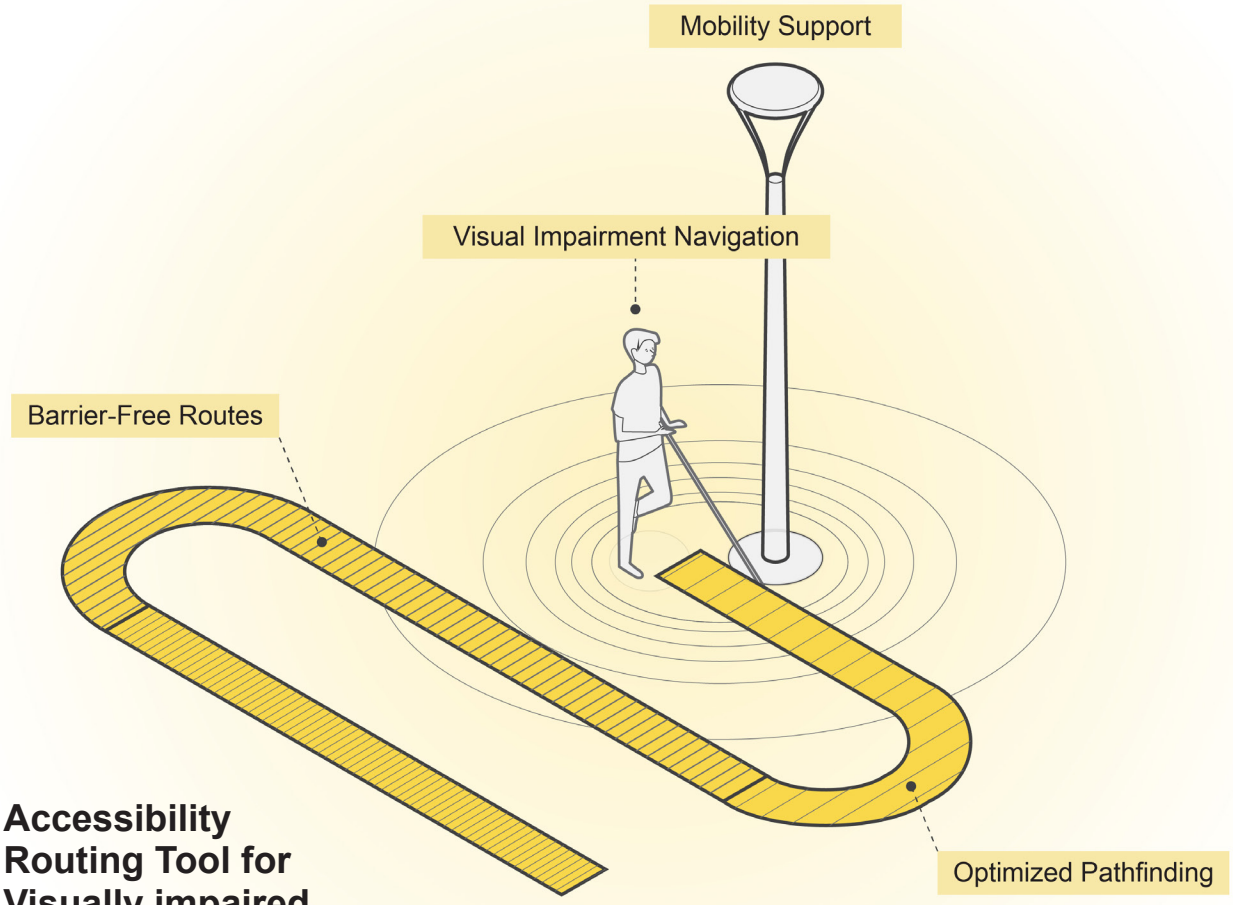
EU 1



Accessibility Routing Tool for Visually impaired and Mobility impaired people

2024, Athens (Penteli), Hamburg - Ethnicon Metsovion Polytechnion (NTUA)

This technology helps people with visual and mobility limitations to orient themselves in the surrounding environment. It offers accessible route planning, navigation for the visually impaired, and barrier-free route finding. For example, suggested routes can avoid stairs or narrow corridors. The routing tool can make a big difference in the lives of people with visual and motor impairments, as it can help them become more independent and participate more fully in society.

Prioritize accessible routes when planning urban developments

By empowering people with visual and mobility impairments, this technology allows them to navigate independently, enhancing their engagement with society and access to public spaces safely.

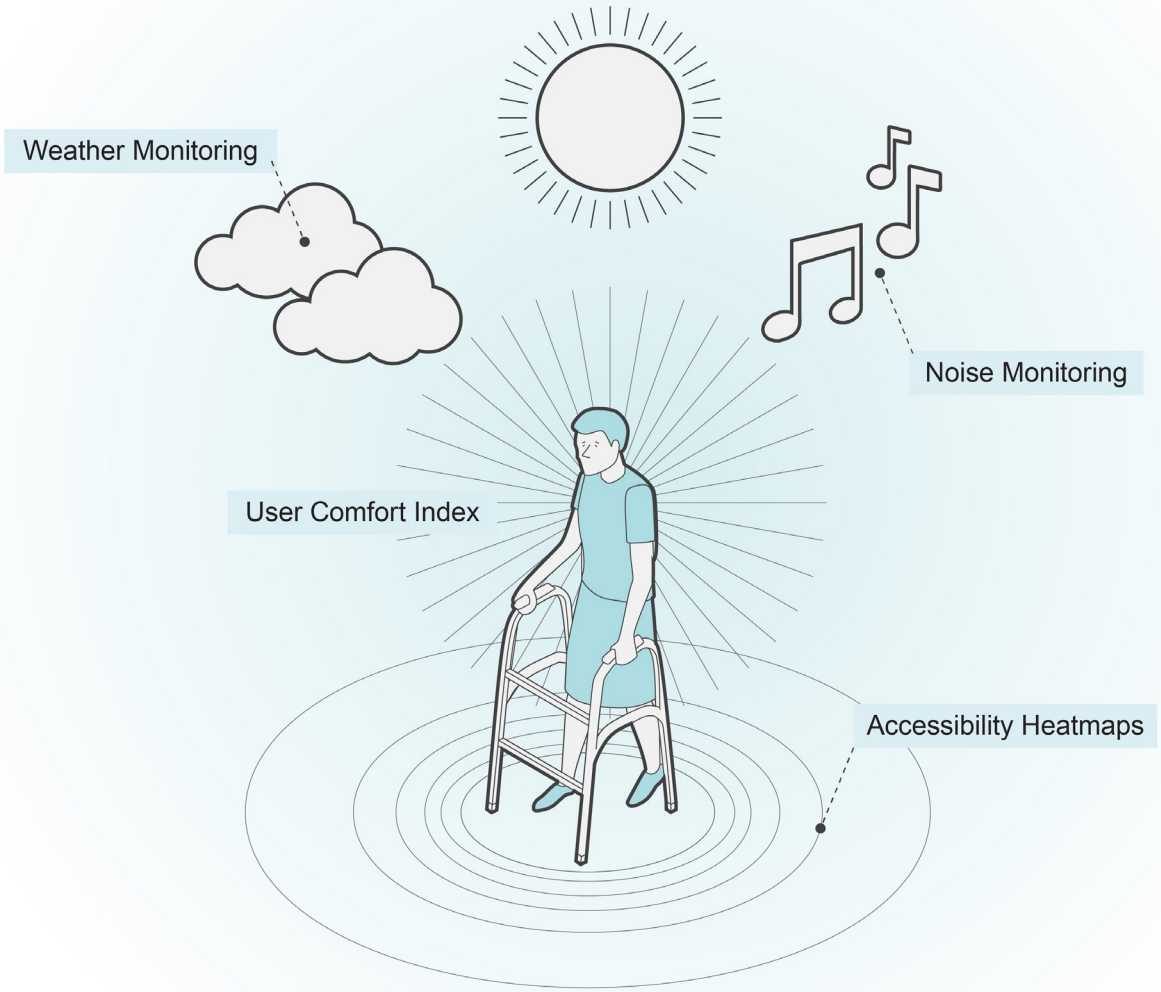
- **Where possible, seek to design continuous accessible routes.**
- **Provide navigational aids for people with visual impairments. This can include audio descriptions of the environment, tactile maps and other aids.**
- **Consider the needs of people with motor disabilities. This means designing routes that are easy to navigate for people using wheelchairs or other mobility devices.**

Source: https://inclusivespaces-heproject.eu/

Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective

Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 2



Comfort-based Accessibility tool

2024, Athens (Penteli), Hamburg - Technische Universitaet Muenchen (TUM)

This tool helps people with mobility difficulties to orient themselves in their environment. It offers interactive maps, a comfort index and comfort-based maps with real-time data. The tool takes into account factors such as weather, noise and obstacles to allow users to see which areas are currently the most comfortable and pleasant for them to move around.

Source: https://inclusivespaces-heproject.eu/

Connect different areas of the city with comfortable accessible urban routes

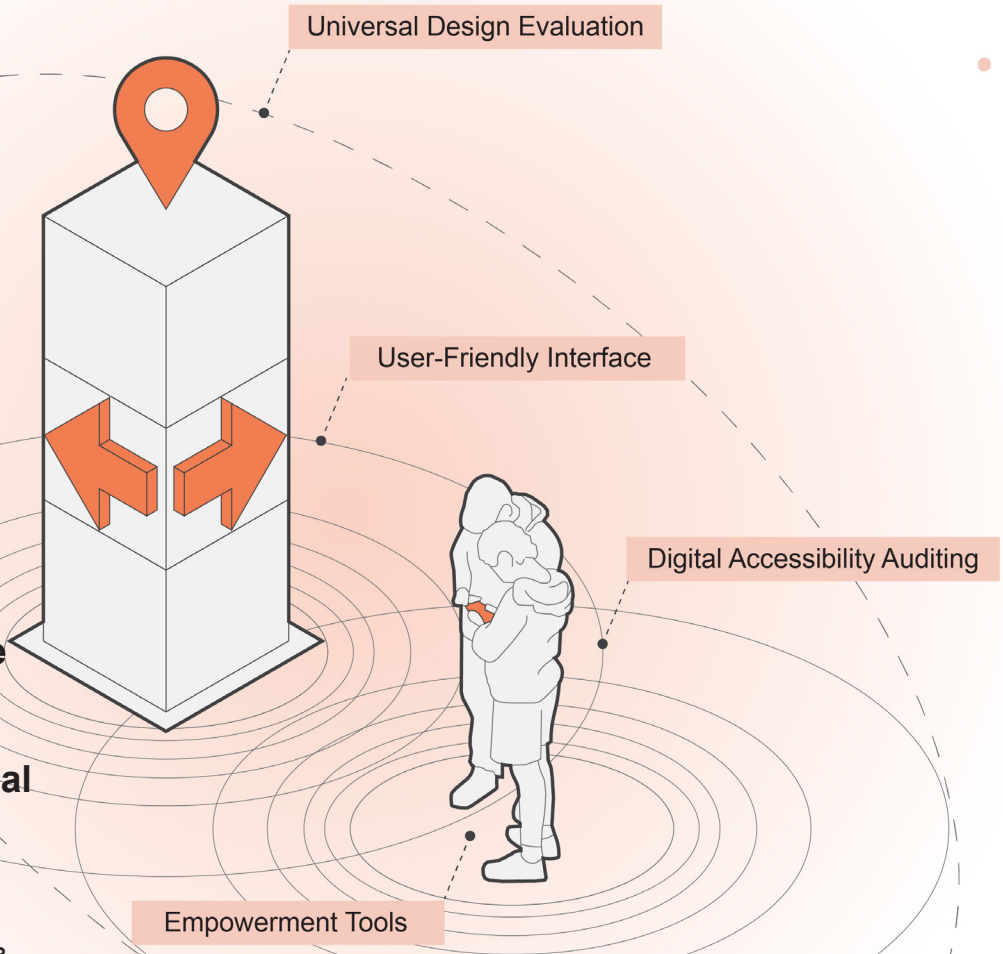
This tool empowers individuals with learning disabilities to actively assess accessibility, ensuring built environments meet universal design standards and are truly inclusive.

— **When intervening in the urban environment, try to connect the most accessible and comfortable urban areas with one another. This creates continuity between spaces and therefore allows for free movement.**

Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective

Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 3



Digital tool to empower people with borderline intelligence in auditing universal accessibility in buildings and public spaces

2024, Madrid, Larnaka - Instituto Internacional Académico y Profesional para la Accesibilidad (iiAPA)

This innovative tool is specifically designed to empower individuals with learning disabilities to actively participate in assessing the accessibility of buildings and public spaces. By leveraging technology to examine environments and providing user-friendly resources for generating accessibility reports, this tool promotes inclusivity and ensures that built environments meet universal design standard. This tool equips individuals to play an active role in assessing accessibility. By providing easy-to-use digital tools and resources, it empowers them to contribute to the creation of spaces that are welcoming and accessible to all.

Source: https://inclusivespaces-heproject.eu/

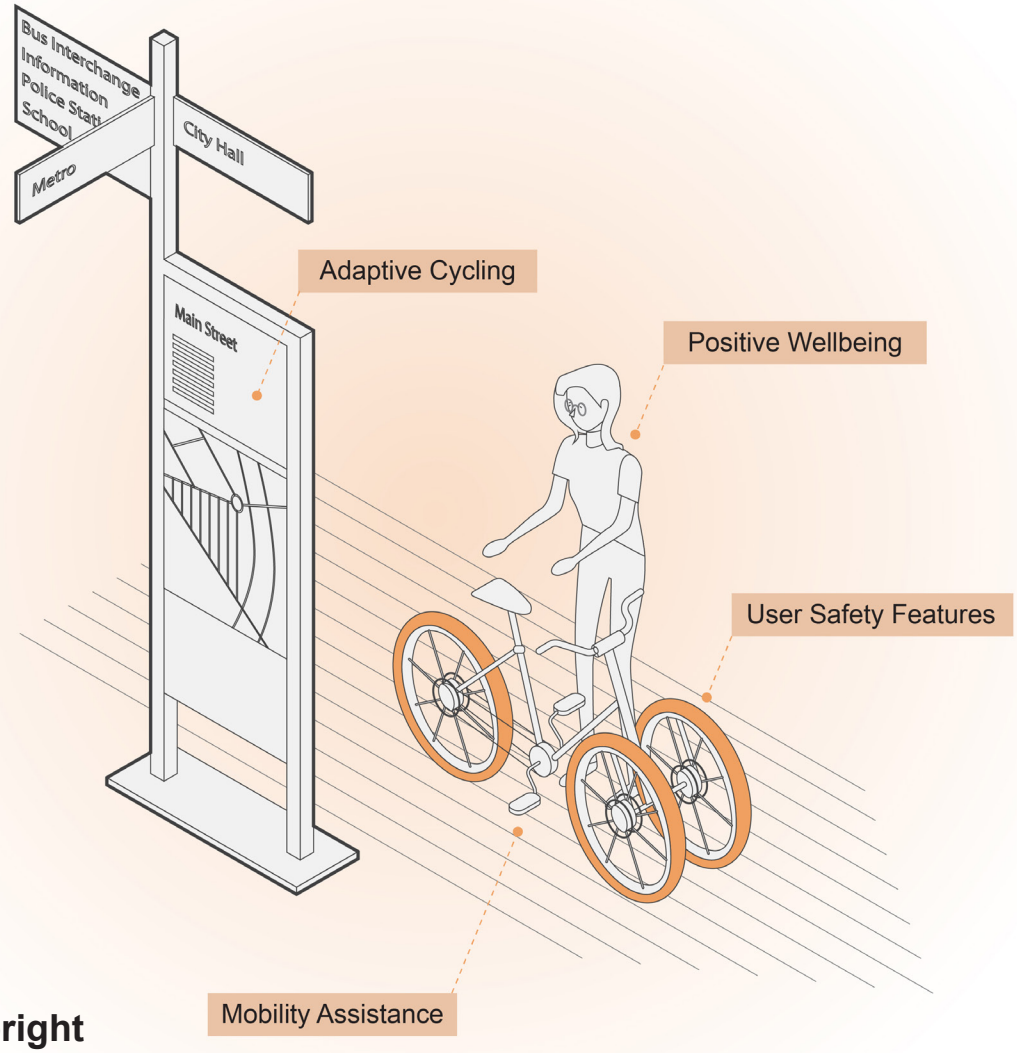
Involve people with disabilities in the design and testing of accessibility tools

- **For full inclusion in design, involve people with disabilities in the design process.**
- **Provide training to staff on how to use the tool and how to interpret the results.**
- **Make sure that the tool is compatible with existing accessibility standards.**
- **Test the tool with a diverse group of users to ensure that it is easy to use and understand.**
- **Educate the public about the tool and how it can be used to improve accessibility.**

Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective

Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 4



Inclusive Upright Tricycle

2024, Hamburg, Budapest - MPH Support Ltd (TripleTread)

This tricycle is specially designed to be accessible to everyone, including those with mobility challenges. It offers exceptional safety, stability, and ease of use. TripleTread incorporates special features to accommodate the diverse needs of its users. Given the challenges faced by people with reduced mobility in urban environments, this tricycle promotes greater independence, autonomy and joy in outdoor spaces, which has a positive impact on overall well-being and health.

Source: https://inclusivespaces-heproject.eu/

Ensure the tricycle meets community needs

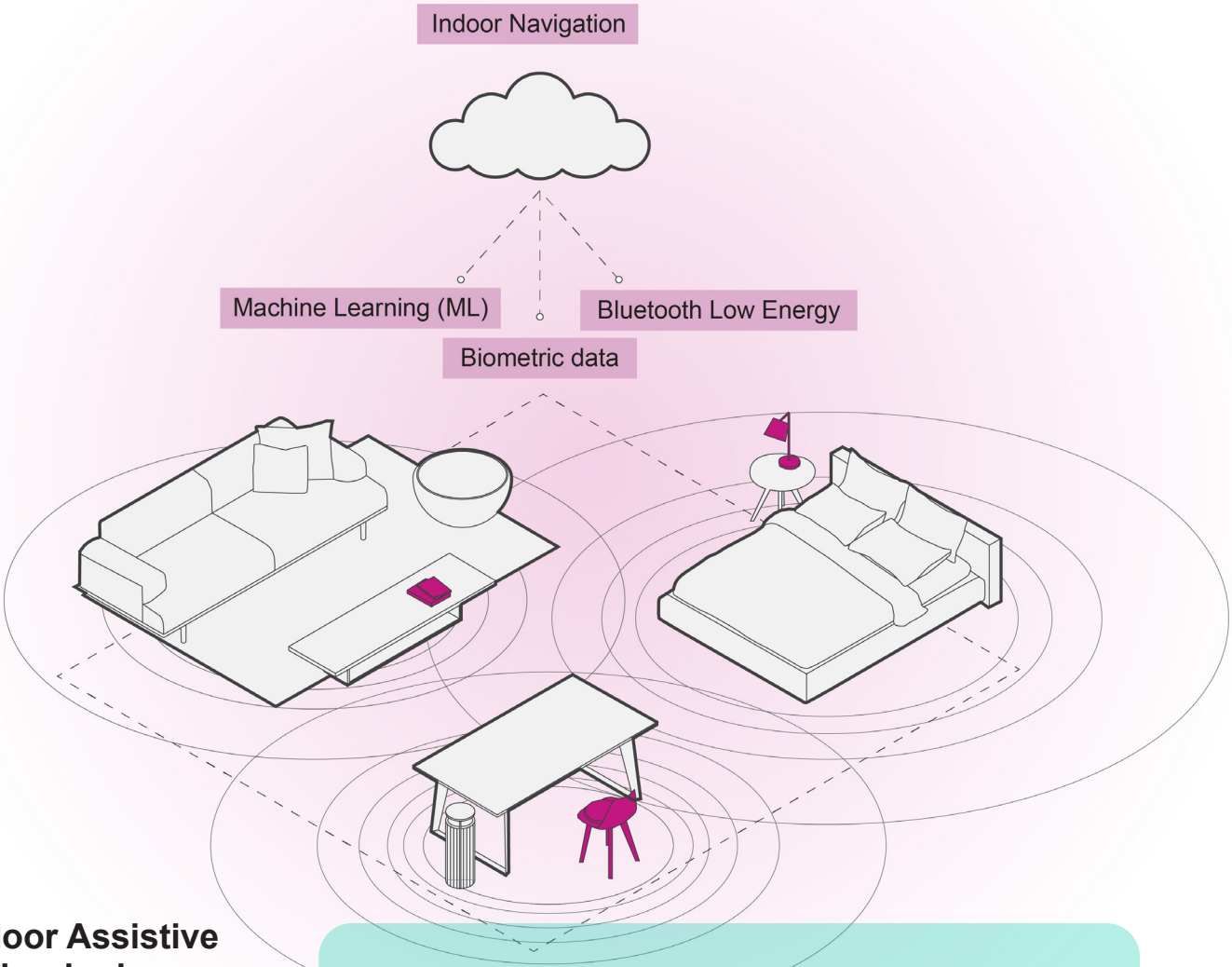
By enhancing independence and well-being for people with mobility challenges, this tricycle fosters greater autonomy in outdoor spaces, promoting a more inclusive urban environment.

- **Make sure that the tricycle meets all safety standards, including those for people with disabilities.**
- **Make sure that the city has the necessary infrastructure, such as ramps and accessible sidewalks, to support the use of the tricycle.**
- **Provide designated parking spaces for the tricycle in public areas.**
- **Work with disability organizations to promote the use of the tricycle and to ensure that it meets the needs of the community.**

Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective

Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 5



Indoor Assistive technologies based on sensors

2024, Athens (Penteli), Larnaka - University of Peloponnese (UoP)

Thanks to sensors and digital maps, this technology helps users navigate inside buildings. For a more in-depth analysis of the environment, they use digital devices that obtain information about the user, such as their location or heart rate, and use Bluetooth to communicate with other devices such as mobile phones if necessary (for example, if there is a fall or a person is trapped somewhere in the building). Thanks to machine learning, this technology is expected to improve progressively.

Source: https://inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

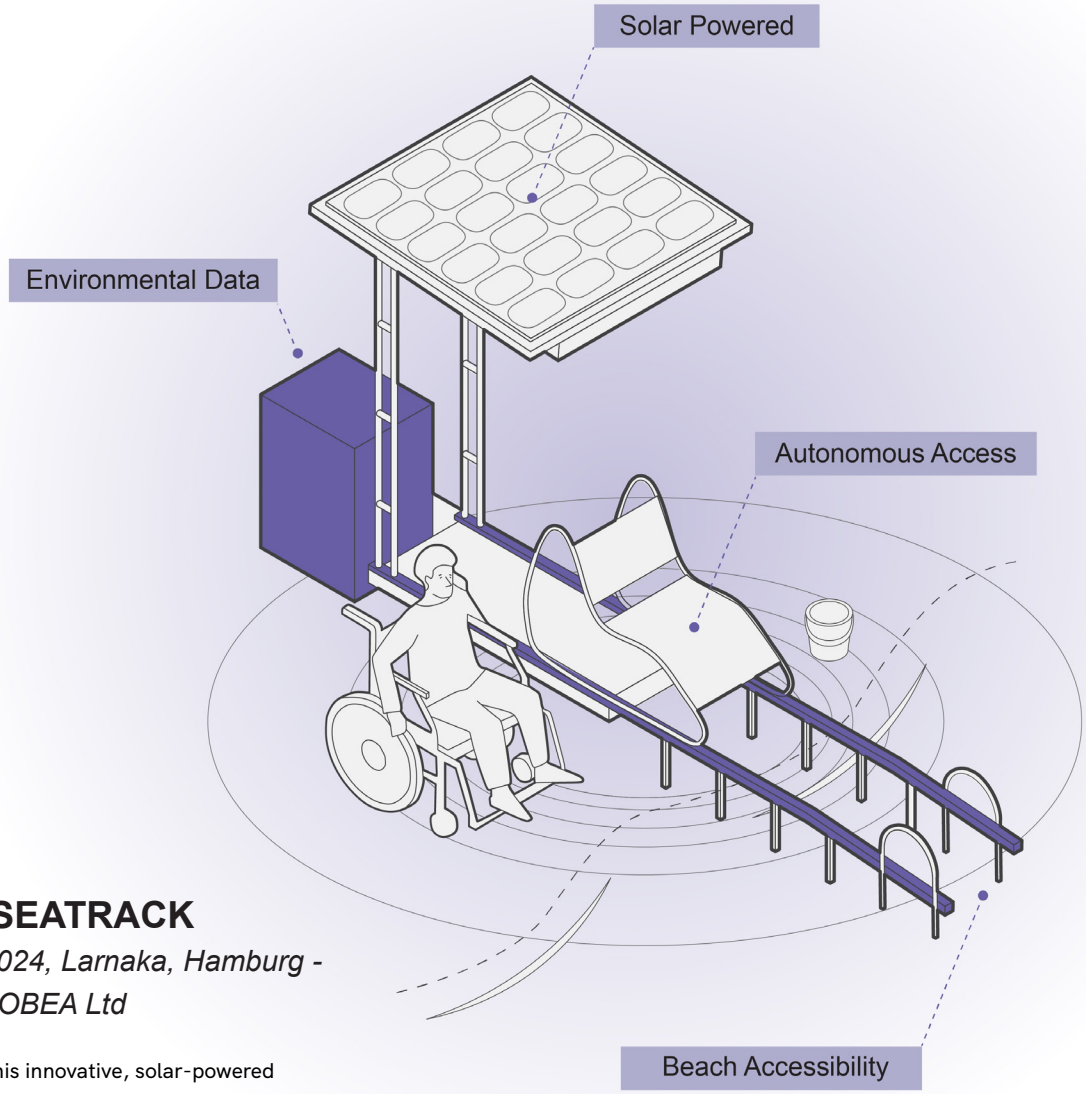
Prioritize user privacy when developing accessibility technology

Improving safety and accessibility while ensuring privacy, this technology offers critical support in emergency situations and progressively enhances the user experience through machine learning.

- **Make sure that the technology is used in a way that respects the privacy of users.**
- **Make sure that the technology is accessible to people with disabilities.**
- **Educate the public about the technology and how it can be used to improve safety and accessibility.**
- **Work with building owners, emergency services, and other stakeholders to ensure that the technology is implemented effectively.**
- **Test the technology in a variety of settings to ensure that it works as intended.**
- **Continuously monitor the use of the technology and make improvements as needed.**

Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective | Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 6



iSEATRACK

2024, Larnaka, Hamburg - TOBEA Ltd

This innovative, solar-powered beach access device provides autonomous and accessible access to the shoreline, empowering people of all abilities (in particular wheelchair users) to enjoy the beach environment. This sustainable solution not only promotes inclusion, but also contributes to environmental monitoring by collecting valuable weather data.

Source: https://inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

Provide accessible beach facilities for people with disabilities

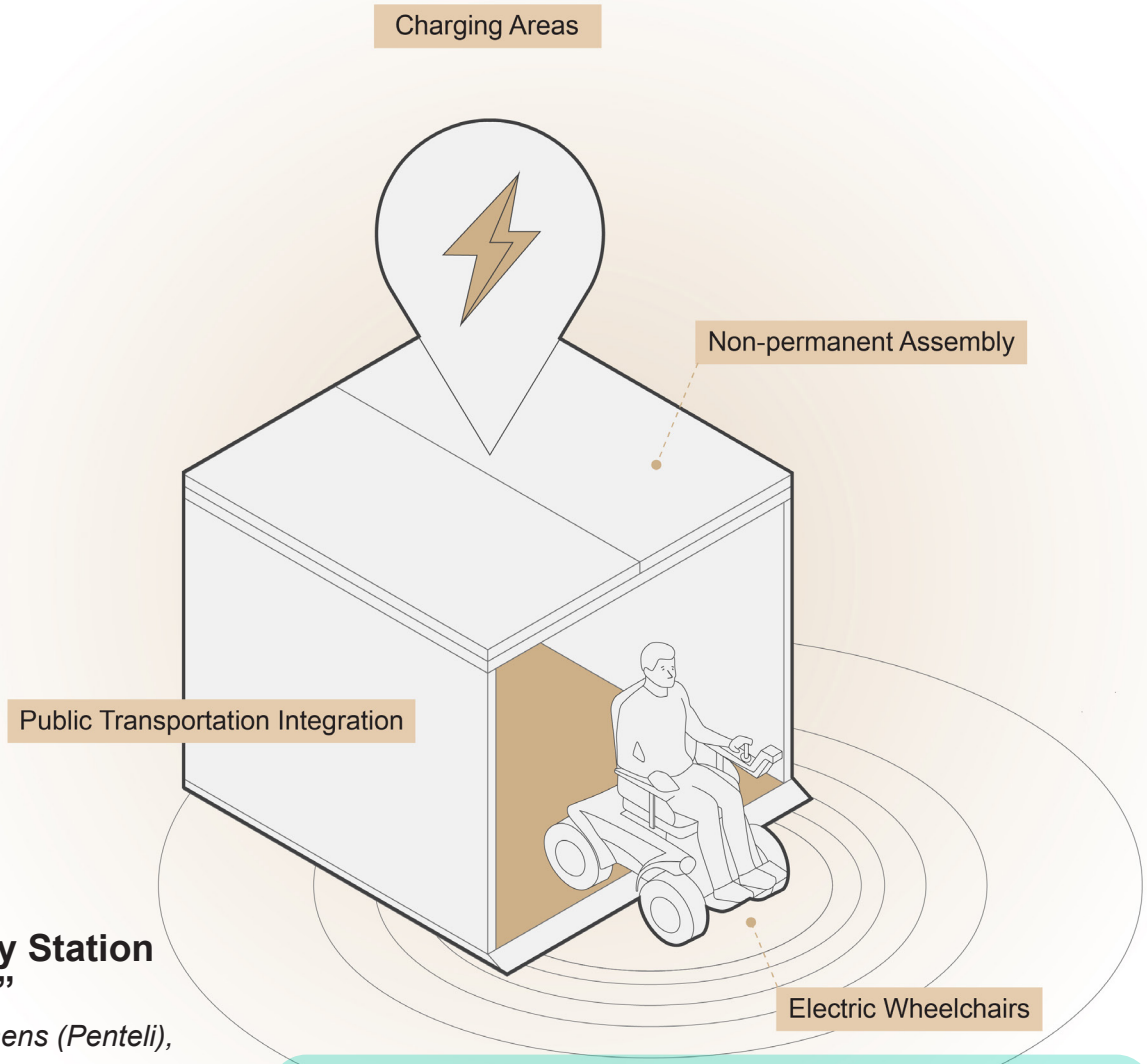
Promoting inclusion and environmental sustainability, this beach access device enables people with disabilities, particularly wheelchair users, to enjoy the beach autonomously while supporting environmental monitoring.

- **Provide your city's bathing beaches with these devices.**
- **Seek methods to facilitate the free and autonomous use of the beach for people with all abilities.**
- **Maintain these devices properly**
- **Provide clear signage and wayfinding information.**
- **Train lifeguards on disability awareness.**
- **Offer accessible parking and restrooms.**

Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective

Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 7



Mobility Station "Kiosk"

2024, Athens (Penteli), Larnaka, Hamburg - TOBEA Ltd

This mobility station can be strategically located at various points in the city according to changing needs. By allowing battery charging and wheelchair exchange, it promotes the autonomy and independence of people with reduced mobility, allowing them to explore the city more easily and confidently. Additionally, being adaptable to different environments, these stations not only meet a basic need but also contribute to creating more inclusive and accessible cities for all. Furthermore, it contributes to creating greener and more environmentally friendly cities by reducing the dependence on unsustainable transportation.

Source: https://inclusivespaces-heproject.eu/

Prioritize accessibility and safety when locating mobility kiosks

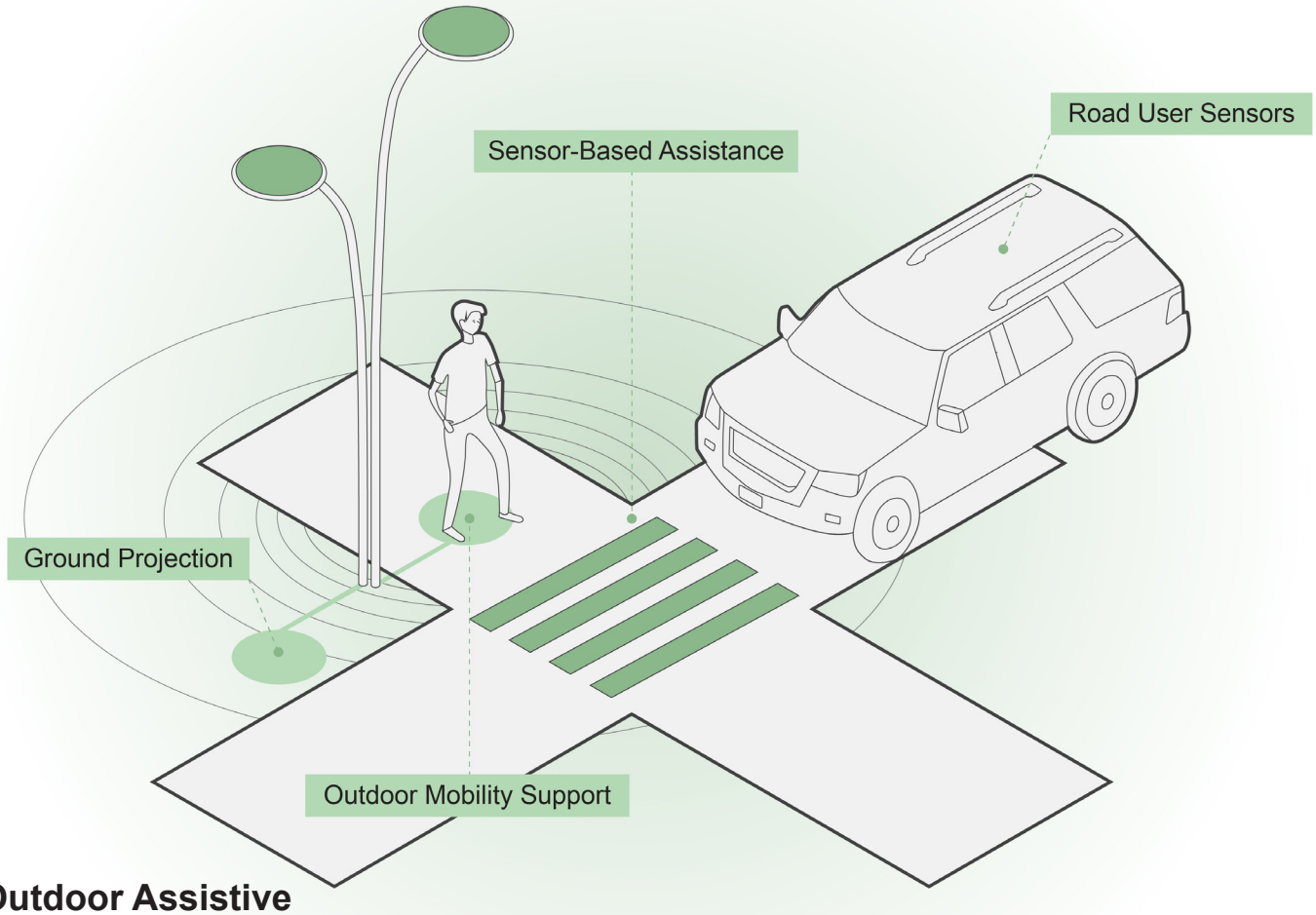
This mobility station enhances independence for people with reduced mobility, contributing to more inclusive, safer, and environmentally sustainable cities by providing reliable support for urban exploration.

- **Choose locations that are easily accessible to people with disabilities, such as near public transportation, hospitals, and shopping centers.**
- **Make sure that the station is accessible to people with different types of disabilities, including people who use wheelchairs, walkers, and canes.**
- **Make sure that the station is safe for users, especially at night. For example: providing security cameras, lighting, and other safety features.**
- **Regularly maintain the station to ensure that it is always in good working order.**
- **Work with city officials, disability organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure that the station is implemented effectively.**

Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective

Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 8



Outdoor Assistive technologies based on sensors

2024, Athens (Penteli), Geneva - SWARCO Italia SRL

This sensor-based mobility assistance system, installed in urban environments, provides visual and auditory information to users, especially those with special needs or difficulties with orientation. The sensors identify the presence of people, obstacles, or vehicles and transmit updated information to users, reducing the risk of accidents and allowing them to move safely and independently. Some of these signals are generated at intersections or with visual projections on the ground. This represents a significant advancement in creating more inclusive and accessible cities by providing tools that facilitate the mobility of all citizens.

Source: https://inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

Ensure accurate and reliable sensor calibration for the mobility assistance system

Offering real-time information, this mobility assistance system enhances safety and independence for users with special needs, supporting safe navigation in urban environments.

- **Choose locations where the system can have the greatest impact, such as busy intersections, pedestrian crossings, and areas with high foot traffic.**
- **Regularly calibrate the sensors to ensure that they are accurate and reliable. This will help to prevent false alarms and ensure that the system provides accurate information to users.**
- **Regularly maintain the system to ensure that it is always in good working order: cleaning the sensors, repairing any damage, and replacing any broken equipment.**
- **Work with city officials, disability organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure that the station is implemented effectively.**

Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective

Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 9

Travel demand data collection from impaired people (MobyApp)

2024, Geneva, Larnaka, Budapest - Moby Sustainability Non For Profit Ltd (MLAB)

This technology collects information from people with disabilities about their travel needs and experiences and is used to improve transportation infrastructure and services. It also assesses transport to ensure that it meets the needs of people with disabilities.

Source: https://inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

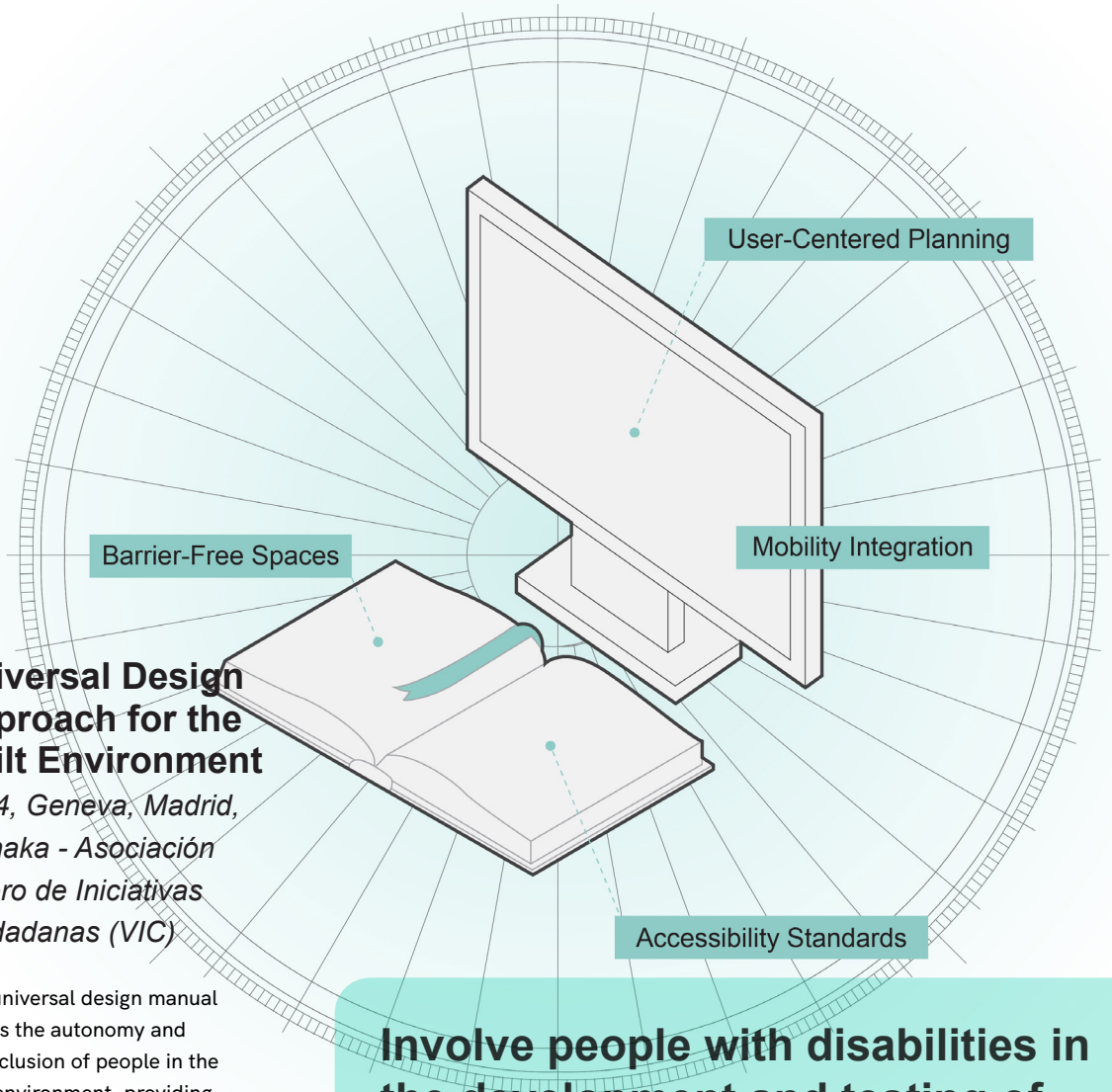
Ensure accurate testing of the transport assistance system

Gathering insights from people with disabilities, this transport assistance system improves transportation infrastructure to better meet users' specific needs while respecting their privacy.

- **Make sure that the technology respects the privacy of users**
- **Test the technology in a variety of settings to ensure that it works as intended, testing the technology with people with disabilities, and in different types of transportation environments.**
- **Continuously monitor the use of the technology and make improvements as needed**

Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective | Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 10



Universal Design Approach for the Built Environment

2024, Geneva, Madrid, Larnaka - Asociación Vivero de Iniciativas Ciudadanas (VIC)

This universal design manual fosters the autonomy and full inclusion of people in the built environment, providing recommendations for building spaces that allow barrier-free, accessible and user-centered mobility. The creation of this manual is based on a previous analysis of architectural and urban examples, measures or regulations on accessibility, other manuals and also on the experience and own voice of users of the city. The manual is based on this document and the sources consulted. Recommendations are extracted from it, which are explained, described and drawn in the manual.
The manual expands the concept of universal design to include more than just the needs of people with disabilities. It also considers factors like gender, socioeconomic background, the environment, and the needs of caregivers.

Source: https: //inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

Involve people with disabilities in the development and testing of universal design manual

Offering practical guidelines that ensure accessibility and usability, this universal design manual promotes autonomy and inclusion, incorporating input from people with disabilities to cater to diverse communities.

- **Make sure that the manual is accessible to people with disabilities, providing alternative ways to access the manual, such as tactile or auditory formats.**
- **Educate the public about the manual and how it can be used to promote accessibility: providing information about the manual's features, benefits, how to use it, etc.**
- **Work with city officials, disability organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure that the manual is implemented effectively, developing clear guidelines for the use of the manual, among others.**
- **Test the manual in a variety of settings to ensure that it works as intended, like testing the manual with people with disabilities, and in different types of urban environments.**
- **Continuously monitor the use of the manual and make improvements as needed, updating the manual to add new features and improving its performance.**

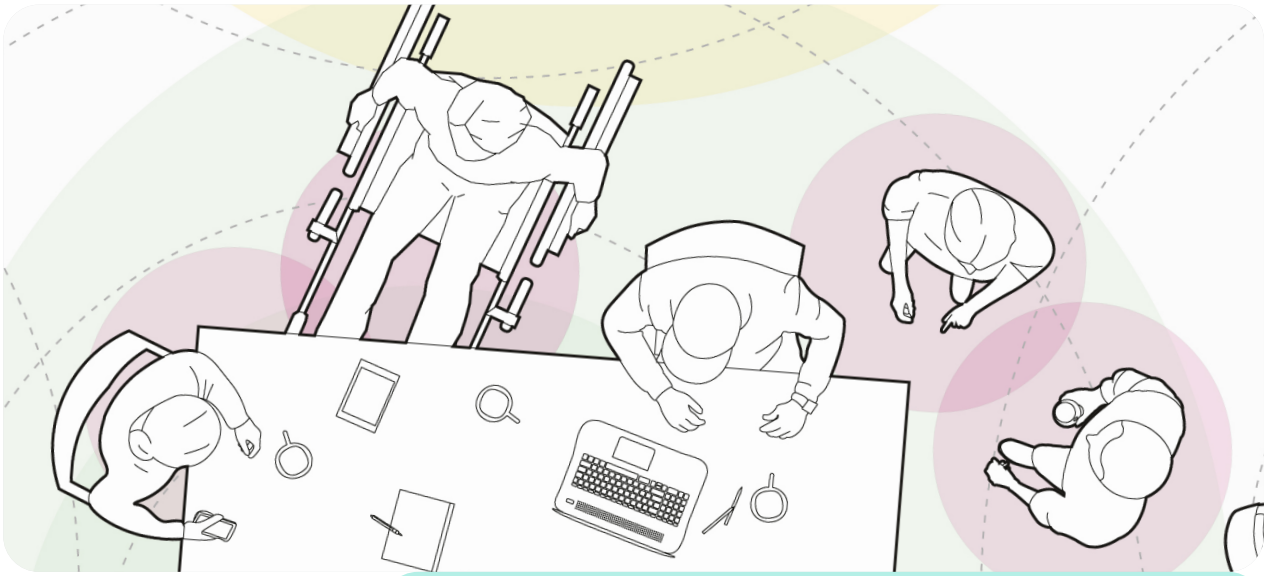
Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective | Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 11

Practitioners Interviews (1)

2024, Madrid - InclusiveSpaces

Among the interviews with architecture, urban planning and spatial design professionals, the interest in including design and inclusion perspectives as a main element of their designs from phase zero stands out. They comment that accessibility should not be fulfilled with a series of accessories that are attached to the buildings, but as an element that embellishes and gives more strength to the project. Others of them prefer to have given emphasis on the design of the process rather than the design of the result, and confirm to give importance to include other more participatory and inclusive design dynamics. Some prefer not to use certificates, as they believe that inclusion and accessibility should be protected by free public standards..



Source: https://inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

Inclusive Design from start to end

This approach ensures that accessibility and inclusivity are seamlessly integrated into the design, enhancing both functionality and creativity, while also empowering communities and promoting equity.

- **Embed accessibility and inclusion in the design process from the outset, rather than as an afterthought.**
- **Treat accessibility features as integral to the aesthetic and strength of the project, not just add-ons.**
- **Emphasize the design process itself, ensuring it is inclusive and participatory at every stage.**
- **Involve diverse stakeholders, including users with disabilities, in collaborative design activities.**
- **Avoid reliance on certifications; instead, focus on universally applied public standards for inclusion and accessibility.**
- **Promote design dynamics that foster engagement, ensuring that the final result truly reflects the needs of all users.**

Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective

Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 12

Practitioners Interviews (2)

2024, Madrid - InclusiveSpaces

Inclusive design relies on each element — from the initial design phase to construction, maintenance, and ongoing use — functioning as part of an interconnected accessibility chain. If one link is broken, accessibility is compromised, such as when a ramp leads to a narrow doorway, hindering its effectiveness. Addressing this requires integrating accessibility considerations from the start of projects, ensuring that inclusivity is a core design principle, not an afterthought. It is also crucial to involve a diverse group of people, including those with disabilities, in the design process to create spaces that truly meet the needs of all users. Furthermore, the maintenance of accessible features is often overlooked but is a vital part of ensuring long-term usability.

Source: https://inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

Ensure that accessibility is integrated into every phase of a project, from design to ongoing maintenance, and involve diverse users in the process

An integrated approach ensures that accessibility is consistent and effective throughout the project lifecycle, leading to spaces that are genuinely usable and inclusive over time.

- **Plan accessibility as an interconnected element from the beginning, ensuring no feature compromises another.**
- **Involve people with disabilities and other diverse groups at all stages of design and planning.**
- **Ensure accessible features are not only designed but also maintained throughout the life of the space.**
- **Regularly audit spaces to ensure all accessibility features are functional and meet user needs.**
- **Prioritize inclusive design principles as core objectives, not secondary considerations, from the start of the project.**
- **Design spaces with long-term usability in mind, addressing future needs and potential changes.**

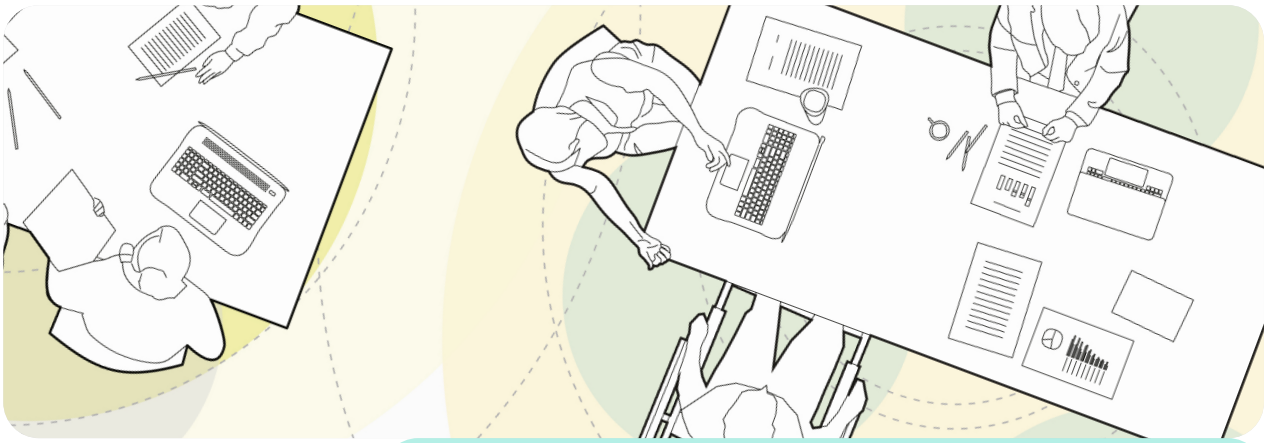
Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective | Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 13

Practitioners Interviews (3)

2024, Madrid - InclusiveSpaces

There are multiple barriers to achieving full inclusion, including social issues like prejudice and lack of awareness, and “unofficial” vulnerabilities such as gender, migration background, and climate-related challenges. The lack of education and training in accessibility for design professionals exacerbates these issues, as does the reliance on private certifications instead of universally applied public standards. While there is often pressure to meet tight deadlines, this can lead to compromised designs that do not prioritize user experience. Involving people with disabilities more actively in the design and commissioning process, alongside effective monitoring mechanisms, is essential to ensure that accessibility standards are met and that the “design for all” principles are actually implemented.



Source: https://inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

Address social barriers and improve accessibility training for design professionals to ensure truly inclusive environments.

Addressing social barriers and improving professional training ensures that all users, regardless of their background or abilities, benefit from truly inclusive, well-designed spaces.

- **Incorporate gender, migration background, and climate vulnerabilities into accessibility planning and design.**
- **Provide mandatory education and training on accessibility for all design professionals.**
- **Replace private certifications with universally applied public standards for consistency.**
- **Prioritize user experience and accessibility, even when facing tight deadlines, to avoid compromised designs.**
- **Actively involve people with disabilities in the design, commissioning, and monitoring processes to ensure needs are met.**
- **Establish effective monitoring mechanisms to track and ensure compliance with accessibility standards.**

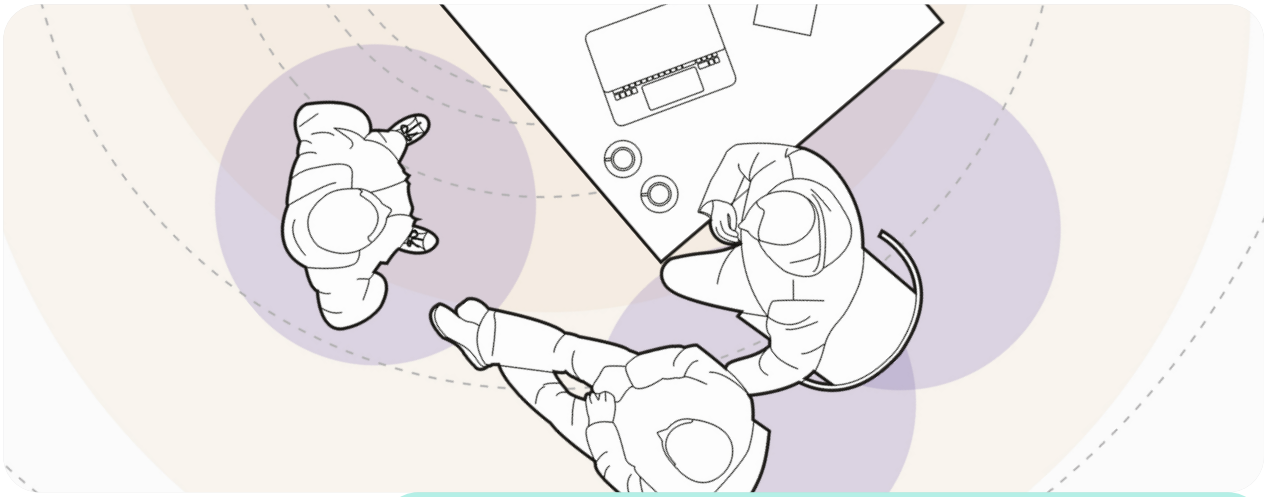
Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective | Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 14

Practitioners Interviews (4)

2024, Geneva - InclusiveSpaces

Creating inclusive public spaces requires a broader focus that goes beyond commuters and peak hours, aiming to cater to a diverse range of groups, including children, seniors, and women. While policies and studies often emphasize accessibility for commuters, there is a need for more comprehensive planning that incorporates the needs of all users. Challenges such as financial constraints and the gradual adaptation of existing infrastructure complicate the implementation of accessibility measures. Moreover, there is a significant gap in involving populations in vulnerable situations directly in the planning processes, which hinders the creation of truly inclusive environments. More effective public participation, better representation, and inclusivity are essential to addressing these gaps.



Source: https://inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

Adopt comprehensive planning that addresses the needs of all users, including population in vulnerable situations, in public space design

Inclusive planning ensures that public spaces cater to the needs of all users, fostering equal access and improving quality of life for diverse communities.

- **Include children, seniors, women, and other vulnerable groups in the planning and design process to ensure their needs are met.**
- **Plan for accessibility throughout the day, not just during peak hours or for commuters.**
- **Overcome financial constraints by prioritizing inclusive designs in early-stage budgets.**
- **Retrofit existing infrastructure gradually to improve accessibility without major disruptions.**
- **Establish more effective public participation processes to ensure diverse groups are heard and represented.**
- **Promote policies that emphasize inclusivity across all sectors, from transportation to urban development.**

Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective | Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 15

Practitioners Interviews (5)

2024, Geneva - InclusiveSpaces

Personal experiences shared by individuals with disabilities highlight the ongoing challenges in public transportation and built environments, emphasizing the need for better infrastructure, adherence to accessibility standards, and a greater focus on user feedback. While norms and regulations like the SIA 500 and VSS provide a framework for accessibility, their application is often inconsistent or contradictory. To address these issues, greater understanding and enforcement of these norms are needed. In addition, associations and experts play a key role in advocacy, though their involvement is typically limited to specific projects or post-construction phases. There's also a growing need for more comprehensive education and training for architects and design professionals to ensure accessibility is considered in all stages of planning.

Source: https://inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

Ensure consistent application and enforcement of accessibility standards, incorporating user feedback throughout all stages of planning and design

Consistent application of accessibility standards and incorporating user feedback ensures that designs are genuinely inclusive and meet the needs of people with disabilities, leading to more accessible environments.

- **Apply accessibility norms consistently across all urban and transportation projects.**
- **Involve disability associations and experts from the early planning stages, not just post-construction.**
- **Integrate user feedback from people with disabilities to inform design decisions and improve accessibility.**
- **Provide comprehensive education and training for architects and designers on accessibility standards and best practices.**
- **Strengthen the enforcement of accessibility standards through regular inspections and audits.**
- **Ensure that accessibility is a priority at every stage of a project, from initial design to construction and maintenance.**

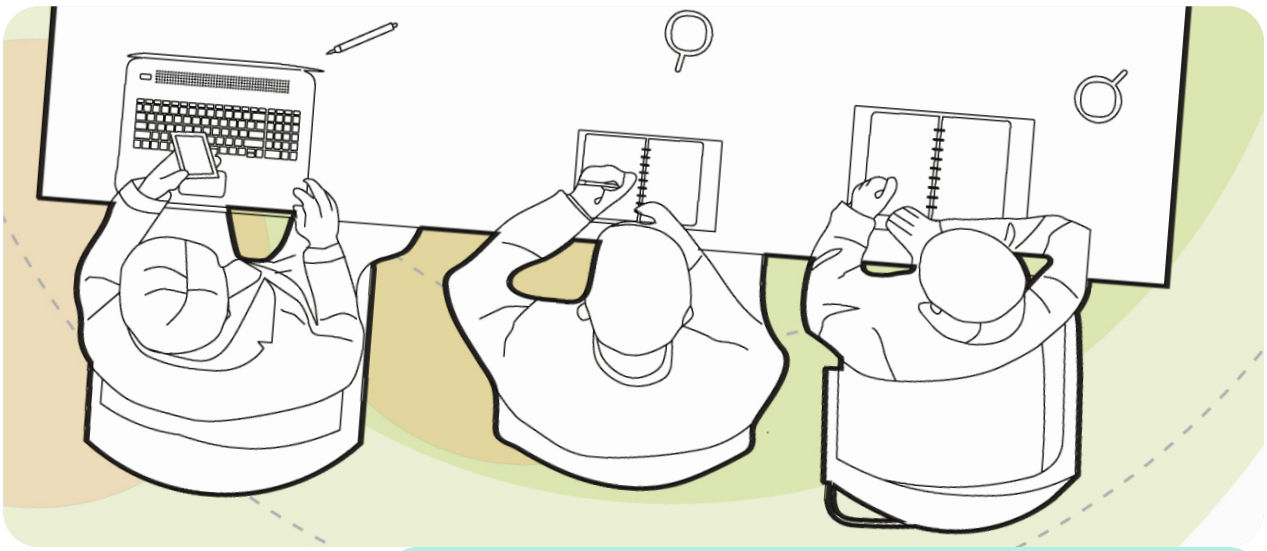
Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective | Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 16

Practitioners Interviews (6)

2024, Larnaka - InclusiveSpaces

Barriers in urban design, such as the absence of ramps, poorly constructed sidewalks, and obstacles like parked vehicles or trees, significantly limit mobility for people with disabilities. These challenges are further compounded by broken infrastructure and narrow pathways, particularly in public spaces like buildings and shops, where accessibility features like ramps and accessible toilets are often missing. Safety concerns also arise from poor lighting and slippery surfaces during rainy conditions, which create hazards for wheelchair users. Additionally, a lack of covered pathways and bus stops exacerbates the challenges of navigating public spaces, especially during extreme weather, further discouraging full participation in society.



Source: https://inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

Ensure the design of urban spaces includes accessible, safe, and well-maintained infrastructure for all users

Removing physical barriers ensures equal mobility, safety, and access to public spaces, fostering full participation in society for people with disabilities.

- **Install ramps, wide sidewalks, and clear pathways that accommodate people with disabilities and avoid obstacles like parked cars.**
- **Prioritize the repair and maintenance of existing infrastructure, such as broken lifts or uneven surfaces.**
- **Ensure public buildings and shops are equipped with accessible features, including ramps and accessible toilets.**
- **Create weather-protected pathways and bus stops to ensure year-round accessibility and comfort.**
- **Regularly assess and remove barriers, like slippery surfaces or obstructions, that could impede mobility.**

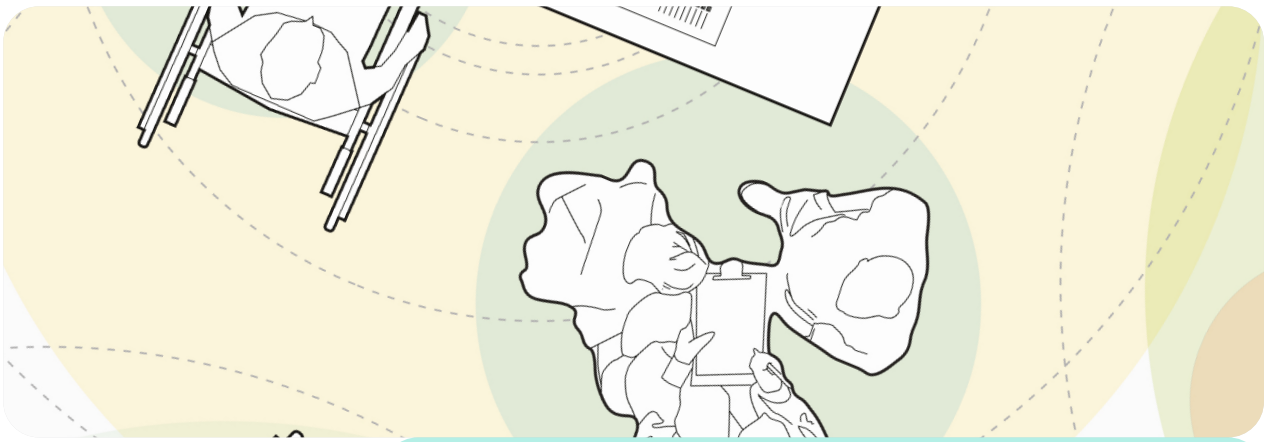
Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective | Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 17

Practitioners Interviews (7)

2024, Larnaka - InclusiveSpaces

A major contributing factor to these accessibility issues is the lack of awareness and proper enforcement of accessibility standards among urban planners and designers. Many public spaces and transportation systems still lack adequate accessibility features, such as pedestrian crossings and accessible public transport options. While accessibility may be considered in the initial design phases, the final implementation often fails to meet the required standards, resulting in significant gaps. The ongoing need for education, advocacy, and stronger enforcement of regulations is essential to address these issues. Public involvement in awareness campaigns and a shift towards comprehensive, long-term planning are crucial to ensuring that accessibility becomes a core priority in urban design, moving away from short-term fixes.



Source: https://inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

Enhance education, advocacy, and enforcement of accessibility standards among urban planners and designers.

Raising awareness and enforcing standards ensures that accessibility becomes an integral part of urban development, reducing gaps and ensuring equal access for all.

- **Provide ongoing training for urban planners and designers on accessibility standards and best practices.**
- **Strengthen the enforcement of accessibility regulations to ensure compliance at all stages of design and construction.**
- **Ensure public buildings and shops are equipped with accessible features, including ramps and accessible toilets.**
- **Integrate accessibility features, like pedestrian crossings and accessible transport, as core elements in every project.**
- **Launch public awareness campaigns to foster broader support for accessible urban planning.**
- **Shift towards long-term, comprehensive planning that prioritizes accessibility from the outset.**
- **Conduct regular audits and inspections to ensure that implemented designs meet accessibility requirements.**

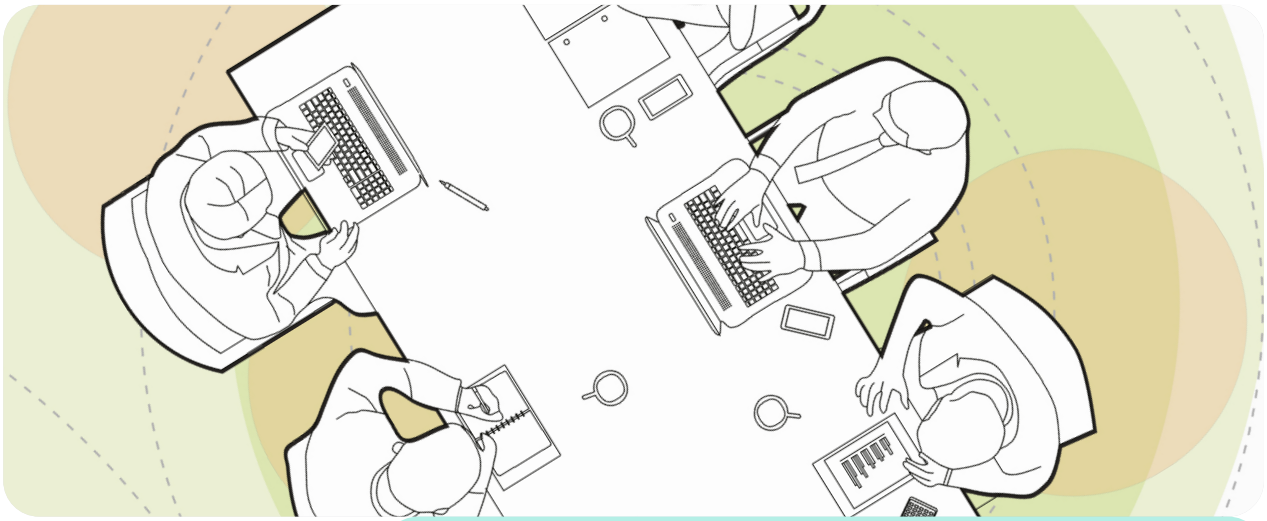
Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective | Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 18

Practitioners Interviews (8)

2024, Hamburg - InclusiveSpaces

The lack of inclusivity in initial planning stages is a significant barrier to accessibility. When new infrastructure or services are rolled out, the primary focus is often on simply implementing the service, with inclusivity becoming a secondary consideration. In many cases, the concern for accessibility does not arise until much later, often due to budget constraints. As a result, accessibility issues are frequently overlooked, leading to spaces that are not fully inclusive for people with disabilities. Additionally, regulations governing accessibility are often fragmented, with various laws and guidelines in place at different levels of government, leading to inconsistent standards. This lack of cohesive regulation contributes to a fragmented approach to creating accessible environments, where municipalities may struggle to implement necessary changes due to limitations in decision-making power.



Source: https://inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

Integrate inclusivity into the initial planning stages of all infrastructure and service projects.

Incorporating accessibility from the start prevents costly retrofits, ensures more inclusive spaces, and establishes consistency in accessibility standards across all projects.

- **Prioritize accessibility as a core objective from the beginning, not as an afterthought.**
- **Allocate budget resources early for accessibility features to avoid financial constraints delaying implementation.**
- **Develop consistent, unified accessibility regulations across all levels of government to ensure coherent standards.**
- **Ensure local municipalities have the authority and resources to enforce accessibility improvements.**
- **Establish clear timelines for incorporating accessibility measures into all phases of design and construction.**
- **Conduct early-stage accessibility assessments to identify and address potential barriers before implementation.**

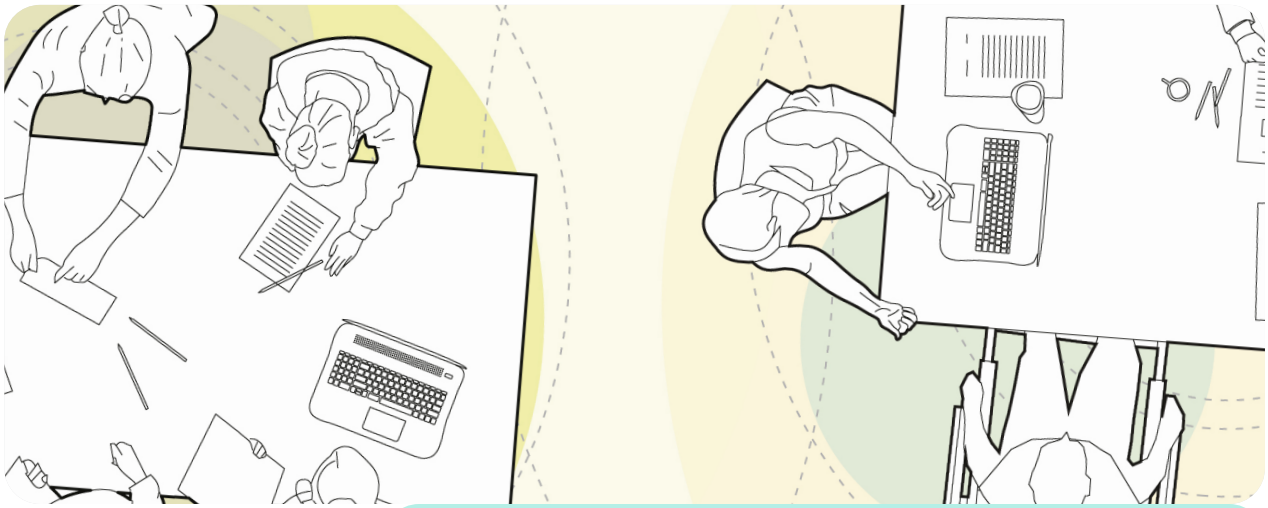
Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective | Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 19

Practitioners Interviews (9)

2024, Hamburg - InclusiveSpaces

A key issue in improving accessibility is the ineffective participation of people with disabilities in the design and planning process. Even when they are consulted, their input is often not fully integrated into the final design, leaving the end product inaccessible. This tokenistic involvement undermines the potential for truly inclusive spaces and can result in projects receiving a “stamp” of inclusivity without meaningful improvements. Furthermore, there are systemic barriers to effective implementation, such as the insufficient planning for specific infrastructure needs. For example, people with mobility impairments often face significant challenges, including longer travel routes due to inaccessible infrastructure, such as broken lifts or poorly designed sidewalks. Conflicting needs between different disabilities, such as the debate over the ideal curb height for visually impaired versus wheelchair users, also complicate design efforts, highlighting the complexity of achieving true inclusivity.



Source: https://inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

Ensure meaningful participation of people with disabilities at every stage of design and planning processes.

Meaningful participation ensures inclusive designs that address real needs, avoiding superficial solutions and fostering equitable spaces for all.

- **Involve people with disabilities as equal partners, not just consultants, throughout the project lifecycle.**
- **Establish frameworks to integrate user feedback directly into final design decisions.**
- **Conduct workshops with diverse disability groups to address conflicting needs, such as curb height or pathway design.**
- **Prioritize maintenance and functionality of critical infrastructure, like lifts and accessible pathways.**
- **Create accountability mechanisms to avoid tokenistic inclusivity in planning processes.**
- **Develop targeted solutions for specific challenges.**

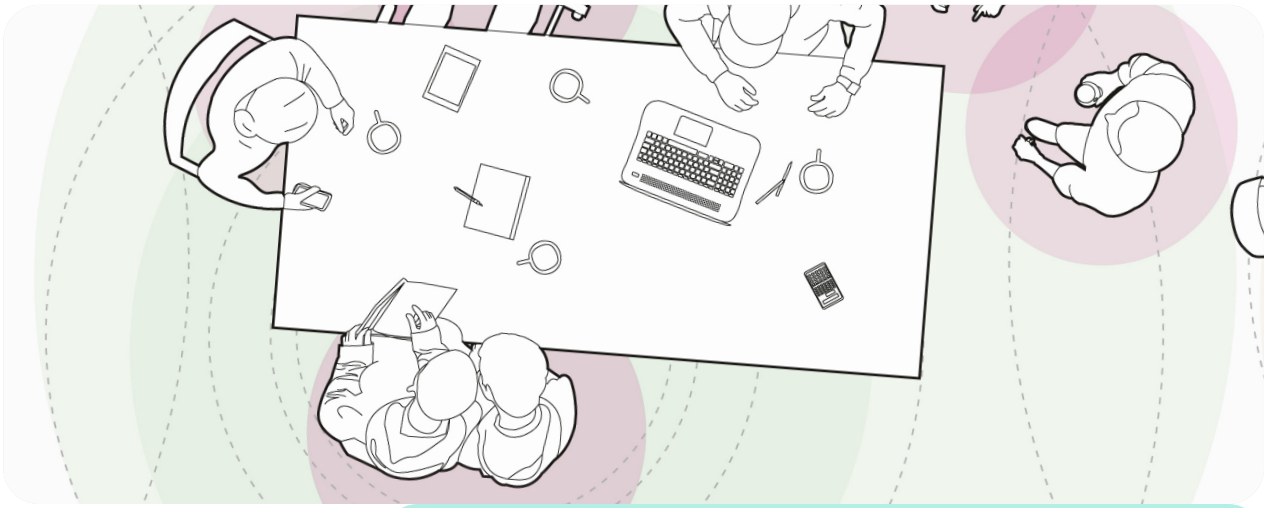
Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective | Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 20

Practitioners Interviews (10)

2024, Athens-Penteli - InclusiveSpaces

Despite Greece having a comprehensive legal framework for accessibility, the lack of codification and enforcement mechanisms renders these regulations ineffective. There is no supervisory body responsible for ensuring compliance, nor are there penalties for violations. This regulatory gap allows new construction projects to proceed without fully implementing accessibility standards, ultimately leading to urban environments that are not inclusive. Furthermore, Greek architects and engineers primarily follow the national New Building Code without integrating international standards such as WELL and BREEAM, limiting their exposure to best practices in accessible and sustainable design. Without proper oversight, accessibility remains a theoretical requirement rather than a practical reality.



Source: https://inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

Ensure meaningful participation of people with disabilities at every stage of design and planning processes

The absence of a supervisory body and penalties allows projects to bypass standards. Strengthening oversight, accountability, and training is essential to making accessibility a practical reality.

- **Establish a regulatory body to monitor accessibility compliance in new construction projects.**
- **Introduce penalties for non-compliance to ensure accountability.**
- **Conduct mandatory training programs for architects and engineers on international accessibility standards.**
- **Codify accessibility legislation to make regulations clearer and more enforceable.**

Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective | Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 21

Practitioners Interviews (11)

2024, Athens-Penteli - InclusiveSpaces

Greece's urban environment presents significant barriers to mobility due to poor infrastructure and inadequate public transportation. Many sidewalks are either absent or too narrow for safe pedestrian movement, and there are no provisions to accommodate extreme weather conditions such as high summer temperatures or winter precipitation. Public transport is also largely inaccessible, with insufficient routes and a lack of accessible vehicles and stops. Furthermore, factors like poor night-time lighting and illegal parking worsen accessibility issues, making public spaces unsafe and difficult to navigate, especially for people with disabilities, older adults, and parents with young children.

Source: https://inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

Improve Urban Infrastructure and Public Transport for Accessibility

Narrow or missing sidewalks, lack of weather-adaptive features, and insufficient accessible transit routes create significant barriers. Poor lighting and illegal parking further compromise safety. Enhancing sidewalks, public transport, and enforcement measures is essential for a more inclusive and navigable urban space.

- **Expand and maintain sidewalks to ensure adequate space for all pedestrians.**
- **Implement weather-responsive infrastructure, such as shaded walkways and better drainage.**
- **Upgrade public transportation with accessible routes, vehicles, and stops.**
- **Improve street lighting and enforce traffic laws to enhance pedestrian safety.**
- **Introduce awareness campaigns to promote responsible traffic behavior and reduce illegal parking.**

Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective | Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

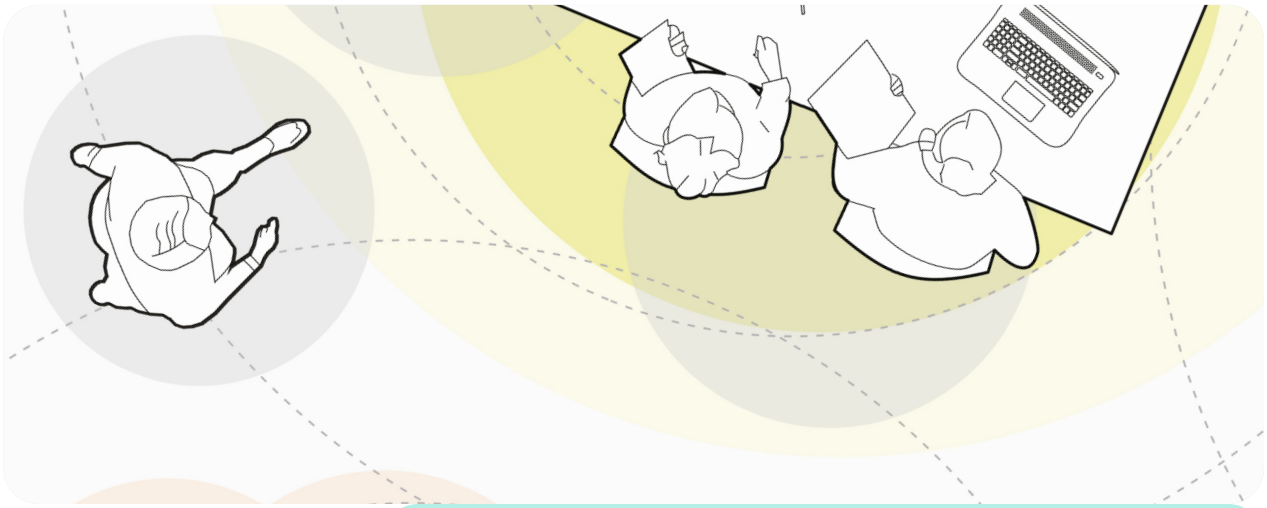
EU 22

Practitioners Interviews (12)

2024, Budapest - InclusiveSpaces

In Budapest, many designers lack awareness of the benefits that diverse users bring to accessible design. As a result, they do not prioritize involving target groups, such as people with disabilities, in the planning and development process.

However, designers who have studied accessibility and universal design (UD) and maintain regular contact with Disabled People's Organisation (DPOs) tend to value user input more. This suggests that knowledge and direct engagement significantly influence the prioritization of accessibility. Unfortunately, without a systematic approach to user involvement, accessibility considerations often remain superficial, only fulfilling legislative requirements rather than achieving truly inclusive design.



Source: https://inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

Promote User Engagement and Accessibility Training in Design

Some designers overlook the value of diverse user input in accessibility. Without a structured approach to user involvement, accessibility often remains superficial. Mandatory training, user collaboration, and clear guidelines are essential for truly inclusive design.

- **Implement mandatory training programs on accessibility and universal design for designers and architects.**
- **Encourage collaboration with DPOs and other user groups throughout the design process.**
- **Establish guidelines requiring user consultation in both public and private development projects.**
- **Promote awareness campaigns highlighting the added value of diverse user involvement in accessibility.**

Universal Design | Hearing impairment | Visual impairment | Cognitive abilities | Physical abilities and features | Temporary | Gender perspective | Carers | Older people | Children | Low-education | Low-income | Decolonial perspective | Digital barrier | Enviroment | Other(+)

EU 23

Practitioners Interviews (13)

2024, Budapest - InclusiveSpaces

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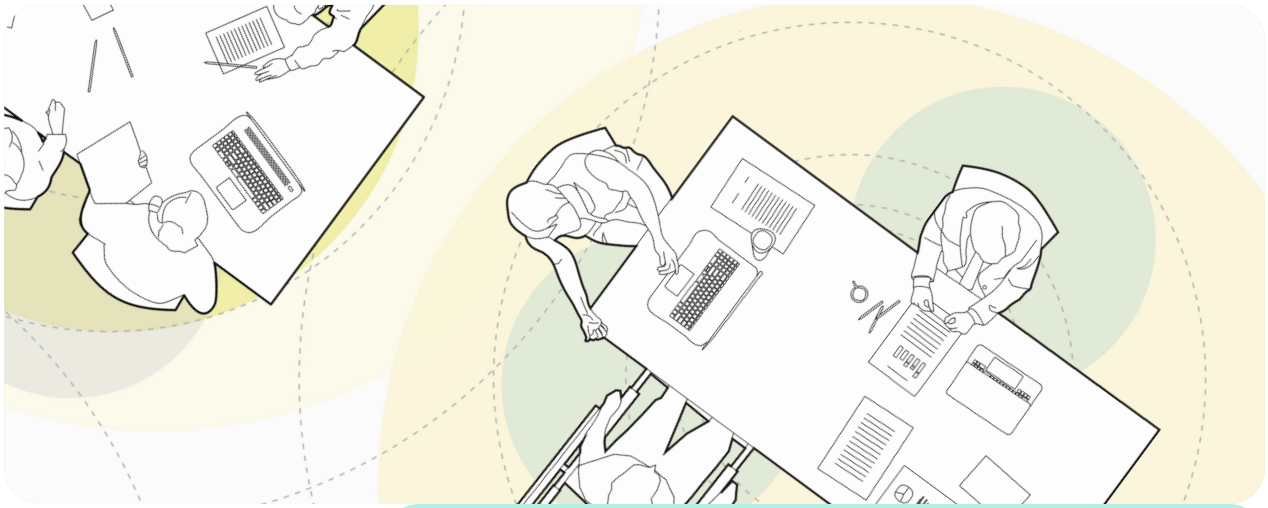

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EU 24

Communities of Practice

2024, Athens-Penteli, Budapest, Hamburg, Geneva, Madrid, Larnaka - InclusiveSpaces

Creating truly accessible spaces requires a collective effort from policymakers, designers, advocacy groups, and the people who will use these spaces daily. While incorporating diverse voices into the design process can slow decision-making, this inclusivity ultimately leads to more effective and sustainable solutions. Accessibility should not be an afterthought or an isolated feature but an integral part of urban planning and architectural design. Public participation must be planned with respect, professionalism, and the creation of a safe space where all voices are valued. Strengthening education on universal design and fostering collaboration between government agencies, researchers, and user groups ensures that accessibility solutions address real needs. Beyond infrastructure, social attitudes and cultural awareness play a vital role in inclusion. By integrating user feedback, promoting dialogue between architects and communities, and embedding accessibility into policies, cities can become spaces where everyone navigates independently and with dignity.

Source: https://inclusivespaces-he-project.eu/

Collaboration, Education, and User-Centered Solutions

Collaboration, Education, and User-Centered Solutions

- **Foster collaboration between government bodies, academics, and advocacy groups to advance accessibility initiatives.**
- **Ensure active participation of user groups in the development and validation of accessibility tools and solutions.**
- **Strengthen education on universal design for professionals and the public to foster a culture of inclusion.**
- **Improve urban infrastructure, public transportation, and signage to enhance accessibility for individuals with disabilities.**
- **Facilitate direct dialogue between architects and diverse user groups to promote empathy-driven design.**
- **Implement policies and awareness campaigns to address both physical and social barriers to inclusion.**
- **Establish structured testing phases for accessibility technologies to ensure they meet real-world needs.**
- **Develop and enforce accessibility regulations that integrate inclusive design from the outset.**

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