

Accessible destinations for all : the commitment of the public transport sector

Presentation abstract

Public transport is by definition a vector of social inclusiveness; the public transport sector has therefore the responsibility to keep removing barriers and ensure that everyone with reduced mobility have equal access to all of the urban mobility options.

Accessibility has always been one of the main concerns for operators and authorities of public transport. Industries have developed new technologies to address this major issue, low-floor buses being perhaps the most visible example, and decision-makers have implemented improved regulations. UITP has released a report on the best practices to provide accessible public transport in Europe, which shows the progress already made and the planned further developments. Regular users but also tourists have witnessed the results of these changes in stations, transport modes and services around the world, but also in a various range of contextually adapted solutions to meet their needs.

Indeed, flexibility is key in meeting the accessibility challenge in cities, as context and needs of users are disparate. While in some cases hard work on the infrastructure is required to ensure smooth flow of all passengers, in other cases alternative solutions including door-to-door services will be the most efficient way of spending public money for the benefits of all passengers. Whether hard works or door-to-door services, the solution should anyway make sure that cities are turning into accessible destinations. And whether it is a voluntary approach or defined by legislation, these frameworks can reach their full potential only if all stakeholders, including national, regional and local governments and civil society are working hand-in-hand to implement the best solutions locally, and funds are made available to support public transport agencies.

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Biography : Anne-Laure Le Merre has been working for more than 15 years for international lobbying associations mainly representing the transport sector in Brussels. She has been dealing with issues related to passenger transport and accessibility for about 10 years, has a solid understanding of the needs and challenges, and knows all the major EU stakeholders.

Anne-Laure has a Master 2 in International Business management, and a Master 2 in Business law with the University of Paris I La Sorbonne and Lyon 3.