Council of Ministers

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON TRANSPORT AND AGEING OF THE POPULATION

These Conclusions and Recommendations were agreed by the Council of Ministers, meeting in Lisbon on 29-30 May 2001.
CONCLUSIONS

1. This document concerns people aged 65 and over. In ECMT Member and Associate Countries, the proportion of the population in this age group will increase by 40% in the next thirty years and the number of people will double; the proportion over 80 will double and the number will treble. These facts directly concern us, as these people are ourselves.

2. Older people in the future will have better health, higher levels of education, better housing and higher incomes than older people now. They will prefer to live in their own home as long as possible. They will expect higher levels of service than at present and this will open up new market and business opportunities.

3. Older people in future will expect to retain the levels of mobility they have enjoyed previously although as they age mobility will become more difficult. Driver licence holding will be higher, especially among women. Old people will retain their driving licence as long as possible. Given present trends, older people’s use of the car is likely to increase but their mobility will not be entirely car dependent.

4. They will walk more, with up to 30 to 40% of travelling time spent on walking. Older pedestrians are more exposed to specific risks than any other age category. This risk is not fully reflected in road accident statistics because slips, trips and falls are not included. The cost to society is nonetheless significant.

5. Public transport use will also be increasingly important. However, for many older people it will be an option only if accessibility, reliability, information and personal security are improved.

6. Cycling will not be a significant mode of choice for many older people. Experienced cyclists may safely continue into old age, but over the age of 75 the risks become significantly greater.

7. Older people do not deliberately take more risks in traffic but they are more at risk. They are more frail and therefore the consequences of accidents are more severe than for any other age group. Simply because of this, the number of injuries and fatalities in road accidents will increase.

8. They may therefore face physical, psychological and economic barriers to travel, including for some diminished motor, sensory and cognitive abilities. To overcome these barriers and allow them to play a full part in society a fundamental rethink about some aspects of transport policy is needed so that mobility needs can be met in a safe, accessible and sustainable way. This concerns:

- patterns of land use and housing that facilitate neighbourhood based living;
- infrastructure designed with the needs of older people in mind, including accessible, safe and well maintained pedestrian facilities;
- accessible and user friendly transport modes and information on how to use them;
- integrated delivery of public and private services in a cost effective way
- a choice of transport alternatives;
- new technologies concerning vehicle equipment and engineering
- education, training and awareness programmes

9. The success of policies and measures taken will have a fundamental effect on the possibilities for older people to participate fully in society and to have access to activities, shops and services as well as to friends and relatives.
10. Many of the measures now being considered as part of a sustainable transport strategy also promote accessibility, mobility and safety. These include:

- more use of alternatives to the car, including walking and public transport
- lower traffic speeds
- better urban design
- more facilities within walking distance.

11. Changes in the transport system have a long life and mistakes made now will be with us for many decades. It is therefore important to start now

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. All policy options in transport and land-use planning should systematically include an evaluation of their potential impact on the safety and accessibility of older people (safety and accessibility audits).

2. The entire “transport chain” (including all the modes and interchanges between them) needs to be improved. Weaknesses in one link can make the entire chain ineffective.

3. Where they have not already done so, Member States should implement those parts of recommendations dealing with pedestrians and cyclists [CEMT/CM(97)11 and CEMT/CM(98)19/Final], insofar as they apply to older people.

4. In addition, ECMT should draw up guidelines for implementation at the national level in relation to accessibility and safety of the transport system and its components, in particular covering:
   - land-use, which could provide neighbourhood based living and be less car dependent;
   - infrastructure, including the function and design of the road system, paying specific attention to signs, lighting, intersections and pedestrian facilities;
   - public transport, including interchange, information and personal security;
   - economic aspects, including cost-effective service delivery;
   - effective driver evaluation and training programmes, not only age-related but also functionally based, bearing in mind road safety purposes.

5. These guidelines should be established as soon as possible in cooperation with appropriate international organisations and Ministries concerned, then submitted to Ministers.

6. Implementation should be monitored at national level, and a report on progress should be made to Ministers in due course.