

AccessibleEU – Accessibility Indicators

Highlights 2024

Latvia

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 Latvia

Percentage of people with disabilities ([Eurostat, 2024](#)): 40,7%

AccessibleEU National Expert: Daina Podzina

National Council of Persons with Disabilities (member of the European Disability Forum): [The Latvian Umbrella Body for Disability Organisations \(SUSTENTO\)](#)

[Annual Country Report 2024 for Latvia](#)

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:** The [Construction Law](#), which regulates built environment and transport infrastructure, refers to the principle of environmental accessibility and refers to the standards “ [General Construction Standard for Buildings LBN 200-21](#)” prescribing that access for people with functional impairments should be ensured. It is expected that improvements will be achieved in the future as there is commitment for developing the Accessibility services standards, as well as in the field of culture and electoral processes. There is no specific infringement and sanctions regime in Latvia.

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

- **Findings:** International accessibility standards are incorporated in [Latvia's standardisation framework](#), such as LVS EN 17210:2021 and LVS EN 62944:2017 for ICT and LBN 200-21 for the built environment.

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

- **Findings:** There is no unique National Action Plan on Accessibility in Latvia. [The Plan for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities for 2024-2027](#) has a cross-sectorial approach. There are also specific plans, such as “[About Housing Accessibility Guidelines 2023-2027](#)”, the [Transport Development Guidelines for 2021-2027](#) that sets the objective of accessible and available mobility, and the [Digital Transformation Guidelines 2021-2027](#) about the accessibility of the digital environment.

Process indicators

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

- **Findings:** The courses on Accessibility/ Universal Design/ Inclusive Design/Barrier-free design/ Design-for-All are not included in the training programs in higher education and/or professional accreditation courses. The Foundation 'Association of Disabled People and their Foundation 'Apeirons' organises training on environmental accessibility and universal design to interested professionals, including architects, architecture students, specialists from various fields, an average of 100 people per

year, and/or provides information on environmental accessibility and universal design on an average of 200 consultations per year,

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:** In 2020, the [Ministry of Welfare](#) analysed the accessibility of state and municipal institutions' buildings infrastructure. The analysis included 2.249 questionnaires in which state and municipal institutions provided self-assessment. One assessment of the accessibility of state and local government buildings, and public transport infrastructure is under preparation for the first half of 2026. About ICT, the Ministry of Smart Administration and Regional Development is responsible for testing of public websites and apps and involves people with disabilities. In 2021, a selection of simplified evaluation websites (113 websites) and an in-depth evaluation sample (16 websites and 8 mobile applications) was developed. Finally, the [Consumer Rights Protection Centre](#) receives applications and complaints regarding accessibility issues in transport, health care, education, social services, and other areas.

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:** Some actions are carried out within the '[Plan for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities for 2024-2027](#)' including the organisation of online seminar for construction specialists, the preparation of Guidelines on applying the Law on Access to Goods and Services to microenterprises, the redaction of Accessible electronic media services standards, and the organisation of educational events before the elections to responsible institutions and the dissemination of information on digital accessibility and diversity management to authorities.

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

- **Findings:** No public funding initiatives on accessibility have been identified in Latvia.

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:** Any NGO can be actively involved in the preparation phase of any policy planning document or draft law by participating in working groups or in public consultation, but no specific information has been identified regarding reference to the mandatory involvement of people with disabilities in accessibility-related legislation in Latvia.

Outcome indicators

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

- **Findings:** Report published in 2021 '[Analysis of self-assessment of environmental accessibility in state and local government institutions](#)' concludes that only 8% of public buildings are accessible, 26% are partially accessible, and 66% are inaccessible. Environmental accessibility and improved safety at 75 railway stations in the first half of 2024, 65 modernised stations have been equipped with audiovisual notification of rail passengers in 'real-time'. In the second half of 2024, 32 new electric trains were adapted for persons with disabilities and reduced mobility. In 2021, the Ministry of Welfare assessed the [environment's accessibility](#) in 26 higher education institutions and the main conclusions of the evaluation is that 51% of parking for people with disabilities is not accessible, 25% of sidewalks and paths are not accessible, and accessibility for people with visual, hearing and mental impairments is not fully ensured in 89% of the cases. In 2023 a Survey evaluated the accessibility of goods and services. On average, 60% of respondents rated accessibility as very bad or bad. The most significant obstacles in service accessibility were mentioned as a lack of understanding of persons with disabilities' needs by service providers, staff attitude, lack of individual approach, lack of information regarding service provision places, and too complex communication language.