the implementation of Regulations **(EC) 181/2011** on its territory and to inform the European Commission

Any irregularities will be reported to the institution or operator that brakes the Regulation, the passenger shall have three months from the date of travel on the application of these irregularities

This body should accept complaints from travelers with disabilities concerning carriers or bus stations managers.

Although Regulation (EC) 181/2011 came into force across the EU (including Poland) from 1st March 2013 its implementation into Polish law is already almost two years too late.



Summary

A number of **recommendations** were formulated in the past by international organizations such as the United Nations (UN) and the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (CEMT) and numerous organizations of persons with disabilities

European regulator systematically introduces in the European Union, through the regulations issued for subsequent modes of transport, needs to respect the rights of passengers with disabilities in transport



Conclusions

- **National regulations** concerning the rights of passengers with disabilities are often the result of the need to implement solutions and standards for passenger handling set by European Union.
- However, **to ensure their implementation in practice** requires not only efficient carriers and operators of transport infrastructure steps, but also of national authorities established to monitor and judge of complaints of passengers (UTK in rail transport, ULC in air transport and the lack of such body in the road transport)
- It is necessary in Poland, to speed up the legislative work in order to fully implement the Regulation (EC) No. 181-2011



Dziękujemy za uwagę !
Thank you for your attention !
Děkuji za pozornost !

iberge@sgh.waw.pl