



**Written submission
of the Austrian Disability Council**

**for the thematic study on the rights of
persons with disabilities and
disability-inclusive infrastructure, including
housing and transportation**

**of the Office of the
United Nations High Commissioner for Human
Rights**

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The report at hand is mostly based on documents from the Austrian Disability Council, the legally recognised umbrella organization of over 85 member organisations representing approximately 1.4 million persons with disabilities in Austria.



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1. Legal and policy frameworks

1. What national, regional or local policies exist in your country to promote accessible transport and housing for persons with disabilities?

Austria is a federal state with nine provinces, each of which holds primary responsibility for housing policy. This means that there is no overarching federal legislation on housing, and approaches differ across the 9 provinces. In practice, this has led to varying models of institutional housing and supported living.

Regarding accessibility in housing, the legal framework has deteriorated in recent years, resulting in new buildings being constructed that are not fully accessible. Federalism complicates the creation of uniform standards in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and nine different regional building codes still exist. The Austrian Institute of Construction Engineering (OIB-Österreichisches Institut für Bautechnik) issued guidelines aiming to harmonize the building codes, but the 9 provinces can and do deviate from them.¹ In addition, since the reference to the ÖNORM B 1600 (the national standard for accessibility) was removed from the guidelines in 2015, the OIB guidelines have set lower accessibility standards than the national standards for accessibility.²

As for transport, the Federal Disability Equality Act (Bundes-Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz)³ legally requires accessibility in transport services. However, not all services are accessible in practice, and the available legal remedies remain insufficient. Furthermore, within the new strategic framework, the Austrian Federal Railways have reduced their allocated budget for accessibility measures, which poses an additional setback to progress in this area.

2. How do these frameworks align with obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities?

These frameworks show only partial alignment with Austria's obligations under the CRPD. While the Federal Disability Equality Act legally requires accessibility in transport, the lack of effective enforcement mechanisms undermines the practical realization of accessibility as enshrined in Articles 9 and 20 of the CRPD.

¹ OIB Österreichisches Institut für Bautechnik, Neueste Ausgabe der OIB-Richtlinien, [OIB-Richtlinien 2023 - Österreichisches Institut für Bautechnik | OIB](#) (last accessed: 27.08.2025).

² Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic report of Austria 2023 (CRPD/C/AUT/CO/2-3), 4 (27b).

³ § 6 Abs 5 Bundesgesetz über die Gleichstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen, BGBl 2018/32.

In the area of housing, the continued investment in segregated institutions contradicts Article 19 CRPD. Investments are still being made - partly with funding from the European Union's Structural Funds - into the renovation and construction of segregated institutions for persons with disabilities, rather than into community-based and inclusive housing solutions.⁴ For the second time, disability organisations in Austria have lodged a complaint with the European Commission regarding the misuse of an estimated € 3.2 million from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), which in Tyrol was allocated to the renovation and construction of segregated facilities for persons with disabilities.⁵

The regression in the standards for accessible construction of housing, as noted with concern by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities⁶, further compounds existing barriers to independent living and undermines the effective implementation of Article 9 CRPD.

Overall, current policies demonstrate significant gaps between Austria's international commitments and their practical realization at national and provincial levels.

3. How are these integrated in the design and implementation of comprehensive care and support systems-related infrastructure?

There is no systematic integration of accessibility considerations into the design and implementation of infrastructure related to comprehensive care and support systems.

2. Accessible Transport

4. What measures have been taken to ensure the accessibility of different modes of transport (urban, rural, long-distance, maritime, air, railway, bus)?

Public transport has seen notable accessibility improvements, particularly in urban areas where infrastructure is well developed. In rural regions, however, gaps remain. Long-distance trains have also been significantly improved. The current collaboration of the Austrian Federal Railways with experts with disabilities and the Austrian Disability Council has brought many improvements by implementing accessibility measures.

5. Are point-to-point and demand-responsive transport services (e.g., accessible taxis, paratransit) available? If so, what has been their impact?

⁴ (CRPD/C/AUT/CO/2-3), 8 (47d).

⁵ BIZEPS, EU-Strukturfonds werden in Österreich zur Aussonderung von Menschen mit Behinderungen verwendet, [EU-Strukturfonds werden in Österreich zur Aussonderung von Menschen mit Behinderungen verwendet - BIZEPS](#) (last accessed: 27.08.2025).

⁶ (CRPD/C/AUT/CO/2-3), 4 (27b).

Demand-responsive services are gradually emerging in Austria. A key challenge, however, is ensuring that these services are fully accessible, as there are no binding legal requirements guaranteeing accessibility across the country. From individual feedback, the Austrian Disability Council is aware that when such services are offered in an accessible manner, they are used extensively. In two cases, the Austrian Disability Council has also initiated arbitration to address barriers in this area.

6. What training is provided to transport personnel to ensure accessible, dignified service?

Some individual transport providers offer trainings to their staff to raise awareness and improve services for persons with disabilities. However, there is no overarching framework that requires such training to be carried out systematically, and no legal obligation currently exists in this regard.

7. What indicators or monitoring mechanisms are used to assess the accessibility and inclusiveness of transport systems?

There is no state-led measurement or monitoring mechanism in place to systematically assess the accessibility and inclusiveness of transport systems. The Austrian Federal Railways do publish information on the accessibility status of train stations.⁷ However, beyond this, no comprehensive or government-driven monitoring framework currently exists.

3. Accessible and inclusive housing

8. What actions have been taken to increase the availability and accessibility of housing for persons with disabilities?

No specific measures have been taken in Austria to increase the availability or accessibility of housing for persons with disabilities. Accessibility standards for housing have been scaled back, and instead, funding has been directed towards institutional care.

9. How are universal design, house adjustments and reasonable accommodation integrated into housing policies and building regulations?

Universal design principles are partially incorporated into housing policies and building regulations in Austria. However, reasonable accommodations are not systematically addressed or integrated into these frameworks.

⁷ ÖBB, Barrierefreiheit, [ÖBB Folder-Barrierefreiheit.pdf](#) (last accessed: 27.08.2025).

10. Are there housing programmes or financial mechanisms (e.g., subsidies, grants) specifically supporting independent living for persons with disabilities?

The Support Fund for persons with disabilities provides grants for housing adaptations.⁸ In addition, personal assistance is currently limited to specific target groups, rather than being available to all persons with disabilities.

4. Participation and governance

11. How are persons with disabilities and their representative organizations involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of transport and housing policies?

Persons with disabilities and their representative organizations are consulted on transport and housing policies only on an occasional, ad-hoc basis. There is no comprehensive or systematic participation, neither in transport at the national level nor in housing policies at the regional level.

5. Data collection and evaluation

12. What data is collected on accessibility in transport and housing? Are these data disaggregated by disability and other factors?

There is no systematic collection or publication of data on accessibility in transport and housing. In the housing sector, some data may exist at the regional level, but these are neither shared nor integrated into a national overview.

13. How is the impact of policies and practices on participation of persons with disabilities evaluated?

The impact of policies and practices on the participation of persons with disabilities is not systematically evaluated.

6. Good practices

14. Please share examples of good practices, pilot initiatives or scalable programmes in transport, particularly point-to-point transport and housing accessibility and adjustments.

A notable good practice is the Postbus Shuttle, the demand-responsive call-collect taxi service operated by Postbus AG.⁹ It provides flexible, point-to-point transport, particularly in rural areas, as a complement to regular public transport.

⁸ Sozialministeriumsservice, Unterstützungsfonds, [Unterstützungsfonds](#) (last accessed: 27.08.2025).

⁹ Postbus AG, ÖBB Postbus Shuttle, [Postbus Shuttle - Postbus](#) (last accessed: 27.08.2025).

15. What were the key factors for their success, and what lessons can be learned for replication or adaptation?

A key factor in the success of the Postbus Shuttle is that persons with disabilities were explicitly recognized as a target group for the service. When accessible vehicles are made available, these services are widely used, demonstrating the potential of flexible, need-based transport solutions.

7. Integration with care and support system

16. How do policies and practices in transport and housing interact with or complement comprehensive care and support systems aimed at enabling independent living and community inclusion?

Current policies and practices in transport and housing tend to hinder, rather than support, independent living and community inclusion. Existing regulations and provisions do not sufficiently facilitate accessible and flexible services that enable persons with disabilities to live independent within the community.