

Vienna: Accessibility Integrated into Urban Governance



Background

Vienna has a long-standing commitment to inclusive urban planning. Its strategy includes gender-sensitive planning, accessibility for persons with disabilities, and inclusive policies for diverse communities such as LGBTQIA+ residents. In addition, the city's "Inclusive Vienna 2030" strategy programme centres on co-decision with disability organisations and cross-departmental collaboration.

Vienna won the 2025 Access City Award, signalling recognition for its integrated socio-environmental accessibility policy.



Key Activities

The city integrates inclusion into every project phase, from zoning to street furniture. Public consultations are conducted, involving underrepresented groups. City staff also receive ongoing training.

Vienna achieved universal accessibility in all metro stations and over 95% of bus and tram stops using tactile guidance, low-floor vehicles, audible announcements, and emergency systems.

Gender-inclusive urban design, such as widened pavements, improved lighting, and stroller-friendly infrastructure, has been prioritised. Gender-inclusive urban design, such as widened pavements, improved lighting, and stroller-friendly infrastructure, have been prioritised and widely celebrated.

In addition, the city introduced accessible swimming pools, Smart Traffic Lights, and social programmes for housing and integration.

Impact

Enhanced accessibility: Accessibility has improved across different areas, including housing, transport, and public spaces. The city has become more attractive for tourism and business, and the public's trust in municipal services has increased.



Co-funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.
Project Number: 2024-1-CY01-KA220-YOU-000254366

Vienna: Accessibility Integrated into Urban Governance



Impact

Enhanced accessibility: Vienna is regularly ranked amongst the world's most liveable cities, as it now offers exceptional physical and institutional accessibility, contributing to its global liveability. The city's residents report high satisfaction with transport and public space accessibility, as its approach is a model integrating inclusion into all aspects of governance.

Recognition: Vienna won the 2025 Access City Award, cementing its role as a leader in inclusive governance. Social research highlights how inclusion supports other policies, such as social housing and gender equity.



Tips for Similar Projects

- Use inclusion as a lens across all policy domains, not just mobility.
- Engage civil society continuously.
- Frame accessibility as both social justice and urban quality-of-life improvement.
- Include inclusive design across housing, transport, tech, and public spaces.
- Rely on strong political backing and civic participation to sustain progress.

Challenges & Solutions

- Coordinating inclusion across departments was addressed through cross-agency working groups and clear guidelines. Careful coordination among departments ensured smooth implementation.
- Despite strong pedestrian zones like Mariahilfer Straße, some users have reported inconsistencies where cars and bikes still intrude, issues the city is actively addressing through enforcement.



Identified Limitations/Weaknesses

- Maintaining momentum requires political continuity and sustained investment.
- Achieving full consistency in inclusion requires ongoing effort. Some pedestrian zones remain only partially enforced, and traffic encroachment continues in certain mixed-use lanes.

Vienna: Accessibility Integrated into Urban Governance



Video

- **“How to Explore Vienna: A Disabled Traveler's Guide”**

Video Description

A travel vlog-style video presented by wheelchair tennis player Nico Langmann, showing how Vienna supports accessible travel. It highlights the city's barrier-free metro system, elevators in historic buildings, accessible museums, and inclusive streetscapes. Nico provides personal commentary on how the city balances history and accessibility, making it not only more liveable for locals but also welcoming for tourists with disabilities.

Resources

- [Vienna Inclusive Planning](#)

Image Source

Image © Julius Hirtzberger/WienTourismus

Partners



Co-funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.
Project Number: 2024-1-CY01-KA220-YOU-000254366