



Example 12                    **Introduction of Low-Floor Buses in New EU Member Countries**

City (country)                **Budapest (Hungary)**

Similar service in:         Bratislava (Slovakia), Nicosia (Cyprus), Riga (Latvia), Tallinn (Estonia), Valletta (Malta), Vilnius (Lithuania), Warsaw (Poland)

good practice for people with ...	kind of vehicle	kind of measure/approach
... motor impairment ... visual impairment	city bus	engineering/technology approach

**Project description**

The low-floor bus is an engineering achievement that can be found almost everywhere in Europe. In Central and Western Europe in particular there are many cities that nowadays have a bus fleet of entirely low-floor buses. In many cities, as in Budapest, low-floor buses are the first step to an accessible public transport system.

In general the passenger compartment has a floor that is considerably lower than that of conventional models. The vehicles have a stepless entry and often an area without seating next to at least one of the doors where wheelchairs and baby carriages can be parked. Low floors in buses can be complemented by a hydraulic or pneumatic “kneeling device,” which can be used when the bus is at a stop. The bus can then tilt to the side where passengers get on and off. This technology creates a gapless transition between vehicle and adapted stop. Without such a kneeling device, wheelchair users use either an automatic or a mechanical ramp, which is operated by the bus driver. These technologies also make it much easier to get in and off the bus for people with difficulty walking (like the elderly) and those with baby carriages.

The Budapest Transport Company (BKV) introduced the first 50 low-floor buses in 2001. There are currently already 115 low-floor buses operating on 16 lines with more than 200 accessible bus stops. Furthermore 15 new low-floor trolley buses have been introduced.

In short, conventional buses with step entries make it impossible for wheelchair users to board the bus by themselves. This is why low-floor buses are an important development for motor-impaired persons in particular, because in combination with adapted kerbs disabled passengers can easily get on and off the vehicle.

Source:  
ECMT: Hungary, <http://www.cemt.org/topics/handicaps/develop/Hdev02.pdf> (07/11/2007)