

EN

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Answer given by Mr Hoekstra
on behalf of the European Commission
(23.10.2024)

1. The rights of persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air are set out in Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006¹. In November 2023 the Commission adopted a legislative proposal² to review the passenger's rights legislation, including this Regulation. The main aim of the proposal is to make it easier for such passengers to exercise their rights as they often do not fully benefit from their rights due to the shortcomings in the application of the legislation.

2. The Regulation establishes that assistance provided at airports shall, as far as possible, be appropriate to the needs of the passenger³. The Commission considers that the best assistance is to allow the use of personal wheelchairs to the greatest extent possible as they provide the greatest possible comfort and scope for maximum mobility, in particular when the airport's wheelchairs are not suitable for their specific needs. The Commission recognises this as a best practice in its revised interpretative guidelines⁴ according to which airports should allow passengers to use their own wheelchair until they board the aircraft and to receive it immediately after disembarking⁵. However, in order to comply with security rules or the handling procedures to ensure the safe loading of the wheelchair into the aircraft's cargo compartment, passengers might still be required to hand over their wheelchair at the check in or at the boarding gate.

¹ Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air (OJ L 204, 26.7.2006, p. 1).

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2023%3A753%3AFIN>

³ See Article 7(7) of the Regulation.

⁴ The Commission approved the English language text of the revised interpretative guidelines on 25 September 2024 (see section 6.4 of C/2024/6546, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ%3AC_202405687).

⁵ The interpretative guidelines also state that passengers should, where practicable, taking into account safety-related handling procedures, should receive back their own mobility equipment immediately after disembarking and should not be obliged to retrieve it at the baggage hall.