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Answer given by Ms Ferreira
on behalf of the European Commission
(31.3.2021)

The operations financed by the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds) in the period 2014-2020 need to prevent any kind of discrimination and ensure accessibility of persons with disabilities, in line with Article 7[1] of Regulation (EU) N° 1303/2013. Furthermore, the existence of administrative capacity for the implementation and application of the United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (UNCRPD) was an ex-ante conditionality for funding by the ESI Funds. It is also noted that Member States are parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities. In line with its Article 9 on accessibility, Member States have to eliminate obstacles and barriers to accessibility.The Managing authorities of the programmes have to ensure that all projects, throughout their preparation and implementation, comply with accessibility requirements, as well as with national legislation.

Upon the Commission's request, the managing authority of the Cyprus' operational programme supporting the projects in the centre of Nicosia (including the "Eleftheria square") has clarified that the Municipality of Nicosia (responsible for the project)[2] has designed and implemented the project on the basis of international standards. Furthermore, a meeting took place in January at the Eleftheria Square, between the Municipality and representatives of KYSOA (Confederation representing people with disabilities at the national level), who have submitted concrete contributions and ideas to improve the project. The Commission expects that this will lead to appropriate solutions, in line with EU and national requirements as well as international standards.

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[1] Promotion of equality between men and women and non- discrimination
[2] They have been thus approved by the competent department of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Works.