

Round table discussion in Kaunas initiated by Mobility Scouts

On February 8th, 2018 a round table discussion initiated by Mobility Scouts took place in Kaunas Municipality meeting room. The roundtable was the highlight of Mobility Scouts small project 'Participation in decision making for age-friendly public transport'. Members of Seniors Council, Association of Community Centres, participants of Mobility Scouts project, and specialists from the Department of Social Services attended the discussion with the head of the Department of Transportation and Traffic Paulius Keras, Director of Kaunas Public Transport Company Mindaugas Grigelis and Director for Transport Operations Rimantas Stankaitis.

Edita Štalienė, the chairperson of Seniors Initiatives Centre, introduced the Mobility Scouts project, the concept of Age-friendly city, the areas of age-friendly environment (WHO), and the importance of mobility in later life.

The round table discussion was moderated by Lithuanian Sports University lecturer Saulius Kavaliauskas who had helped to prepare for the discussion, design the agenda, and ensured that the conversation was shared equally. The discussion concentrated on the issues raised and analysed by Mobility Scouts in the training. They were related to the improvement of public transport routes, presenting information at bus stops and inside the buses/trolley-buses, getting on and off the bus, waiting time during transfers and the number of transfers in order to reach the destination, the length of green light at pedestrian crossings, a possibility to introduce 50% discount on fares for retired citizens.

The head of the Department of Transportation and Traffic explained the basic principles how public transport is organised (bus route files), how decisions are made, the principles of public transport fare and discount calculation, the status of Kaunas SUMP drafting and the timetable of public discussions on SUMP solutions.

Director of municipal Public Transport Company Kauno autobusai talked about the traffic culture, the specific aspects of bus driver's job, high driver turnover rates, technical possibilities of bus stop arrangement, and passenger behaviour.

The roundtable was very successful and proposals of Mobility Scouts were taken into consideration. All stakeholders agreed to continue collaboration in the future. Lithuanian Geographical Society board member Giedrė Godienė made a graphical recording of the discussion.