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Disability and Development Report 2024

Accelerating the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by, for and with persons with disabilities

Advance Unedited Version

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Department of Economic and Social Affairs

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United Nations

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

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Making cities and human settlements inclusive and sustainable (Goal 11)

Goal 11 is a call to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. In the CRPD, Article 3 has accessibility as a general principle and Article 9 gives specific guidance outlining the responsibilities of States Parties to take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas. General Comment number 2 of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities provides additional guidance for implementation.

This chapter focuses in particular on four Goal 11 targets: (i) target 11.1, which calls for access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services; (ii) target 11.2 which calls for providing by 2030 access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, with special attention to the needs of inter alia persons with disabilities; (iii) target 11.3 which calls for inclusive urbanization; and (iv) target 11.7 which commits to providing by 2030 universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for persons with disabilities. Based on these analyses, the final section of this chapter identifies targeted actions to achieve Goal 11 by, for and with persons with disabilities.

Current situation and progress so far

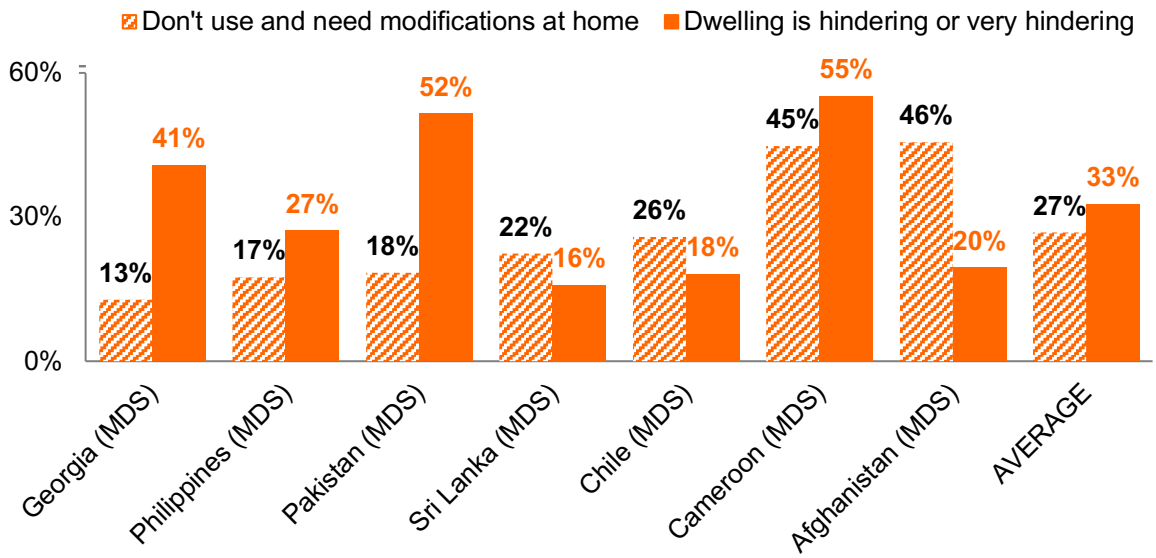
Adequate, safe and affordable housing (target 11.1)

Adequate housing includes the following elements: security of tenure; availability of services, materials, and infrastructure; affordability; accessibility; habitability; location and cultural adequacy.[469] Around the world, persons with disabilities are at a higher risk of living in inadequate housing than others. They are more likely to live in dwellings that lack access to an improved and safe water source and to improved sanitation facilities (see chapter on Goal 6). They are more likely to live in poverty (see chapter on Goal 1), less likely to have a job (see chapter on Goal 8) and thus face more barriers affording adequate housing. Many persons with disabilities end up in poorer housing at higher risk of suffering the impact of weather-related disasters and hazards, such as floods (see chapter on targets 1.5 and 11.5 and Goal 13).

Moreover, persons with disabilities often experience barriers in finding housing that is accessible and inclusive of persons with disabilities (Figure 171). In 7 countries, 33 per cent of persons with disabilities on average indicated that their dwelling is hindering, from 13 per cent in Georgia to 46 per cent in Afghanistan; and 27 per cent of persons with disabilities indicate that they do not have but need modifications at home, from 16 per cent in Sri Lanka to 55 per cent in Cameroon. In the United States, in

2011, only 1 per cent of rented dwellings included five basic universal design features that make housing accessible to persons with mobility impairments (no-step entry; single-floor living with bedroom, bathroom, and kitchen on the same level; lever-style door handles; accessible electrical controls; and extra-wide doors and hallways),[470] and experts predicted a 24 percent chance that 10 per cent of rentals by 2030 would meet these universal design criteria.[471]

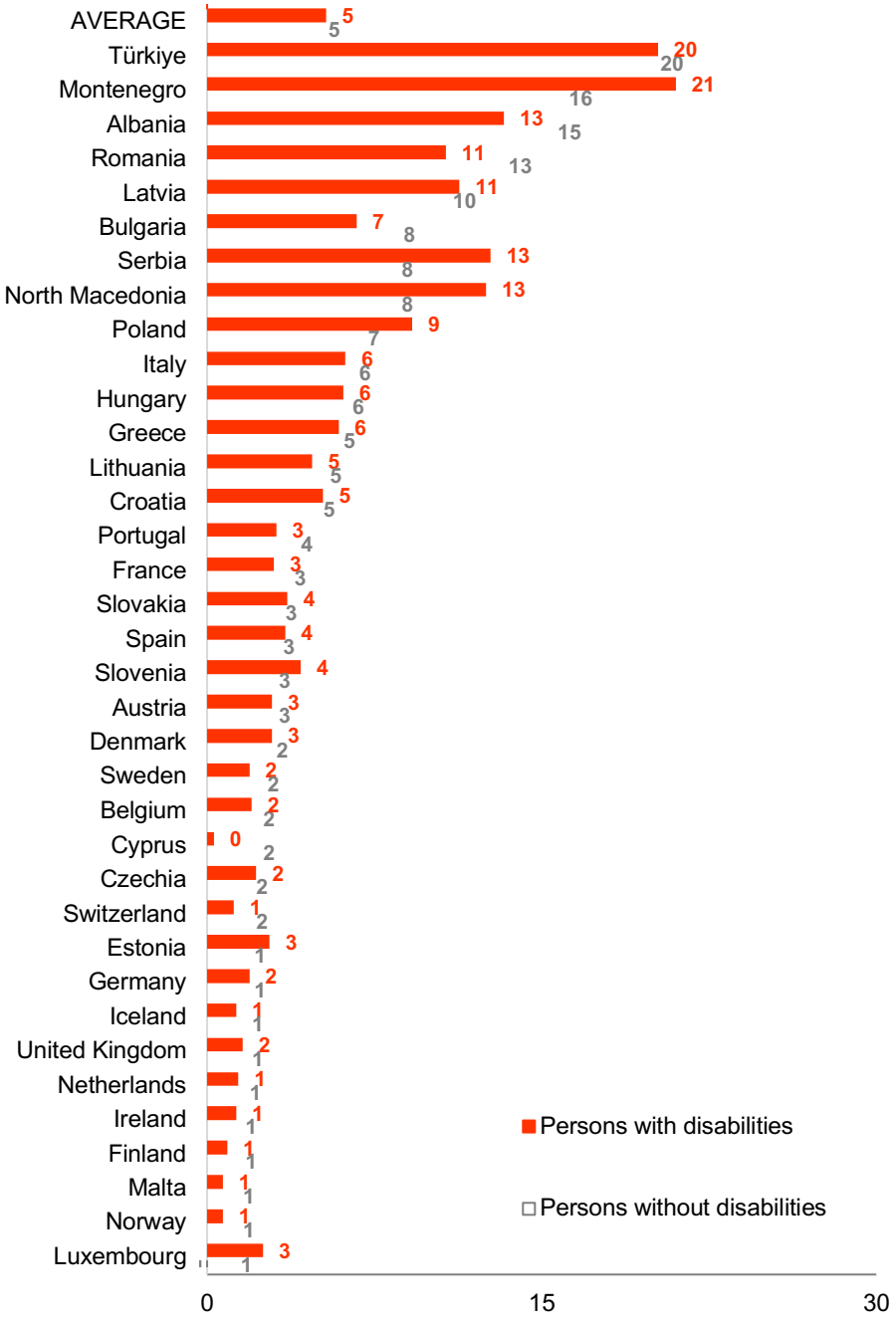
Figure 171. Percentage of persons with disabilities who (i) consider their dwelling hindering and (ii) do not have but need modifications at home, in 7 countries, in 2021 or latest year available.



Note: (MDS) identifies data produced using the Model Disability Survey.
Source: WHO (on the basis of data from the Model Disability Surveys).

In Europe, severe housing deprivation has been defined as the simultaneous occurrence of overcrowding, together with at least one of the following housing deprivation measures: a leaking roof, no bath/shower and no flushing toilet, or a dwelling considered too dark. Among 36 countries, mainly in Europe, the average percentage of persons aged 16 and over living in severely deprived housing is similar, 5 per cent, for persons with disabilities and without disabilities (Figure 172). In Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, the gap between persons with and without disabilities is 5 percentage points or more. In Montenegro and Türkiye, more than 20 of persons with disabilities live in severely deprived housing, the largest percentages among these 36 countries.

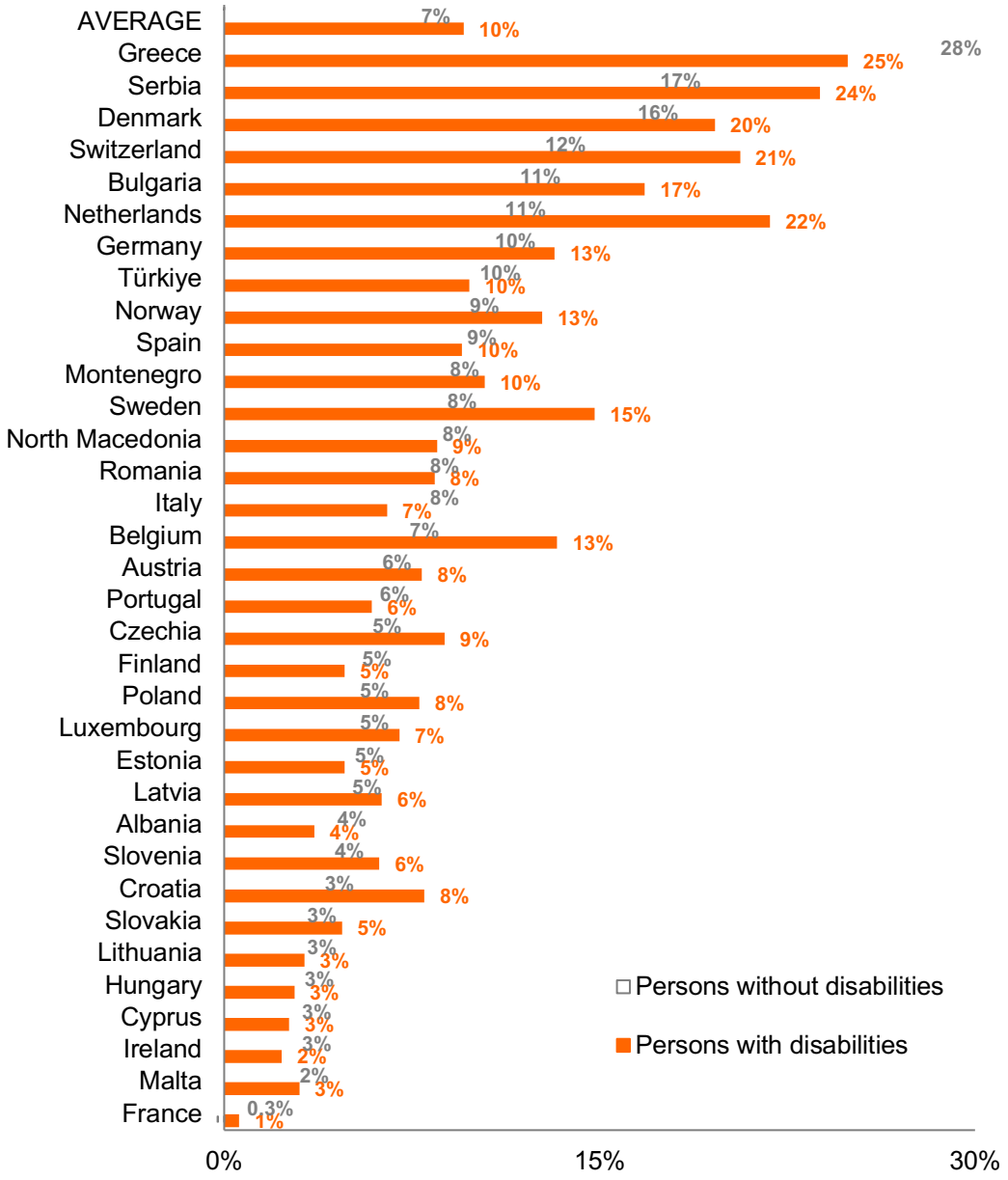
Figure 172. Percentage of persons aged 16 and over living in severely deprived housing, by disability status, in 36 countries, in 2020.



Note: For Iceland and the United Kingdom, data is from 2018; for Poland, data is from 2019.

Source: Eurostat. [7]

Figure 173. Percentage of persons aged 16 and over living in households where the total housing costs represent more than 40 per cent of disposable income, by disability status, in 34 countries, in 2021.



Note: Data for Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, Switzerland and Türkiye is for the year 2020. Persons with disabilities include persons with some or severe limitations.
Source: Eurostat. [7]

In addition, for persons with disabilities, housing costs can place a heavy burden on their disposable income. In 2021, among the same 36 countries, 10 per cent of persons with disabilities lived in

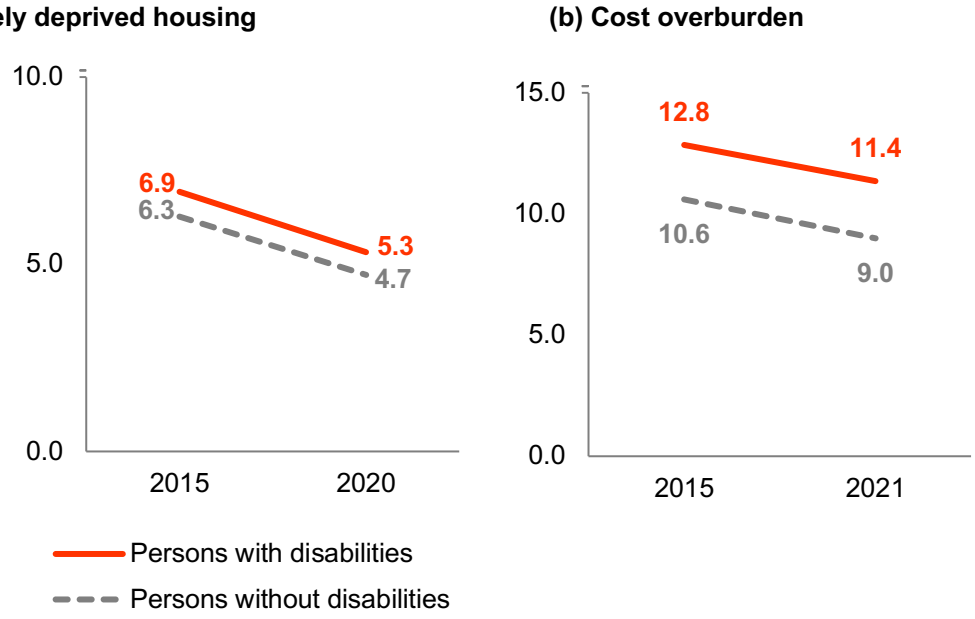
households where housing costs placed a heavy burden on disposable income, compared to 7 per cent of persons without disabilities (Figure 173). Greece (32 per cent), Serbia (30 per cent), Denmark and Netherlands (20 per cent), Bulgaria and Switzerland (19 per cent) have the highest percentages of persons with disabilities experiencing housing cost overburden. On the other end of the scale, Malta (2 per cent), Cyprus (3 per cent), France and Ireland (4 per cent) have the lowest percentages.

The average percentage of persons with disabilities living in severely deprived housing has decreased from 6.3 to 4.9 per cent from 2015 to 2020; and those experiencing housing cost overburden decreased from 12.8 to 11.5 per cent in the same period (Figure 174). For persons without disabilities, similar progress has been made and the gaps between persons with and without disabilities have stayed the same over time.

Persons with disabilities are more likely to experience problems associated with housing deprivation and worse housing conditions. In 2020, on average, 11 per cent of persons with disabilities experienced crime, violence or vandalism in the area where they live, compared to 8 per cent for persons without disabilities (see chapter on targets 16.1 and 16.2); down from 14 per cent of persons with disabilities in 2015 (see chapter on targets 16.1 and 16.2). Moreover, 11 per cent of persons with disabilities in European countries lack heating and cooling facilities at home compared with only 7 per cent for persons without disabilities (see chapter on Goal 7). In addition, in 2020, 3 per cent of persons with disabilities had no indoor toilet in their dwelling, compared to 2 per cent of persons without disabilities and down from 5 per cent in 2015 (see chapter on Goal 6) – similar percentage were found for persons having no bath or shower in their dwelling (see chapter on Goal 6).

Various barriers persist for persons with disabilities in exercising their right to adequate housing. These barriers include: discrimination in legislation and policies that have the effect of limiting ability to exercise right to adequate housing; the denial of right to live independently and in community; the presence of environmental barriers; the lack of participation and access to resources and opportunities; and the lack of monitoring and complaint mechanisms.[472]

Figure 174. Percentage of persons aged 16 and over (a) living in severely deprived housing, by disability status and (b) living in households where the total housing costs represent more than 40 per cent of disposable income, average of more than 30 countries, in 2015 and 2020.

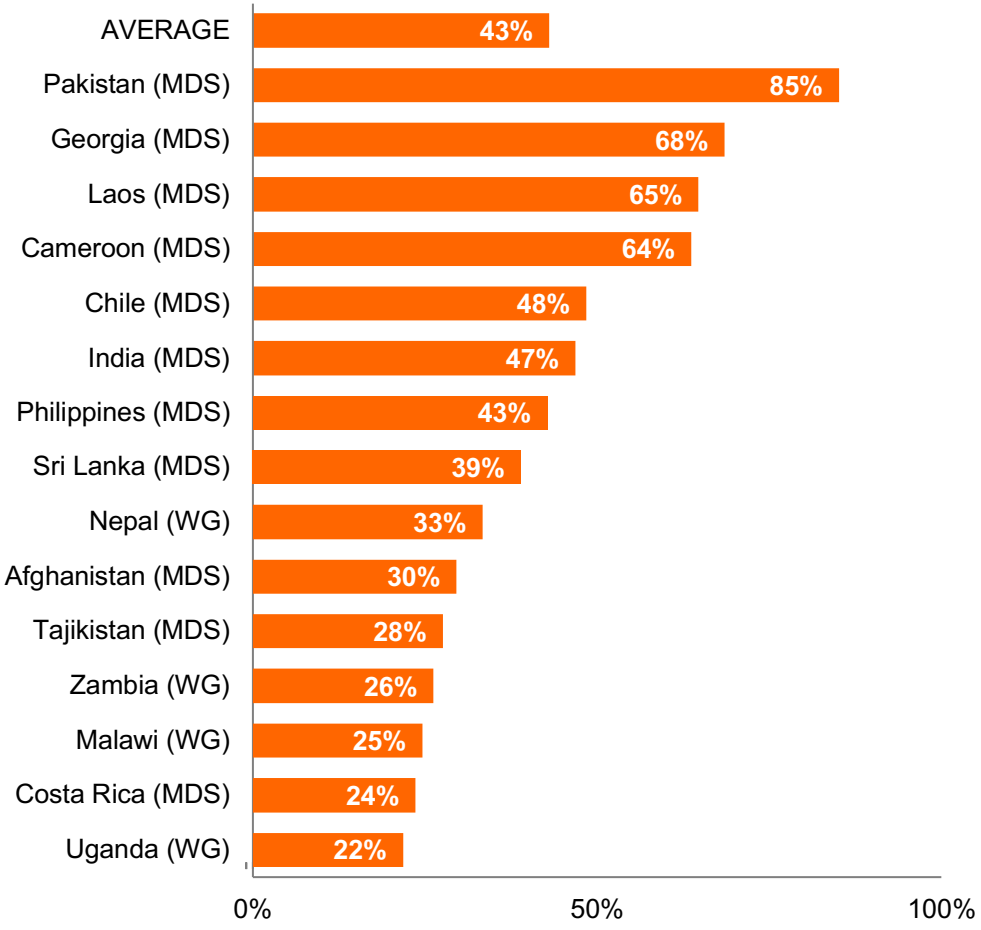


Source: Eurostat. [7]

Accessible transport for persons with disabilities (target 11.2)

Inclusive and accessible transportation systems can increase access for persons with disabilities to employment, recreational and other essential opportunities that enable persons with disabilities to improve their living conditions and escape poverty. But, in many countries, transport is not always accessible to persons with disabilities. In 15 developing countries, on average, 43 per cent of persons with disabilities consider transportation hindering or nor accessible, ranging from 22 per cent in Uganda to 85 per cent in Pakistan (Figure 175).

Figure 175. Percentage of persons with disabilities who consider that transportation is hindering or not accessible, in 15 countries, in 2021 or latest year available.



Note: (MDS) identifies data produced using the Model Disability Survey; (WG) identifies data produced using the Washington Group Short Set of Questions.

Source: UNDESA (on the basis of data from SINTEF[9]) and WHO (on the basis of data from the Model Disability Surveys).

Table 4. Percentage of countries/territories in Asia and the Pacific with legal requirements on accessibility of international airports, by type of requirement, in 12 countries/territories, in 2022.

Legal requirement	Percentage of countries/territories
Stable, firm, wide and slip-resistant routes to the airports	83%
Accessible parking spaces	83%
Accessible common areas (ticketing, check-in, security clearance, boarding gates, baggage retrieval)	83%
Ramps or elevators where changes in level are necessary	83%
Accessible toilets at international airports	83%
Lifts and ramps to support boarding and disembarkation	83%
Signage, including emergency evacuation procedures and exits, available in easy-to-read	83%
Vehicles with passengers with disabilities can drop off these passengers at the point closest to the airport entrance	82%
Persons with disabilities travelling by themselves cannot be refused check-in due to their disabilities	82%
Entrance doors with wide openings, without steps and equipped with automatic openers	75%
Seating areas with spaces for users of assistive mobility devices	75%
Signage (gate numbers, emergency evacuation procedures/exits) in tactile formats such as Braille	75%
Personal assistance for persons with disabilities who need such services	75%
Civil aviation authorities regularly conduct staff training on the provision of services for passengers with disabilities	75%
Onsite/remote sign language interpretation services at check-in counters, boarding gates and information booths	73%
Commonly used assistive products available if required	73%
Grievance procedures for lack of accessibility	73%
Organizations of persons with disabilities involved in accessibility audits	67%
Accessible shuttle buses and trains	64%
Accessibility features of airports available in accessible formats on the official airport websites	60%
Selected check-in counters and ticketing offices with lower counter heights	58%
Service animals allowed to enter the airports and relief areas available for these animals	55%
Calming room and services for persons with hidden disabilities	50%

Source: ESCAP.[14]

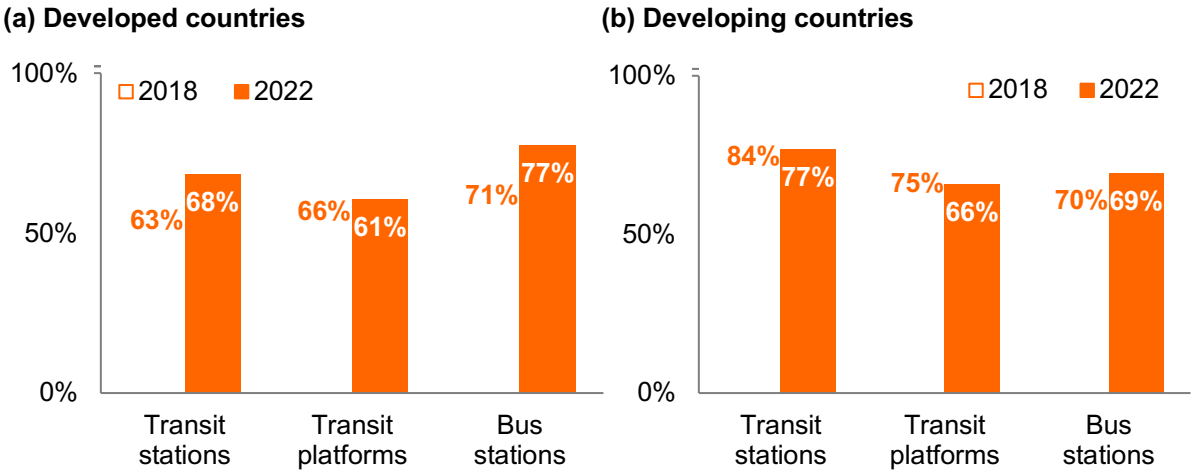
Table 5. Percentage of countries/territories in Asia and the Pacific with legal requirements on accessibility of public transport, by type of requirement, in 11 countries/territories, in 2022.

Legal requirement	Bus system	Rapid transit system
Passenger doors sufficiently wide for users of assistive mobility devices to enter	89%	56%
Tactile paving or ground surface indicators to guide persons with visual impairments	88%	67%
Buses with level-changing mechanisms or boarding device (e.g., a ramp) for users of assistive mobility devices to board the vehicle	78%	NA
Physically accessible and barrier-free bus stops/train stations	78%	78%
Information on public transport (schedules, routes, stations, platforms, exits, safety precautions) in accessible audio and easy-to-read formats	75%	56%
Carriages with priority seating for persons with disabilities	75%	44%
Wheelchair spaces in carriages	75%	44%
Interior of the carriage with sufficient turning and manoeuvring space for users of assistive mobility devices	75%	33%
Bus drivers allow adequate time for passengers with disabilities to board and alight and provide assistance throughout the ride	67%	NA
Service animals are allowed to board	67%	56%
Regularly staff training on the provision of services for the access and safety of passengers with disabilities	67%	56%
Organizations of persons with disabilities involved in conducting accessibility audits of bus/mass rapid transit systems	67%	44%
Accessibility features of stations and carriages explained in accessible formats on the official public transportation portal	63%	56%
Mechanism for customer feedback on accessibility services and grievance procedures for safety and accessibility issues	63%	56%
Online information on public transportation (routes, fares, etc.) in accessible formats (e.g., easy-read versions, subtitles and sign language)	63%	44%
Standard operating procedures for the safety and smooth use by passengers with disabilities of public transport systems	56%	44%
At least one barrier-free entrance and exit with wide fare gates in every station	NA	63%
Accessible toilets in train stations	NA	63%
Auditory and visual warning signs indicating closing of train doors	NA	56%
Accessible elevator service to all levels in the stations, including Braille plates on lift buttons	NA	50%
Minimal difference between the heights of train carriage and platform floor	NA	44%

Source: ESCAP.[14]

Crowdsourced data from developed countries indicates that, in 2022, 68 per cent of transit stations, 61 per cent of transit platforms and 77 per cent of bus stations were accessible to wheelchair users, with some progress on the accessibility of transit and bus stations since 2018 but some deterioration in the accessibility of transit platforms for persons with disabilities (Figure 176). Similar percentages are found in developing countries, despite a deterioration in accessibility of transit stations and platforms since 2018.

Figure 176. Percentage of transit stations, transit platforms and bus stations that are accessible for wheelchair users, in developed and developing countries, in 2018 and 2022.



Source: UNDESA (on the basis of data from Sozialhelden[10]).

Several countries have introduced laws requiring airports to incorporate features, services and procedures to make the airports accessible for persons with disabilities. For example, in 12 countries/territories in Asia and the Pacific, the percentage of countries with such requirements varies from 50 to 83 per cent depending on the type of requirement (Table 4): 83 per cent of countries/territories require international airports to have stable, firm, wide and slip-resistant routes to the airports (from parking, from transportation and from the street), accessible parking spaces, accessible common areas (in ticketing, check-in, security clearance, boarding gates and baggage retrieval), ramps or elevators where changes in level are necessary, accessible toilets at international airports, lifts and ramps to support boarding and disembarkation, signage available in easy-to-read (including emergency evacuation procedures and exits). Moreover, 67 per cent of countries/territories require organizations of persons with disabilities to be involved in accessibility audits of international airports; 75 per cent of countries/territories require civil aviation authorities to regularly conduct staff training on the provision of services for meeting the access and safety needs of passengers with disabilities; 73 per cent of countries/territories require that grievance procedures are available for persons with disabilities who have issues with the lack of accessibility of international airports in the country/territory; and 50 per cent of countries/territories require

international airports to have calming rooms and services for persons with hidden disabilities.

Similarly, a number of countries in Asia and the Pacific have introduced laws requiring the public transportation system to incorporate features, services and procedures to make the system accessible for persons with disabilities (Table 5). In Europe and Africa, a number of initiatives have also made the transportation systems more accessible and inclusive to persons with disabilities (Box 6); and various countries have developed programmes to provide accessible, affordable and reliable transportation for persons with disabilities, such as paratransit transportation and transportation subsidies, as part of investments in community support systems (see chapter on target 10.2).

Box 6. Making transportation more inclusive for persons with disabilities around the world

Accessible bus system in Dakar, Senegal

The Humanity & Inclusion's program in Dakar, Senegal, aims at increasing access to employment for persons with disabilities, including by improving safe and accessible urban mobility that allows a greater number of workers with disabilities to travel from home to work. Stronger political leadership and collaboration with local organizations of persons with disabilities has led to an improvement in national policy on accessible transport. The largest bus operator in Dakar agreed to increase the number of buses that have ramps and priority seats for persons with disabilities, and to train bus operator staff in the different needs of passengers with disabilities. Moreover, the bus company hired 25 persons with disabilities to sell tickets. Other noteworthy initiatives for safer and accessible transport in Dakar include the phasing out of old minibuses from the 1960s and 1970s and replacing them with a safer and more accessible fleet of buses.[473]

Accessible bus rapid transport in Johannesburg, South Africa

The city of Johannesburg launched a six-month pilot project to provide free travel for persons with disabilities on the Rea Vaya bus rapid transport system. Rea Vaya buses and stations have several features that allow access for persons using wheelchairs and commuters with visual or hearing impairments. The areas surrounding the bus stations are evenly paved and the stations are all fitted with access ramps of width and gradient that conform to universal design guidelines. Moreover, for persons with mobility impairments, the ramps have handrails on either side or a landing area halfway up for those who wish to rest. The Rea Vaya's buses have a double-section bus that runs on its trunk routes, each allowing for two wheelchairs. The standard length buses have at least one wheelchair position as well as grab rails and a kerbside lift.[473]

Nation-wide train station adaptations for persons with disabilities in the Netherlands

In a collaboration between the Dutch Member of the European Blind Union, the national rail operator and the respective infrastructure manager, all train stations in the Netherlands have been made accessible for persons with visual impairments. The same accessibility provisions have been coherently implemented in all stations of the national rail network, which means they are predictable for the passenger. These

features include route descriptions that can be downloaded in both print and audio versions in advance, tactile guidance and signage, adequate contrast values and harmonized location of ticketing machines. Once the accessibility provisions had been implemented, training was organized for both the passengers and staff to learn how to use the features in practice. Throughout the entire procedure, volunteers tested the proposed solutions, giving feedback on materials and measurements. Initial user evaluations show that passengers with visual impairments are independently mobile in all Dutch railway stations, even if they visit a station for the first time.[474]

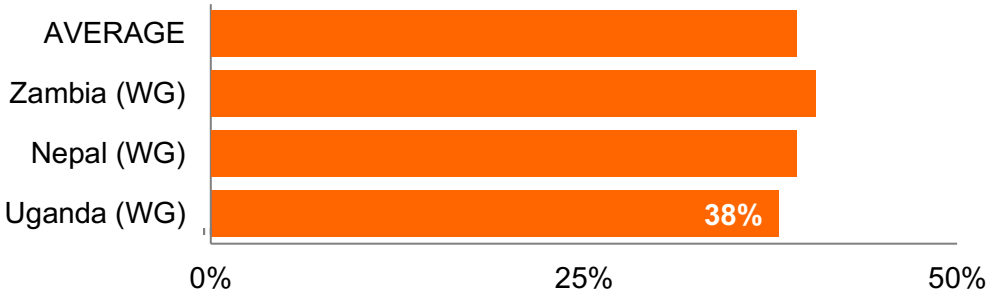
Personal mobility service for persons with visual impairments in Iceland

The Personal Mobility Service in Iceland is a flexible taxi service for persons with visual impairments. In the absence of convenient public transport, this service is crucial to participate fully in society, go to school, work, shopping, etc. An agreement is set up between the local municipality, the Icelandic Member of the European Blind Union and a taxi company to establish the service. Only registered persons with a visual impairment are eligible for the service and can order a taxi for the price of a regular bus ticket at any time of the day. Taxi drivers are specifically trained on access needs. The service is cost-effective for all parties involved and thus is highly satisfactory. The difference in the actual taxi costs is covered by the municipality. The service is also cheaper than the other existing solution, a government-managed transport service for all persons with disabilities. Overall, 80 per cent of persons with visually impairments in Iceland evaluate this service positively, as it is easy to use, affordable and provides a high-quality service.[474]

Inclusive urbanization and safe and inclusive public spaces for persons with disabilities (targets 11.3 and 11.7)

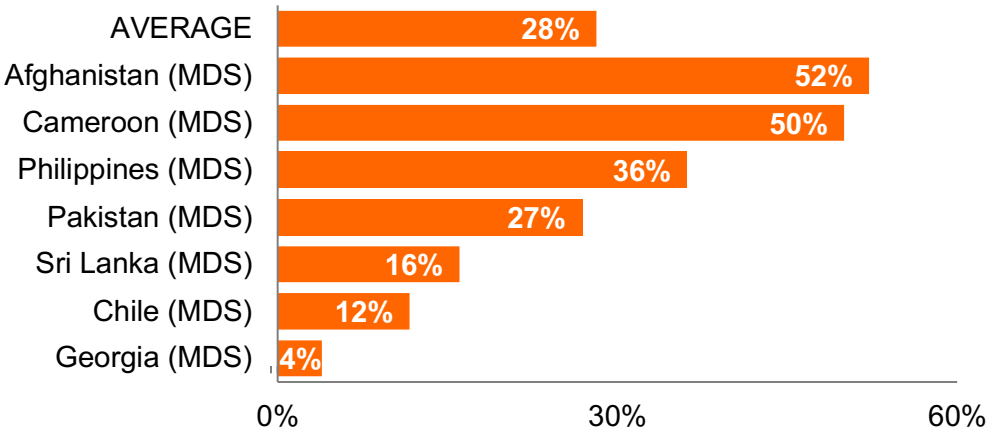
Target 11.3 calls for inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries, with indicator 11.3.2 monitoring the proportion of cities with a direct participation structure of civil society in urban planning and management that operate regularly and democratically. However, many barriers persist for persons with disabilities in urban and public spaces due to the lack of consultation with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations. Persons with disabilities are often not involved in policy and decision-making regarding urbanization and urban mobility,[475] and their perspectives remain largely absent in research on urban planning.[476] For most cities, the design of buildings and roads is still made from the perspective of persons without disabilities. Lack of accessibility of recycling premises and stores for sustainable products can compromise the participation of persons with disabilities as agents of change to achieve Goal 12 (Box 8).

Figure 177. Percentage of persons with disabilities who report that recreational facilities (e.g., cinema, theatre, pubs) are generally not accessible to them, in 3 countries, in 2018 and latest year available.



Note: (WG) identifies data produced using the Washington Group Short Set of Questions.
Source: UNDESA (on the basis of data from SINTEF[9]).

Figure 178. Percentage of persons with disabilities who need but do not encounter modifications to make it easier to participate in the community, in 7 countries, in 2021 or latest year available.



Note: Modifications in the community include barrier free buildings open to public such as shops, cinemas or worship place; barrier free public buildings, city hall or post office; barrier free signage and way finding; barrier free public toilets; barrier free public transportation; barrier free roads, paths and trails. (MDS) identifies data produced using the Model Disability Survey.
Source: WHO (on the basis of data from Model Disability Surveys).

Target 11.7 calls for universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for inter-alia persons with disabilities. Indicators 11.7.1 monitors the average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for inter-alia persons with disabilities. But many public spaces continue to have barriers for persons with disabilities. Accessibility barriers that create obstacles

for persons with disabilities in the public space include high curbs, uneven surfaces, lack of ramps, various footpath- and street crossing-related barriers, insufficient lighting and limited places to rest, limited reliability or availability of audible traffic lights, lack of visual aids, lack of curbs and controlled crossings.[477] These barriers mean that persons with disabilities are often dependent on assistance from other pedestrians[477] and spend more time negotiating barriers and spaces.[478]

Box 7. Making public spaces accessible for persons with disabilities

New universally accessible playground opens in Surrey, British Columbia, Canada

A new 12,000-square feet playground created to be inclusive of children with disabilities opened in Surrey, British Columbia, Canada. The space features adaptive equipment such as a wheelchair-accessible "we-go-round." The park has double-wide ramps, which allow children in wheelchairs to get into it.[479]

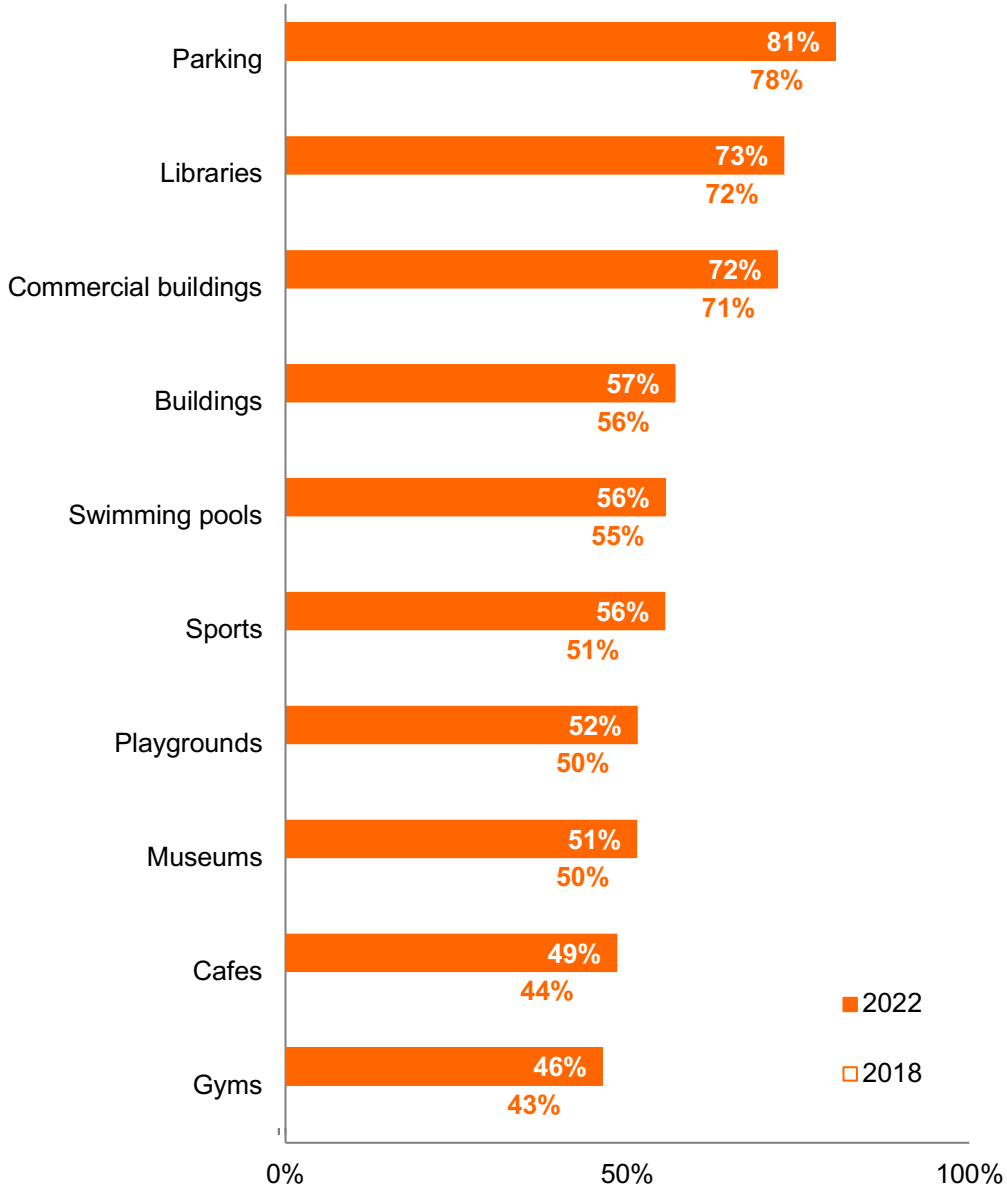
Creating inclusive and accessible public markets in Cairo, Egypt

The Zenin market is an example of an intersectional, participatory and inclusive design project. The location was identified by women in the community as a priority space for gender and disability responsive planning interventions. The Zenin market is the country's first market to be redesigned using an approach that creates a safe space for women vendors and customers, including women with disabilities. The market design process included six months of consultations with market users and vendors and studies conducted by specialists, including architects as well as environmental, waste and gender consultants. Through this consultation process, women with disabilities explained their specific needs in accessing the market stalls and bathrooms and the additional barriers they may experience when using the market. Following recommendations made, the Zenin market has been made more accessible to persons with disabilities, including women, youth and children with disabilities. For instance, the accessibility of the market has been improved through wider paths and ramps to accommodate wheelchairs.[480] The program was implemented in partnership with the National Council for Women, the Ministry of Social Solidarity, the Giza Governorate, Care Egypt and other three local non-governmental organizations.

Data from 3 developing countries shows that about 40 per cent of persons with disabilities indicate that recreational facilities are generally not accessible to them (Figure 177). And an average of 28 per cent of persons with disabilities in 7 countries indicates that they need but does not encounter modifications to make it easier to participate in the community (Figure 178). According to crowdsourced accessibility data, in 2022, 81 per cent of parkings, 73 per cent of libraries, 72 per cent of commercial buildings, 57 per cent of buildings, 56 per cent of swimming pools, 56 per cent of sports facilities, 52 per cent of playgrounds, 51 per cent of museums, 49 per cent of cafes and 46 per cent of gyms were accessible to users of wheelchairs (Figure 179). Although, for all these premises, accessibility has increased since 2018, the

progress is small. Cafes and sports facilities show the largest increase, with a 5-percentage point increase since 2018. Countries worldwide have also been investing in making public places more accessible to persons with disabilities, such as playgrounds and markets (Box 7).

Figure 179. Percentage of various spaces in cities and human settlements that are accessible for wheelchair users, worldwide, in 2018 and 2022.



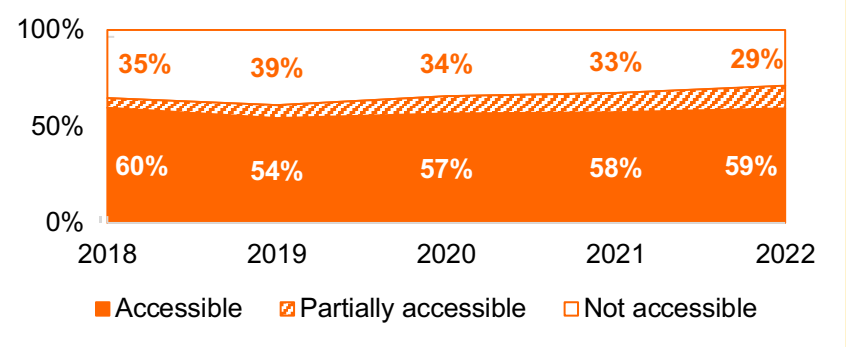
Source: UNDESA (on the basis of data from Sozialhelden[10]).

Box 8. Ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns, conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas and marine resources, protecting, restoring and promoting sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably managing forests, combating desertification, and halting and reversing land degradation and halting biodiversity loss (Goals 12, 14 and 15)

Achieving Goals 12, 14 and 15 will require the participation of all persons. Yet, persons with disabilities face barriers in acting as agents of change to achieve sustainable consumption and production patterns (Goal 12). Target 12.5 calls for substantially reducing waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse. But persons with disabilities face barriers in accessing recycling premises: worldwide, only 59 per cent of recycling premises are accessible for wheelchair users, slightly down from 60 per cent in 2018 (Figure 180). With current trends, in 2030, only 60 per cent of these premises are expected to be accessible – the same level as in 2018. Progress needs to accelerate to 65 times past observed trends to make all these premises accessible to persons with disabilities by 2030.

Target 12.2 aims at achieving the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources. However, persons with disabilities face barriers in accessing sustainable products: worldwide, only 67 per cent of shops selling organic/sustainable products are accessible for wheelchair users up from 60 per cent in 2018 (Figure 181). With the progress rates observed so far, 81 per cent of these shops are expected to be accessible for persons with disabilities by 2030: the rate of progress needs to accelerate to 2 times faster to ensure that all shops are accessible for wheelchair users by 2030.

Figure 180. Percentage of recycling premises that are accessible for wheelchair users, worldwide, yearly from 2018 to 2022.



Source: UNDESA (on the basis of data from Sozialhelden[10]).

Persons with disabilities face barriers towards participating in youth environmental activism and to promote the realization of Goals 14 and 15. In 2021, no references to persons with disabilities were found in academic literature covering youth environmental activism and in social media from youth environmental activism groups.[481] When involved, persons with disabilities are often engaged only as

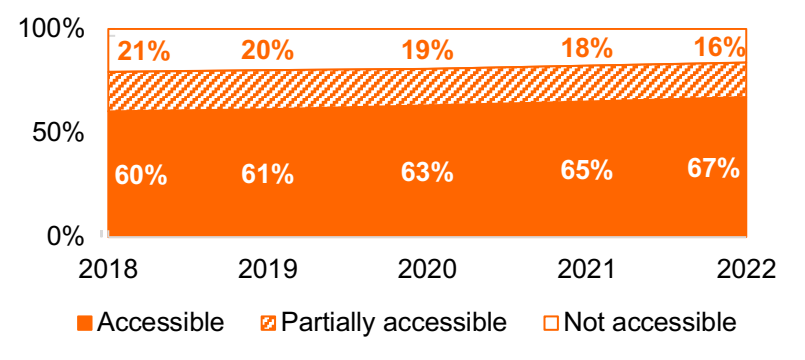
environmental learners and given few opportunities to take roles such as environmental advocates or educators.[482]

Persons with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by environmental shocks, such as natural disasters and climate-related hazards (see chapter on goals 1, 11 and 13), and addressing this impact will require engaging persons with disabilities in active roles in environmental issues. Furthermore, environmental discourses, policies, actions and activism can impact persons with disabilities in a negative way if the needs and perspectives of persons with disabilities are not considered. For example, various countries have introduced plastic straw bans to reduce plastic pollutants but some persons with disabilities need to use straws to assist with drinking. Single-use plastic straws are preferred as they are more flexible, more sanitary and safer for them than alternatives such as metal and plastic straws.[483,484]

As another example, protests to advocate against environmental degradation, such as roadblocks for cars, can create disproportionate barriers to persons with disabilities: users of wheelchairs often need to take a car or taxi to work and have no alternative transport because not all public transportation is yet accessible to them – unless all public transportation is made accessible, the traffic delays caused by protests will impact persons with disabilities more than others.[485] Climate mitigation and adaptation measures developed without consultation with persons with disabilities can also create additional barriers: bicycles lanes may cause bus stops to become wheelchair inaccessible; extra taxes on private transportation can disproportionally impact persons with disabilities if public transportation is not accessible. Despite the barriers, there are examples of persons with disabilities acting as environmental activists.[486]

Involving persons with disabilities in environmental discussion, action and decision-making and making recycling facilities and premises for sustainable products and services accessible to persons with disabilities will be positive steps contributing to the achievement of goals 12, 14 and 15.

Figure 181. Percentage of shops of organic/sustainable products that are accessible for wheelchair users, worldwide, yearly from 2018 to 2022.



Source: UNDESA (on the basis of data from Sozialhelden[10]).

Indicator 11.7.2 monitors the proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months. Examples of harassment include offensive or derogatory jokes or remarks, racial or ethnic slurs, pressures for sexual favours and negative, offensive or unwelcome comments about a disability, unwanted or inappropriate touching, hugging or other physical contact. The experience of physical and sexual harassment can have far-reaching negative impacts on the victims. Besides the emotional and psychological harm suffered, harassment can have negative consequences on the ability of its victims to fully participate in public life and to share in and contribute to the development of their communities.

In the European Union, persons with disabilities experience harassment at a higher rate than others: 50 per cent of persons with severe disabilities and 47 per cent of persons with not severe disabilities experienced harassment in 2019 or in the five preceding years, compared to 37 per cent of persons without disabilities.[487] Globally, persons with disabilities are 2-6 times more likely than others to experience violence, including harassment and other forms of violence, with women and girls with disabilities at higher risk than others (see chapter on targets 16.1 and 16.2).

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic brought challenges for persons with disabilities to affording housing, transport and basic services at home, such as water and other utilities. During the pandemic, a slightly higher proportion of households with persons with disabilities, compared to those without, reported difficulties paying for rent (28% vs 24%) and transport (16% vs 15%).[16] A higher proportion of parents/caregivers with disabilities, compared to those without, reported needing and not having access to water delivery during the pandemic (31% vs 18%).[16] A higher proportion of households with persons with disabilities, compared to those without, reported difficulties paying for utility bills (31% vs 24%).[16]

Due to financial difficulties, persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, may have been at an increased risk of homelessness as a result of the pandemic. Surveys conducted in April 2020 among persons with disabilities, national human rights institutes and experts from governments aware of the situation of homeless persons with disabilities indicate that 51 per cent considered their government took no measures to protect the life, health and safety of persons with disabilities living on the streets or in homeless shelters during the pandemic; 41 per cent considered the government took some measures and 8 per cent considered the government took significant measures.[488]

Persons with disabilities in remote and rural areas may have faced additional barriers to accessing COVID-19 treatment and to access adequate information on COVID-19 prevention and vaccination, especially in areas without access to the Internet, phones and other information technologies. In the same surveys conducted in April 2020 among persons with disabilities and experts from governments and national human rights institutes, the majority of respondents (59 per cent) indicated that no measures were taken by their government to protect persons with disabilities in remote and rural areas; 32 per cent

considered the government took some measures and 9 per cent considered the government took significant measures.

Lack of inclusive and accessible transportation during the pandemic, especially during lockdowns, may have caused negative impacts on persons with disabilities. For example, in South Africa, lack of transport and dependency on others for transportation led to persons with disabilities not being able to receive their COVID-19 vaccination in a timely manner.[489] In 2020, across 75 countries worldwide, 50 per cent of persons with visual impairments reported challenges in transportation.[490]

Another barrier for inclusive cities and human settlements during the pandemic was the adoption of face masks that were not inclusive of persons with disabilities, i.e. face masks which are not transparent. Although transparent face masks exist, their adoption has not been promoted and research, pre- and during the pandemic, on the efficiency of these face masks in the protection against COVID-19 has been insufficient. Deaf persons and persons with hearing impairments, who rely on lip-reading and visual cues, were prevented from effective communication as they struggled to understand what was said to them: 85 per cent of deaf persons or persons with hearing impairments saw face coverings as an impediment for speechreading and 72 per cent thought that masks made it more difficult for them to use their residual hearing to aid speech comprehension.[491] The inability to communicate with fellow pedestrians and at services impeded the possibility for deaf persons and persons with hearing impairments to access important resources and services and confidently and safely use city and town streets.

Moreover, many persons with disabilities stopped receiving personal care and assistance with shopping during the pandemic lockdowns – another barrier for them to access resources and services in their communities. For instance, in the United Kingdom, 41 per cent of persons with disabilities were no longer receiving assistance with shopping. [492]

Evidence suggests increased harassment and violence against persons with disabilities during the pandemic (see chapter on targets 16.1 and 16.2), including increased mocking, taunting and street harassment.[493]

Summary of findings and the way forward

Adequate, safe and affordable housing is a key component of inclusive development and an aim of target 11.1. Yet, persons with disabilities still find barriers in finding adequate and affordable housing for them. In developing countries, 33 per cent of persons with disabilities indicate their dwelling is hindering or not accessible to them; and 27 per cent report that they need but do not have modifications to make their home accessible to them. Barriers are also found in developed countries. In Europe, 5 per cent of persons with disabilities live in severely deprived housing, i.e. overcrowded housing with a leaking roof, no bath and shower, or too dark; and 10 per cent of persons with disabilities have heavy housing costs,

spending more than 40 per cent of their disposable income to pay these costs. Analysis in North America points to only 1 per cent of rented dwellings meeting the standards of universal design.

Safe, accessible and affordable transportation provides mobility to all, drives sustainable and inclusive growth and is a call of target 11.2. But 43 per cent of persons with disabilities in developing countries consider that transportation is hindering or not accessible to them. Persons with disabilities also encounter barriers in transit stations, transit platforms and bus stations: in 2022, only 68 per cent of transit stations, 61 per cent of transit platforms and 77 per cent of bus stations in developed countries were accessible to wheelchair users; and 77 per cent of transit stations, 66 per cent of transit platforms and 69 per cent of bus stations in developing countries.

Targets 11.3 and 11.7 call for inclusive urbanization and for safe, inclusive and accessible public and green spaces. However, about a third of persons with disabilities report that recreational facilities are not accessible to them; and 28 per cent report that they need but do not encounter modifications to make it easier to participate in the community. Globally, in 2022, only 57 per cent of buildings, only 52 per cent of playgrounds and only 51 per cent of museums were accessible to wheelchair users. Car parkings, libraries and commercial buildings tend to be more accessible (81 per cent of car parking lots, 73 per cent of libraries and 72 per cent of commercial buildings).

The COVID-19 pandemic brought challenges to affording housing and basic services at home: 28 per cent of persons with disabilities reported difficulties paying rent (compared to 24 per cent of persons without disabilities) and 31 per cent paying utility bills (compared to 24 per cent of persons without disabilities); 31 per cent of persons with disabilities needed but did not had access to water delivery (compared to 18 per cent of persons with disabilities).

Progress since 2015 has been slow or stagnant. Trends in Europe show progress in reducing the percentage of persons with disabilities in severely deprived housing and facing housing costs overburden. But, despite this progress, gaps between persons with disabilities remain. At the rates of progress observed so far, 2 per cent of persons with disabilities are expected to still live in severely deprived housing and 9 per cent to face housing costs overburden by 2030. Progress needs to accelerate 1.1 times faster to eliminate the gap between persons with and without disabilities living in severely deprived housing and 1.4 times faster to eliminate severely deprived housing for persons with disabilities by 2030. Higher acceleration will be needed to address housing costs overburden for persons with disabilities: 2 times faster to eliminate the gap between persons with and without disabilities and 3 times faster to eliminate housing costs overburden by 2030.

Accessibility of transit stations, transit platforms and bus stations has been decreasing in developing countries, this trend needs to be reversed to achieve accessible transportation systems for all by 2030. In developed countries, accessibility transit platforms has also been deteriorating; accessibility of transit stations for wheelchair users has been increasing and is expected, if past observed trends continue, to reach 79 per cent by 2030. This trend would have to accelerate to twice as fast to achieve 100 per cent

by 2030. Likewise, accessibility of bus stations in developed countries for wheelchair users has been increasing and is expected, if past observed trends continue, to reach 91 per cent by 2030. This trend would have to accelerate 1.5 times to achieve 100 per cent by 2030.

Accessibility of spaces in cities and human settlements has been increasing but at a slow place. If past observed trends continue, by 2030, 85 per cent of car parking lots, 76 per cent of libraries, 75 per cent of commercial buildings, 60 per cent of buildings, 55 per cent of playgrounds and only 55 per cent of museums are expected to be accessible to wheelchair users. These trends need to accelerate 3 times for car parking lots, 7 times for libraries, 7 times for commercial buildings, 10 times for buildings, 10 times for playgrounds and 9 times for museums to achieve 100 per cent accessibility to wheelchair users by 2030.

To make cities and communities inclusive, accessible and sustainable for persons with disabilities, more efforts are needed to:

1. Raise awareness of disability among communities and create an enabling environment where persons with disabilities are included without discrimination and can participate equally in their communities. Involve representative organizations of persons with disabilities in awareness campaigns and share progress and best practices on disability-inclusion and accessibility.

2. Build capacity in accessibility and disability-inclusion among decision-makers and building professionals, such as architects, engineers, urban planners and managers. There is a lack of expertise and technical capacity to implement measures promoting accessibility and inclusion. Initiate, in collaboration with representative organizations of persons with disabilities, training programs for decision-makers, ministerial and agency staff, and building professionals, such as architects, engineers, urban planners and managers on legal obligations, development frameworks and tools to support inclusive urban development strategies and practices. Enhance inter-ministerial coordination on inclusion, accessibility and human rights pertaining to urban development, avoiding duplication of and siloed efforts.

3. Adopt explicit commitments to inclusion, universal design and accessibility. Promote policies and practices to improve accessibility of public spaces and disability-inclusive road and pedestrian environments. Develop policies, regulations and standards supporting accessible and universal design throughout the transport system. Include requirements for accessibility and universal design in standard procurement documents.

4. Regularly generate research, disaggregated data and city-wide assessments on accessibility and use this evidence to guide policy making. Conduct surveys among persons with disabilities to assess the accessibility of public space and transportation and the barriers they face in these environments. Explore also crowdsourced data to monitor accessibility and disability-inclusion in public spaces. Assess accessibility barriers in public spaces and transportation systems and conduct impact evaluations of policies and strategies implemented to promote accessibility. Involve persons with

disabilities and their representative organizations in data and research efforts. Use the evidence generates to produce roadmaps and action plans.

5. Establish clear participatory and accessible mechanisms for inclusive budgeting, planning, designing, implementation, and monitoring of urban strategies, policies and practices. Engage persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in budgeting, planning, designing, implementation, and monitoring of urban strategies, policies and practices. Make all consultations accessible to persons with disabilities.