

## Guidelines for the design of information sheets regarding timetables and routes at bus stops and elsewhere

As a general rule, information about timetables should be available as widely as possible: they should be posted up at each stop on the network; hard copies should also be available in as many distribution centres as possible, meaning all train stations and bus terminals, but also in other locations outside public transport networks (such as tobacconists, supermarkets, etc.)

### A clear text

The general rules to apply for the text, on the timetables, at bus stops and for internet website pages, are the following:

- Size of letters – this should be as large as possible (given the size of the poster / of the page, and of the quantity of information which it is necessary to include in the document). Lettering smaller than 12 pt should be avoided.
- Types of fonts used – the font should be sans serif :
  - The recommended fonts are: arial, san serif, comic sans serif, Tahoma, etc.
  - Fonts to be avoided are: Times New Roman, Courier, Book Antiqua, etc.
- Use normal text – you should avoid text in *italics*, **bold** or underlined; in addition, words should be a mixture of capitals and lower case, but in any case, the sole use of CAPITALS should be avoided.
- Colour and contrast – the ideal combination for printed text is black letters on a white background; when the corporate identity or the colours of a company / organisation must be used, the layout of the colours should favour dark letters on a light background. The combination of green and red should be avoided at all cost (the proportion of colour-blind individuals is of around 8 % in men and 0.45 % in women).

### Contents of the information

The posters and leaflets should not be crowded with useless information. However, at the very least, these documents should provide information regarding the route number, and include a list of stops, and departure and arrival times.

In addition to the information text, it is useful to include on the timetable sheets a simple map of:

- The whole network
- The part of the network that is serviced by the interchange, station or stop.
- In the case of an interchange hub including several stops, a map of the area is necessary, identifying the locations of the different stops, as well as a list of the network routes which use each of these stops. Generally, bus stops are identified by a letter, whereas bus routes are identified by a number.

Some types of information are particularly important for disabled individuals, namely: which part of the network is accessible, the location of accessible toilets (together with the times at which they are accessible), the location of help and information points, the availability of induction loops if there are any, for individuals who are hard of hearing, etc.

One particularly important point: a telephone number that can be called for any information should be provided – both in order to provide clearly audible information if the visual information provided is not easy enough to read, and to provide information on the day in case of disturbances or changes to the normal service. This number should connect the caller to a “real person”, not a recorded message, and should be provided on all available timetable information.

## **Positioning of timetable information at the bus stops**

The timetables should be placed in such a position as to be easy to see, and where network users can stand close to the information in order to read it (meaning not above the place where users are likely to sit down). The information should be located in a well-lit place, except if an artificial light has been installed.

The ideal height at which to place the information at the bus stop is between 900 mm and 1,800 mm above the ground. Information that is particularly useful, or likely to be particularly useful, to wheelchair users should be located in the lower part of this bracket; no important information should be positioned higher than 1,700 mm above the ground.

## **Ease of understanding**

All information must be provided in comprehensible language (no transport jargon – words such as “means” should be avoided).

If colour codes are used for certain transport services, it must be possible to find these in the printed information.

The use of images or pictograms can be particularly useful for mentally deficient individuals; if this is the case, the images must also be provided with an explanatory text and/or a legend.

## Availability of the information in alternative formats

Those providing the information should be flexible enough to be able to offer this information in different formats; this includes:

- The provision of a telephone number, if the printed information is not legible (see above) – this also allows people who are not sure they have properly understood the information, or who simply lack confidence when they are travelling, to obtain additional help. Recorded audio timetables will be enough for some travellers, but for information about any changes or unplanned disturbances to the service, it is necessary to provide a telephone number which will connect them to a physical person.
- A telephone number which deaf or hard of hearing individuals will be able to use via a “textphone” (conversation translation service) should also be available.
- At the very least, timetable information printed out in a larger format should be available upon request.
- When the transport system is likely to be used by tourists, or in areas where the population includes a significant proportion of ethnic minorities, the possibility of providing information in another language than French or English should be considered; at the very least, timetable information in other languages should be available upon request.
- It is very useful for users to be able to receive information regarding timetables electronically, as they can use it in any way they like (print it out in large lettering, zoom in on their computer screen, etc.).