

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002927/26
to the Commission
Elena Kountoura (The Left)
(14 July 2026)

Subject: Ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities through the mandatory implementation of standard EN 17210: 2021 on a built environment accessible to all

The European Commission has recognised, in line with the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, that accessibility is a fundamental condition for the enjoyment of the rights of persons with disabilities and their full participation in public life and society ⁽¹⁾. However, significant gaps and disparities in the physical accessibility of public spaces and infrastructure remain, despite the existence of European standard EN 17210: 2021. This standard sets minimum functional requirements for the universal accessibility of buildings, public spaces and urban infrastructure ⁽²⁾, but its implementation remains patchy due to its non-mandatory nature.

Bearing in mind the European Parliament's recent resolution, which emphasises the need to improve accessibility for people with disabilities ⁽³⁾, the significant number of EU-funded infrastructure projects that are implemented without adequate and binding physical accessibility conditions, the complaints from organisations and citizens about repeated delays, violations, discrepancies and gaps relating to accessibility ⁽⁴⁾, and bearing also in mind the existence of standard EN 17210: 2021, which is currently being revised ⁽⁵⁾, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Does it intend to propose a mandatory European framework for full accessibility, based on standard EN 17210: 2021, for all public and private projects, as well as for the renovation of existing infrastructure, funded by the EU?
2. Does it intend to link the use of European funds to mandatory compliance with binding physical accessibility requirements, in order to ensure a built environment that is accessible to all citizens?

Submitted: 15.7.2026

Answer given by Ms Lahbib on behalf of the European Commission
(7 September 2026)

Accessibility is an enabler of rights. In its communication 'Enhancing the strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities up to 2030 ⁽¹⁾', the Commission recalls this while acknowledging that persons with disabilities continue to face barriers in the built environment.

Various EU policy and regulatory initiatives offer opportunities to promote accessibility. The European Affordable Housing Plan ⁽²⁾ encourages Member States to foster access to accessible housing for persons with disabilities.

The Commission has been considering accessibility in its assessment ⁽³⁾ of national building renovation plans under the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) ⁽⁴⁾, which requires Member States to address the issue of accessibility in new buildings and existing ones undergoing major renovation.

The New European Bauhaus also offers a policy framework for adequate reforms and investments. Moreover, the EPBD already lays down obligations for Member States to address accessibility in specific cases.

At this stage, there is no initiative announced that would introduce a mandatory European framework for accessibility of the built environment, based on standard EN 17210:2021.

Related to the Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034, the Commission's proposal establishing the National and Regional Partnership Plans (NRPPs) ⁽⁵⁾ contains provisions on ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities.

¹ See the strategy for the rights of people with disabilities 2021-2030.

² The standard aims to describe basic, common minimum functional requirements and recommendations, applicable across the built environment, for an accessible and usable environment for all.

³ Resolution of 27 November 2025 on the EU strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities post-2024.

⁴ See report by the European Disability Forum, published in March 2025 (<https://www.edf-feph.org/eu-institutions-failing-its-staff-with-disabilities-un-experts-hear>), and the petitions submitted by citizens and organisations ([https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/IUST_IDA\(2025\)780258](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/IUST_IDA(2025)780258)), highlighting the legislative gaps and recurring patterns of exclusion in the daily lives of people with disabilities.

⁵ <https://www.cenelec.eu/news-events/news/2026/en-in-the-spotlight/2026-02-26-en-17210-2021/>.

⁽¹⁾ COM(2026) 541 final.

⁽²⁾ COM(2025) 1025 final.

⁽³⁾ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/9f0d1959-800a-11f1-bf5e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>.

⁽⁴⁾ Directive (EU) 2024/1275 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 April 2024 on the energy performance of buildings.

⁽⁵⁾ Recital 26 and Article 7 of the proposal for a regulation Establishing the European Fund for Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion, COM(2025) 565 final. This proposal also sets out that such NRPPs should not support actions that contribute to any form of segregation, discrimination, or exclusion.

These conditions have been referred to in the sector-specific proposals linked to the NRPPs, such as proposals on the European Regional Development Fund or the European Social Fund, as well as in proposals for funds under other management modes.
