



Example 23 **User Tests of Accessible Bus Stops and Driver Training**

City (country) **Espoo (Finland)**

good practice for people with ...	kind of vehicle	kind of measure/approach
... motor impairment ... visual impairment ... hearing impairment	city bus regional bus	engineering/technology approach financial support measure awareness building

Project description

New guidelines for the dimensioning and planning of accessible bus stops were tested by drivers and passengers along the route of Espoo public transport line 19 in Puolarmetsä, as planned by the ELSA (see example 28) project "Accessible public transport line 19 in Espoo." Tests were undertaken which involved driving to the stops and testing the functionality of equipment used to make sure the guidelines were working and meeting the requirements of drivers and different passenger groups.

Three separate test rounds were organised to test the functionality of the stop for drivers and passengers. Firstly the driver drove an empty bus on the stop, secondly a test group travelled on the bus and lastly the same test group used the stop.

As a result of the tests the new model for accessible stops is suitable for passengers in need of high-level accessibility and is well designed in terms of approachability by bus. In the contract plan more detailed requirements for construction should be recorded and in particular planning for the surroundings of the stops needs to be extended. More attention should also be paid to the planning of accessible stop shelters.

To guarantee the enhanced accessibility supported by the new bus transport facilities, appropriate driving behaviour and knowledge of how the technical fittings work are crucial. Driver training and refresher courses are therefore important and can also teach the drivers the necessary patience. It is recommended that driver training is included as a quality requirement at competitive tendering processes and that accessibility requirements are considered when schedules are to be planned. In addition, maintenance, especially in winter, is crucial for guaranteeing an accessible public transport system.

Once the new accessible bus stop is accepted, the plan is to implement it on a wider scale in Espoo as well as in other parts of Finland.

Source:

ELSA: User Tests of Accessible Bus Stops and Education Plan for the Drivers of Accessible Bus Routes,
http://www.elsa.fi/English/hankeyhteenvedot/11_ELSA_hankeyhteenvedo_TESTELI_en.pdf (06/11/2007)