

City metro passenger setting new standards of accessibility for all

SPAIN – CATALUNYA/TRANSPORTES METROPOLITANOS DE BARCELONA – METRO ACCESSIBILITY

Transportes Metropolitanos (TMB) de Barcelona is the main public transport operator in Barcelona and the province of Catalunya. In 2021, TMB renewed its train fleet and used this opportunity to introduce new passenger cars that are highly accessible for travellers with various needs, among them the communication system NaviLens, emergency measures useable for wheelchair users, and all warning messages in acoustic and visual formats. By 2027 only this kind of passenger cars will be in use.

Problem targeted

Public transportation is often inaccessible for persons with disabilities, and often only covering some additional needs.

Solution, innovation, and impact

In 2021, TMB incorporated new vehicles into its fleet and introduced major accessibility improvements for passengers with disabilities. Features include wider automatic doors, acoustic warning lights, intercoms located at an optimum height for wheelchair users, emergency handles, and colour contrast signage.



A glimpse into the new train cars of the Barcelona metro.

“Committed to people with disabilities, Barcelona Metro sets new accessibility standards for all.”

Raül Casas, Transports Metropolitanos de Barcelona

Two notable developments are the arrangement of two spaces reserved for wheelchairs, scooters, and child carriages and the onboard NaviLens system – a navigation and labelling app specially designed for blind and partially sighted users. TMB has also improved the accessibility of its bus fleet by including features such as visual and audible stop warnings, and signs in Braille and colour contrast. TMB works closely with ALSTOM, the French manufacturing company, which has implemented all the improvements proposed by TMB. The new acquisitions meet all the criteria stipulated for UNE 170001 Universal Accessibility Certification.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

The financing of TMB's accessibility is different in the

metro area than in the bus area. New works related to vertical accessibility systems are financed by the Departamento de Política Territorial y Obras Públicas, whereas TMB finances stair maintenance, routing, and platform expansion works with its own budgets. TMB has an annual budget of €360,000 for accessibility improvements. Different departments invest part of their own budget for singular projects: for example, the cost of implementing the NaviLens system in Metro and Bus networks was €575,000. The Metropolitan Transport Authority plans to make a significant financial effort to purchase 95 new trains by 2026 and refurbish 107 trains in the current fleet by 2027 while incorporating accessibility standards.

FACTS & FIGURES

Start: 2021

- The new TBM metro trains have a total of 20 reserved seats for passengers with disabilities.
- 148 of the 162 stations of the Barcelona metro network are accessible.
- *A practice from the Business Sector.*

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