

Carriage of passengers: vehicles comprising more than 8 seats or maximum length 15m (amend. direct. 70/156/EEC)

1997/0176(COD) - 26/09/2000 - Council position

The proposal has been examined by the Council since 1997 and it has undergone some modifications which, however, do not change its overall orientation. The Council has been able to incorporate some of the European Parliament amendments in part, while also taking on board the principles behind other amendments. The amendments accepted in part or in principle relate in particular to: - the addition of the definition of a "person with reduced mobility" and "reference wheelchair"; - the taking into account of the technical requirements adopted by the UN Economic Commission for Europe; - the much greater emphasis on the needs for wheelchair users and strengthen the provisions for regarding persons with reduced mobility; - the freedom to choose the most appropriate solution to achieve improved accessibility in vehicles other than Class I. On the other hand, the amendments not accepted by the Council relate to: - the authorisation of specific transport services; - replacing traditional detailed legislation on technical harmonisation with general guidelines to be elaborated by comitology. Moreover, there have also been some changes to the common position, the Council has amended or clarified the Commission proposal on points such as, comitology, school buses being exempt from the Directive's scope, seats in the gangway in Class III vehicles and side-facing seats in Class III and B vehicles. In conclusion, the Council feels that by approving the bulk of the Commission proposal while also accepting several of the European Parliament's amendments, it has arrived at a practicable solution which ensures a high level of safety and user friendliness.