



24.7.2020

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

Subject: Petition No 0756/2019 by P.T. (German) on an EU-wide disability card

1. Summary of petition

The petitioner advocates EU-wide concessions for disabled people along the lines of what is provided in Germany for German nationals who have been issued with a severe-disability card. He puts forward three options: either a severe-disability card that is valid in all EU countries regardless of where it is issued; or, alternatively, a standard severe-disability card modelled on the German card could be introduced, though each Member State would be able to set its own criteria; or a standard EU-wide severe-disability card could be introduced.

2. Admissibility

Declared admissible on 21 January 2020. Information requested from Commission under Rule 227 (6).

3. Commission reply, received on 24 July 2020

The Commission's observations

Currently, there is no mutual recognition of disability status between Member States and therefore, the national disability cards might not be recognised in other Member States. The determination of disability status is done according to the rules of Member States; EU competence in this area is limited.

To help people with disabilities to travel more easily between EU countries, the EU parking

card for people with disabilities was introduced by a Council Recommendation in 1998¹. It is based on the mutual recognition of national parking cards.

In 2016-2018, the EU put in place a pilot action on an EU Disability Card and associated benefits² in eight Member States: Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Italy, Malta, Romania and Slovenia. The Card ensures equal access to some benefits and services in the areas of culture, leisure, sport and in some countries also transport. It is mutually recognised between these participating countries, which decide on a voluntary basis what benefits and services to include.

The assessment of the EU Disability Card pilot project by independent researchers is ongoing. It should be finalised by September 2020. Preliminary conclusions and recommendations show positive impacts of the action, even if it is limited in scope as implemented only in eight countries. They also confirm the interest people with disabilities have shown in the Card. The Commission will carefully study the results when they are finalised.

Conclusion

Regarding the mutual recognition of disability status among Member States, the competence lies primarily with Member States. The Commission works closely with them on the above-mentioned project and on the implementation of the EU parking card for people with disabilities. At the same time, the Commission works on the evaluation of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 with the aim to present a strengthened strategy for disability in 2021.

¹ 98/376/EC: Council Recommendation of 4 June 1998 on a parking card for people with disabilities, *OJ L 167*, 12.6.1998, p. 25–28.

² <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1139>

