

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

1997/0176(COD) - 18/06/1997 - Legislative proposal

OBJECTIVE: the proposal for a directive sets out to establish a Community system of type-approval technical provisions applicable to buses and coaches. SUBSTANCE: the Commission's proposal seeks to establish a single system which is valid and recognized throughout the European Union for the type-approval concerning the technical specifications of buses and coaches. These provisions include: the distribution of the combined weight of the passengers so as to avoid overloading individual axles; the number, type and location of the emergency exits; the technical specifications governing service doors including power-operated doors; approved access steps incorporated in the vehicle; access to service doors, emergency exits, gangways and seats; the provision of handrails and hand holds for standing passengers; the minimum seat size and spacing between seats; the stability of the vehicle and the strength of the superstructure. The Commission also seeks to ensure that urban public transport is easily accessible for people with reduced mobility, including wheelchair users. Concerning regular interurban services the Commission will, without delay, put forward a proposal based on relevant studies concerning the technical specifications applicable to the vehicles used for this purpose. Concerning longitudinal seats (considered by some to be unsafe), the Commission will investigate the matter and consider taking specific measures without excluding the possibility of eliminating this type of seat on vehicles not intended for the transport of standing passengers. It will also consider the possibility of proving the safety of these seats by installing safety belts. The proposal takes account of the technical specifications of minibuses (including those built in the United Kingdom), in certain cases providing for limited exemptions to the standards generally applicable.