

The entire journey all year round! – A follow-up of the accessibility of the transport system for people with functional disabilities



Foreword

In 2009, the Riksdag decided to approve the overall goal of transport policy to secure transport services that are socio-economically efficient and sustainable in the long term throughout the country. Furthermore, the Riksdag decided to approve a functional goal on accessibility and a consideration goal on health, safety and environment. The specifications of the functional goal mean that the transport system is to be designed so that it can be used by people with functional disabilities. The Committee on Transport and Communications has considered matters relating to public transport for people with functional disabilities on various occasions. The Committee has stressed how important these issues are and maintained that the need for measures to make public transport fit for use by people with functional disabilities is fundamentally a question of democracy. The Committee has also noted that much remains to be done to improve accessibility within the public transport system for people with functional disabilities. In the light of this and as part of the follow-up of the Riksdag's transport policy goals, the Committee on Transport and Communications decided in February 2013 to describe and analyse in closer detail central government initiatives to increase accessibility to public transport, primarily by train, bus, aeroplane and boat, and the results of these measures from a user perspective. The follow-up has primarily focussed on highlighting measures taken to improve accessibility for people with mobility, visual and hearing impairments.

The follow-up has been conducted by the Committee on Taxation's follow-up and evaluation group, comprising the following members of the Riksdag: Lars Tysklind (Lib), Chair, Lars Johansson (SocDem), Jessica Rosencrantz (Mod), Annika Lillemets (Grn), Göran Lindell (Cen), Bengt Berg (Lft) and Annelie Enochson (ChrDem). The background materials for the follow-up have been prepared within the Riksdag Administration by Head of Secretariat Christer Åström and Senior Evaluation Officer Cecilia Forsberg at the Evaluation and Research Secretariat, as well as Committee Clerical Officer Anne Mattila Wass at the Secretariat of the Committee on Transport and Communications.

Work with the follow-up began during the spring of 2013 and was concluded in November 2013 with a presentation in the Committee. The report of the follow-up group has since been published in the Report from the Riksdag series (Report 2013/14:RFR5) and considered in Committee Report 2013/14:TU1, where the Committee on Transport and Communications proposes that the Riksdag approves the Committee's findings. This brochure provides a summary of the findings of the follow-up.

The follow-up group's assessments in brief:

- There are still many obstacles that make travelling more difficult for people with various functional disabilities. The needs and conditions vary greatly depending on the functional disability of the individual passenger. Safety is a central concern when embarking on a journey.
- Measures are taken to increase accessibility, but these efforts are often uncoordinated and much remains to be done.
- It is important that the entire journey works smoothly all year round. It is vital that the issue of accessibility of public transport remains on the agenda.
- There are clear goals and rules for accessibility within the public transport system. However, it is not satisfactory that the goals for when public transport will be accessible are moved forward in time. Clearer signals need to be sent from central government to ensure that the accessibility goals are achieved.
- It is important that priority is given to resources for work with accessibility and that the relevant actors can specify the resources devoted to accessibility, in particular to be able to evaluate the measures taken.
- Improved traffic information and information about accessibility in vehicles is needed at interchange points. It is important to take measures to simplify ticket purchases.

- The financing of accompanying companions on trains and buses should be reviewed in order to bring about a funding model characterised by greater solidarity.
- It is not sufficiently clear who bears responsibility for coordinating measures to make the public transport system accessible for everyone. The roles and responsibilities of various actors need to be clarified, in particular as regards travel by boat. It is important that dialogue between public authorities and organisations for the functionally disabled continues to be developed.
- Knowledge of the results of measures is limited. It is important to follow up and evaluate measures and their impact on travel and how users perceive accessibility in the public transport system. It is also important to introduce better routines for reporting back, for example, on what is and what is not accessible.
- Supervision within this area needs to be strengthened and clarified, and the division of responsibilities between various public authorities needs to be clarified.
- It is important that the Government continues to account for and assess results of central government measures to the Riksdag.
- It would be of value if the Government, on the basis of the problems that have been highlighted in this follow-up, could account for continued measures and results from a user-perspective too.

Introduction

Background, purpose and implementation

The Committee on Transport and Communications has considered matters relating to public transport for people with functional disabilities on various occasions. The Committee has stressed how important these issues are and maintained that the need for measures to make public trans-

port fit for use by persons with functional disabilities is fundamentally a question of democracy. The Committee also notes that much remains to be done in order to improve accessibility in the public transport system for persons with functional disabilities.

In the light of this and as part of the follow-up of the Riksdag's transport policy goals, the Committee on Transport and Communications has decided to describe and analyse in closer detail central government initiatives that have been taken to increase accessibility to public transport, primarily by train, bus, aeroplane and boat, and the results of these measures from a user perspective. Matters relating to special transport services have not been included in the follow-up. The follow-up has primarily focussed on highlighting such measures that have been taken to improve accessibility for persons with mobility, visual and hearing impairments.

The follow-up has been implemented by a follow-up group comprising members of the Riksdag within the Committee. The purpose of the follow-up was to give the Committee a more in-depth knowledge base for use in consideration of future Government bills and motions on the subject. Questions relating to accessibility for persons with functional disabilities concern several ministries, public authorities and other bodies. The follow-up group therefore believes that the follow-up may be useful for both the Committee on Transport and Communications, and for others in continued developments in the field.

Opportunities to travel by public transport

Observations

The follow-up shows that developments regarding accessibility are not clear-cut. Many problems remain for passengers with various forms of functional disability. It has emerged in the follow-up that accessibility varies depending on mode of transport (bus, train, aeroplane or boat) and that changing between different modes of transport is perceived as a weak link.

The follow-up also shows that accessibility varies in different parts of the country and that accessibility in the public transport system is better in urban areas than it is in more sparsely populated areas.

The follow-up shows that the concept of accessibility is not clearly defined and is interpreted differently by different actors. Accessibility varies in relation to different kinds of functional disability too. For persons with functional disabilities, travel requires a considerable amount of planning and that he or she feels confident that the journey will work. The follow-up shows that it is still difficult to get the entire journey to function smoothly, and that this can involve everything from getting to and from the station, vehicles, possibilities for changing between different modes of transport or vehicles at stations and bus stops, to information, the way they are treated and possibilities for purchasing tickets etc.

As a rule, it is easier to travel in an environment one is accustomed to than a new environment. In new environments, compensatory measures are often required, such as assistance and accompaniment for those who cannot see. The type of measures required varies between different modes of transport and depending on the type of disability. A person with, for example, a mobility impairment or serious visual impairment may need some form of support or assistance as it can be difficult to travel alone.

Different bodies are responsible for different parts of the journey. If these do not coordinate their measures, there is a risk that the journey becomes problematic for persons with functional disabilities. The follow-up shows that in many aspects of work to ensure accessibility of the public transport system, there is still no “entire journey perspective”. Parts of the journey may work, but problems arise when the whole journey from A to B does not run smoothly. The weakest link in the entire journey determines how accessible the journey is. In winter, for example, it can be difficult to get to a station or bus stop.

In the follow-up, the importance of conveying passenger security has been emphasised. In the case of journeys by public transport, these often occur in a stressful environment. If a driver is driving a full bus or tram and a wheelchair user wants to board, the situation can feel stressful both for the passenger and the driver. Timetables need to be kept, there will be

fewer stops and less allocated time per bus stop. If a driver is delayed, this may mean that his or her break ends up being shorter.

The obstacles that have been identified prior to journeys are, for example, that it has become more difficult to purchase tickets as the ticket system has become more complicated and information is deficient as regards interchanges between different modes of transport. Difficulties that have been identified in connection with journeys are, for example, that wheelchair lifts, announcements and hearing loops do not work. Many passengers have also pointed out that the lack of information when the unexpected happens also causes problems. Here, it has been stressed that it is important that support and information are provided in the case of disruptions. Loudspeaker announcements are not enough as these can often not be comprehended by people with hearing impairments.

The assessments of the follow-up group

In the light of the findings of the follow-up, the group makes the following assessments as regards opportunities for travelling by public transport:

- There are many obstacles for people with functional disabilities and these obstacles lead to insecurity, as a result of which many people avoid travelling. For many people with functional disabilities it is still not possible to use public transport on the same terms as the rest of the population. The fact that few people with functional disabilities use public means of transport may depend on a lack of accessibility.
- People with functional disabilities are not a homogeneous group. Needs and conditions vary greatly depending on the type of functional disability of the individual passengers. Differences between different people's functional disabilities are great, as are the consequences of the disabilities for the individual. This should be an important point of departure for continued development initiatives.
- People with functional disabilities travel less than the population as a whole. This means that there is a risk of isolation and less participation in society, which is serious.

- Sweden has an ageing population. The number of older passengers is increasing, which in turn means that demands on the accessibility of the transport system will increase in the future.
- It is important to emphasise that both public transport and opportunities for passengers to get from their homes to various means of transport are decisive to making the entire journey go smoothly.
- It is unclear what percentage of the people with functional disabilities can currently use public transport. It is important to continue to keep the question of accessibility of the public transport system alive, and that accessibility for people with different functional disabilities is taken into account in social planning in a natural way. It is also important that the accessibility perspective is taken into account more clearly in various processes, for example, in policy documents and when planning and implementing various transport projects.
- Better information about accessibility both of vehicles and at stations, bus stops, terminals etc. is needed, and it is important to clarify who bears responsibility for collecting and disseminating such information. It is important that traffic information is perceived as good by all passengers and, in particular, that it is provided in a way that is accessible for passengers with different kinds of functional disability.
- There are major problems with procedures for purchasing tickets today. It is very important to work to simplify ticket purchase procedures for all passengers, in particular for people with functional disabilities.

Goals, rules and resources

Observations

The Riksdag has decided that the goal is that the transport system should be designed in a way that makes it fit for use for people with functional disabilities. Furthermore, the Riksdag has decided on goals for functional disability policy. In connection with the presentation of the Government's strategy for functional disability policy in 2011, the Swedish Transport

Agency, the Swedish Transport Administration and the Swedish Maritime Administration were given the assignment to work in accordance with three sub-goals during the period 2011-2016.

For many years now, the Government has said that accessibility is to increase. In order to achieve this, there are various forms of steering, such as EU regulations, national legislation, goals, demands on public authorities and economic instruments. However, despite regulations, goals and investments for increased accessibility, the follow-up shows that there is still no holistic perspective that focusses on accessibility issues. At the national level there is no public authority with overall responsibility.

In the follow-up, several actors have maintained that steering is weak and ill-defined. The Riksdag's goal of an accessible public transport system for people with functional disabilities by 2010 was not achieved. The follow-up shows that this has not led to any reaction from central government in the form of clear signals to the public authorities to intensify measures.

The public authorities that work with transport issues have been assigned by the Government to define a priority public transport network. The follow-up shows that the goals for the percentage of railway stations and bus stops that are to be adapted has been changed over time. When it was clear that the original goal of an accessible public transport system would not be reached by 2010, the goal was changed to approximately 80 per cent of the stations and interchange points being adapted by 2010. The goals have since been changed again. The new goal is that 50 per cent of all stations and 40 per cent of all bus stops are to be completely adapted by 2016. All stations and bus stops are to be completely adapted by 2021. By 2012, 37 per cent of all stations and 30 per cent of all bus stops in the priority network had been adapted. As regards boat terminals and landing-stages in the priority public transport network, the follow-up shows that there is currently a lack of comprehensive information about the status of interchange points. In the case of air travel, the follow-up shows that all Swedish airports meet the EU's accessibility standards. However, it can be noted that it is not certain that there is a functioning network of other public transport connecting to the airport.

There are many different rules drawn up by different actors. In the follow-up, it has among other things been stated that the EU's rules on passengers' rights have been important and have helped to speed up work with accessibility issues. As the EU rules set out specific requirements, they have helped to promote accessibility work and have had a positive impact. The EU's rules are divided according to mode of transport, while Swedish regulations apply across all types of transport. The EU's rules have come into force at different times for different modes of transport, which is why the requirements vary for trains, buses, aeroplanes and boats.

The follow-up shows that there are several examples of a lack of clarity in the rules, for example, how terms such as "station manager" (stationsförvaltare) and "fully accessible interchange points" are to be interpreted. There is no authority that feels responsible for producing national definitions.

In the follow-up, examples have emerged of regulations contradicting each other. One such example is security-based building regulations for vessels that, at the same time, obstruct accessibility.

Another example that has been highlighted is that regulations often stipulate adaptations to accessibility in the case of extensive reconstruction or acquisition of new vehicles, but that corresponding requirements are not stipulated with regard to existing vehicles.

The Public Transport Act stipulates that the regional transport supply programmes are to contain an account of time-defined goals and measures. The follow-ups that have been carried out of the transport supply programmes show that accounts of accessibility vary in the different regional programmes.

There are no national guidelines regarding work to achieve an accessible transport system. The follow-up shows that different actors in different regions do things differently. This means, for example, that bus stops and guidance systems can be designed in different ways in different municipalities and regions. It is difficult for municipalities to draw up their own standards.

In public procurement of public transport, demands are made regarding accessibility. However, different regional public transport authorities

have different demands regarding accessibility. In the follow-up it has been maintained that contractors sometimes feel that there are tougher demands in some public procurement contracts and that these demands are sometimes more stringent than set out in the regulations.

Under the new Public Transport Act, transport companies can freely establish commercial transport. The follow-up shows that the demands regarding accessibility and serviceability that can be made on the deregulated public transport market are perceived as unclear. Neither are there the same demands for accessibility as there are in the case of transport services procured by the regional public transport authorities. In the follow-up, examples of problems with regard to commercial transport that is not accessible have been highlighted.

No specific central government funding has been earmarked for the purpose of accessibility measures. Central government funding to increase accessibility occurs within the framework of the budget determined in the national plans for the transport system and the appropriations received by the Swedish Transport Administration. Prioritisation of resources for various measures is based on the national plans decided by the Government. Various actors say that these do not give any clear signals regarding the prioritisation of accessibility of the public transport system for people with functional disabilities. Furthermore, various actors have pointed out the need for a special pot of money to separate accessibility from, among other things, traffic safety and environment. Earlier there were funds that were earmarked for accessibility measures, and this also led to a relatively high number of measures.

In the follow-up, it has been stated that the amount of resources invested in accessibility measures is a matter of priority, where the costs of accessibility measures must be weighed up against other types of measures. During discussions, it can be difficult to decide to prioritise accessibility in relation to other important areas. It has also been stated in the follow-up that central government funding has had a positive impact on accessibility work.

The follow-up shows that there is no information about the volume of resources invested in accessibility measures within the field of transport. No authority or other actor who has been contacted in connection with

the follow-up has been able to provide information about this. Several actors say that it is very difficult to say how much money has been invested in measures to improve the accessibility of the transport system for people with functional disabilities. It is often not possible to account for these costs separately as they are part of various projects of the Swedish Transport Agency and other bodies.

In the follow-up it has been maintained that a relevant question to ask as regards resources for better accessibility is how much is saved rather than how much accessibility measures cost. Several people have pointed out that the costs of making existing public transport accessible by adapting it is greater than if the transport had been constructed in an accessible way from the start, as the additional costs are not estimated to be as great. Some parts of the sector are sceptical to the demands that everything should be accessible as it is regarded as cost-intensive. Some transport companies also question why such sizeable resources should be invested in passengers who do not use public transport.

As regards internal management within the Swedish Transport Agency, the follow-up shows that the intention is to use the same model for accessibility measures as for road and rail traffic-safety measures, that is, to develop indicators and to hold results conferences in order to follow up the results.

The assessments of the follow-up group

In the light of the findings of the follow-up, the group makes the following assessments as regards the management of measures:

- There are clear goals and rules for accessibility within the public transport system. - However, clearer signals need to be sent to the public authorities in order to ensure that the accessibility goals are achieved.
- Work with the priority network has been slower than originally planned. Even if implementation of measures has continued after 2010, developments have been slow, especially in the central government area. It is not satisfactory that the goals for when public transport will be accessible are constantly moved forward in time.

- The lack of cohesive information at the national level about the level of resources invested in accessibility of the transport system for people with functional disabilities means that it is difficult to evaluate the measures that are taken.
- It is important to find national standards and minimise development costs. There are a large number of rules, guidelines and various solutions for how, for example, bus stops can be designed, and at the same time, there is no common standard. As there is no national standard, there is a risk that it will be the suppliers' various solutions that are implemented instead.
- The socio-economic costs may be considerable if demands vary from region to region.
- Improvements to the accessibility of the transport system entail costs, and when it comes to measures that have priority and are implemented they must, as in other areas, be weighed up in relation to the benefits they bring, so that the resources that are invested are used to give the greatest benefits to travellers. It is important to note that improved accessibility can often involve greater comfort for people without functional disabilities, but for people with functional disabilities, it can be of decisive importance for whether or not they can use public transport. Increased accessibility benefits all travellers.
- It is unfortunate that there are different regulations for different modes of transport as this makes it more difficult for travellers.
- It is unsatisfactory that there are still no opportunities to impose sanctions in the case of violations of the regulations.
- It is positive if development measures continue and are intensified in order to improve accessibility, and that these efforts follow the example of measures in the transport safety area. The work already done as part of “zero-vision measures” has, among other things, involved developing indicators and holding results conferences in order to follow up results. This has highlighted transport safety and has generated many positive results. These experiences can serve as an example for more forceful

efforts to bring about improvements as regards accessibility in the transport system.

Implemented measures and their results

Observations

The Committee on Transport and Communications' follow-up shows that both central government and other actors have carried out measures that have contributed to successively improving the accessibility of the transport system for people with impaired hearing, vision and mobility. On the whole, accessibility has increased with, for example, more accessibility-adapted interchange points, more accessible vehicles and better information. At the same time, the follow-up shows that knowledge about the results of the measures is limited. The follow-up shows that, on the whole, air travel is the mode of transport that has come the furthest as regards accessibility adaptation.

Furthermore, the follow-up shows that levels of ambition and understanding are now greater as regards functional disability and transport. Even if developments are moving in the right direction as regards accessibility adaptation, there are different views regarding whether volumes of measures are low or high.

The transport sector is very complex, with different regulations, modes of transport, actors with various roles and responsibilities, different degrees of regionalisation and privatisation etc. By means of measures, central government can create conditions for greater accessibility, but at the same time it is necessary that the sector and other actors take measures and take into account passengers' needs for accessibility in order for the entire journey to function smoothly.

Measures are continuously taken to make more vehicles accessible for people with functional disabilities. This applies both to procurement of new vehicles and to adaptation of older vehicles. In addition are the measures that are taken to make bus stops, stations and terminals accessible. Several actors have stressed that measures should not be based on special solutions but on providing improvements both for people with functional

disabilities and for other passengers. An example is the low-level access for all passengers.

The follow-up also shows that there is a lot that can be improved in terms of operation and maintenance. This includes maintenance of measures that have already been taken and snow-clearance.

For reasons of cost, there is a general desire to try to persuade travellers to use public transport rather than special transport services. Examples of this work are given in the follow up. At the same time, surveys show that many of those who have access to special transport services want to continue with this rather than travel by public transport. Several actors say that it is worthwhile trying to get more people to travel by accessible public transport instead of by special transport services. Accessibility in the public transport system leads to reduced costs for special transport services, among other things, as use of special transport services can then start later for older public transport users. Several actors say that, at the same time, it is important that there is a link between special transport services and public transport.

It has also been stated in the follow up that the focus as regards accessibility measures has often been on technical solutions, such as ramps and guidance systems. A number of the actors who have been interviewed stress, however, that accessibility is about many more aspects such as access to information, personal service and the importance of the attitudes and knowledge of staff in the transport sector. Many different examples of a greater focus on improving work with these issues have emerged in connection with the follow-up. For example, several transport companies offer training regarding functional disabilities and this includes such issues as attitudes.

The follow-up shows that accompaniment services are perceived to work well, especially in connection with air travel. Improvements have been made in accompaniment services, among other things with regard to coordination. At the same time, there are still problems within the various modes of transport, for example, it is not clear for passengers when responsibility for accompaniment is transferred from one actor to another, which can create insecurity for travellers.

Accompaniment services are not marketed, which has meant that many passengers do not know that they are available. As regards the funding of assistance and accompaniment services, this varies among different modes of transport. For accompaniment in connection with train services, for example, the rail operator is debited for accompaniment. In addition, extra costs arise for the train operators in connection with traffic disruptions for the minutes that the companion has to wait in the case of a delay. Within the rail sector, the transport companies regard the accompaniment services as costly. The station manager manages and procures accompaniment services, while the rail operator pays for accompaniment. The rail operators are dissatisfied with not being able to influence costs. The funding of accompaniment in connection with rail services means that passengers with functional disabilities risk being pointed out as expensive, and that the current funding system does not create incentives for companies to attract customers needing accompaniment. Several of the interviewees have therefore urged for a more general funding system which is not linked to individual passengers.

In the air traffic sector, another funding system is applied, according to which costs for assistance and accompaniment are debited via the general passenger charge that all airlines pay for all their passengers at the airport. Representatives of the air traffic sector are satisfied with this system.

The assessments of the follow-up group

In the light of the findings of the follow-up, the group makes the following assessments as regards measures that have been taken and their results.

- Many measures still need to be taken to improve accessibility of the public transport system for people with functional disabilities. There are still significant obstacles when it comes to travelling by public transport, for example, as regards getting to and from bus stops and stations in the winter.
- Throughout Sweden, many different measures are being taken to increase accessibility, but these efforts are largely uncoordinated.

- It is crucial that functional disabilities are highlighted when continued measures are taken.
- It is important that resources for accessibility measures are given priority within the framework decided by the Riksdag.
- Accessibility is good for everyone, and adaptations that benefit everyone pay as all passengers benefit from the measures that are taken to improve accessibility. This means that accessibility should not be increased by means of special solutions, but that public transport should be designed so that everyone can use it, with or without functional disabilities.
- Complications sometimes arise, for example, that a specific measure is perceived as negative by other passengers or by the driver. One example is that buses with low floors are not perceived as positive by all passengers in rural traffic as they are less comfortable. This is also negative for the driver's working environment.
- It is positive that training, for example, in attitudes, is organised for staff at transport companies.
- It is important that accompaniment services are organised and that passengers can rely on them.
- The system for funding of accompaniment services on trains and buses should be reviewed, with the aim of finding funding models based on solidarity, such as that used in air traffic.

Coordination and cooperation

Observations

The organisational structure is different in Sweden compared to other EU countries. In Sweden, responsibility today is distributed among many different bodies. There are various central, regional and local authorities. In addition, there are different bodies for transport, tracks, roads, bus stops, stations, etc., which makes travel more complex. The follow-up shows that this means that it is difficult to apply the EU regulatory framework.

The relationship between different actors is sometimes considered to be unclear and there is currently no clear overview as regards the division of responsibilities between various authorities and other actors. For the actors concerned too it is sometimes difficult to know who is responsible, for example, for matters relating to accessibility and functional disabilities.

Major changes have been made to the structure of the public authorities within the transport sector in recent years. The concept of sectoral authorities has been abolished and replaced with the concept “strategic authority”. The follow-up shows that the authorities partly have unclear roles in relation to each other and that there is also a lack of clarity as regards their areas of responsibility. Both functional disability organisations and other bodies have stated that the central government authorities are not perceived as sufficiently proactive and that they need to show a greater commitment to accessibility issues.

One example of this is that central government measures to increase accessibility have come to a halt in the shipping sector, at the same time as it is unclear what central government authority is responsible for promoting work to enhance accessibility. The regional public transport authorities are new actors, which work in different ways. It has been stated in connection with the follow up that the situation whereby responsibility for accessibility in the public transport system is unclear and divided means that “everyone’s responsibility is no one’s responsibility”. Several actors say that it is difficult to understand the thinking behind the system and that there is a lack of clarity regarding roles. At the local and regional levels, administrative officers working with accessibility issues feel that there is a lack of clarity on the part of the central transport authorities.

In the follow-up it has emerged that there is also an unclear division of responsibilities at the operative, local level, for example, regarding who is responsible for a lift at a station. There is no simple solution for how this should work; there are different solutions in different municipalities and for different modes of transport.

The follow-up has also shown that there is often good cooperation between the public authorities and functional disability organisations. It is common for the functional disability organisations to be part of various types of disability councils where accessibility issues are discussed. The

organisations also stress how important it is that the councils are afforded higher status than they are today.

The assessments of the follow-up group

In the light of the findings of the follow-up, the group makes the following assessments as regards coordination and cooperation:

- It is still not sufficiently clear who is responsible for coordinating accessibility of the public transport system, and the lack of clarity regarding the division of responsibility makes the system vulnerable. It is important to clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of the bodies concerned in order to ensure that the entire journey goes smoothly. It is also important that the potential within the transport authorities' organisation is used. It is important that the various actors work together so that the interchanges between different parts of a journey function smoothly. These are issues that should be highlighted in continued development efforts.
- It is important that it is clear what public authority is responsible for accessibility measures concerning transport by boat.
- A survey is needed to establish who the relevant actors actually are and what they should do.
- It is important that the responsible authorities continue to develop their dialogue with functional disability organisations and it is essential to make use of experiences learned.
- It should be possible to develop supportive measures within the Swedish Transport Administration and to raise the level of priority in order to meet the needs of the regional public transport authorities.

Follow-up, evaluation and the dissemination of experience

Observations

There are several different authorities that conduct follow-ups within this area. Within the transport sector, Transport Analysis is the agency

with overall responsibility for evaluating and presenting the impact of measures taken on the basis of transport policy goals. Handisam is a government agency with responsibility for developing a cohesive system for follow-up and analysis of developments in functional disability policy. The Swedish Transport Administration, the Swedish Transport Agency and the Swedish Maritime Administration are to report annually to the Government on the implementation of the interim goals on the basis of the functional disability strategy.

The follow-up shows that despite the follow-up measures that are being taken, there is still very little information about how various measures affect travel for people with various functional disabilities and how these passengers perceive the accessibility of the transport system. In the follow-up, it has emerged that it is difficult to account for how different measures affect travel for people with functional disabilities. At present, knowledge is limited as regards how good different measures are and their actual impact on passengers with various functional disabilities. The follow-up also shows that better knowledge is needed of how people with functional disabilities perceive travel by public transport and how this perception has developed over time.

One of the Swedish Transport Agency's main tasks is to supervise the transport sector in accordance with the regulations that apply to each respective area. This includes supervising the regional transport supply programmes that the regional transport authorities are to produce.

The Swedish Transport Agency has maintained that this supervision is only guided by laws and ordinances and that there are hardly any clear supervisory assignments as regards demands for accessibility for people with functional disabilities. With regard to supervision of passengers' rights in accordance with EU regulations, responsibility is divided between the Swedish Transport Agency and the Swedish Consumer Agency. For railways, for example, this means that the Swedish Transport Agency is responsible for supervision of regulations of a technical nature, while the Swedish Consumer Agency is responsible for regulations of a consumer-rights nature. The functional disability organisations have maintained that both these agencies primarily have legal competence, rather than specialist subject competence as regards transport and accessibility.

According to the disability organisations, this means that it is difficult for the supervisory agencies to make objective assessments and that their supervision is therefore perceived as weak.

The assessments of the follow-up group

In the light of the findings of the follow-up, the group makes the following assessments as regards follow-up, evaluation and supervision.

- Knowledge of the effects of measures is limited. The agencies' continued follow-up work needs to focus on improving and providing clearer reports regarding what is, and what is not, accessibility. There is a need for better and more systematic follow-up of measures that have been implemented and their results as regards providing conditions for people with functional disabilities to be able to carry out the entire journey using public transport. A more user-oriented perspective could be introduced to follow-up work if the authorities were to involve the functional disability organisations and, more systematically, take into account their experience when follow-ups are carried out.
- Supervision within this area needs to be strengthened. It is important that passengers know which supervisory authority is responsible for supervising what. Therefore it is necessary to clarify the division of roles. This is an issue that needs to be examined further.

The Government's reports to the Riksdag

Observations

The Government states in this year's statement of operations to the Riksdag that the difference in mobility between people with functional disabilities and others has reduced in recent years and that differences regarding travel by public transport are also decreasing. The Government further states that, during 2012, the Swedish Transport Administration continued to adapt bus stops and stations to people with special needs, but at a slower rate than in 2011, and that the share of vehicles in the public transport system that have been adapted to people with functional disabilities has

increased in recent years. The overall assessment from the Government was that the trend was positive.

The assessments of the follow-up group

In the light of the findings of the follow-up, the group makes the following assessments as regards reports from the Government to the Riksdag.

- It is important that the Government's annual statements of operations to the Riksdag continue to present and assess the results achieved through central government measures.
- It would be of value if the Government, on the basis of the problems that have been highlighted in this follow-up, could account for continued measures and results from a user-perspective too.

Follow-ups from the Committee on Transport and Communications

Thematic follow-ups

Supervision of the commercial carriage of goods by road – A follow-up (Report 2011/12:RFR8)

The Pump Act - follow-up of the Act on the Obligation to Supply Renewable Fuels (Report 2009/10:RFR7)

Follow-up of how Hurricane Gudrun was dealt with in the field of transport and communications (Report 2007/08:RFR5)

Follow-up by the Committee on Transport and Communications on the removal of vehicles (Report from the Riksdag 2006/07:RFR3)

A follow-up of the implementation of the system of protection against gross crimes of violence against shipping (Report 2005/06:RFR7)

Transport research in a changing world (Report 2004/05: RFR1) Planning of roads and railways - a follow-up and evaluation study (Report 2003/04:URD4)

Ongoing follow-ups

Follow-up of the Government's statement of operations for expenditure area 22 Communications (presented annually, most recently in Report 2013/14:TU1)

How to order copies of reports

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