

Feasibility study on the harmonization of services for passengers with special needs in Port system of Adriatic-Ionian area

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1. Introduction

1.1. Objective of the study

The activity performed within the IPA Adriatic CBC Programme 2007-2013' EA SEA-WAY strategic Project working package relatively to the outlining sustainable passenger transport models for the Adriatic-Ionian basin and capacity building, by activating new governance tools and sharing sustainable cooperation strategies on passenger transport, in the light of the forthcoming Adriatic-Ionian macro-region, foresaw inter alia the reaching of a series of cross-border agreements on specific thematic results of common interest from the partners involved into the Project. Such approach led to the identification of the particular need of improvement for accessibility and the mobility of passengers across the Adriatic-Ionian (AI) area and its hinterland, through the development of new cross-border, sustainable and integrated maritime transport-oriented transport system providing optimal solutions to the demand of services to people with different needs and reduced mobility (disabled persons, elderly, minors, pregnant women, etc.) in port terminal structures of the whole AI area. Thus ensuring equal rights to transport and social inclusion for persons with disabilities and restricted mobility.

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In order to facilitate the integration of Adriatic-Ionian ports with the hinterland and improve services offered to passengers, this action intended to provide all necessary instructions and solutions in order to provide such services, in terms of delivering available information and standardized assistance to passengers and improving the sharing data exchange through the adopting of ITC solutions related to people with different needs and reduced mobility between the ports of the Adriatic-Ionian area.

In such mode, the Partners expressed the will to share experiences and promote joint initiatives for training of staff on disability awareness and disability equality to help to get a better understanding of disability and how to meet different needs. At the same time, the partners aimed to develop methods and tools to “certify” and make accessible places recognizable and more visible by creating a system of attribution of “labels”, shared with associations of disabled people.

With the adoption of this *well-purpose* cooperative tool, the intention was also to adopt common solutions facilitating the introduction of internationally recognized policies and codes of conduct concerning easing of the transport of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility, also favouring the standardization toward the EU legal framework. Furthermore, the

proposed maritime service has an important cross-border character since it is focused on improving connections, services and sustainable mobility in the completely Adriatic-Ionian area. Moreover, it falls within the framework of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-Region for Transport, clearly stated in the specific objectives of the 2nd Pillar Connecting the Region.

Some Project Partners proposed to deal with such demand from the territory by outlining a cross-border framework of a set of interventions to reduce physical barriers that do not allow disabled people and people with different needs to easily move in the ports, representing the basis for a common approach and a shared proposal to effective solutions. This led in Dubrovnik (Croatia) on May 11, 2016, during the Project Final Conference, to the signature posed by eight Partners to the *Cross-Border Agreement of Mutual Cooperation on Passenger Special Needs Services*.

The signatory subjects were:

- Region Friuli Venezia Giulia - Central Directorate for infrastructure and territory (IT),
- Dubrovnik Neretva Region (CR),
- Levante Port Authority (IT),
- Ancona Port Authority (IT),
- Port of Bar Holding Company (ME),
- TEULEDA (AL),
- Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure – Republic of Albania (AL),
- Port of Split Authority (CR).

The grouping formed by 4 port authorities, 1 ministry, 2 regional administrations and 1 regional development agency belonging to the Adriatic-Ionian area's countries, clearly expresses the relevance of the dealt with issue, paving the way for possible implementation of the involved grouping.

1.2. Structure of the study

The present study represents an introductory assessment to the following training models that represent the cornerstone of the activity and will provide for arising knowledge and awareness in approaching demand originated from passengers with special needs. It is composed by:

- a descriptive introductory picture of main features and state of the typology of existing barriers to services in question in the concerned Adriatic-Ionian area. The analysis of the context is supported with the assessment of the results provided by a survey addressed to all national and regional port authorities of the basin;
- the identification of needed interventions to define possible solutions;
- the description of the EU legal framework granting fair and respectful treatment of passengers, included those having impairments;
- the alignment of the study goals with the EUSAIR Strategy;
- the outline of the training structure to be supplied.

2. Analysis of the context

2.1. Current state of the study area

In recent years the European Union has pursued an effective program, through the achievements of transport policy, aimed at strengthening securing and upholding, being the first region in the world where passengers have guaranteed rights across all forms of transport.

A boost was the increased mobility over the last decades, also taking into account the widening of the community borders.

EU legislation has therefore been introduced for all modes of transport to protect passenger rights and ensure they are not lost in a myriad of national rules.

Thanks to this EU legislation, passengers now have certain entitlements when it comes to information travels, with specific rights adapted to each means of transport and some differences that relate to national exemptions or the amount and basis of compensation. But in essence, the rights that apply to all types of transport are comparable.

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They are based on three key principles: non-discrimination; accurate, timely and accessible information; immediate and proportionate assistance. These principles are the foundation for ten basic rights that form the core of EU passenger rights policy.

The issue assume even more relevance if concerning **persons/travellers with disabilities**. In this sense, the EU promotes the comprehensive active inclusion and full participation of disabled people in society, in line with the EU human rights approach to disability issues. And the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD), to which the EU is a signatory.

The European Commission's European Disability Strategy 2010-2020¹, adopted in 2010, builds on the UNCRPD and takes into account the experience of the Disability Action Plan (2004-2010).

Its objectives are pursued by actions in eight priority areas²:

- 1) **Accessibility**: make goods and services accessible to people with disabilities and promote the market of assistive devices,

¹ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV%3Aem0047>

² <http://ec.europa.eu/social/>

- 2) Participation: ensure that people with disabilities enjoy all benefits of EU citizenship; remove barriers to equal participation in public life and leisure activities; promote the provision of quality community-based services,
- 3) Equality: combat discrimination based on disability and promote equal opportunities,
- 4) Employment: raise significantly the share of persons with disabilities working in the open labour market. They represent one-sixth of the EU's overall working-age population, but their employment rate is comparatively low,
- 5) Education and training: promote inclusive education and lifelong learning for students and pupils with disabilities. Equal access to quality education and lifelong learning enable disabled people to participate fully in society and improve their quality of life. The European Commission has launched several educational initiatives for disabled people. These include the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education as well as a specific study group on disability and lifelong learning,
- 6) Social protection: promote decent living conditions, combat poverty and social exclusion,
- 7) Health: promote equal access to health services and related facilities,
- 8) External action: promote the rights of people with disabilities in the EU enlargement and international development programmes.

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The Commission also supports the Academic Network of European Disability experts (ANED), which provides the Commission with analysis of national situations, policies and data. ANED also manages the online tool (DOTCOM - <http://www.disability-europe.net/dotcom>) that provides an overview of the key instruments in the Member States and the EU needed for the implementation of the UNCRPD. The creation of the tool is one of the actions foreseen in the List of Actions (2010-2015) accompanying the European Disability Strategy.

The European Union statistics estimated in 42 million disabled people (2012 EUROSTAT data), corresponding to 12.8% of the population aged 15-64 (EU-27). Overall in the EU-27, 70.0 million people aged 15 and over reported a disability in 2012, a share of 17.6%. Nearly three fifths (58.4%) of all disabled people aged 15 or over were women. This is a considerable number of people, in terms of potential travellers, to which have to be added other social categories (elderly, minors, pregnant women, etc.) that during their travels (pleasure, work and other commitments), require specific and similar assistance. This demand, regardless of the form of

disability or reduced mobility, has to be seen in the context of the growing dynamics of mobility in the whole region, also affecting the maritime transport. It should be taken into consideration that the profile of present travellers who use of maritime transport mode is changing as travel patterns vary greatly. The number of passengers with reduced mobility is growing and the proportion of older people in the population is also increasing. These demographic changes requires improvement in the accessibility of maritime passenger transport services.

For such reasons, it is of utmost importance to act to guarantee the conditions for ensuring equal rights to transport and social inclusion for persons with disabilities and restricted mobility, by setting up interventions to reduce physical barriers that do not allow disabled people to easy move in the ports.

2.2. Barriers to travel

It is useful to briefly link the features of the existing barriers to travel for passengers and travellers with disability and reduced mobility that prevent these people to make a travel having the same expectations and conditions as other travellers. It remains as key-factor the issue that existing barriers in the maritime transport system can prevent passengers with reduced mobility and/or disability from using sea-transport services. That would lead these potential sea-passengers to choose an alternative method of travel or simply not travel at all.

Barriers can be defined as those “*impediments encountered while participating or attempting to participate in a tourist experience*” (McGuire 1984).

Barriers to travel may be essentially divided in following areas (not considering the intrinsic (level and typology of disability) and economic ones):

- Physical (environmental/mobility) architectural barriers – the presence of accessibility gap features as different levels of pathways (i.e. stairs), its width and winding, difficult doors to manage, steep or narrow gangways, unclear building/area layout and/or location, inadequate lighting, inadequate waiting conditions, specific available services, etc..
- Communication barriers – all kind of information to travellers (signage, timetables, ticketing, safety, etc.) have to be adequate and accessible (in form and feature; in their location in different terminal areas), and provided taking into account the different disabilities, so ensuring that the needs are met.

- Barriers made by procedures – adopted procedures and organisational schemes adopted may represent a practical barrier to travellers and their needs. Quality services and capability of adaptation to arisen issues can result of great relevance to overcome such problems, as for resilience ability of the operators to face with these issues.

To this category can be added the lack of awareness or enforcement of existing laws and regulations that require actions to be accessible to people with disabilities.

- Barriers determined by management behaviour – there is still a public attitude toward people having impairments and/or facing significant mobility constraints that travel, a way of thinking or feeling that bounds people's perception to the potential to people with disabilities to be capable, independent individuals. Negative attitudinal barriers include inter alia prejudice, ignorance, insensitivity, discrimination.

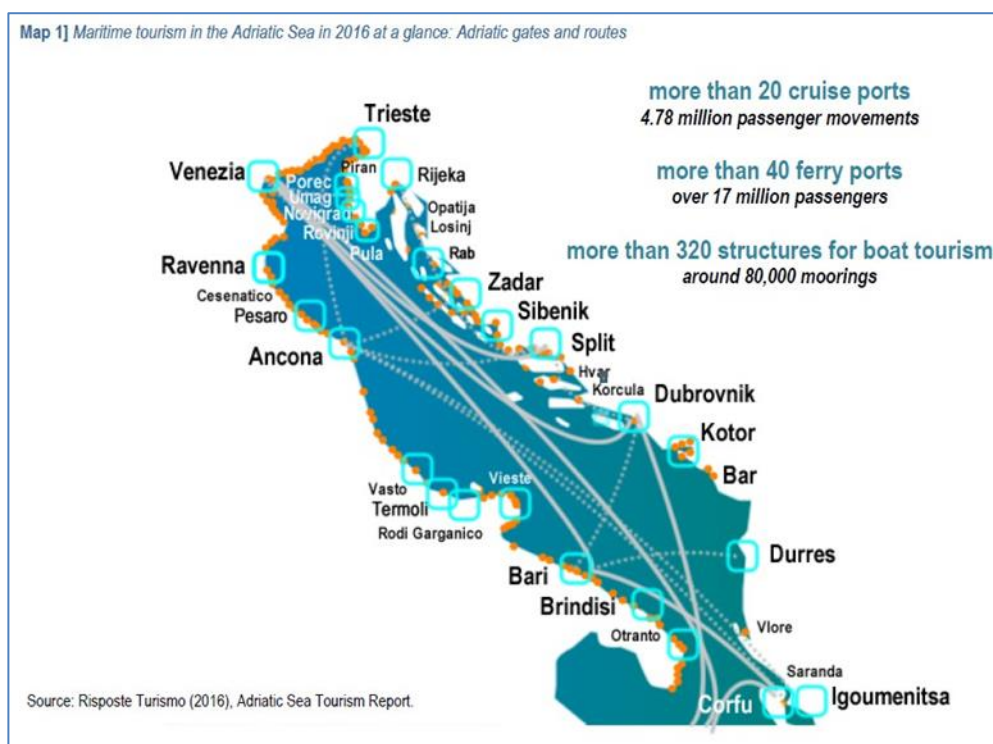
2.3. Survey results

To better assess and update the current state and level of services provided to passengers having impairments (disability and reduced mobility), a brief Survey (see Annex) was prepared and sent (in August) to all Adriatic-Ionian port authorities. Over forty port institutions were involved from all six countries of the basin (Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro, Albania, Greece), taking into account their different feature (structure dimension, existing passenger terminal, role, passenger flow figures) and typology of sea-transport (cruise, ferry, catamaran, marina, seasonal services, etc.).

The response to the survey was provided by eight port institutions from four Adriatic-Ionian bordering countries, of which six port authorities and two organisations managing passenger port terminals (subsidiary companies of the two local port authorities for Trieste and Venice). Here they are:

- Port of Sibenik (HR),
- Port of Ancona (IT),
- Port of Umag-Umago (HR),
- Port of Bari (IT),
- Port of Trieste (by Trieste Terminal Passeggeri spa - IT),
- Port of Pula (HR),
- Port of Venice (by Venezia Terminal Passeggeri spa - IT),
- Port of Bar (ME).

If the result may not be fully numerically exhaustive (8 out of 44 targeted), nevertheless the respondents represent some of main actors in the Adriatic-Ionian area (both for cruise and ferry/hydrofoil passenger movements) interested by greater part of the passenger traffic flows in the basin.



The Survey have been structured on a series of closed format dichotomous questions (Yes/No) starting from the existence of passenger terminals (physical structures), on the presence or non-existence of welcoming, access and other assistance services, on the presence of trained staff, and a rating scale question (1 to 4) referring to the level of demand of specific services from different social categories having impairments.

Of the interviewed responding to the Survey, 5 (ports of Ancona, Trieste, Venice, Bari, Bar) confirmed the presence on their area of at least one **physical fixed-structure for passenger terminal** operating for cruise calls, ferry and hydrofoil lines, having in some cases distinguished

terminals for Schengen and non-Schengen transit. Sibenik, and Umag usually utilise their piers for the mooring of the carriers, while Pula, after a recent modernisation of its docks, possesses a small cabin as terminal. Sibenik has an ongoing intervention for the construction of a building for the new passenger terminal.

The present existing differences are due to the fact that first ports highlight a regular vessel flow (cruise, ferry, hydrofoil), while the latter are essentially characterised by local and seasonal flows (since the structural interventions, Pula is now pushing for cruise development as port of call).

A relevant factor for the travelling is the quality of **welcoming services** offered within the passenger terminal structures (Tab. 1). This assumes even more significance in the case of persons with disability and reduced mobility as such kind of services represent the first approach in case of travel by sea and negative concerns of even existing barriers in the maritime transport system could prevent these passengers from using sea-transport services.

TAB. 1 – WELCOME SERVICES

| | Assistance prior to arrival | Pick-up / drop-off point | Minors accompanied | Help point | Assistance in different languages | Equipped waiting room/area | Waiting area for children | Nursery |
|---------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------|
| Ancona | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | N | N |
| Trieste | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | N | N |
| Venice | Y | Y | N | Y | Y | Y | N | N |
| Bari | Y | N | N | Y | Y | Y | N | Y |
| Sibenik | N | Y | N | N | | | | |
| Umag | Y | Y | N | Y | Y | N | N | N |
| Pula | N | N | N | N | N | N | N | N |
| Bar | Y | Y | N | Y | Y | Y | N | N |
| Responses Y/N | 6/8 | 6/8 | 2/8 | 6/8 | 6/7 | 5/7 | 0/7 | 1/7 |

The majority of responders guarantees in their terminal structures a specific assistance to persons with disability and reduced mobility prior their arrival to terminals (as for info-desk, reservation, etc.); the same for the prospect to have a pick-up/drop-off point that facilitates access to the terminal site. Almost all provide an help point in the terminal structures with a multilanguage offer (excepting for Sibenik and Pula due to their seasonal cruise purpose). All the port responders having physical fixed-structures for passenger terminal provides for

equipped waiting room/area to satisfy the demand of travellers having impairments (disability and reduced mobility), thus implying a sort of physical assistance of qualified personnel. Much less qualitative is the service supplied in case of minors; if non accompanied, only Ancona and Trieste offer solutions to guarantee their sea-travel safety and assistance. None of the ports have put a disposal specific waiting and playground space/area for children, while only Bari presents the service of a nursery for newborns.

It should be pointed out that in Trieste (Trieste terminal Passeggeri - TTP) the services are directly supplied at the terminal by the cruise operator.

Another category of services taken into consideration include the **access services** provided in approaching the travel and more specifically the access to the vessel (Tab. 2). This feature is extremely relevant for people with reduced mobility that find difficult and hard to freely move, especially if not accompanied or if they present the need for assistance for any assistive mobility device.

TAB. 2 – ACCESS SERVICES

| | Lift / elevator / platform | Wheelchair (accompanied) | Facilitated boarding / disemb | Ambulift | Direct access to alongside ship |
|---------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|----------|---------------------------------|
| Ancona | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Trieste | Y | Y | Y | N | Y |
| Venice | Y | Y | Y | N | Y |
| Bari | Y | Y | Y | N | Y |
| Sibenik | N | N | N | N | Y |
| Umag | N | Y | | N | N |
| Pula | N | N | N | N | Y |
| Bar | N | Y | Y | N | Y |
| Responses Y/N | 4/8 | 6/8 | 5/7 | 1/8 | 7/8 |

The Survey shows as only four ports have at their disposal in passenger terminals and areas the equipment (lift, elevator, platform) capable of facilitating the access to vessel for people having impairments. It is worth to note that these ports (Ancona, Trieste, Venice, Bari) the most interested by sea-traffic flows in the whole basin and possess the most developed terminal structures for passenger travel. Some ports even do not have the service of

wheelchair accompaniment as a result of a limited seasonal passenger traffic flow. Most of the ports provide for facilitated solutions for embarking and disembarking to/from vessel, offering a privileged path for persons with disability. Direct access to alongside the ship is normally available (as in case of using ambulance transport services). Special equipment as ambulift (medical lift specifically designed to ensure the most safe and efficient serviceability of disabled passengers on wheelchairs and stretchers to and from the carrier) is present only in the port of Ancona.

There is a wide range of possible **other services** to facilitate, favour and encourage the travel of passengers presenting disability and reduced mobility; in (Tab. 3) the attention has been placed on certain types of demand for specific services, still taking into account that the list is not exhaustive.

TAB. 3 – OTHER SERVICES

| | Specialised medical care | Special meals | Equipped toilets for disability | Baggage handling | Preferential parking | Possibility transfer in transit |
|----------------------|--------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Ancona | Y | N | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Trieste | N | N | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Venice | Y | N | Y | Y | Y | N |
| Bari | N | N | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Sibenik | N | N | N | N | Y | Y |
| Umag | Y | N | N | N | Y | Y |
| Pula | N | N | N | N | N | Y |
| Bar | N | Y | N | Y | Y | N |
| Responses Y/N | 3/8 | 1/8 | 4/8 | 5/8 | 7/8 | 6/8 |

Only three ports (Ancona, Venice, Umag) provide for specialised medical care going beyond the essential first aid service. The reason may be individuated by the fact that all the passenger terminal and areas are placed within (or near) main urban areas, provided for healthcare services and assistance. The passenger terminal of the port of Bar is the single structure that offers special meals to travellers, as is for diabetic, child/baby meals, intolerant and allergic or other personnel needs. As for other services previously described, main ports are the most equipped with specific facilities as toilets for disables, the possibility to preferentially handle

luggage for particular categories of travellers and to ensure, if needed, a transfer in transit (in case of multimodal transport). Surprisingly, Venice does not provide such kind of service. Finally, almost all of the reviewed ports are able to offer a preferential parking for travellers with special needs.

An intriguing issue of the Survey was the problem related to the **presence in passenger terminals of trained staff**. Such question is relevant because it permits to assess the level of capacity and readiness of the port structure management to face with such demand from particular categories of travellers, together with the involvement and cooperation with voluntary pro-social sector organisations (i.e. Red Cross, community-based services, care services for the elderly, sector social/health cooperatives and ngos, etc.) in providing assistance to travellers with disability.

TAB. 4 – PERSONNEL TRAINING

| | Existing trained personnel | Activity of volunteers |
|----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Ancona | Y | Y |
| Trieste | Y | N |
| Venice | Y | N |
| Bari | Y | N |
| Sibenik | N | N |
| Umag | N | N |
| Pula | N | N |
| Bar | Y | N |
| Responses Y/N | 5/8 | 1/8 |

Again, from the Survey (Tab. 4) results emerges as the main ports are the most prepared, available of trained personnel (directly with its own personnel or through third parties thanks to the activity yield by cruise companies' staff) to address challenges dealing with passengers with disability and /or reduced mobility. Nevertheless, only Ancona benefits from the support provided by the activity of local volunteers belonging to social assistance organisations.

Finally, the Survey asked to the respondent of port authorities an assessment that deemed to what extent are requested **particular services to travellers, by separate social categories** of people having impairments and special travelling needs. It was requested to list by relevance (1 most relevant; 4 least relevant) which category evidences a higher demand reflecting priority for its management and service supplying.

TAB. 5 – MOST REQUESTED SERVICES BY (1 most relevant; 4 least relevant):

| | Disabled | Elderly | Unaccompanied minors | Pregnant women |
|---------|----------|---------|----------------------|----------------|
| Ancona | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| Trieste | 1 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| Venice | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 |
| Bari | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 |
| Sibenik | | | | |
| Umag | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Pula | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| Bar | 1 | 2 | 4 | 3 |

The results of the assessment reflect the picture emerged from previous posed questions; there is a greater awareness of the issue by main larger ports (Ancona, Trieste, Venice, Bari, Bar), handling large and regular passenger cruise and ferry/hydrofoil traffic flows, while other ports confirm their minor role, mainly seasonal and local, with negligible or no interest expressed. As for instance Umag, that rate that “(...) is a small port used to embark and disembark passengers for daily trips during the tourist season. There are no specific requirements for passengers with disabilities, of which they take care by agencies that organize trips and the boarding.” (quote from Umag Port’ Survey). Such type of services are mostly requested in the ports of Trieste and Bari (2.0%, respectively 15.0%); the latter is likely affected by the consistent traffic of the ferry lines with Albania and Greece involving migrant flows.

A Preliminary assessment summarizing the data emerged from the survey highlights the substantial difference among ports following their different dimension and role. The offer of welcoming, access and other services to passenger with special needs is more likely qualitative in bigger port terminals that concentrate the maritime passenger traffic flows (both cruise and ferry/hydrofoil) of the entire Adriatic-Ionian area. For the others, the seasonal and local traffic

factors heavily impact on the level of services at disposal, in some case lacking in every kind of service. A relevant issue is the presence of cruise flows as leverage effect; such feature spontaneously drag with it a higher framework quality and range of specific services to passenger with special needs, also affected by the contribution of the cruise organisations, engaged to offer to their client travellers the better possible assistance.

In some case it is possible to read the lack of some typologies of services for persons having impairments and special travelling needs with the location of passenger terminals and areas placed within main urban areas, letting to these to provide for missing services and assistance.

Also the presence of trained experienced staff to deal with persons with disability and reduced mobility is linked to main port passenger terminals, where higher are the traveller flows dynamics with relevant international share, and accordingly a due consideration of the EU community and international legal framework to defend particular social categories' rights. Almost missing is resulting the potential benefit from the support provided by the activity of local volunteers belonging to social assistance organisations, in terms of involvement of the associations of the territory.

Finally, an interpretation of last question posed to the interviewed denotes a consistent lack of sensibility and awareness of the problem seen in its whole. If considered the component of travellers with special needs, it still mainly contemplates the disable persons, misconceiving or undervaluing the needs of other social categories when travelling.

3. Identification of needed interventions

The need to supply equal solutions to maritime passenger transport to all travellers, irrespectively of each particular conditions and disability, can be ensured by the improvement of the accessibility to the services provided. And it is decisive that persons having impairments and special travelling needs can access facilities in the same way as everybody else. The final benefit for such provision can also be intended as an implemented and more qualitative service background for all travel users.

At the same time, demographic changes and social behaviours imply a grow of overall travellers also for the maritime mode of transport, with an implicit increase of passengers with reduced mobility, of elderly (in an ageing society), unaccompanied minors and pregnant women with particular demand of assistance.

To face such relevant challenge, appropriate follow-up actions should be taken, with specific focus on accessibility to port infrastructures and terminal buildings, travellers information and the staff training on disability.

Accessibility to port buildings and infrastructures is a relevant aspect to take into consideration to permit a smooth, safe and secure access and use of maritime passenger transport services by passengers with reduced mobility. The circumstance can be problematic particularly in older port buidlings, where the modernisation needs meet the involvement of different owners (public and port administrations, private operators, etc.) with complex procedures, also ensuring the full respect of the set of measures to enhance the security of ships and port facilities foreseen by the (2004) International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code.

The improvement of access to a port passenger terminal or any embarkation point has to consider the prerequisite for particular features allowing a direct entrance for travellers having impairments and special travelling needs, as are smooth and adequately marked pathways to/from terminal and carriers, facilitating the changing of levels and minimising distances, accessible facilities and reserved parking, safe drop-off and pick-up services, optimising connections with other modes of (public) transport.

In the comprehensive approach, the easily achievable features of accessibility should be addressed first, also defining a plan for the long term accessibility actions.

Travellers information remains a decisive feature of the aim of eliminating barriers hindering the free mobility for passengers having impairments. The information chain starts since the

person with special travelling needs decide to make a travel, and has to be informed about the services he can be supplied with for and during the entire travel cyclus. To reach such goal, to optimise communication channels, involved actors (port and terminal management, other company operators) should resort to reliable personnel, adequately prepared and able to face with passenger with disability and reduced mobility requests to make them fully aware of the access to provided services, by offering them best possible solutions to their travel needs as to approach with their feedbacks.

To correctly and effectively interface with passengers with disability and reduced mobility, the operating personnel need an adequate preparation and expertise. It has to properly understand travellers having impairments and particular demands to be able to respond quickly and appropriately. It is useful to remind that, beside the *frontline customer facing staff* dealing with special passengers, a high level of knowledge of such issues should also be provided to all operators of the port structures (possibly appropriate for each category consistent with their tasks) to get prepared to face similar issues, if necessary. Staff training on disability allows the awareness of disability seen in a global context of equality and social inclusion, fostering full recognition of the people with disability to be fully included into social life.

4. Legal EU framework

The European Union is the only area in the world where citizens are protected by a full set of passenger rights – whether they travel by air, rail, ship, bus and coach.

Europe has experienced a boom in mobility over the last three decades. Since 2001, the Commission set in the **White Paper on Transport** the objective to introduce passenger protection measures to all modes of transport. Community legislation has therefore been introduced for all modes of transport to protect passenger rights and ensure they are not lost in a myriad of national rules.

Starting with the air mean of transport, in recent years EU legislation covered all remaining modes (rail, waterborne, bus and coach), granting specific rights as well for disabled passengers and those with reduced mobility.

Europe's success in securing and upholding passenger rights is one of the resounding achievements of transport policy. The EU is now the first, and only, region in the world where passengers have guaranteed rights across all forms of transport when something goes wrong with their trip.

Thanks to this EU legislation, in order to guarantee a fair and respectful treatment of passengers, the legislator has had the aim to introduce a common set of passenger rights guaranteed by law for the four transport modes. Passengers now have certain entitlements when it comes to information about a journey, reservation, ticket fare, damage to baggage - or for the event of accidents, delays and cancellations, denied boarding, or difficulties with package holidays.

Criteria and conditions are set for possible compensation, re-routing or ticket reimbursement, and assistance – including meals, and accommodation if necessary. The priority is to get travellers to where they want to go – and back home again.

EU passenger rights are adapted to each means of transport. There are some differences to allow the necessary distinctions due to the specific characteristics of each mode and their markets, related to the industries (company size, revenues or number and frequency of routes) and passengers (length, price and conditions of the trip) to ensure proportionality. But in essence, the rights that apply to all types of transport are comparable.

They are based on three key principles: non-discrimination; accurate, timely and accessible information; immediate and proportionate assistance. These principles are the foundation for ten basic rights that form the core of EU passenger rights policy. Which are:

1. Non-discrimination,
2. Access and assistance for disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility,
3. Information,
4. Choice to cancel trips due to disruption,
5. Rerouting or rebooking,
6. Assistance in event of long delay,
7. Compensation,
8. Carrier liability,
9. Easy complaint handling,
10. Effective enforcement of rights (EU law).

In November 2010 was passed a specific law on maritime passenger rights (**Regulation EU No. 1177/2010**) by the European Parliament and the Council, concerning the rights of passengers when travelling by sea and inland waterway. The Regulation applied from 18 December 2012.

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It provides for a minimum set of rights for passengers travelling

- on passenger services where the port of embarkation is situated in a Member State,
- on passenger services operated by Union carriers from a port situated in a third country to a port situated in a Member State,
- on a cruise where the port of embarkation is situated in a Member State.

To a passenger ship which:

- (i) is certified to carry more than 12 passengers;
- (ii) has a crew responsible for the operation of the ship composed of 4 or more persons;
- (iii) is not an historical passenger ship certified to carry up to 36 passengers.

To a maritime journey that is more than 500 metres one way and is not an excursion or sightseeing tour (other than cruises).

It sets out the rights of all passengers, including the disabled and persons with reduced mobility, travelling by sea or inland waterway within the EU. These rights apply to passengers travelling in the EU on large ferries and cruise ships on sea, rivers, lakes or canals. They include:

- reimbursement or rerouting in situations of cancellation or of delay at departure of more than 90 minutes;
- adequate assistance e.g. meals, refreshments and, where necessary, accommodation for up to 3 nights in situations of cancellation or delay at departure of more than 90 minutes;
- partial compensation (of between 25% and 50%) of the ticket price in situations of delay in arrival or cancellation of journeys;
- adequate information on travel arrangements for all passengers before and during their journey, as well as general information about their rights in terminals and on board ships;
- right to non-discriminatory contract conditions in purchasing tickets of waterborne passenger transport services and cruises;
- establishment of a complaint-handling mechanism by carriers and terminal operators;
- establishment of independent national bodies to enforce the rights guaranteed under the regulation, including, where appropriate, the application of penalties.

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Beside the general passenger rights, the Regulation (Chapter II, artt. 7 to 15) foresees a non-discriminatory treatment and specific assistance free of charge for disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility both at port terminals and on board ships, so as to provide them with a right to transport on an equal footing with other passengers, as well as financial compensation for loss or damage of their mobility equipment.

More specifically, it provides for

- a) right to access to transport for disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility without any discrimination. Carriers, travel agents and tour operators may not refuse to accept a reservation, to provide a ticket or to embark persons on the grounds of their disability or reduced mobility. Where it is not possible to carry a disabled person or a person with reduced mobility on board a ship for safety reasons or due to the impossibility of embarkation, travel agents and tour operators have to make all reasonable efforts to propose the person concerned an acceptable alternative transport. Carriers, travel agents or tour operators may not ask disabled persons or

persons with reduced mobility to pay a higher cost for reservations or tickets. Tickets and reservations shall be offered to the disabled persons or persons with reduced mobility under the same conditions as to other passengers.

- b) right to special assistance. Disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility have the right to free of charge assistance by carriers and terminal operators in ports and on board ships, including with embarkation and disembarkation. Disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility have to notify the carrier at the time of reservation or advance purchase of the ticket of their specific needs regarding accommodation, seating, required services or their need to bring medical equipment.
- c) right to compensation for loss of or damage to mobility equipment. Where a carrier or terminal operator has caused loss or damaged of mobility equipment or other specific equipment used by a disabled person or a person with reduced mobility due to his neglect or fault, he has to pay the disabled person or the person with reduced mobility a compensation corresponding to the replacement value of the equipment concerned or, where it is possible to repair that equipment, the costs relating to repairs.

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A specific article (No. 14) of the Regulation indicated that terminal operators should establish disability-related training procedures, including instructions, and ensure that (a) their personnel, including those employed by any other performing party, providing direct assistance to disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility are trained or instructed as described in Annex IV, Parts A and B; (b) their personnel who are otherwise responsible for the reservation and selling of tickets or embarkation and disembarkation, including those employed by any other performing party, are trained or instructed as described in Annex IV, Part A; and (c) the categories of personnel referred to in points (a) and (b) maintain their competences, for example through instructions or refresher training courses when appropriate.

The Regulation Annex IV, disability-related training, including instructions, as referred to in Article 14, sets out the following parts, defining the thematics of interest to be addressed by the training, in terms of awareness and assistance:

A. Disability-awareness training, including instructions, including:

- awareness of and appropriate responses to passengers with physical, sensory (hearing and visual), hidden or learning disabilities, including how to distinguish between the

different abilities of persons whose mobility, orientation or communication may be reduced,

- barriers faced by disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility, including attitudinal, environmental/physical and organisational barriers,
- recognised assistance dogs, including the role and the needs of an assistance dog,
- dealing with unexpected occurrences,
- interpersonal skills and methods of communication with people with hearing impairments, visual impairments or speech impairments and people with a learning disability,
- general awareness of IMO guidelines relating to the Recommendation on the design and operation of passenger ships to respond to elderly and disabled persons' needs.

B. Disability-assistance training, including instructions, including:

- how to help wheelchair users make transfers into and out of a wheelchair,
- skills for providing assistance to disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility travelling with a recognised assistance dog, including the role and the needs of those dogs,
- techniques for escorting passengers with visual impairments and for the handling and carriage of recognised assistance dogs,
- an understanding of the types of equipment which can assist disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility and a knowledge of how to carefully handle such equipment,
- the use of boarding and disembarking assistance equipment used and knowledge of the appropriate boarding and disembarking assistance procedures that safeguard the safety and dignity of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility,
- understanding of the need for reliable and professional assistance. Also awareness of the potential of certain disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility to experience feelings of vulnerability during travel because of their dependence on the assistance provided,
- a knowledge of first aid.

5. Alignment with EUSAIR Strategy

This Feasibility Study is part of the project CAPTAIN, which objectives are in line with those of Pillar 2 “*Connecting the Region*” of the EUSAIR strategy.

The overall objective of Pillar 2 “*Connecting the Region*” is to improve connectivity within the Region and with the rest of Europe in terms of transport and energy networks. This requires thorough coordination of infrastructure works and improved operation of transport and energy systems between the countries in the Region.

The specific objectives for this pillar are:

1. To strengthen maritime safety and security and develop a competitive regional intermodal port system;
2. To develop reliable transport networks and intermodal connections with the hinterland, both for freight and passengers;
3. To achieve a well-interconnected and well-functioning internal energy market supporting the three energy policy objectives of the EU – competitiveness, security of supply and sustainability.

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In particular, this Feasibility Study is draft taking into consideration the integration of ports with hinterlands and transport networks and being therefore in line with one of the three topics of Pillar 2: “*Intermodal connections to hinterland*”, providing for effective solutions to tackle with the increase in the maritime transport of goods, the intermodal connections to hinterlands implementation, the development of sustainable transport schemes linked to local and regional qualitative plans.

The interventions to overcome present criticalities described, support the indicative action described by the EUSAIR action plan concerning the “*Intermodal connections to hinterland*” topic of Pillar 2 referring to the action “*Improving the accessibility of the coastal areas and islands: Coastal area and island accessibility are mostly affected by tourism seasonality and commercial and passenger maritime transport are not sufficiently developed. This needs to be addressed by exploring new coordinated and market-based options, optimising use of freight and passenger routes and involving private and public stakeholders*”.

6. Training Structure

Objective

The aim of the training is to raise the awareness of maritime passenger transport operators in gaining knowledge and understanding the needs of passengers with disability and reduced mobility and providing them the necessary knowledge to respond to their needs appropriately during the trip cycle, complying with the requirements of Annex IV, Part A and Part B. of the Regulation (EU) No. 1177/2010.

Disability training allows participants to acquaintance with disability within the wider context of equality and social inclusion, reflecting the actual personal and social condition of the disabled and acquiring knowledge about the methods of approach and the disabled relationship with the surrounding environment. It encourages learners to identify the changes in personal and organisational behaviour required to ensure equal access to services for passengers having impairments, focusing on the broad range of changes that may be required to ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to the services provided by the organisation. Such changes may include changes to facilities, policies and procedures.

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Who should attend

The training is mainly supplied to the port passenger terminal staff (including management, administrative and technical workforces) and to other operators acting within port area and in a wider context of people's mobility, starting with workers that provide direct assistance to disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility, but also taking into account the different requirement for each staff category of work, so to provide a qualitative and appropriate service to passengers with special needs in all areas of the passenger transport.

To facilitate the operators involvement and participation, the training has been conceived on a daily's basis (approx. 8 hours) comprising two working sessions. The dissemination of the course is further supported by a streaming connection that will allow to other participants unable to physically participate to take part to the sessions via web. In addition, the full registration of the training will be uploaded on the CAPTAIN Project website, where also will be available to be downloaded the support material inherent to the training.

The course contents

The range of topics that may be covered in training include:

The first module providing for background information about

- the context of disability, inclusion and equality,
- challenging stereotypes and assumptions,
- the legal framework – employment and customer service,
- understanding of the need for reliable, adequate and professional assistance.

The second module providing for elements to effectively approach the demand from passengers with special needs (skills-based):

- dealing with passengers with reduced mobility – language, practical skills, types and use of equipment,
- removing barriers in practices, policies and procedures,
- removing barriers in the physical environment,
- removing barriers in communication and adequate information provision.

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The training provided by Venice CFLI (Consorzio Formazione Logistica Intermodale) experts will also deal with following issues and aspects related to the assistance to passenger with disability:

- Reference background: culture and interculture about disability,
- UNESCO: make culture,
- Classification ICIDH: (International Classification of Impairments Disabilities and Handicaps),
- New ICF (International Classification of Functioning) standard,
- ONU convention,
- Physical, spatial and temporal sensation and perception,
- Passengers with motor disability: characteristics, aids, moving,
- Passengers with sensory disability (sight and hearing): characteristics and behavior formalities,
- Passengers with mental disorders: characteristics and behavior formalities,

-
- Dedicated terminology.

7. Annex: Survey template



*Survey on Services for Passengers with special needs in the Port system
of the Adriatic-Ionian area*



Port of

Country

Please provide a Yes/No answer to following questions:

1) Does Your Port Structure have a physical Passenger Terminal (building) for ferry
and/or cruise ?

Yes

No

2) Current dedicated services to passengers with special needs

| | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|
| WELCOME SERVICES | | |
| Special assistance prior arrival to terminal (info-desk, reservation, etc.) | | |
| Pick-up and drop-off point | | |
| Minors accompanied | | |
| Help point | | |
| Assistance in different languages | | |
| Equipped waiting room/area/lounge | | |
| Waiting room/area for children/playground | | |
| Nursery | | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| ACCESS SERVICES | | |
| Lift/elevator/platform | | |
| Wheelchair (accompanied) | | |
| Facilitated boarding/disembarking procedures | | |



The project is co-funded by the European Union, Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance



INFORMEST



CAPTAIN

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Ambulift | | |
| Direct access to alongside ship | | |

| OTHER SERVICES PROVIDED | | |
|--|--|--|
| Specialised medical care/first aid facility | | |
| Special meals | | |
| Equipped toilets for disability | | |
| Baggage handling and facilitated formalities | | |
| Preferential parking for disabled persons | | |
| Possibility of transfer in transit traffic to/from other transport terminals | | |

2

3) On average, indicatively how many passengers benefit from such a specific service?

As (Yearly) percentage of total passenger flows %

4) Please rank which type of passengers mostly request such a specific service (1=highest;

4=lowest)

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Disabled | |
| Elderly | |
| Unaccompanied minors | |
| Pregnant women | |

5) Training for personnel

| | Yes | No |
|--------------------------------------|-----|----|
| Existing trained personnel/operators | | |
| Activity of volunteers | | |

6) Other suggestions

Thank You very much for Your cooperation.

Please mail back the compiled Survey by the end of August.



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