

The European Charter of Pedestrians' Rights

Adopted in 1988 by The European Parliament

I. The pedestrian has the right to live in a healthy environment and freely to enjoy the amenities offered by public areas under conditions that adequately safeguard his physical and psychological well-being.

II. The pedestrian has the right to live in urban or village centres tailored to the needs of human beings and not to the needs of the motor car and to have amenities within walking or cycling distance.

III. Children, the elderly and the disabled have the right to expect towns to be places of easy social contact and not places that aggravate their inherent weakness.

IV. The disabled have the right to specify measures to maximise mobility, such as the elimination of architectural obstacles and the adequate equipping of public means of transport.

V. The pedestrian has the right to urban areas which are intended exclusively for his use, are as extensive as possible and are not mere 'pedestrian precincts' but in harmony with the overall organisation of the town.

VI. The pedestrian has a particular right to expect;

a) compliance with chemical and noise emission standards for motor vehicles which scientists consider to be tolerable,

b) the introduction into all public transport systems of vehicles that are not a source of either air or noise pollution,

c) the creation of 'green lungs', including the planting of trees in urban areas,

d) the control of speed limits by modifying the layout of roads and junctions (e.g. by incorporating safety islands etc.), so that motorists adjust their speed, as a way of effectively safeguarding pedestrian and bicycle traffic,

e) the banning of advertising which encourages an improper and dangerous use of the motor car,

f) an effective system of road signs whose design also takes into account the needs of the blind and the deaf,

g) the adoption of specific measures to ensure that vehicular and pedestrian traffic has ease of access to, and freedom of movement and the possibility of stopping on, roads and pavements respectively (for example: anti-slip pavement surfaces, ramps at kerbs to compensate for the difference in the levels of pavement and roadway, roads made wide enough for the traffic they have to carry, special arrangements while building work is in progress, adaptation of the urban street infrastructure to protect motor car traffic, provision of parking and rest areas and subways and footbridges),

h) the introduction of the system of risk liability so that the person creating the risk bears the financial consequences thereof (as has been the case in France, for example, since 1985).

VII. The pedestrian has the right to complete and unimpeded mobility, which can be achieved through the integrated use of the means of transport. In particular, he has the right to expect;

a) an extensive and well-equipped public transport service which will meet the needs of all citizens, from the physically fit to the disabled,

b) the provision of bicycle lanes throughout the urban areas,

c) the creation of parking lots which affect neither the mobility of pedestrians nor their ability to enjoy areas of architectural distinction.

VIII. Each Member State must ensure that comprehensive information on the rights of pedestrians is disseminated through the most appropriate channels and is made available to children from the beginning of their school career.