

## **Report on the enforcement of Regulation (EU) No 181/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2024**

Under Article 29 of Regulation (EU) No 181/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport and amending Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 (hereinafter 'Regulation'), the enforcement bodies responsible for the enforcement of the Regulation shall publish a report on their activity every two years. The report shall contain a description of actions taken in order to implement the Regulation and statistics on complaints and sanctions applied.

The present report describes the actions taken by the Finnish Transport and Communications Agency (Traficom) between 1 January 2023 and 31 December 2024.

### **1 Traficom's duties**

Provisions on Traficom's competence are laid down in the Act on Transport Services (320/2017), more specifically in section 186, subsection 2, paragraph 1; section 186, subsection 4; and section 187 of the Act. Traficom supervises compliance with the Regulation on a general level with respect to the rights of business passengers, disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility. Traficom's duties also include the designation of bus and coach terminals where assistance shall be provided to disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility, as referred to in Article 12 of the Regulation.

Traficom handles complaints concerning the rights of persons with disabilities or reduced mobility. Business passengers, i.e. passengers who are not considered consumers, can report to Traficom issues concerning a bus or coach journey. For these passengers, Traficom gives general guidance and advice.

Under section 255, subsection 1 of the Act on Transport Services, Traficom may oblige anyone who has violated an EU regulation to rectify their error or negligence. Traficom may also impose a conditional fine to enforce its decision.

On a case-by-case basis, Traficom supervises compliance with the Regulation in cooperation with the Consumer Ombudsman. The Consumer Ombudsman supervises compliance with the Regulation on a general level as regards consumers. Consumer complaints are resolved by the Consumer Disputes Board.

## **2 Contacts by passengers**

Traficom receives only a few enquiries each year related to the scope of application of the Regulation. For example, in 2023, Traficom was contacted six times about bus or coach journeys. Three of the cases did not fall within the scope of the Regulation. Similarly, in 2024, Traficom was contacted six times, but three of the cases did not fall within the scope of the Regulation. Traficom responded by providing general guidance and advice or referred the matters to the competent authority or some other relevant party.

In 2023–2024, Traficom issued recommendations for decisions in two matters related to the Regulation.

## **3 Supervision measures and other activities**

In spring 2023, Traficom initiated a review of designated terminals where assistance is provided for disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility, in accordance with Article 12 of the Regulation. This review was prompted by significant changes in the functions and operating environments of these terminals. A public consultation regarding the designation of terminals was held from 10 August to 11 September 2023, during which a total of 15 comments were received. In addition to the public consultation, information about the review was shared at two stakeholder meetings and through Traficom's newsletters. By way of a decision adopted on 4 April 2024, Traficom designated the Helsinki bus terminal (Kamppi shopping centre, long-distance transport terminal) as a terminal providing assistance.

In 2023–2024, Traficom disseminated information about the rights of bus and coach passengers in four separate newsletters. The newsletters announced the designation of a terminal providing assistance and reminded operators about the provision of disability awareness training to drivers as part of their periodic refresher training, for example.

In 2024, Traficom published a guide entitled [Public transport with an assistance dog – Instructions for travelling with an assistance dog](#). The guide applies to all modes of transport, including taxis and air travel, and aims to make travelling with an assistance dog easier in Finland. The guide

is available in Finnish, Swedish and English and was distributed to all organisations that provide qualification training for lorry and bus/coach drivers.

#### **4 Further information about accessibility in bus and coach transport and transport services in Finland**

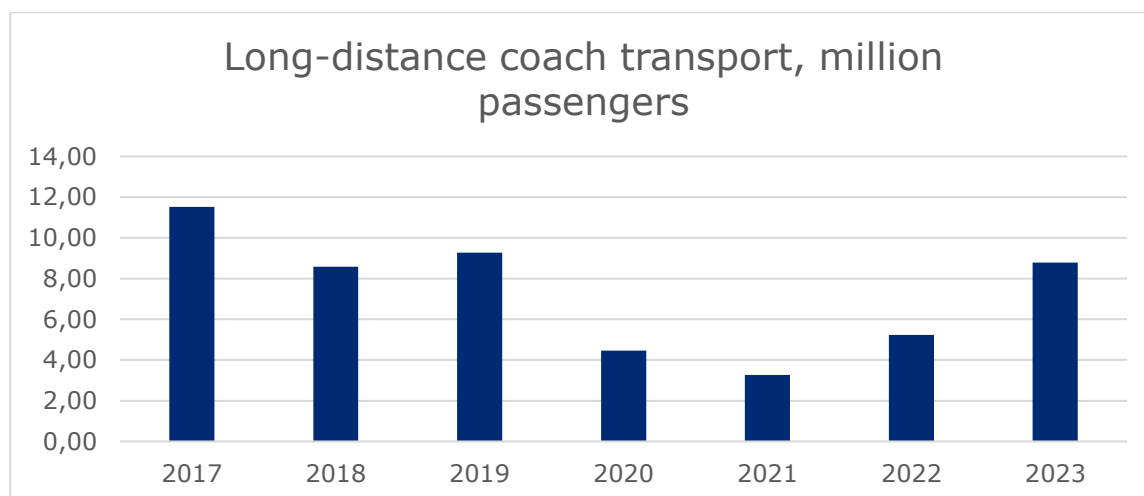
In 2024, Traficom updated its situational pictures concerning the accessibility of [long-distance bus services](#) and [local public transport services](#). These situational pictures provide information about the accessibility of regular long-distance services as well as city-operated local public transport services across Finland, highlighting key areas for development. The data contributes to wider [transport system analysis](#) that offers a strategic overview of the current state, development needs and evolving operating environment of the transport system. The situational pictures on accessibility are updated every two years.

In 2023, Traficom examined the state of accessibility in bus and coach transport in connection with the national transport system plan. The findings were published in a report on [accessibility in vehicle requirements for bus and coach transport](#) (in Finnish).

Traficom's [situational pictures by mode of transport](#) also provide data on public transport [demand](#) and [supply](#), for example. It appears that the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced travel behaviour: remote working has become more widespread and the average commuting distance has increased. Passenger volumes in almost all Finnish urban regions have surpassed pre-pandemic records. In 2024, passenger numbers exceeded 2019 levels in all urban regions except Pori and the operating area of HSL Helsinki Region Transport. In the HSL area, the passenger numbers were nine per cent lower than in 2019, while in Pori they were seven per cent lower. Conversely, passenger numbers increased in Vaasa by more than 50 per cent and in Hämeenlinna and Lappeenranta by more than 30 per cent. Tampere also experienced an increase of nearly 30 per cent compared to 2019.

In 2023, long-distance transport carried approximately 8.8 million passengers, a figure close to the 2019 level. The peak year for long-distance passenger numbers was 2017, after which volumes began to decline, even before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tabell 1: Long-distance coach transport 2017–2023<sup>1</sup>



At the time of preparing this report, statistical data on long-distance transport in 2024 was not yet available.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Traficom, Finnish Transport and Communications Agency.