

Question for written answer E-003307/2025
to the Commission
Rule 144
Emmanouil Fragkos (ECR)

Subject: Accessibility and basic sanitary needs in intercity and interstate buses

Millions of citizens use intercity and interstate buses in the EU. This is an economical and environmentally friendly means of transport, but many vehicles do not have toilets or water supply, even on journeys of more than 3-4 hours. This limits accessibility and poses risks for the elderly, people with disabilities or chronic conditions (e.g. diabetes, overactive bladder, gastrointestinal problems), as well as for children and pregnant women. Prolonged lack of access to a toilet is associated with infections, constipation, dehydration and severe discomfort.

Regulation (EU) No 181/2011 on bus and coach passengers' rights does not provide for minimum requirements for toilets or water, creating a gap in the principle of accessibility. On the contrary, on trains and planes these basic needs are covered, while the WHO and health organisations (e.g. NHS) recommend breaks and movement every 1-2 hours on long journeys, to avoid blood clots. In some Member States (e.g. Sweden, Finland, Germany) there are already requirements for toilets on long journeys.

It is noted that not moving for long periods is associated with thrombosis, swelling, back problems, constipation, cardiovascular risk and stress. Even brief movement on the bus (to/from the toilet) can help to address these problems.

In view of the above:

1. Does the Commission recognise that the absence of toilets and water on long-distance buses creates an accessibility and health problem?
2. Does the Commission intend to establish minimum European standards for toilets and water on such routes?

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