



Recommendation of the Council on
Traffic Limitation and Low-Cost
Improvement of the Urban
Environment

**OECD Legal
Instruments**

This document is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. It reproduces an OECD Legal Instrument and may contain additional material. The opinions expressed and arguments employed in the additional material do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD Member countries.

This document, as well as any data and any map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

For access to the official and up-to-date texts of OECD Legal Instruments, as well as other related information, please consult the Compendium of OECD Legal Instruments at <http://legalinstruments.oecd.org>.

Please cite this document as:

OECD, *Recommendation of the Council on Traffic Limitation and Low-Cost Improvement of the Urban Environment*, OECD/LEGAL/0131

Series: OECD Legal Instruments

© OECD 2018

This document is provided free of charge. It may be reproduced and distributed free of charge without requiring any further permissions, as long as it is not altered in any way. It may not be sold.

This document is available in the two OECD official languages (English and French). It may be translated into other languages, as long as the translation is labelled "unofficial translation" and includes the following disclaimer: *"This translation has been prepared by [NAME OF TRANSLATION AUTHOR] for informational purpose only and its accuracy cannot be guaranteed by the OECD. The only official versions are the English and French texts available on the OECD website <http://legalinstruments.oecd.org>"*

Date(s)

Adopted on 14/11/1974

Background Information

The Recommendation on Traffic Limitation and Low-Cost Improvement of the Urban Environment was adopted by the OECD Council on 14 November 1974 on the proposal of the Environment Committee (now called Environment Policy Committee). The Recommendation recommends that Adherents to seek to strike a better balance between private and public transportation by encouraging local authorities and other responsible bodies, particularly in congested cities, to expand and improve the quality of transportation services.

THE COUNCIL,

HAVING REGARD to Article 5 b) of the Convention on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development of 14 December 1960;

HAVING REGARD to the Recommendation of the Council of 26 May 1972 on Guiding Principles concerning International Economic Aspects of Environmental Policies [C(72)128];

CONSIDERING that urban areas are the home of a vast and ever growing proportion of Member countries' populations;

CONSIDERING that air pollution, noise, congestion and accidents which result from motorised traffic severely hinder attempts to improve the quality of urban life;

CONSIDERING that the need to lessen dependence on private automobiles is reinforced by the necessity to conserve energy resources;

CONSIDERING that certain measures to reduce the adverse effects of traffic can be implemented on a relatively short time scale and do not necessarily require large capital investment;

CONSIDERING that solutions to urban environmental problems cannot be found on a piecemeal basis but require a comprehensive urban policy approach;

On the proposal of the Environment Committee;

I. RECOMMENDS that Member countries:

1. Seek to strike a better balance between private and public transportation by encouraging local authorities and other responsible bodies, particularly in congested cities, to expand and improve the quality of transportation services, and to encourage the use of means of transport other than private automobiles whenever these alternative means are or can be made available;
2. Include in the above efforts, traffic management and other measures which can be implemented at relatively low cost - such as bus priority measures, provision of bicycle-ways, car pooling, traffic signal systems, parking control and establishment of car-free areas;
3. Complement the above policies with low-cost measures to improve the quality of the local environment, for example through the creation of small parks and open spaces, pedestrian areas, and conservation of the urban landscape;
4. Support and encourage further experimental projects aimed at demonstrating the feasibility and financial, environmental and urban development implications of the measures referred to above and co-operate in the international dissemination of this experience;
5. In the longer run, seek to reduce the need for transportation through comprehensive land use and transportation planning and through other measures affecting the patterns of human activities.

II. INSTRUCTS the Environment Committee:

1. To continue its examination of national policies and programmes for traffic limitation and its assessments of their costs and effectiveness with emphasis on measures which can be implemented at relatively low cost;
2. To assess the action taken pursuant to this Recommendation and report thereon to the Council;
3. To carry out this work in conjunction with other appropriate bodies of the Organisation and with the European Conference of Ministers of Transport.

Adherents*

OECD Members

Australia
Austria
Belgium
Canada
Chile
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Iceland
Ireland
Israel
Italy
Japan
Korea
Latvia
Luxembourg
Mexico
Netherlands
New Zealand
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Slovak Republic
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
Turkey
United Kingdom
United States

Non-Members

* Additional information and statements are available in the Compendium of OECD Legal Instruments:
<http://legalinstruments.oecd.org>

About the OECD

The OECD is a unique forum where governments work together to address the economic, social and environmental challenges of globalisation. The OECD is also at the forefront of efforts to understand and to help governments respond to new developments and concerns, such as corporate governance, the information economy and the challenges of an ageing population. The Organisation provides a setting where governments can compare policy experiences, seek answers to common problems, identify good practice and work to co-ordinate domestic and international policies.

The OECD Member countries are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. The European Union takes part in the work of the OECD.

OECD Legal Instruments

Since the creation of the OECD in 1961, around 450 substantive legal instruments have been developed within its framework. These include OECD Acts (i.e. the Decisions and Recommendations adopted by the OECD Council in accordance with the OECD Convention) and other legal instruments developed within the OECD framework (e.g. Declarations, international agreements).

All substantive OECD legal instruments, whether in force or abrogated, are listed in the online Compendium of OECD Legal Instruments. They are presented in five categories:

- **Decisions:** OECD legal instruments which are legally binding on all Members except those which abstain at the time of adoption. While they are not international treaties, they entail the same kind of legal obligations. Adherents are obliged to implement Decisions and must take the measures necessary for such implementation.
- **Recommendations:** OECD legal instruments which are not legally binding but practice accords them great moral force as representing the political will of Adherents. There is an expectation that Adherents will do their utmost to fully implement a Recommendation. Thus, Members which do not intend to do so usually abstain when a Recommendation is adopted, although this is not required in legal terms.
- **Declarations:** OECD legal instruments which are prepared within the Organisation, generally within a subsidiary body. They usually set general principles or long-term goals, have a solemn character and are usually adopted at Ministerial meetings of the Council or of committees of the Organisation.
- **International Agreements:** OECD legal instruments negotiated and concluded within the framework of the Organisation. They are legally binding on the Parties.
- **Arrangement, Understanding and Others:** several ad hoc substantive legal instruments have been developed within the OECD framework over time, such as the Arrangement on Officially Supported Export Credits, the International Understanding on Maritime Transport Principles and the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Recommendations.