

Improving accessibility, inclusive mobility and equity: new tools and business models for public transport in prioritised areas

Proposals should address all the following aspects:

- Analysis of the characteristics of prioritised areas in terms of spatial, demographic and socio-economic characteristics and identification of the factors that influence mobility and accessibility.
- Exploring travel behaviour and social habits of the population in a disaggregated way and assessing travel demands in prioritised areas.
- Addressing mobility needs of vulnerable to exclusion population groups such as: elderly, children, youth, disabled, people in poverty, migrants etc., as well as possible limitations to the use of new transport business models (e.g. IT illiteracy of elderly or low educated persons, pricing, different educational and cultural backgrounds, etc.). Identification of gender-related specificities in each group is strongly recommended.
- Critical assessment of existing innovative organisational and operational frameworks aimed at delivering new mobility solutions and their impact on inclusive mobility and equity.
- Identification and/or development of new, efficient, inclusive, affordable and accessible mobility solutions and public transport models taking also advantage of IT applications (such as social media, app-oriented services, etc.).

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of between EUR 1 and 3 million each would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Accessibility is a concept used in order to address both travel patterns, attitudes and needs of particular social groups – e.g. gender specific needs, unemployed persons, vulnerable to exclusion citizens such as migrants, elderly, children, disabled, etc., as well as the mobility needs and transport use characteristics of people living in different types of areas such as rural, remote or deprived urban areas. To obtain a more comprehensive view which will allow the elaboration of measures and transport systems that will improve inclusive mobility and equity, and support social innovation in this area, it is necessary to incorporate both approaches considering specific geographical factors as well as the mobility needs and capabilities of particular population groups.

Rural areas, for example, are faced with continuous challenges linked to demographic, socio-economic and mobility factors such as: declining populations characterised by more pronounced ageing; income factors; reduced number of services and economic viability of public transport schemes; longer distances and different mobility needs related to public transport. Urban peripheral, suburban and deprived urban areas on the other hand are often characterised by population groups which face acute social, demographic and economic problems which impact on their mobility and on their ability to use available transport systems on equal terms.

In this context, the main challenge of this topic is to examine whether organisational, technological (including extended use of ICT) and social innovations in public transport can lead to improved accessibility, inclusive mobility and equity in prioritised areas, by responding better to their specific needs and demographic/socio-economic characteristics.

As described in the specific challenge, certain geographic areas (such as rural, remote and deprived urban areas) as well as population groups (such as the elderly, disabled, in poverty, migrants, etc.) are faced with particular challenges regarding their mobility needs and capabilities, to which current public transport systems do not always respond adequately.

Work under this topic is expected to contribute to:

—The identification and critical assessment of sustainable and inclusive mobility options for European citizens and residents in prioritised areas and improve accessibility offered by public transport systems.

—The development of effective, efficient and affordable mobility solutions which respond to the specific needs of particular population groups such as vulnerable to exclusion citizens, taking into consideration the gender aspect.

—The elaboration of new business models for public transport, with the deployment of organisational, technological (such as IT and app-oriented services) and social

innovations taking into account possible social and demographic barriers for their effective use.

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