

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 2017 to 31 December 2018***General***

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, the enforcement bodies responsible for the enforcement of the Regulation shall publish a report on their activity every two years.

The report shall contain in particular a description of actions taken in order to implement Regulation (EU) No 181/2011 and statistics on complaints and sanctions applied. The present enforcement report concerns the activities of the Finnish Transport Safety Agency (Trafi) from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2018. The Finnish Transport and Communications Agency Traficom started its operations on 1 January 2019 as the Finnish Transport Safety Agency (Trafi), the Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority (FICORA) and certain functions of the Finnish Transport Agency were merged into one organisation.

Provisions on Trafi's competence under Regulation (EU) No 181/2011 were previously laid down in the Public Transport Act (869/2009) and later in the Act on Transport Services (320/2017). Current provisions on Traficom's competence in matters concerning Regulation (EU) No 181/2011 are laid down in section 186, paragraphs 2 and 4, and section 187 of the Act on Transport Services (320/2017).

Traficom oversees the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport insofar as the matter does not fall under the competence of the Consumer Ombudsman. Moreover, Traficom has the competence to recommend solutions to complaints submitted by non-consumer passengers (i.e. mainly business travellers). Traficom is also responsible for overseeing and enforcing the rights of disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility and for processing complaints submitted by these passenger groups. Traficom's duties include the designation of bus and coach terminals where assistance shall be provided to disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility, as required by Regulation (EU) No 181/2011. Trafi covered all the matters listed above.

The Consumer Disputes Board solves complaints concerning individual consumer disputes.

Contacts and complaints

So far, the annual number of contacts (incl. complaints) concerning passenger rights in bus and coach transport has been low. In 2017–2018, Trafi was contacted a total of 4 times.

Supervision measures and other activities

As of 1 March 2018, there has been a requirement that bus and coach drivers must be provided with disability-related training or instructions to raise awareness. In 2017, Trafi informed all transport licence holders and training centres providing training for professional qualifications about this requirement under point b of Article 16(1). Information on the matter was also published in the December issue of Trafi's newsletter and on the Trafi website.

In 2018, Trafi began exploratory work on implementing another process to designate bus and coach terminals providing assistance. Traficom has continued this work in 2019.