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FUTURE ACTIVITIES OF THE WORKING PARTY

Rail transport of passengers with mobility handicaps

Transmitted by Ann Frye Limited

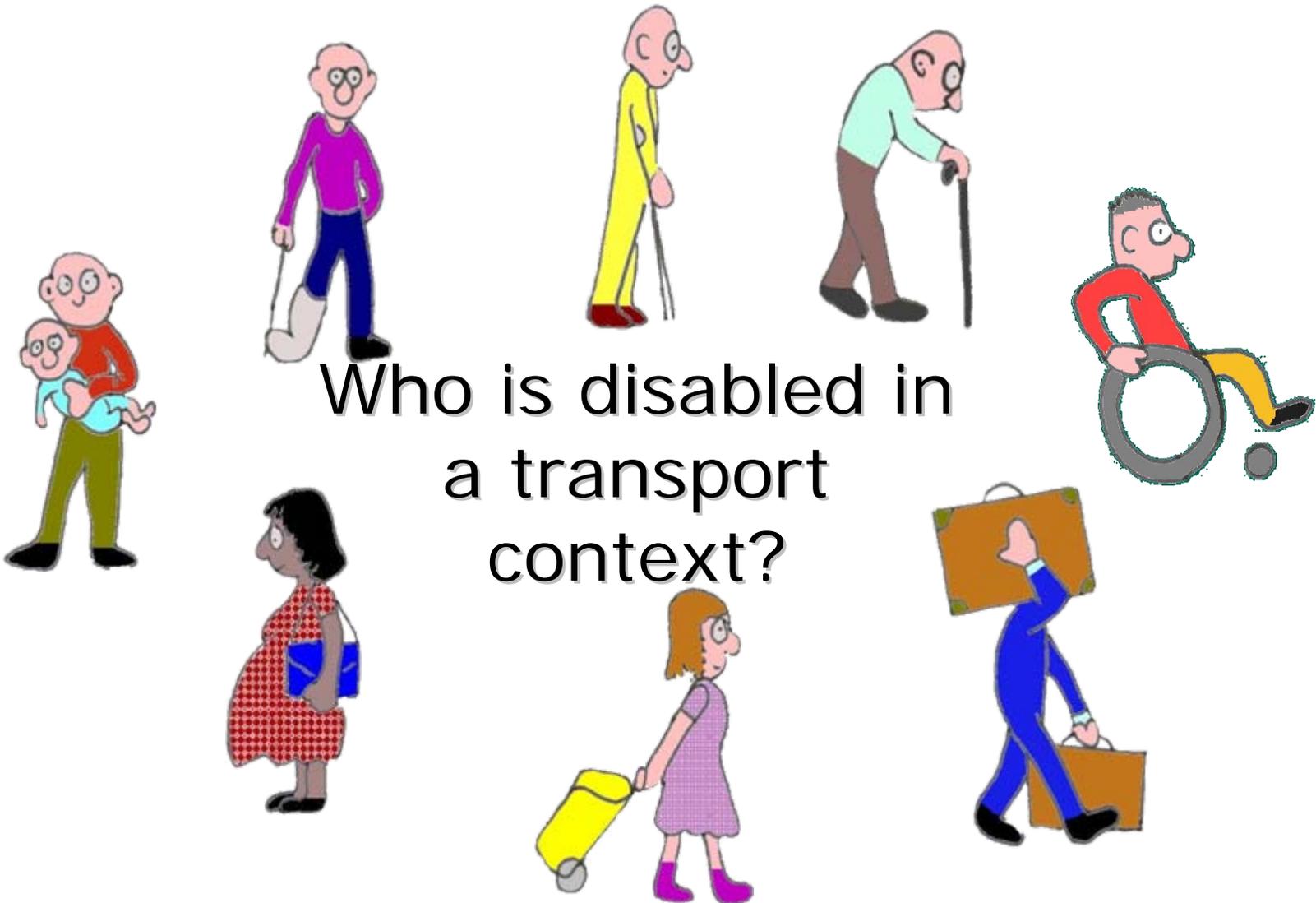
Passenger Accessibility of Heavy Rail Systems

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The Facts and Figures

- There are some 50 million disabled people in the 27 countries of the European Union;
- There are over 60 million disabled people across Europe as a whole;
- About 20% of adults have some form of long term disability;
 - 70% of them have difficulty walking and/or climbing stairs;
 - 41% have a hearing loss;
 - 24% have a vision loss;
- Around one in four households has a disabled resident;
- Recent research in the UK has shown that disabled people travel one third less than non-disabled people; in some countries that figure will be much lower.



Who is disabled in
a transport
context?

The link between age and disability

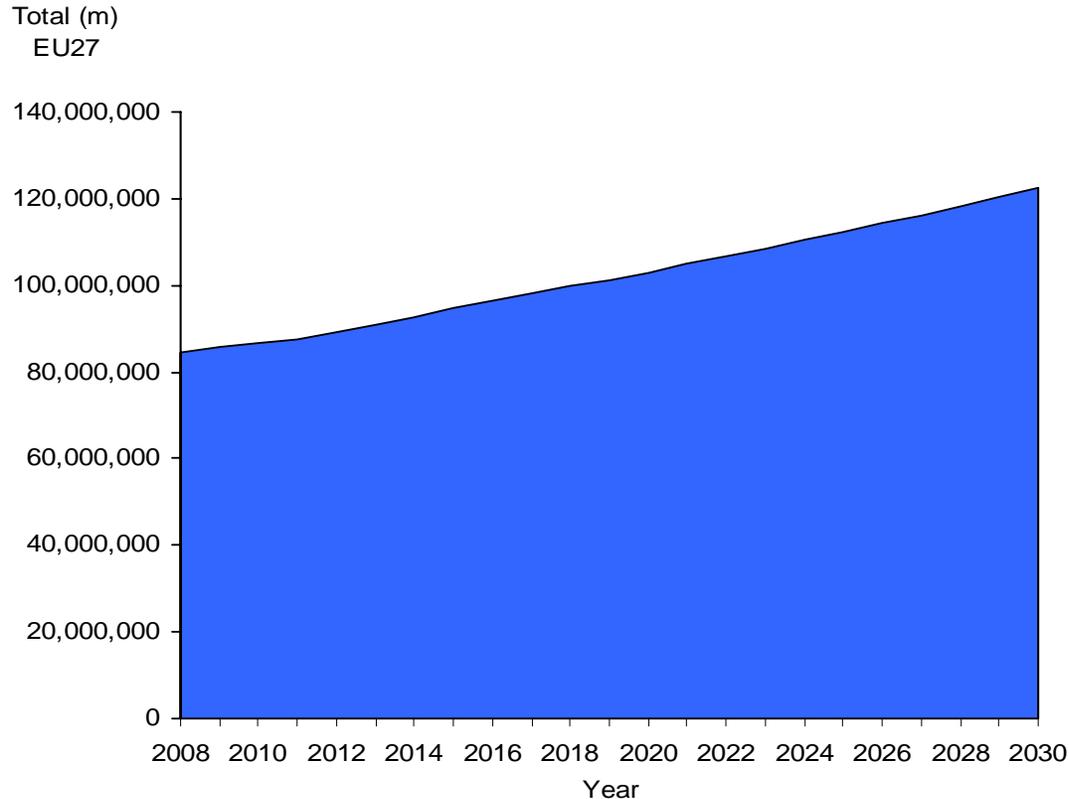


- There is a strong correlation between age and disability;
- Two thirds of disabled people are elderly;
- Over half the population aged over 75 has a disability.

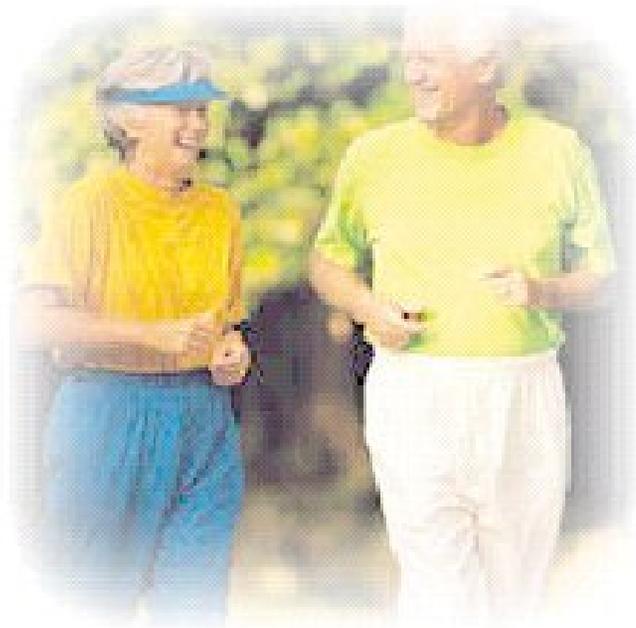
The shifting population balance

- By 2015 older people will account for 19% of Europe's population – some 95 million people;
- In parallel birth rates are falling;
- This means that in future the working age population will not be large enough to support older and disabled people;
- Retaining independent mobility is both an economic and a social imperative.

European Trends in Growth of Population aged over 65



Profiling the Baby Boomer Generation



- There are fundamental differences between the generation currently approaching old age and previous generations;
- They have the highest mean income of any age group;
- They also have high expectations of continuing active lifestyles and travel into retirement.

What does this mean for the Rail Industry?

- Rail travel will become an increasingly popular means of travel for older people;
- It is less stressful than air travel;
- It brings you closer to city centre destinations;
- To meet this new and growing market the rail industry needs to provide rolling stock, infrastructure and services that are accessible.

Key Issues for older and Disabled People



- The problems facing older and disabled people include:
 - Lack of information about accessible stations and trains;
 - Poor access at stations;
 - Low platforms which mean steep steps to board;
 - Poor access on the train;
 - Lack of assistance at the station and on the train.

National Legal Frameworks

- **Many countries have introduced legislation (general and/or technical) on accessibility. These include:**
 - **Italy (1992 And 2001):** Law On The Assistance, Social Integration And Rights Of Disabled People. (1996) Law On The Accessibility Of Buildings, Public Transport And Services;
 - **UK (1995 And 2005)** Disability Discrimination Act (DDA);
 - **Germany (2002):** Act On Equal Opportunities For Disabled Persons
 - **Spain (2003) :** National Law For Equal Opportunities, Non Discrimination And Universal Accessibility;
 - **Switzerland (2004):** Federal Act On The Elimination Of Discrimination Against People With Disabilities;
 - **France (2005):** Law On Equal Rights And Opportunities, Participation And Citizenship Of Disabled Persons;
 - **Ireland (2005)** Disability Act.

The European Legal Framework

- The European Commission has developed an Action Plan on Equal Opportunities for Disabled People;
- It sets a clear objective of “enhancing the economic and social integration of people with disabilities”;
- Accessible public transport is a key priority for meeting this objective;
- The Commission’s White Paper “European Transport Policy for 2010” also recognises this

European Legal Framework

- There is a Directive in place on Bus and Coach accessibility (2001/85/EC);
- There is also a Regulation on Disabled Passenger Rights for Air Travel (1107/2006);
- A proposal for similar laws on maritime travel is expected shortly;
- Rail travel is an important part of this same package....

Rail : The legal framework

- There are two Directives on procurement procedures (2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC);
- They apply specifically to the transport field;
- They specify that contracting authorities should ensure that accessibility criteria for people with reduced mobility are taken into account.

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Rail: The Legal Framework

- The Third Rail Package was approved in September 2007;
- Regulation 1371/2007 Covers the rights of disabled passengers to be given assistance including boarding and alighting and changing trains;
- It will apply from 2009 to both international and domestic services.

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Rail: The Legal Framework

- Directive 2004/50 on the interoperability of the trans-European high-speed rail system includes a technical specification (TSI) dealing with accessibility of stations and trains;
- The TSI covers conventional and high speed rail infrastructure and passenger rolling stock;
- It also includes other issues like ticketing equipment;
- The TSI is the standard against which rail vehicles capable of operating on the Trans-European Network will be assessed.

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Technical Specification for Interoperability (TSI)



- The TSI on “people with reduced mobility” came into force on 1 July 2008;
- This definition goes wider than disability and age: it includes those who have a temporary disability or who travel with small children etc;
- The TSI applies to all new, upgraded or renewed stations and trains on the Trans-European Network;
- As an example, in the UK this has been taken to mean all heavy rail trains.

Guidance and Best Practice

- COST (Co-operation in Science and Technology) Project 335 on access to heavy rail systems provides guidance on best practice for accessibility of rolling stock and stations;
- The TSI has drawn on COST 335 in setting standards;
- <http://cordis.europa.eu/cost-transport/src/cost-335.htm>



Summary

- Accessibility is a legal requirement;
- It is also a commercial opportunity: growing numbers of older and disabled people would make use of rail travel if they could do so with confidence and in comfort;
- Improvements to meet the needs of disabled and older people will almost always benefit the wider travelling public (for example, lower steps, more handrails, non-slip surfaces);

Summary

- Accessibility should be incorporated into new rolling stock at the design stage;
- It is also possible to make significant improvements to older rolling stock through the refurbishment process;
- Many improvements are simple and low cost;
- Station accessibility improvements should, whenever possible, be made in parallel with the improvements to rolling stock;
- Issues such as staff training and communication are also crucial to giving people the confidence to travel,

Next Steps

- Disabled and older people need confidence before they will make a journey;
- This means that every aspect of a train journey needs to be accessible:
 - Pre journey information
 - Booking arrangements
 - Station facilities
 - Staff assistance at the station (both ends of the journey) and on board
 - Information and facilities on board.

Next Steps

- Technical standards can improve rolling stock design but unless all the other factors are addressed in parallel, people will not travel;
- Best practice and guidance exists but it is often ignored;
- What role can you play in opening up Europe's railways to a wider travelling public?

Information

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