

Flexible

Comfortable

Accessible

Safe

Green

Taxis are instrumental in ensuring the mobility of people who cannot drive or use conventional public transport

For many people with disabilities, especially those who are unable to drive or use conventional public transport, taxis and private hire vehicles are pivotal means for ensuring their mobility. Taxis in many cities can carry wheelchairs and taxi drivers are increasingly aware and trained to meet specific assistance needs of passengers with disabilities.

In the UK, disabled passengers use taxis and private hire vehicles 67% more often than the general public.



In Finland, people with severe mobility impairment are granted daily taxi trips to/from work or to/from study. In addition, they have the right to 18 one-way subsidised recreational trips per month.

A proactive industry

A joint IRU-ECMT study* recommended that matters related to taxi vehicle accessibility should be decided at local level and based on two vehicle design levels:

- Type One - Wheelchair Accessible Taxis: accessible vehicles capable of carrying the majority, but not all, passengers who travel in their wheelchair, as well as people with other disabilities.
- Type Two - Standard Accessible Taxis: vehicles with features designed to be used by disabled people more easily, but which would only be able to carry a wheelchair-user who can transfer to a taxi seat.



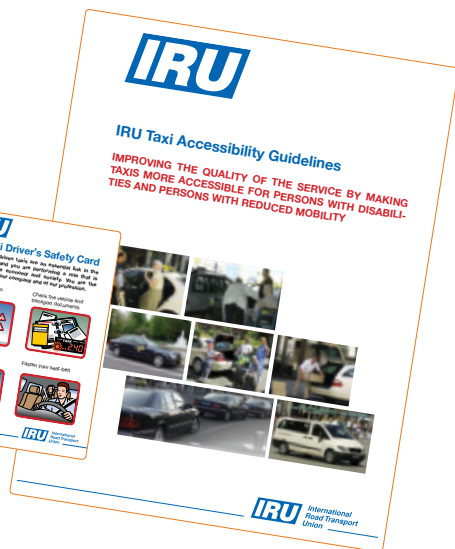
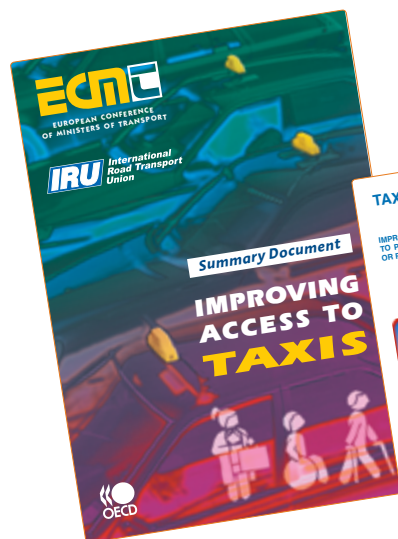
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The study also recommended that taxi fleets used for regular services should be composed of a combination of these two types of vehicles. The proportion of each type within the taxi fleet is likely to vary from place to place, both within and between countries.

The IRU developed voluntary guidelines (2008) and checklists (2010) to provide guidance and advice to taxi operators and drivers with the objective to raise their awareness and help them improve the quality of the services offered to their customers and, in particular, to customers with disabilities and reduced mobility.

However, governments' financial incentives to support dedicated services for persons with disabilities are instrumental in enabling the taxi industry to invest in more costly, accessible vehicles that will help persons with disabilities to make the trips they need to be employed, for medical visits, to go grocery shopping, etc.

* IRU Taxi Accessibility Guidelines, 2004.
http://www.iru.org/en_bookshop_item?id=198

The study was carried out in 2004 jointly by the International Transport Forum and the IRU, with the active participation of European-based motor vehicle manufacturers and conversion specialists, representatives of people with disabilities, representatives of the European taxi industry and national governments.

