

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002891/26
to the Commission
Anna Maria Cisint (PFE)
(13 July 2026)**

Subject: Use of local public resources to finance public transport for asylum seekers and compatibility with EU law

The Metropolitan City of Bologna uses its own public resources to finance public transport passes for asylum seekers hosted at contingency reception centres.

Thus, local authorities are using public resources for a specific category of beneficiaries — asylum seekers, while many Italian and EU citizens who live in the same area do not receive the same treatment, raising questions about compliance with the principles of proportionality, equal treatment and sound financial management referred to in EU law.

In the light of the above:

1. Does the Commission consider it compatible with EU law to go beyond the standards laid down in EU legislation on reception by using local authorities' own resources to provide free local public transport for asylum seekers?
2. Given that a large share of Italian and EU citizens who live in that area pay for this service, is this choice compatible with the principles of proportionality, non-discrimination and sound financial management?
3. Will the Commission check that the use of local public resources for those purposes does not lead to unjustified preferential treatment over other categories of citizens and is consistent with the EU's regulatory framework on reception and integration?

Submitted: 13.7.2026

**Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the European Commission
(2 October 2026)**

Under Directive (EU) 2024/1346⁽¹⁾ Member States may grant more favourable conditions to applicants for international protection, insofar as compatible with the directive.

Using financial resources to provide free public transport passes to applicants for international protection is a responsibility of the competent national, regional or local authority.

Differentiated access to local benefits must comply with EU primary law, including the principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination enshrined in the Treaties and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, as well as with any applicable secondary legislation. Distinctions between groups of beneficiaries need an objective and proportionate justification linked to legitimate public policy aims.

Under EU law, Member States remain competent to determine how national resources are used, subject to compliance with national law and applicable EU law. As noted in the first paragraph, EU law does not prevent more favourable conditions to applicants for international protection.

Where EU funds are concerned, the financial support must be implemented in accordance with the applicable EU legal framework, including the objectives of the fund. The Commission monitors the use of these EU funds.

⁽¹⁾ Directive (EU) 2024/1346 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection, OJ L, 2024/1346, 22.5.2024: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1346/oj/eng>.