

Consultation

on the provision of EU-wide real-time traffic information services under Directive 2010/40/EU (the "ITS Directive")

Objective of the consultation

The objective of this consultation is to collect the opinions of stakeholders and interested parties including EU citizens and private and public organisations on the issues related to the provision of EU-wide real-time traffic information services.

The replies submitted to this consultation will be taken into consideration for the development of the relevant specifications on the provision of EU-wide real-time traffic information services under Directive 2010/40/EU (the "ITS Directive").

What are real-time traffic information services?

Real-time traffic information services aim to provide road users with useful, accurate and up-to-date information on the road network, traffic circulation plans, traffic regulations (such as speed limits and access restrictions), recommended driving routes and real-time traffic data including estimated travel times, information about congestion, accidents, road works and road closures, weather conditions, other relevant safety-related information (e.g. the presence of animal, people or debris on the road). Additionally, real-time traffic information services can potentially include any other information considered relevant to the planning and the execution of the trip.

Who are the users of real-time traffic information?

The users of real-time traffic information fall into three main categories: (1) the most numerous user group is road users including private motorists, commercial road transport operators and also users of public transport services who want to optimise their transport activities; (2) transport infrastructure managers, road operators and traffic managers use real-time traffic information to optimise the utilization of transport infrastructure they are responsible for and also aim to provide a better user experience for road users; (3) ITS¹ service providers who use real-time traffic information to provide value-added services to their own customers. It is worth noting that many of the users of real-time traffic information also generate data that can be used for the provision of the traffic information services (e.g. road operators who collect traffic information using roadside sensors but also motorist whose vehicles or personal devices might generate probe data/floating car data²).

How is information delivered to users?

Real-time traffic information services can be delivered to users through a variety of delivery channels including the traditional voice radio broadcasting of traffic news, digital broadcasting of data over FM radio or digital radio, the transmission of data through mobile communication technologies (GPRS, 3G etc.) and the display of information on so-called variable message signs (VMS) along the road. While variable message signs are capable to deliver information to users directly, most of the delivery channels require users to have access to certain equipment (such as FM radio, digital radio, smart phone or personal navigation device). In addition, users may also consult real-time traffic information services by telephone or access specialised websites operated by road operators or service providers.

¹ Intelligent Transport Systems

² Probe data that can be potentially obtained from a suitably equipped vehicle or from a personal communication device that is situated in the vehicle include time, position and speed. If probe data is acquired from a sufficient number of vehicles or devices, it allows the monitoring of road traffic at any chosen location or point in time. Additionally, other relevant information (e.g. weather conditions such as slippery road surface) can also be obtained this way.

Policy background

Directive 2010/40/EU (the "ITS Directive")³ provides for the adoption of specifications to ensure the compatibility, interoperability and continuity for the deployment and operational use of EU-wide real-time traffic information services (priority action "b").

As listed in Annex I of the Directive, these specifications shall include:

- the definition of the necessary requirements to make EU-wide real-time traffic information services accurate and available across borders to ITS users;
- the definition of the necessary requirements for the collection by relevant public authorities and/or, where relevant, by the private sector of road and traffic data (i.e. traffic circulation plans, traffic regulations and recommended routes, notably for heavy goods vehicles) and for their provisioning to ITS service providers;
- the definition of the necessary requirements to make road, traffic and transport services data used for digital maps accurate and available, where possible, to digital map producers and service providers.

The Directive foresees these specifications to be binding and aimed at ensuring the development of interoperable services, where possible based on existing standards and technology. The initiative is expected to contribute to EU-wide continuity and harmonised delivery of real-time traffic information services.

The European Commission has already adopted specifications for the minimum requirements for road safety related minimum universal traffic information services⁴. The objective of this initiative was to provide early warning to drivers about unexpected and dangerous traffic situations or road conditions to enable them to better anticipate and adapt their driving behaviour to avoid potentially serious accidents.

Instructions for filling in the questionnaire

Please note that the questionnaire consists of four parts. Part I asks information about the respondent and all the questions in Part I are mandatory to all respondents. The questions in Part II are only applicable to citizens filling in the questionnaire. The questions in Part III and Part IV are primarily directed at organisations filling in the questionnaire and these questions are mandatory for organisation. However, citizens responding to the consultation may also answer some or all the questions in Parts III-IV if they wish to do so.

Disclaimer

Please note that this document has been drafted for information and consultation purposes only. It has not been adopted or in any way approved by the European Commission and should not be regarded as representing the views of the Commission. It does not prejudice, or constitute the announcement of any position on the part of the Commission on the issues covered. The European Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the information provided, nor does it accept responsibility for any use made thereof.

³ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32010L0040:EN:NOT>

⁴ [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/its/news/doc/c\(2013\)2550_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/its/news/doc/c(2013)2550_en.pdf)