

## **EU Mobility card project – Disability card**

### *Preliminary survey – results*

As previously stated, the objective of the Project, in accordance with European guidelines, is to facilitate access for persons with disabilities to the transport system and to proposals and offers of a cultural, sporting and recreational nature. All this in a homogeneous manner, throughout the national territory and in co-ordination with similar European initiatives.

Over the decades, both FISH (project founder) and FAND (project partner) have, albeit in a non-systematic way, collected lots of information and gained experience concerning the facilities and access methods reserved for persons with disabilities. This knowledge not only concerns areas more strictly related to the project, but also the criteria and methods adopted to access other benefits, in particular those of a fiscal and tax nature.

The construction of a structured and informal monitoring process focuses on three logical questions:

- What is the benefit?
- Who is entitled to that benefit?
- How do I obtain the benefit?

We use the generic term benefit to refer to tariff concessions or discounts, but also support and assistance in accessing certain opportunities. On this information both FAND and FISH, together with a number of information desk providers, have over the years created and reviewed their activities of dissemination, information and support to citizens, often finding differences, bureaucratic complications, poor awareness of rights and opportunities for profitability in everyday experiences.

As stated, this consolidated wealth of experience is broad but not sufficiently structured to guarantee solidity to the project in question, also in terms of methodology. Thus, the effort made in the preparatory phase of research was twofold:

- To gather significant data and analyse it (qualitative objective);
- To elaborate a series of reference indicators in order to construct some operative proposals (instrumental objective).

Therefore, the staff placed particular onus on the definition of blocks of items, with the intent to understand and describe the routes and conditions of access to specific benefits, to gauge a hypothetical standard route and to describe the types of benefit.

Maximum synthesis of each item was intentionally requested in order not to further enhance minute differences, of little interest when highlighting a general perspective. For example, if access to a benefit is based on income limits, the survey did not collect information on the thresholds or amounts, considering the recurrence of the income limit as already exhaustive.

The creators of this survey have not overlooked the weighting of the impact value of individual cases. It is clear that, for example, the separate survey on the Emilia Romagna Region in terms of public transport affects a number of territories and citizens much higher than those who annually visit the Pinacoteca di Brera, the subject of another separate survey.

However, at this stage even this weighting is marginal as we intend to compare models and paths that, at least from a logical point of view, have equal qualitative dignity.

We will see the items surveyed in blocks. Not for reasons of methodological transparency, but in order to explain the areas that could be central in the subsequent project process.

### **General personal data**

Data relating to the name of an institution and its headquarters, indicating region and the municipality, is collected. This is not to be confused with the territorial area of intervention.

An initial classical type distinction is made on the institution: public; public / private participatory companies; private.

Public bodies include Regions and Municipalities. Participatory companies include Trenitalia, for example.

On the other hand, private bodies represent a much more varied audience: private transport companies (relatively few compared to the participatory ones), tour operators, sports clubs and museum corporations, parks, concerts, etc.

### **Territory**

A specific group of items aims to define the territory in which the benefit of the survey is in force: National, Regional, Supraregional, Local, Structure or structures or single place /space or event. The last item is related in particular to museums, stadiums, theatres, concert events and shows of various kinds. This allows us to compare the different requirement settings and paths for each area together in combination with the block of items that follows.

### **Field of benefit**

In this case, the survey differentiates the area to which the benefit relates, keeping in mind the objectives of projects favouring mobility, culture and sport.

The first block of items is dedicated to mobility: urban transport; urban and suburban transport; rail transport; air transport and naval transport.

We decided to keep both the terms “urban” and “urban and suburban” despite the almost absolute, but not total, pre-eminence of the second type.

The second block of two items is dedicated to culture: museum structures or other cultural heritage; cultural events. “Cultural heritage” includes archaeological sites and areas, as well as structures that are not strictly museums, etc.

Items related to sport included sports facilities (where you can play sports) and sports events (matches, championships, competitions, etc..).

The last block highlights leisure activities: musical events or shows; amusement parks or theme parks; parks and nature trails; tours, trips and excursions.

### **Additional concessions and benefits**

The two central blocks aim to confine the borders of tariff subsidies to understand if they are available, whether they are reductions or exemptions, and whether these formulas directly concern the disabled person, his/her companion or both. The choice obviously reflects a different approach and attitude, even if this is a consideration to develop after the survey.

Following this, we focused on the activation of additional benefits, ie supports (facilitators) for the use of a service, an event, an opportunity. These elements are not negligible, also for their function of reasonable compromise, which potentially triggers other system reflections.

We asked if the following were available: reservations; assistance; sign language interpreting service; aids or mobility support products; aids or guidance support products (for the blind or

partially sighted); aids or support products for understanding (eg audio / video guides, apps) or others.

The “none” answer has also been expressly provided where deemed significant.

### **Limitations**

This group of items was created to draw up the main limitations of the bodily functions and structures considered for granting benefits. We have opted for a language that is not strictly compliant with the ICF codification to avoid misunderstandings and for greater continuity with the “classifier” systems still in use.

Therefore we have: motor disability with impediment or reduction of walking; motor disability regardless of walking limitation; visual disability; intellectual or relational disability; deafness. Naturally, the field is multiple choice. Further items not strictly related to the limitations of bodily functions and structures have been added, as it is known that in some cases there are additional limiting conditions, namely: income limits; registry limits; residence limits.

### **Required documentation**

The last block of items is the one that has led to greater reflection and attention aimed at grouping the cases as much as possible. Experience in this field shows us that in some cases (for example some concession on transport fares) a varied articulation of conditions and status is required. At the same time, the Italian legislation on the “status” of disabling conditions is greatly fragmented and differentiated due to etiopathogenesis, commissions responsible for ascertaining invalidating states and by type of minority. This situation, without anticipating conclusions, will also influence the practical and operational proposals regarding the ownership of a future disability card.

Therefore, a restricted but well thought out range of documentation likely to be requested by benefit granting bodies has been forecasted. These are an invalidity, disability or inability report, etc. with specific thresholds (percentages), a disabled sticker (for circulation or parking); self-certification (consider, for example, at the airport), at the discretion of the operators; other documentation. Again the fields are multiple choice.

The item “no documentation” has also been expressly provided.

The survey team took information directly from institutions, in some cases using documentation or deliberations already available on the network, or rather already prepared in the form of publicity material for the citizen. All the surveyors involved shared the aims and objectives of the research and of each single question in order to guarantee the maximum homogeneity of the answers.

### *Early results of the survey*

### **The sample**

The survey was conducted from May 17 to June 25, 2016. For practical reasons, the survey will continue further accentuating the focus on local transport, even if the first survey reveals a sufficiently consolidated and homogeneous itinerary model. Criteria and rules are usually adopted through regional decisions that affect all urban and suburban public transport companies of reference in the territory. This makes it unnecessary to carry out, for research purposes detection on any given urban / suburban transport company that must comply with those decisions.

A total of 218 entities have been mapped out, including public institutions and private

organizations, distributed throughout the national territory. The lion's share is in the North-West (31.7%) followed by the centre (27.5%). The regions most involved are Lazio (with 34 entities involved) and Lombardy (with 33).

In 61.9% of cases, these are private entities and structures: museums, historical monuments, cinemas, theatres, sports clubs, stadiums and amusement parks. In 34.9%, public bodies and structures were surveyed. These included institutions, museums, historical monuments and archaeological sites. The remaining 3.2% regard public and private partnerships, such as Trenitalia or the Genoa Aquarium. By and large, the administration area of the institutions analysed regards culture (48.2% of cases) and Leisure (40.4%). So the main theme is benefits for persons with disabilities in relation to access to museums or other cultural heritage sites (46.8%) and to the attending musical events or shows (36.7%). Next is sport with 9.6% of the entities that manage sports facilities and events.

We must not be misled by these figures, however. Despite the fact that the number of institutions analysed within the sphere of mobility plays a minor role in this survey, in contrast with reference to potentially involved users, it has a decidedly more significant impact. Crossing the fields of management of the entities involved with the territorial scope of the recognised benefits, we can see that all the entities within the areas of Culture, Sport and leisure have a range of action closely linked to the place / event / service they manage. With reference to the Mobility sector, the benefits granted by the related bodies have a national impact (e.g. Trenitalia) or a regional one (affecting dozens of participatory transport companies), involving a number of persons with disabilities undoubtedly more substantial.

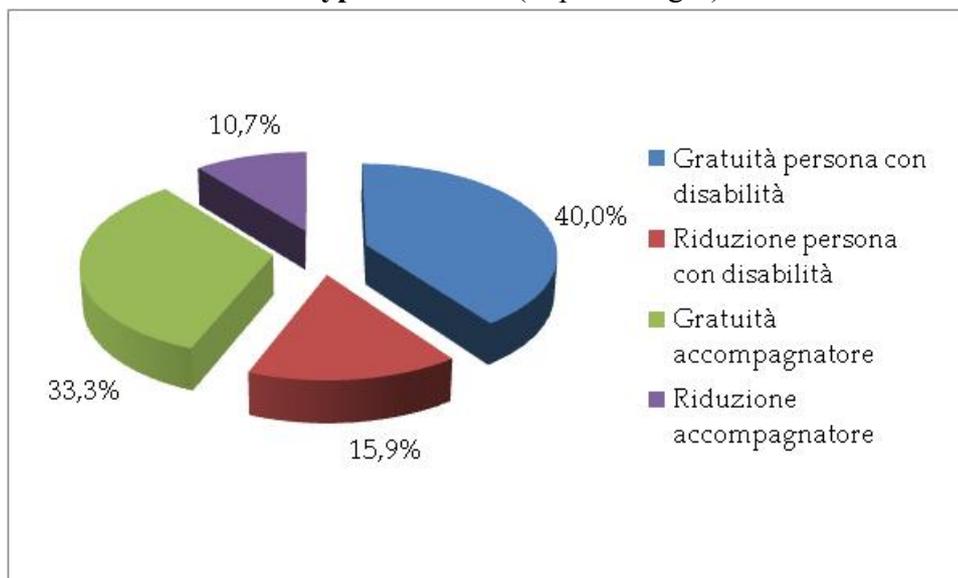
### **The benefits**

As previously mentioned, the type of benefits granted have been broken down into tariff concessions and additional services of a non-monetary nature, i.e. support for accessibility and use of a structure, a place, a show, a sporting event or a service aimed at the community. All of the entities analysed envisage some form of concession on the price of a ticket or on the cost of a service provided. Over 70% of the benefits foreseen relate to free access for the disabled person (by 161 bodies) and/or for his/her companion (by 134 institutions). In the minor number of cases (15.9% and 10.7% respectively), the benefits refer to reductions in the price charged to the person (by 64 entities) and / or to the accompanying person (by 43 entities ).

Usually the economic benefits concern both the person with disability and his or her companion at the same time, but there are 5 institutions that do not provide free or reduced access for the disabled person, but only for the companion, and 45 institutions that do not include concessions for the latter. Finally, there are 16 bodies in which free and reduced formulas are co-present, depending on the case, or for the same person with disabilities (for example on the basis of different degrees of disability) or for his companion.

At the heart of the choice to apply concessions solely to the companion (for example, Trenitalia) is the consideration that this represents an additional cost strictly necessary to the person with the disability. Thus it is an expense absorbed by the corporation.

### Tariff concessions for type of benefit (in percentages)



*40.0% Free for person with disability*

*15.9% Concessions for person with disability*

*33.3 Free for companion*

*10.7% Concessions for companion*

### Additional services

With reference to additional services, (support, aids and facilitators provided to guarantee equal access and use opportunities for persons with disabilities), compared with the 37 entities that do not provide such benefits, 181 provide for one or more. Those most frequently present are the reservation service (31.4%) for the person and / or his companion followed by aids and products to support mobility (29.4%), such as fixed or mobile platforms, electric or manual wheelchairs, stairlifts, lifts designed to make spaces or services more accessible.

On the other end of the spectrum, very low percentages (3.2%) are recorded on the presence of interpreters for the deaf in sign language (LIS).

Despite this, among the aids or support products for comprehension, we also find video guides in LIS; while only two of the institutions analysed provide subtitling: a cinema for watching movies and a museum for the use of its relative video guide.

For blind or visually impaired persons, in some cases (7.1%), guidance aids and supports are provided, such as tactile maps, embossed signage and Braille texts, but in some cases, there are guided tours for persons with visual disabilities or tactile trails within museums or other cultural heritage sights.

There are rarely additional services for overcoming obstacles and barriers encountered by persons with mental, intellectual and relational disabilities: in one case, there is a guide with “simplified language”, in another of specific museum trails and workshops and in another, a classification of attractions based on the feelings and emotions that they are able to arouse.

The survey shows that in terms of improving the usability of services, good practices undoubtedly exist, but are very rare.

### **Additional services provided by type of benefit (absolute values and percentages)**

<b>Additional services</b>	<b>value</b>	<b>%</b>
Seat reservation	97	31,4
Assistance	19	6,1
Sign language interpretation	10	3,2
Mobility aids and products	91	29,4
Orientation aids and products	22	7,1
Comprehension aids and products	32	10,4
Other	38	12,3
<b>Total</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>100,0</b>

### **Functional limitations and concessions**

Now we come to one of the most relevant aspects for the purpose of the Disability Card Project: Which limitations in bodily structures and functions are the different benefits addressed to?

77.1% of institutions considered recognise benefits to persons with disabilities regardless of the type of limitations in bodily structures and functions. The remaining 22.9% only grant benefits in relation to some types of disability. Motor and visual limitations are those that are most frequently associated with concessions and services provided. While those that receive comparatively less attention are intellectual and relational disabilities.

### **Limitations in bodily structures and functions providing access to benefits (absolute values and percentages)**

<b>Limitations</b>	<b>v.a.</b>	<b>%</b>
Motor disability with walking restriction	216	99,1
Motor disability without walking restriction	199	91,3
Visual impairment	208	95,4
Intellectual or relational disability	181	83,0
Deafness	195	89,4
<b>TOTAL ENTITIES SURVEYED</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>100,0</b>

Beyond the consideration of functional and body structure limitations, the survey also added “residence” and “income limits” as additional items. The survey also confirms how these two restrictive elements of benefits, already known to those who carried out the research, almost exclusively concern the granting of seasonal passes or tickets at discounted rates in urban and suburban transport, even if different Regions have adopted a variety of choices.

For example, the Regions of Sardinia and Lombardy provide an articulated system of diversification of subsidies, correlating them both to income limits and the degree of disability. Other Regions offer concessions regardless of income, applying this restriction only to over-65s. Again, regional choices are rather differentiated by the degree of detail in indicating the beneficiaries, in some cases even citing specific health situations (pacemakers).

### **Required documentation**

To benefit from the concessions and services provided, only nine entities do not require any documentation certifying the condition of limiting bodily functions and structures. 113 require the obligatory presentation of a single type of document, while 37 point to a variety of types. One significant fact is the number of institutions (59, equal to 27.1% of the sample) that do not provide information on the subject, which suggests a certain degree of discretionary activity.

Among the most frequently requested documentation is a report that certifies an invalidity status (56.3%), followed by a disabled sticker for circulation and parking vehicles at their premises (22.3%).

It follows that the majority of the documentation (78.6%) derives from previous assessment by a public a commission charged with the assessment of invalidating status (whether by civil impairment or disability, or work incapacity, by service, INPS, etc.). This implies that operators are able to read the reports in question. On this last aspect and on any related difficulties the survey did not collect qualitative elements.

Finally, the item “Other documentation” (which concerns 12 entities) covers, for example, the indication by class groups of the presence of one or more students with disabilities, i.e. documentation or additional statements that are required, for example, when group concessions are applied.

### **Documentation required for access to planned benefits (absolute values and percentages)**

<b>Documentation</b>	<b>v.a.</b>	<b>%</b>
Impairment, disability, inability, etc.	111	56,3
Disabled sticker	44	22,3
Self-certification	11	5,6
At operators discretion	10	5,1
Other documentation	12	6,1
<b>Total</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>100,0</b>

### **Final considerations**

The first data collected, inclusive of the additional research mentioned in the previous pages, already allows us to draw conclusions characterized by some sufficiently consolidated elements:

- The corpus of benefits are essentially attributable to essential public services or services of a commercial nature (among which museum access is also features);
- There is more rigour in the identification of the criteria relating to potential beneficiaries in relation to essential public services (transport);
- Benefits are still largely of a tariff or monetary nature, while there are relatively few support systems offering better use of a service (be it mobility, culture or sports);
- The choice of the type of concession to be applied is fragmented where benefits of an economic nature are concerned: to the person with disability, to the accompanying person or to both;
- Overall, benefits are lower for persons with intellectual or relational disabilities;
- There is no prevailing model in the itinerary “indication of criteria” or “presentation of documentation”; the criteria adopted is usually a political choice of the individual institution, company or structure;
- The required documentation is mainly of public origin (commissions); as there is a vast range of possible reports or certificates, specific skills on the part of the operators involved must also be a requirement;
- The benefit panorama does not show any signs of inter-operability or transferability of concessions, in the sense that the documentation presented for access to the San Siro stadium does not allow the same concessions to be enjoyed at another stadium, unless the same documentation is presented).

Below is a final note in order to highlight certain trends:

- Some Regions (in the public transport sector) have already provided for a specific card;
- Trenitalia (and RFI) utilise a specific “blue card”;
- The “disabled sticker” – in the new European format – is sometimes used as a “card” for access to some benefits that do not concern mobility;
- Some companies recognize benefits (in particular discounts) upon presentation of membership cards of some associations.