

Public bus stop areas

Overview

Public bus stop areas should be easily identifiable and recognisable, and clearly distinguishable from the surroundings. For example, the surface colour of the passenger waiting area should differ from that of the pavement and the colour of the passenger shelter should be in clear visual contrast to that of the waiting area surface. Sufficient waiting space at the stop must be provided.

Arriving at and leaving the waiting space must be free of danger and easy for all user groups. The bus must be able to pull up close enough to the kerb for safe boarding and alighting. Cycle paths wherever possible should be directed behind the passenger waiting areas.

Pedestrian footpaths, cycle paths and walking surfaces

For maintenance by machine, the minimum allowable width of the waiting area between the walls of the bus stop canopy and the edge of the carriageway is 2,250 mm. If maintained in another way, the minimum allowable width is 1,500 mm. The minimum clear height of the route is 2,200 mm.

The minimum clear width of the route around the bus stop canopy is 900 mm (wheelchair space requirement), but the recommended minimum width is 1,500 mm, which is enough for persons needing an assistant or a guide dog. The minimum turning circle diameter for an electric wheelchair is 2,500 mm; a manual wheelchair needs 1,500 mm. Private cars, taxis and taxis for the disabled must be able to pick up and drop off passengers at the public bus stop.

It is recommended that the paving materials and visual contrast used in stop areas be different from those of pavements and cycle paths. The surface should be hard and non-slippery even when wet. The maximum allowable deviation from level is 5 mm. The maximum allowable width of tile joints is also 5 mm. In public bus stop areas, the maximum allowable lateral inclination is 2% and the maximum allowable longitudinal inclination is 3%.

Public loading islands

The presently ongoing transfer to low-floor vehicles requires that boarding platforms be higher than before for ease of boarding and alighting. The kerb of a raised boarding platform should be 160-200 mm high. In bus bays that are long enough to accommodate two buses, the maximum allowable elevation of the boarding platform is 200 mm per 8 metres. In bus bays that accommodate one bus, the height of the boarding platform at kerbside may vary between 120 mm and 160 mm, depending on the lateral deviation of the bus bay. Use of proper measurements protects the sides of the bus from damage as it lines up parallel to the kerb. At the edge of the loading island, next to the kerbside, there must be a warning area about 300 mm wide, with a visual contrast that is clearly distinguishable from the pavement (contrast requirement: difference between medium grey and black/white).

SuRaKu Cards contain guidelines for planning, construction and maintenance of accessible, public outdoor areas.

The model designs outlined in the cards are examples of designs for an accessible environment. However, further advances in the quality of the environment and accessibility can be achieved by continued product and design development.

The instructions and specifications in the cards are based on the accessibility criteria established for the SuRaKu Project, and on the model designs. The instructions have been updated to comply with the regulations and guidelines related to accessibility that have entered into force by 2022.

Two levels of accessibility have been defined for the areas in question. The requirements for the basic level of accessibility apply to all areas. More stringent requirements for the special level of accessibility apply to the following areas:

- *Pedestrian street milieus*
- *City centre areas with public facilities and services*
- *Areas surrounding institutions providing health care and services for the elderly and persons with a disability*
- *Areas with a lot of housing targeted at the elderly and persons with a disability*
- *Public transport terminals and areas surrounding public bus stops*
- *Sports areas and playgrounds catering to all types of users*
- *Accessible routes in recreational areas, etc*

Applicable rules and regulations

241/2017 Government decree on accessibility of buildings

1007/2017 Ministry of the Environment decree on safety of use of buildings

379/2020 Government decree on the use of traffic control devices

Other instructions

Instructions of the Finnish Public Transport Association: "Esteetön bussipysäkki" ("Accessible Bus Stops")

RT 103141: Barrier-free movement and operating environment

SuRaKu Instruction Cards

1. Pedestrian crossings and pavements
2. Pedestrian street milieus and squares
3. Differences in elevation
4. Public courtyards
5. Park paths and resting places
6. Public playgrounds
7. Public bus stop areas
8. Temporary traffic arrangements

SuRaKu Accessibility Criteria Tables

Kerbstones at pedestrian crossings, Outdoor staircases, Ramps, Guidance paving flags and materials, Demarcation strips, Loading islands, Gutters and gullies, Walking surfaces, Pedestrian crossing markings, Handrails, Railings, Push-button poles, Pedestrian crossing signs, Seating, Bollards and crash guards on pavements, Pedestrian refuge island, Tactile map and Warning areas.

For SuRaKu Instruction Cards and Accessibility Criteria in PDF format, see www.hel.fi/helsinkikaikille/

Unobstructed access from the pavement to the boarding platform must be secured. A raised waiting area must be equipped with a guardrail.

Warning areas and guidance paving flags

Warning areas and guidance strips guide persons who are partially sighted from the pavement to the public bus stop and help cyclists to realise that they are approaching one. A visual contrast that is readily distinguishable from the pavement surface should be used in warning areas and guidance strips (contrast requirement: difference between medium grey and black/white). Correspondingly, guidance paving flags can be used to direct persons who are partially sighted to public bus stops located in covered or heated public transport terminals, etc.

Public bus stop equipment

Public bus stop areas should be equipped with a rain shelter, signs, seating at two heights, and a litter bin. The minimum depth of the rain shelters is 1,500 mm, and they must be adequately lit. No sharp components or structures causing collision or other risk are to be used.

Signs

Signs should serve all user groups, including persons who are partially sighted. For further, more detailed information, see "Esteetön bussipysäkki" ("Accessible Bus Stops"), Instructions of the Finnish Public Transport Association.

