



ACT4DYS

Belgium



Empowering youth workers, young people, and young persons with disabilities to become active advocates, using creativity and leadership to make their cities more inclusive & sustainable

We are developing an e-portfolio featuring 40+ good practices from across Europe, offering adaptable, practical ideas. As part of this process we conducted national research and focus groups to inform the development.

Desk Research Snapshot

Belgium is making strides in sustainable, inclusive urban mobility via regional strategies, national transport upgrades, legal frameworks and incentives, with local innovation, yet implementation remains inconsistent and fragmented, treating accessibility and sustainability as add-ons, not core priorities.



Key Insights

- Regional mobility plans (Flanders' Vision 2040, Brussels' Good Move, and Wallonia's FAST 2030) and national rail upgrades are advancing sustainable, integrated transport across Belgium.
- Regional frameworks and standards support accessible environments, with agencies providing guidance and incentives to stakeholders.
- Strong policies exist, but accessibility and sustainability efforts are inconsistently applied at all government levels.
- Focus group participants highlighted that while assistance is available across various services, it often requires advance planning and introduces dependency, undermining autonomy and contributing to higher private vehicle use by persons with disabilities.

Focus Groups

Five (5) online and one (1) in-person focus group

Who took part?

18 participants including 10 young persons, 14 persons with disabilities and representatives of organisations of persons with disabilities, 1 youth advocacy organisation representative and 3 climate advocates and climate professionals.

Key Findings

Participants shared frustration at fragmented, inconsistent accessibility. Despite legislation, transport, infrastructure, heritage sites and digital systems often hindered independence. Accessibility was seen as an afterthought, with target groups excluded from urban planning and mobility decisions.



Insights

Legal frameworks, standards and good practices lead but implementation and accountability slow to follow.

Recommendations

Disability services should be expanded and integrated, consulting affected groups, enforcing accessibility policies, and using AI to address communication barriers in travel and emergencies.

Good Practices

Examples like Brussels' accessible buses, Ghent's child-friendly planning, Mechelen's inclusive study spaces, bicycle infrastructure, and a youth-led app mapping accessible services

"It is the centre of Europe, and there is no prioritisation [of accessibility] at all."

Visit the website to learn more!

