

AccessibleEU – Accessibility Indicators

Highlights 2024

Belgium

Background

AccessibleEU intends to monitor action and progress of member states to implement accessibility legislation and standards by using a framework largely based on the [United Nations \(2020\) Article 9: Illustrative Indicators, Human Rights Indicators on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\)](#) developed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

This monitoring framework is composed of structural indicators, process indicators, and outcome indicators:

- **Structural indicators** aim to capture the institutional aspects of national commitments.
- **Progress indicators** focus on efforts of member states to transform commitments into results.
- **Outcome indicators** relate to the impact of commitments and efforts onto individuals.

AccessibleEU uses a total of 30 indicators covering the areas of Built Environment, Transport, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Public Policies.

Overview for Belgium

Percentage of people with disabilities ([Eurostat, 2024](#)): 25.40%

AccessibleEU National Experts: [Kathleen Polders](#) and [Stéphanie Herman](#)

National Council of Persons with Disabilities (member of the European Disability Forum): [Belgium Disability Forum](#)

[Annual Country Report 2024 for Belgium](#)

Structural indicators

Topic: Legislation enacted ensuring the right to access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, transportation, services, information and communications, including ICTs, and other facilities and services open or provided to the public, in both urban and rural areas.

- **Findings:** Indicator met across sectors. Legislation in ICT and public sector policies seem to address more explicitly the right to equal access for a broad scope of disability related obstacles than transport and built environment. Enforcement mechanisms are foreseen in the areas of the built environment and ICT.

Topic: Incorporation of EU accessibility standards and/or transposition of EU Directives in national legal frameworks

- **Findings:** Partial transposition of the Directive (EU) 2019/882 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on the accessibility requirements for products and services in transport and ICT. Specific reference to EU accessibility standards is not explicitly incorporated in legislation in the area of built environment (EN 17210:2021), but alignment exists in the sectors of ICT, Transport and Public Policies.

Topic: Accessibility related Strategic and action planning is up to date on national level and aligned with EU relevant strategies.

- **Findings:** The [Inter-federal Disability Strategy 2021-2030](#) covers all sectors (Built Environment, Transport, ICT, Public Policies), it is based on UN CRPD and seeks to promote accessibility objectives in accordance to EU Regulations. Work is in progress for establishing an Accessibility Action Plan in Flanders.

Process indicators

Topic: Training on universal design and accessibility standards is part of higher education courses/ professional accreditation.

- **Findings:** Trainings are available across sectors by state agencies, expert centres and disability organisations. Notably, Inter provides since 2021 [free accessibility training](#) to university schools, such as architecture, interior architecture, product design, space and service design.

Topic: Implementation of accessibility audits on government facilities, services and programmes that require the participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, including with respect to emergency protocols, procedures, services and facilities.

- **Findings:** Accessibility audits are implemented in the sectors of the built environment and ICT. There is evidence of persons with disabilities being involved in audits related to the built environment.

Topic: Awareness raising campaigns and activities to promote accessibility across all services open to the public and promote knowledge of universal design and accessibility standards by relevant professionals, manufacturers and service providers, as well as informing individuals of their rights and responsibilities as they relate to accessibility.

- **Findings:** One ongoing public awareness [campaign](#) was identified in the area of built environment to promote accessibility of physical and digital shops commercial venues, an initiative of the trade federation (Comeos), and the disability organisation Inter, as well as Cawab.

Topic: Incentives and support provision to improve accessibility in the provision of goods and services and/or information about accessibility to potential users.

- **Findings:** There was no evidence identified to support the existence of incentives and supports provision specific to accessibility.

Topic: Consultation processes undertaken to ensure the active involvement of persons with disabilities, including through their representative organizations, in the design, implementation and monitoring of laws, regulations, policies and programs, related to accessibility of the built environment, transportation, information and communication.

- **Findings:** There is not sufficient evidence identified regarding the active participation of persons with disabilities / DPOs in the design/implementation and/or monitoring of relevant strategic plans.

Outcome indicators

Topic: Reported access to public transport, public buildings/spaces and websites and compliance with legal requirements.

- **Findings:** Some evidence is available in the areas of the built environment, transport, and web accessibility. In total 103 rail stations across Belgium are accessible, inc. availability of assistance ([Atingo](#)). In Flanders, 16% of bus stops are wheelchair accessible, 8.5% accessible for visual disabilities and 33% provide assistance ([Bus Transport Flanders](#)). A monitoring study of accessibility of buildings according to urban planning regulations showed that the regulation was correctly applied in only 9 of the 147 permit applications analyzed, which represents 6% of the permit applications.