

Interrail meets politics

2025

EUROPE ON TRACK

THEME: INCLUSION

OFAJ
DFJW



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. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them

The Project

Europe on Track brings together young people from **France**, **Germany**, and **Denmark** for a 10-day Interrail journey from Paris to Berlin to Copenhagen, with **inclusion** at its core. Participants begin by developing a shared vision of an inclusive society. At each stop, creative and hands-on activities offer real-life insights into topics like inclusive mobility. The journey fosters **awareness**, **exchange**, and **fresh ideas**. At the final event in Copenhagen, participants present their visions to representatives of the **EU Council Presidency**. Afterwards, they collaborate with project partners to host local events, sharing their ideas and demands for a more inclusive Europe with the broader public.

Preamble: Inclusion in our Words

Inclusion, for us, means the systematic provision of equal access to opportunities and resources, enabling individuals to achieve independence and, at a minimum, meet their basic needs. This applies to anyone who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as people with physical or intellectual disabilities and members of other minority groups.

Our goal is therefore self-sufficiency for all. A goal which can also benefit non-affected groups.

Preamble: Inclusion is beneficial for Everyone

When speaking with members of the affected communities, it became clear that many of the solutions designed by people with disabilities can benefit not only those who need them, but society as a whole. This highlights how inclusion should be an integral part of how we build our community. Not something that faces resistance from those not directly affected, but something that benefits everyone. Another positive effect of this is the general destigmatization of disabilities.

Preamble: Influence of the affected Group

We all have different strengths. During our journey through Paris, Berlin, and Copenhagen, we observed that good intentions do not always translate into effective solutions in practice. Again and again, when speaking with those directly affected, we heard a clear call for inclusion in decision-making. This means involving impacted communities, relevant organisations, or the like from the very beginning - starting when the groundwork for projects is being laid. By doing so, we can achieve the most effective solutions for everyone.

Preamble: Inclusion - A job for the EU

The EU has the option to create a gold standard that can start in the member states but has the possibility to develop beyond EU borders. Projects can serve as a role model as well as present benefits, like mentioned above to countries and people outside of the European Union. An initiative can also create a network between countries and connect people with the goal of an inclusive society; such things present the opportunity to connect Europe on a new level. To make this job easier the EU should adopt a universal definition of inclusion.

EU funding for Inclusion

A dedicated share of the EU budget should be allocated to inclusion and the implementation of inclusive policies (fostering tolerance, integration, and accessibility) in every Member State, with clear conditionality mechanisms to ensure compliance. This proposal can be applied to all other proposals concerning funding project.

Inclusion through local Community

The EU has to fund the inclusion of local community spaces in as many cities as possible through EU countries.

A welcoming space where everyone can learn the language, values, and culture while sharing their own skills. Public spaces could be repurposed for citizen-led activities such as language courses, communal meals, and other initiatives. To remain truly inclusive, the space must be affordable, accessible, and open to all. By fostering everyday interactions, fear and prejudice can be reduced, reviving the spirit of collective work and strengthening community bonds. Through sharing, the model becomes self-sustaining, with each person contributing and receiving value in return. Inclusion takes shape in shared meals, reduced isolation, and a genuine desire to participate in community life.

Inclusion through Language and Culture

Implementing the generalisation of language and cultural courses, that will help the immigrants to be included into the given society and jobmarket.

To effectively be a part of the wanted society, the immigrants should have the opportunity to learn the language that will serve them on a daily basis, such as through work, and socialisation, which we believe, are the basis for the inclusivity of immigrants. This is only effective, if both sides are willing to include one another. This shared responsibility falls into the state and individuals themselves. To accomplish this challenge, the EU member states need to take the responsibility of offering given language courses. This duty falls into first hands of the state, and any further responsibilities of accomplishing the given course falls on to the Individual. We believe these courses should be mandatory, or are strongly recommended for the individuals.

Breaking Misconceptions

A campaign should be created that highlights the real-life experiences of immigrants in Europe. By focusing on social research, statistical evidence, and personal stories, the campaign can help challenge common misconceptions.

For example, studies show that Muslim communities in Europe demonstrate levels of law-abiding behavior comparable to the general population, and that the vast majority strongly reject any form of extremism. Across Europe, people of all backgrounds – including many Muslims – live their faith in ways that emphasize family, cultural traditions, and the desire for safety and stability.

By bringing these realities to light, we aim to counter prejudice and foster a stronger sense of belonging and social cohesion for immigrants and minority communities.

Bridging Cultures, building Communities

Increase visibility of underrepresented cultures, communities and minorities by implementing intercultural exchange programs like internships in cultural institutions or volunteering opportunities across generations in cultural projects to strengthen societal tolerance.

This proposal outlines the establishment of cultural exchange programs designed to strengthen community ties, promote intercultural dialogue, and empower young people through meaningful participation. By connecting individuals from diverse backgrounds and communities, they aim to foster mutual respect, cultural awareness, and long-term social cohesion and help reduce stereotypes.

Inclusion as a Standard

Every construction or development project should involve an accessibility and inclusion expert to ensure that the needs of all individuals are taken into account from the design stage.

This would guarantee that issues such as barrier-free access, signage, adapted communication, and safety measures are considered from the planning stage, rather than being added later as costly adjustments. Such a requirement would set a strong European standard, ensuring that inclusion is not an afterthought but a guiding principle in the creation of public spaces and infrastructures.

Mobility Without Barriers

Infrastructure should be adapted to people with reduced mobility through measures. This involves equipping stations and vehicles with ramps, elevators, tactile paving, and level boarding between platforms and vehicles.

EU funds could be mobilized to support Member States and local authorities in upgrading their infrastructure, especially in older systems where accessibility is still limited. These improvements would not only benefit people with disabilities but also elderly citizens, parents with strollers, and anyone facing temporary mobility difficulties.

Inclusive Communication, Equal Access

Information and facilities should be designed to be usable by everyone, integrating at least two channels of communication (for example: audio messages and braille for blind people, written displays for deaf people). By applying these standards consistently across Europe, public services would become truly inclusive, enabling all citizens to exercise their rights equally.

A joint EU Platform

The European Union should establish a permanent platform in which disability organisations, EU lawmakers, and Member States meet on a regular basis.

A joint EU platform aimed at improving accessibility in public spaces for persons with disabilities would be ideal for fostering greater inclusion across the EU. The platform should include all relevant stakeholders, i.e., organisations representing persons with disabilities alongside EU decision-makers and Member States.

In its Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021–2030, the EU has already adopted AccessibleEU, whose aim is to make everyday life easier for disabled people across the Union. However, we seek to further develop this initiative by adding a political dimension, whereby disability organisations are granted genuine influence and collaboration on creating more accessible public spaces becomes more structured.

Reviving Buildings - new Housing Opportunities

Using European funds to renovate and repurpose unused public buildings into housing facilities for homeless people.

Unused or abandoned public buildings, such as former schools, administrative offices, or cultural centers, could be renovated with the support of EU cohesion funds, the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), or the Recovery and Resilience Facility. These renovated spaces would provide safe, dignified, and permanent housing solutions for homeless people, combined with essential services such as access to healthcare, social support, and training opportunities. This approach not only addresses homelessness but also contributes to sustainable urban development by giving new life to unused infrastructure.



Europe on Track 2025 - Inclusion





Authors

Amil
Amy
Ebbe
Elena
Emma
Henny
Honoré
Jeanne
Julius
Justin
Mathilde
Mériadec
Rosa
Sami
Tamar



Contact:
Anne Jansen
Europäische Akademie Berlin
aj@eab-berlin.eu



Project Partners

France

Maison de l'Europe de Paris

Germany

Europäische Akademie Berlin

Denmark

European Movement Denmark

