II

(Acts whose publication is not obligatory)

COUNCIL

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION
of 4 June 1998
on a parking card for people with disabilities

(98/376/EC)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 75(1) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal for a recommendation submitted by the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee (¹),

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions (²),

Acting in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 189c of the Treaty (³),

(1) Whereas the reciprocal recognition of a parking card for people with disabilities based on a standardised Community model was advocated by the Commission in its communication on a medium term social action programme (1995-97), forwarded to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on 12 April 1995, and also on its report of 26 November 1993 to the Council on the measures to be taken in the Community regarding the accessibility of transport to persons with reduced mobility;

(2) Whereas, in the spirit of the resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council of 20 December 1996 on equality of opportunity for people with disabilities, all people with disabilities should be entitled to additional concrete measures aimed at improving their occupational and social integration;

(3) Whereas a mode of transport other than public transport constitutes, for many people with disabilities, the only means of getting about independently for purposes of occupational and social integration; whereas, in certain circumstances and with due regard to road safety, it is only right that people with disabilities should be enabled, by means of a parking card for such people, to park as near to their destination as possible; whereas people with disabilities should thus have the opportunity to avail themselves of the facilities provided by the said parking card throughout the Community in accordance with the national rules applying in the country in which they happen to be;

(4) Whereas, in view of the fact that parking cards for people with disabilities may come within the remit of regional and local authorities, the Committee of the Regions should be consulted;

(5) Whereas, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, Community action is appropriate to promote the understanding and mutual recognition of parking cards for people with disabilities and to facilitate freedom of movement for people with disabilities;

(¹) OJ C 174, 17. 6. 1996, p. 27.
(²) OJ C 42, 10. 2. 1997, p. 27.
(³) Opinion of the European Parliament of 13 December 1996 (OJ C 20, 20. 1. 1997, p. 386), Council common position of 19 December 1997 (OJ C 62, 26. 2. 1998, p. 4) and Decision of the European Parliament of 30 March 1998 (OJ C 138, 4. 5. 1998).

(6) Whereas it is desirable that there should be a Community-model parking card, recognised mutually by the Member States, for people with disabilities;

(7) Whereas the definition of disability and the rules for assigning parking cards to persons with disabilities are the responsibility of the Member States;

(8) Whereas Member States should introduce certain security features to prevent forgery or counterfeiting of the parking card;

(9) Whereas the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) has already adopted a resolution encouraging the provision and reciprocal recognition of parking cards for people with disabilities (ECMT resolution of 22 April 1997);

(10) Whereas full information should be provided to card holders on the conditions for using the card in the Member States,

Hereby RECOMMENDS Member States to:

1. introduce a parking card for people with disabilities, issued to them in accordance with the respective national provisions, on the basis of the standardised Community model described in the Annex, which may be used in parallel with the parking cards issued in the Member States, according to the terms laid down in paragraph 5;

2. recognise, as from 1 January 1999, the parking cards for people with disabilities introduced by each Member State in accordance with the standardised Community model, so that cardholders may benefit from the associated parking facilities available in the Member State in which they happen to be;

3. grant the parking card to people whose disability leads to reduced mobility;

4. provide, on the basis of a technical fact sheet prepared by the Commission, an overview of the conditions of use in the different Member States of the European Union when issuing a parking card to people with disabilities and at the request of the persons concerned;

5. take the necessary steps to ensure that standardised Community model parkings cards for people with disabilities are available by 1 January 2000 at the latest;

   This recommendation notwithstanding, models existing in Member States before 1 January 2000 may continue to be used on the territory of such Member States beyond that date until their replacement;

6. inform the Commission, before 1 July 2000, of the action take pursuant to this Recommendation.

Done at Luxembourg, 4 June 1998.

For the Council
The President
D. BLUNKETT

ANNEX

Provisions on the Community-model parking card for people with disabilities

A. The overall dimensions of the Community-model parking card for people with disabilities shall be:

— height: 106 mm,

— width: 148 mm.

B. The colour of the parking card shall be light blue, except for the white wheelchair-user symbol, which shall have a dark blue background.

C. The parking card for people with disabilities shall be plastic-coated, with the exception of the space reserved for the holder's signature on the left-hand side of the reverse.

D. The parking card for people with disabilities shall be divided vertically into two parts on both the front and reverse.

The left-hand side of the front shall contain:

— the wheel-chair user symbol in white on a dark blue background,

— the date of expiry of the parking card,

— the serial number of the parking card,

— the name and stamp of the issuing authority/organisation;

The right-hand side of the front shall contain:

— in capital letters, the words 'Parking card for people with disabilities' in the language(s) of the Member State issuing the card; after a suitable space, the words 'Parking card' shall appear in small type in the other languages of the European Union,

— the words 'European Communities' model' in the language(s) of the Member State issuing the card,

— as background, the distinguishing code of the Member State issuing the parking card, as follows:

B:	Belgium
DK:	Denmark
D:	Germany
EL:	Greece
E:	Spain
F:	France
IRL:	Ireland
I:	Italy
L:	Luxembourg
NL:	Netherlands
A:	Austria
P:	Portugal
FIN:	Finland
S:	Sweden
UK:	United Kingdom

surrounded by the ring of 12 stars symbolising the European Union.

The left-hand side of the reverse shall contain:

1. the holder's surname;

2. the holder's forename(s);

3. the holder's signature or other authorised mark, if allowed under national legislation;

4. the holder's photograph.

The right-hand side of the reverse shall contain:

1. the statement:

   'This card entitles the holder to the special local parking facilities available in the Member State concerned';

2. the statement:

   'When in use, the card is to be displayed at the front of the vehicle in such a way that the front of the card is clearly visible for checking purposes'.

E. With the exception of the right-hand side of the front, entries shall be shown in the language(s) of the Member State issuing the parking card.

If a Member State wishes to make the entries in a national language other than one of the following: Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Italian Portuguese, Spanish, Swedish, it shall draw up a bilingual version of the card using one of the aforementioned languages, without prejudice to the other provisions of this Annex.