



Good hand of cards for persons with disabilities on the move from 2028

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At its conference “Towards full inclusion of persons with disabilities” this week, the Belgian Presidency of the European Union announced the reaching by the co-legislators of a provisional agreement also on the proposed directive, parallel to that establishing the European Disability Card and the European Parking Card for persons with disabilities, to extend the new rules to third country nationals who reside in a Member State and have a recognised disability status there. It now only remains to formally adopt the two directives, as a package.

The two cards will give persons with disabilities travelling in Europe equal access in the host country to special conditions or other preferential treatment, other than social security benefits and residence-based social protection or social assistance.

“This is a landmark development to ensure equal treatment in mobility for people with disabilities, while respecting national differences and the competence of Member States”, the European Blind Union President Tytti Matsinen said. She added: “We urge the European Union to formally adopt the two directives before the European elections.”

We are grateful to the European Parliament for having strengthened the Commission’s proposal on various points, and it is remarkable that the EU Council supported most of the improvements.

We regret however that the opportunity was missed to remedy the absence of temporary support in transition for people moving their residence to another Member State, including for work or studies, during the often lengthy process of re-assessment of their disability status in the host country. We ask the European Commission to quickly address this remaining gap, as contemplated in the directive. It is however a step in the right direction that stays beyond 3 months in the context of an EU mobility programme are covered after all, and that Member States may decide to apply the directive for stays longer than 3 months.

From the entry into force of the directives, the Member States will have 30 months to incorporate them in their national laws, and another 12 months to apply them.

The directive is one of seven 'flagship initiatives' announced by the Commission in the EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030.

Ends

About EBU

EBU is a non-governmental, non-profit making European organisation founded in 1984. It is one of the six regional bodies of the World Blind Union. It protects and promotes the interests of blind and partially sighted people in Europe. It currently operates within a network of national organisations of the visually impaired in 42 European countries.

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