



ISSUE 9

MAKING TRAVEL INCLUSIVE FOR ALL

The Valuable 500 Global Trends Report



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Identifying the most notable trends in
the period May — September 2022



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The effects of climate change are disproportionately impacting disabled and elderly people.
- 02 Post-Covid inclusion**

The aftermath of Covid-19 is still being felt by millions, prompting questions about what lessons can be learned.
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Travel disruption across multiple regions has highlighted inequality in the industry, prompting remedial action.
- 07 Accessible experiences**

There has been a positive move towards making experiences more accessible across tourism and public facilities.
- 08 Rise in disabled sports**

Several of this summer's sporting events have prompted increased engagement and appreciation of disabled sports.
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Global brands are making significant changes to accommodate disabled consumers in their offerings.
- 10 Digital disability employment resources**

Schemes in multiple regions aim to digitise elements of the hiring process for disabled people and employers.



LET'S DISCUSS

Disability and Travel



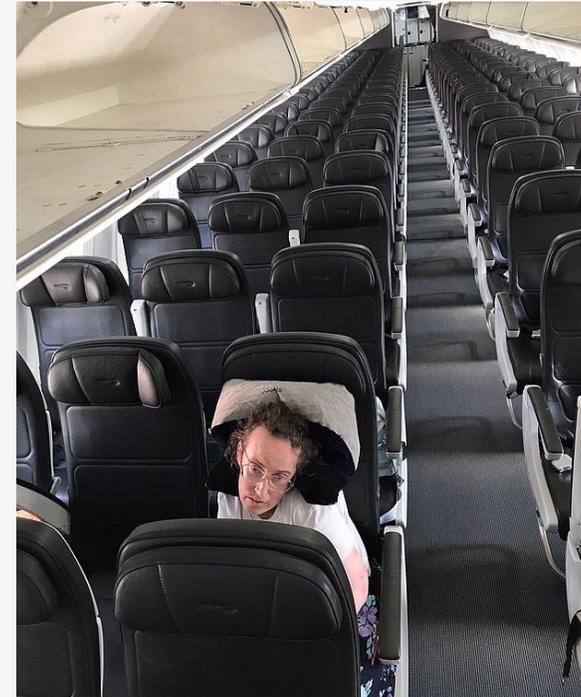
The problem with travel, if you're disabled.

Travel has probably crossed all of our minds at some point in the last few months. Holidays abroad, daytrips with the kids, or music festivals are all familiar summer experiences that require us to think about how we'll get from A to B. But for disabled people, travelling anywhere is far from easy.

For many, this summer has been one of renewed excitement and opportunity, with international travel being possible for the first time since the pandemic. Unfortunately, for people with disabilities, travel is all too often inaccessible, uncomfortable, and expensive. A recent survey found that two-thirds of the seven million Britons with limited mobility avoid flying altogether because it is so difficult.

In the past few months, a series of horror stories in the news have brought this topic into the spotlight. In June, a shocking image of a disabled woman left abandoned in an empty plane cabin went viral, first on **Twitter**, and subsequently in the news media. Victoria Brignell, who is paralysed from the neck down, was stuck in her seat for an hour and a half because the specialist staff booked to lift her safely from the plane seat and carry her to her wheelchair failed to appear. She was eventually carried off the plane by the cabin crew, who were not trained or insured to do so. Sadly, this was not a new experience for Victoria, who says, 'Disabled people are often an after-thought when it comes to travel.'

And Victoria is not alone in feeling this way. Figures from 2019 show that 700 disabled people missed flights between 2015 and 2018 because special assistance either failed to show up in time or didn't have the right equipment. The **Civil Aviation Authority** in the UK recently warned that airports must stop failing disabled passengers, or they could face legal action, after seeing an increase in reports of 'significant service failings'.



Victoria Brignell stranded on a plane at Gatwick Airport.

2/3^{rds}
of Britons
with limited
mobility
avoid flying.

“
Disabled people are often an
after-thought when it comes to travel.

Victoria Brignell



Because the transport industry treats disabled people as the lowest priority, they are constantly seen as an after-thought when it comes to transport, and when things go badly, the impact is huge.

James Taylor,
Executive Director of Strategy, Scope



The problems disabled people face when travelling by plane have been exacerbated by the fact that the industry globally has been struggling with staff shortages in recent months. Airlines and airports around the world cut thousands of jobs during the pandemic, when Covid-19 restrictions virtually shut down international travel. Since the demand for flights has returned, they have found it difficult to recruit and train new staff quickly enough, leading to delays and cancellations.

Unfortunately, disabled people often bear the brunt of service disruptions. James Taylor, Executive Director of Strategy at the disability equality charity **Scope**, argues, 'Because the transport industry treats disabled people as the lowest priority, they are constantly seen as an after-thought when it comes to transport, and when things go badly [in the travel industry] the impact is huge.'

Campaigning on this issue has begun to prompt global action, including the **US Department of Transportation** publishing the first Bill of Rights for Airline Passengers with Disabilities. Following Victoria Brignell's traumatic experience, Paralympian Tanni Grey-Thompson also launched a campaign with **The Mail on Sunday** to make five key demands of the travel industry:

1. Fines for airports and rail operators that keep disabled passengers waiting longer than 20 minutes on planes, and ten minutes on trains, for special assistance.
2. All wheelchair users can use their own chair all the way to plane door – and it will be waiting for them when they arrive at their destination.
3. Storage space for at least one collapsible wheelchair in the cabin of every aircraft, so they don't have to go in the hold.
4. An accessible toilet on every aircraft.
5. A disability champion on board every flight, who is fully trained in the spectrum of accessibility needs and able to assist passengers to move.

Problems closer to home.

Unfortunately, it's not just international travel that's problematic for people with disabilities. Public transport networks also pose problems.

On trains, people with disabilities often miss their stop entirely due to staff failing to provide them assistance getting off. Assistance has to be booked in advance, requiring time and effort that rarely pays off, as campaigner Melissa Parker explains: 'Disabled people deserve equal access to services – we're paying customers, and we shouldn't have to fight to be remembered. It can take hours to book assistance, and it often doesn't make any difference whatsoever.'

A lack of accessibility on the transport network is also a huge problem for disabled travellers. Figures published by the UK government earlier this year show only 20% of train stations in the UK have step-free access between the street and the platform, only 2% have level access with the train, meaning a ramp is required, and only 35% have accessible toilets.

Disabled people are often placed in the luggage area on trains due to the lack of dedicated disabled spaces, and planes and trains rarely have disabled toilets meaning many people with disabilities are forced to deliberately dehydrate themselves to avoid having to use the facilities on board.

20% of UK train stations have step-free access.

2% have level access with the train.

35% have accessible toilets.

“
Disabled people deserve equal access to services – we're paying customers, and we shouldn't have to fight to be remembered. It can take hours to book assistance, and it often doesn't make any difference whatsoever.

Melissa Parker



Change is coming.

Things are changing slowly, with governments around the world pledging to prioritise the accessibility of public transport networks.

Japan

Change is slowly making Tokyo, and Japan in general, more broadly accessible, spurred in part by the city being awarded the 2020/1 Summer Olympics. Japan's rail system has historically been perceived as inaccessible for people with physical disabilities but according to **Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism**, over 90% of stations handling more than 3,000 passengers per day are now accessible to people with physical disabilities; in Tokyo, the number is estimated at 96%.

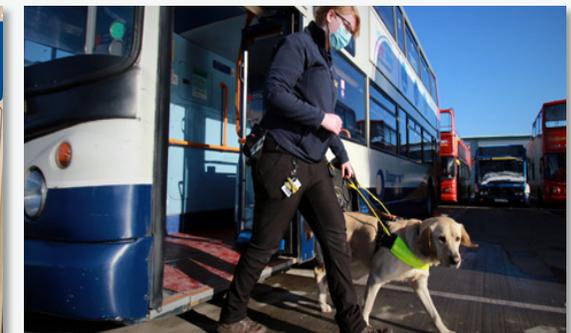
United States

New York's **Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA)** has also pledged to make 95% of its subway stations accessible to people with disabilities by 2055, in a settlement for class-action lawsuits that had pushed the provider to speed up its updates for the system. The MTA has agreed to add elevators and ramps to subway stations and is committing to maintaining the same level of spending for accessibility projects in future years as it has in its current capital programme. That four-year spending plan includes \$5.2 billion for accessibility upgrades across the subway's 472 stations and the Metro North Railroad.

United Kingdom

The UK government recently announced a £2.5 million package to improve transport accessibility and the new Elizabeth Line, which opened recently on London's tube network, has been built to provide step-free access without the need for a boarding ramp at many stations on the line.

Sources: [TFL](#), [Bloomberg](#), [Bloomberg](#)



Planes, trains and automobiles.

Because many public transport networks remain inaccessible, often the only option for disabled people is travelling by taxi.

As a mode of travel, taxi-hire is expensive and often time-consuming due to a shortage of wheelchair-accessible taxis. For example, in Victoria, Australia, last year there were 975 active wheelchair-accessible vehicles (WAVs) registered, according to the **Commercial Passenger Vehicles Victoria** annual report 2020-21. But more than 1 million people in Victoria identify as living with a disability, 17% of whom cannot access public transport such as trains, trams and buses. Elderly people and those with an injury are also reliant on these accessible taxis but there just aren't enough vehicles to meet demand.

In the US, **Uber** recently committed to changes and agreed to pay millions to resolve a Justice Department lawsuit for overcharging people with disabilities. The complaint alleged that Uber violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by failing to reasonably modify its wait-time fee policy for passengers who, because of their disability, needed more than two minutes to get in a taxi. Under the two-year agreement, Uber has committed to waive wait-time fees for all Uber riders who certify that they (or someone they frequently travel with) need more time to get in an Uber car because of a disability.

This positive shift towards equality for disabled people using taxi services has been mirrored elsewhere. In the UK, the new Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (PHV) (Disabled Persons) Act 2022, which came into force on 28 June, amends the Equality Act 2010 to place duties on taxi and PHV drivers and operators, so any disabled person has specific rights and protections to be transported and receive assistance when using a taxi without being charged extra. As part of the amendments, taxi and PHV drivers could face fines of up to £1,000 if they fail to provide reasonable mobility assistance to disabled passengers taking a pre-booked vehicle.



Destination: unknown.

Frustratingly for disabled people, the problems don't end when they reach their destination. The hospitality and tourism industries also have work to do to ensure disabled people can equally access experiences.

According to an **MMGY Global** report on the travel industry, 96% of all respondents have faced a problem with accessible accommodations while travelling; 86% have faced difficulties with air travel, and 79% have also experienced transportation problems while in their destination.

Campaigners say there are just 16 hotels in the whole of the UK that have any rooms that are fully accessible to customers in wheelchairs, and six of them are in London. The overwhelming majority of hotels lack even a single room with a ceiling hoist – a simple piece of equipment that allows guests in wheelchairs to get into bed, go to the toilet or have a bath.

There is also a lack of resources available to support disabled people in finding the limited accessible travel destinations and accommodation available. Disabled bloggers and campaigners have sought to fill this gap by sharing their own travel tips and hacks with the online community, such as Cory Lee who runs '[CurbFreeWithCoryLee.com](https://www.CurbFreeWithCoryLee.com)'. On his site, Cory shares his experiences as a disabled traveller, including information on how to navigate cities around the world as a wheelchair-user.

96% of disabled people have faced a problem with accessible accommodations while travelling.

79% of disabled people have experienced transportation problems while in their destination.



SHARING THE WORLD FROM A WHEELCHAIR USER'S PERSPECTIVE

WHEELIE INSPIRING INTERVIEWS / MY BUCKET LIST / WHERE HAVE I BEEN? / TRAVEL TIPS



@theipaper

Disabled hotel guests are being forced to spend the night sleeping in their wheelchairs, unable to go to the toilet, because of a chronic lack facilities.

@SteveRobson04



EXCLUSIVE

inews.co.uk

Why does the UK only have 16 hotels with full disabled access?

'Disabled people should be able to go on holiday just like everyone else but the barriers to making this happen can sometimes feel enormous'

3:15 PM · Jul 30, 2022 · Echobox



However, businesses are starting to see the opportunities in this space. **Disability Horizons** recently partnered with **Starling Bank** and visually-impaired blogger Emily Davison to compile a travel series that helps disabled travellers plan 'an exciting break from day-to-day life and avoid some of the common pitfalls that can come with travel spending and saving.'

In Australia, **Deloitte Digital** has partnered with **Accessible Beaches Australia** to launch a new online guide detailing the nation's disability-friendly beaches. The project is an Australian first and provides an array of information on various levels of accessibility.

Accessibility-focused tour companies have also established a presence in the market, making travel easier for their clients by carefully vetting hotels, restaurants and attractions to ensure truly accessible accommodations and experiences. One such company, **Wheel the World**, recently launched an industry affiliate programme to enable travel agents to partner and benefit from their certified accessible travel experiences.

Governments around the world are also starting to invest in greater accessibility in the hospitality and tourism industry. Germany's **Tourism For All** initiative aims to make it more straight forward to find accessible experiences for travellers who require increased levels of accessibility, with a website split into different types of access needs including reduced mobility; wheelchair use; deafness, visual impairments; blindness; and learning disabilities.

But despite some encouraging developments, a huge amount of work still needs to be done to make the travel and tourism industries inclusive of people with disabilities. Businesses around the world can play a vital role in transforming travel for disabled people by investing in accessibility and innovative approaches to inclusion. At the heart of such measures should be a willingness to engage with and learn from disabled people, recognising the barriers they face and working with them towards solutions.





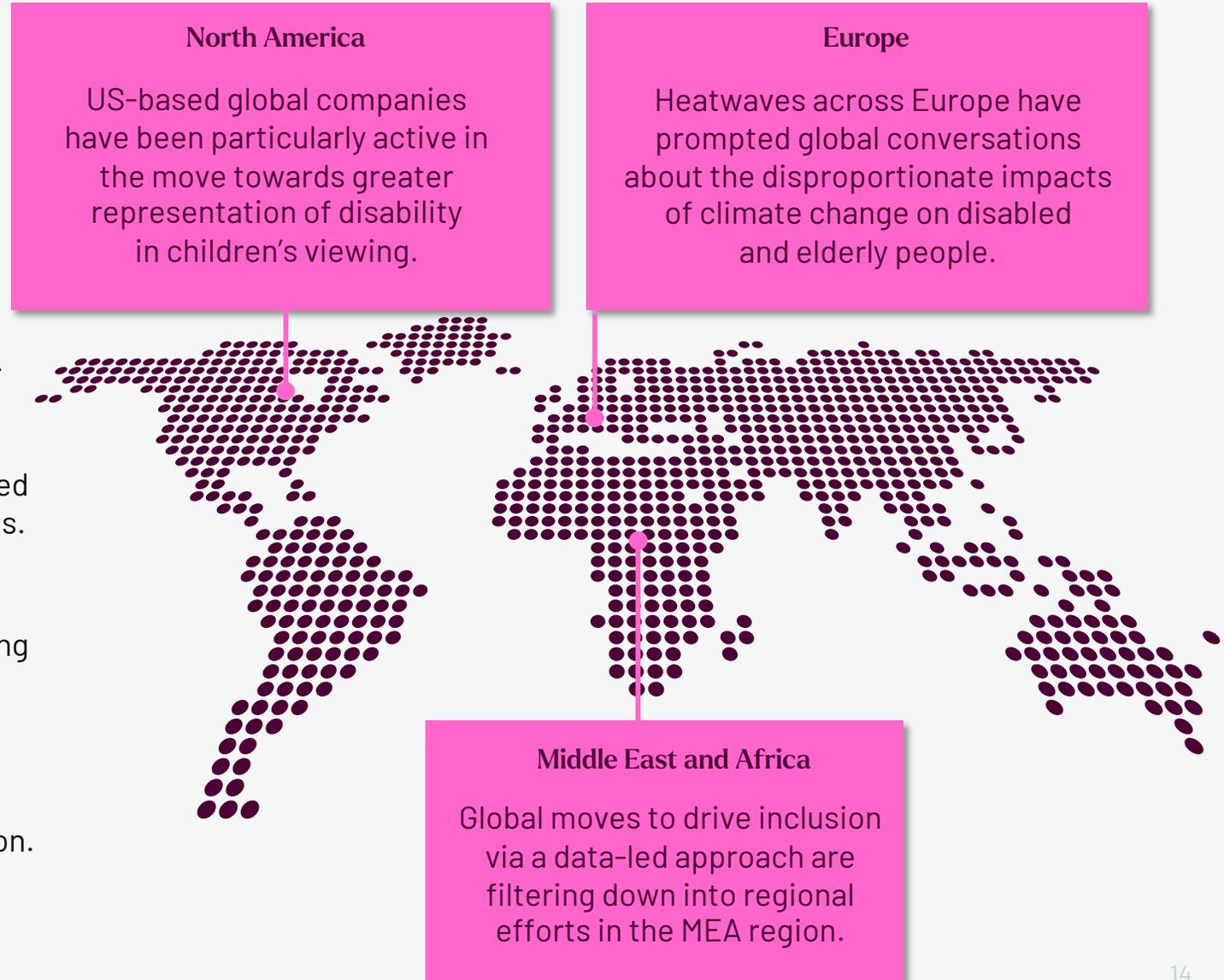
THE GLOBAL VIEW

*Analysis of notable moves,
changes or development at
a global level*



Global trends

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- 02 Post-Covid inclusion**
The aftermath of Covid-19 is still being felt by millions, prompting questions about what lessons can be learned.
- 03 Data-driven inclusion**
Disability inclusion efforts are increasingly being informed by data and insight, leading to more productive outcomes.
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- 05 Digital forces for change**
The digital world is continuing to be a force for change, enabling important conversations and accelerating action.



Disabled people being 'systematically ignored' on climate crisis.

According to a new report titled 'Disability Inclusion in National Climate Commitments and Policies' the needs of people with disabilities are being overlooked in the climate-crisis conversation.



Countries have not considered how people with disabilities can be included in climate plans. They have been systematically ignored.

Sébastien Jodoin,
Professor at McGill University
and co-author of the report

According to the report published in June, few countries make provisions for the needs of people with disabilities when they make plans for adapting to the effects of climate breakdown, and none mention disabled people in their programmes to reduce greenhouse gases.

Yet people with disabilities were among the most vulnerable to climate impacts because of the nature of their disabilities, in addition to the social disadvantage that often accompanies this.

People who use wheelchairs are among those most vulnerable to the climate crisis, but some of the risk factors for people with disabilities are less obvious. For instance, people living with schizophrenia tend to show a mortality rate as much as 50 times higher than the general population when heatwaves hit because their medication makes them more sensitive to changes in temperature.

People with disabilities are already facing danger from the climate crisis. When Hurricane Katrina hit the US in 2005, many people who use wheelchairs were stranded as there was no plan for their evacuation and they were unable to use un-adapted vehicles. Yet few lessons were learned, and when Hurricane Sandy hit in 2012, the same problems were repeated for many wheelchair users.

The authors of the report found only 35 of the 192 parties to the Paris Agreement referred to people with disabilities in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and only 45 countries referred to people with disabilities in any national policies or programmes for adaptation. Major economies including the US, the UK, China and Japan failed to include such recognition at all.

Most of the countries that did include specific reference to people with disabilities did so 'in a cursory manner, without including meaningful mechanisms to consult people with disabilities, or ensure their rights are respected', the report found.

Long-Covid affecting millions of workers.

The aftermath of the pandemic is still being felt by millions of workers, creating a moment of essential innovation for employers.

It's estimated that long-Covid may already affect more than 200 million people globally, according to a recent study. Additionally, the study assessed data from more than 16 countries and showed that the prevalence of the post-Covid-19 condition varies across geographic regions. The prevalence was highest in Asia (51%), followed by Europe (44%) and North America (31%), where it may already affect between 7 million and 23 million Americans who previously had the virus – up to 7% of the US population, according to the **US Government Accountability Office**.

This means the time for companies to consider the impact of the condition and the legally required accommodations that may be necessary, is now. What might be legally required accommodations for some – like ergonomic work equipment and flex time – may boost morale and productivity for all.

According to Jasmine Harris, a law professor at the **University of Pennsylvania**, the advent of a new, widespread disability is 'a real opportunity' for employers to 'get ahead of what's going to come down the pipe. Instead of waiting for lawsuits, compliance departments can think creatively and examine their policies and offer greater flexibility across the board.'

Harris argues that rather than investing time in determining whether an employee is qualified to work from home, employers would be better focusing on preemptive policy reformation, with reference to universal design principles.

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Narrowing the data gap: Microsoft and World Bank commit to unlocking better development outcomes for people with disabilities.

Around the world, people with disabilities remain invisible in the global development agenda. One key reason is because of variances in the availability and use of disability-disaggregated data across organisations and borders.

While it is estimated that one billion people, or 15% of the world's population, have a disability, more data is needed to understand the true scale of the living conditions and development outcomes for people with disabilities, and to get clarity on the degree to which persons with disabilities continue to be underserved.

Many governments around the world use census data to understand a country's socioeconomic situation and to allocate resources or consider policy to address the needs of its citizens. But there is an opportunity to bring data on disability together on a global scale.

In response to this challenge, the **World Bank** and **Microsoft**, in collaboration with the Disability Data Initiative at **Fordham University**, are partnering to expand both access to and the use of demographics and statistics data to ensure representation of disability, particularly in low and middle-income countries. The goal of this effort is to develop a public facing, online 'disability data hub' to offer information on people with disabilities across populations, geographies and development indicators.

Principles for the development of the hub include:

- Engaging with the disability community to inform the creation of the hub and its offerings.
- Aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which require countries to disaggregate data by disability by 2030.
- Taking a holistic approach to data collection on disabilities, including collating and aggregating multiple data sources, such as national household surveys and censuses.



Microsoft



THE WORLD BANK

“
The disability divide has been a reality for decades. This new disability data hub is a step forward in wrapping our arms around the demographics of disability in a more strategic, long-term way. Through partnership we think we can make a tangible difference.

Jenny Lay-Flurrie,
Microsoft Chief Accessibility Officer

Disney increases disability representation.

A series of new characters across Disney's film and TV offerings are helping to normalise disability for the next generation.

Out of my Mind

This new film, based on the novel by Sharon M. Draper, stars newcomer Phoebe-Rae Taylor as Melody Brooks, a young girl living with cerebral palsy who is unable to speak or write. Due to her disability, Melody is not given the same opportunities as her peers, but the film tells Melody's story as she pursues inclusivity in education.

Mickey Mouse Funhouse

Disney Junior has welcomed Deaf drummer Fig to Mickey Mouse Funhouse, which involved adapting ASL for four cartoon fingers. The **Disney** team will carefully choose ASL signs that are appropriate for young signers with a developing ASL vocabulary, especially if they are also early readers, which means captions may not be very accessible to them, if at all.

Disability Pride Month

For Disability Pride Month in July, campaigners called for **Disney** to add a collection on **Disney+** for all its content featuring people with disabilities, including movies, TV series, shorts and select TV episodes for people to browse, asking: 'If anyone from Disney is reading, please keep taking the right steps forward and continue making great content about characters with disabilities and the worlds they live in.'




My hope is that Out of My Mind will be an important part of disability awareness and inclusion and will expand the conversation surrounding diversity and disability.

Amber Sealey
Director, Out of My Mind

TikTok's disability community driving change.

Disabled people used TikTok to draw attention to an ableist slur in one of Lizzo's new songs. Within 48 hours the singer had apologised and re-recorded the song with new lyrics.

When Lizzo released her new single 'Grrrls' in June, listeners quickly pointed out there was an ableist slur in the lyrics – 'spaz', a shortened version of the word 'spastic', which is an offensive term for people with disabilities that affect muscle control.

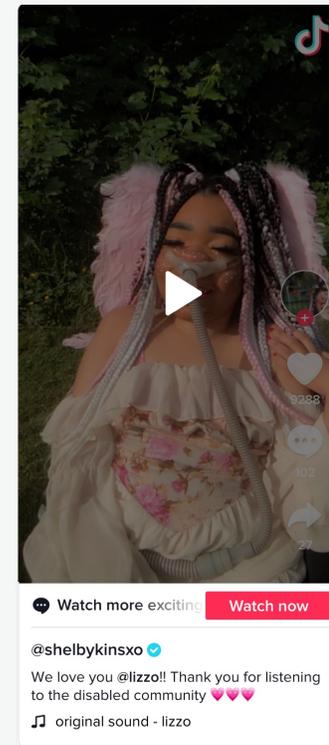
Creators flocked to **TikTok** to express their concern with 'Grrrls' soon after it dropped. TikToker @itsabigaillea, for example, said words like the one she used are 'so harmful, hurtful, and offensive to the disabled community'.

Other popular TikTok creators including Shelby Lynch, who has 429,000 followers, and Imani Barbarin, who has 428,000, expressed disappointment in Lizzo, especially because of her reputation as a staunch advocate and celebrator of body positivity and inclusion. Jay Audrey, a creator who shares their experiences with chronic illness on TikTok, said they were disappointed when they first heard the song, 'We're all so accustomed to casually hearing language that hurts us', they said, 'So it stings when a celebrity you really admire perpetuates that.'

But less than 48 hours after the song's release, Lizzo had swiftly responded to the criticism and apologised in a statement on **Instagram**, saying she had never wanted to promote derogatory language, and she understood the power words can have. 'As an influential artist I'm dedicated to being part of the change I've been waiting to see in the world', she said.

Lizzo also re-released the song without the lyric, making a powerful commitment to accountability and inclusion. Disabled creators welcomed her apology and subsequent action with open arms, and many deleted their critical videos, replacing them with messages of thanks.

Jay Audrey said they were 'so proud and so happy' with Lizzo's apology. They said a motto they try to live by is that the only apology that matters is changed behaviour, and Lizzo 'made herself the bar here' by taking the time to change the song as quickly as possible, without playing 'the victim' at all. Audrey added they hope that kind of self-reflection will be the norm when public figures are called out in the future.



As an influential artist I'm dedicated to being part of the change I've been waiting to see in the world.



REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Europe | Asia Pacific | North America
South America | Middle East and Africa



Regional trends

06 Travel accessibility
Travel disruption across multiple regions has highlighted inequality in the industry, prompting remedial action.

07 Accessible experiences
There has been a positive move towards making experiences more accessible across tourism and public facilities.

08 Rise in disabled sports
Several of this summer's sporting events have prompted increased engagement and appreciation of disabled sports.

09 Fashion and beauty for all
Global brands are making significant changes to accommodate disabled consumers in their offerings.

10 Digital disability employment resources
Schemes in multiple regions aim to digitise elements of the hiring process for disabled people and employers.

South America

Brands are beginning to see the potential of investing in adaptive and accessible products and services.

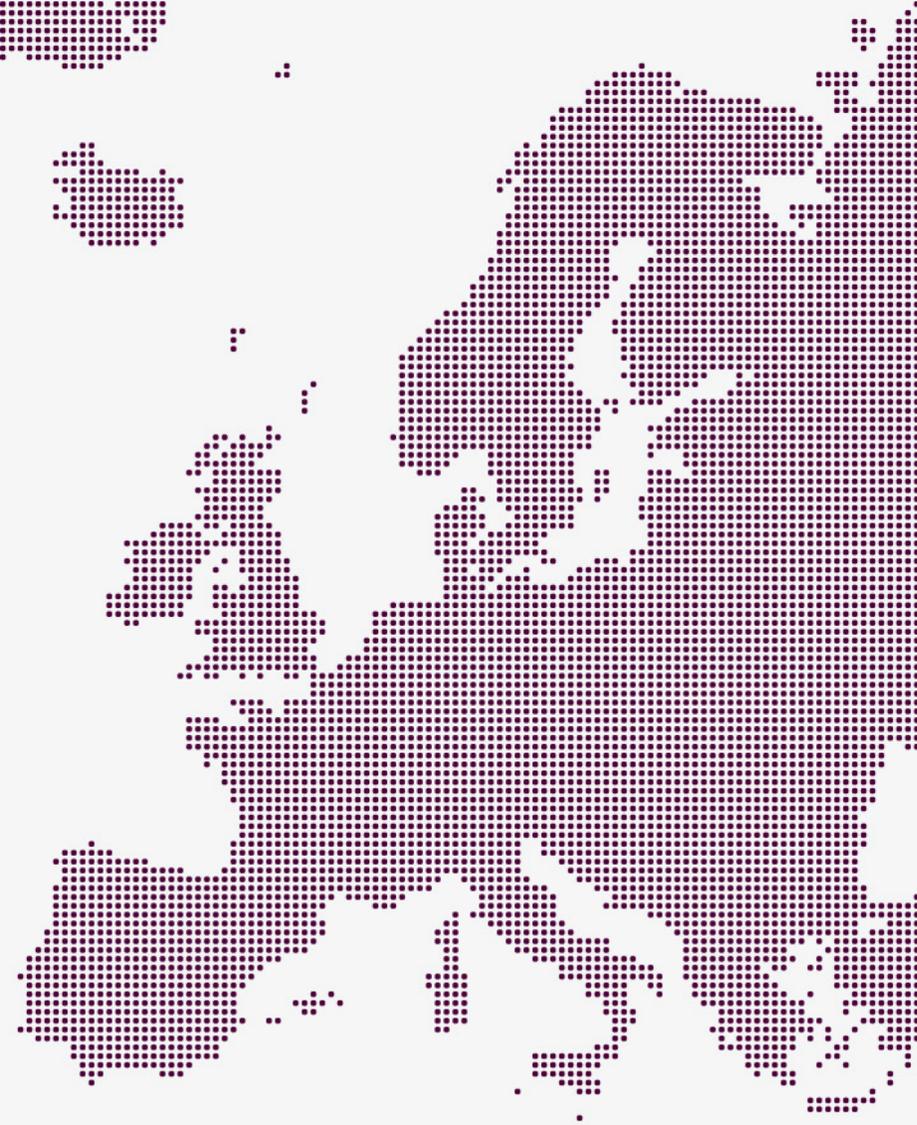
Europe

Sporting events in Europe this summer from Wimbledon to the Commonwealth Games witnessed vastly increased engagement with disabled sports from audiences and organisers.

Asia Pacific

There have been significant developments in the APAC region in the areas of disability employment and travel accessibility.





Europe

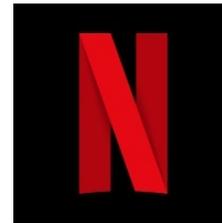


Hiring trends

- There was a continued rise in the number of diversity, inclusion and accessibility roles advertised across Europe, with a broad range of sectors represented.
- Companies appear to be allocating greater investment to accessibility resources as accessibility-related roles spanned senior and managerial positions, indicating growth of this function across sectors.
- There was an increased number of hybrid roles on offer, suggesting that many businesses are still open to remote and flexible working practices.
- A number of roles were strategic or highly specialised in focus, indicating a sophisticated approach to the development of diversity and inclusion functions.



Sample of diversity, inclusion & accessibility roles posted on LinkedIn May – September 2022



Inclusion Strategy Manager
Netflix
(France, Italy, DACH & Spain)



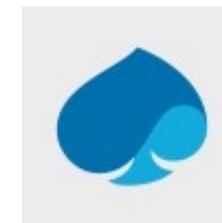
**Head of Diversity, Equity
and Inclusion**
SNS
(Sweden)



Head of Creative Diversity
BBC
(UK/Hybrid)



Accessibility Manager
BT Digital: Enterprise
(UK/Hybrid)



Experte Diversity & Inclusion
Capgemini
(Germany)



**Global Inclusion & Diversity
Senior Manager**
Diageo
(UK)

European heatwaves disastrous for older people and people with disabilities.

This summer we witnessed the effects of climate change on an unprecedented scale, highlighting the impact on elderly and disabled people.

Thousands of people died as 21 countries across Europe endured unusually high temperatures amid an unprecedented and prolonged heatwave this summer. July's heatwave saw temperatures reach upwards of 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit) in France, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom.



Source: [Business Standard](#), [Human Rights Watch](#), [The Nation](#)

96%
of people who died in
Spain's heatwaves
were over the age of
65.

Older people and people with underlying medical conditions, such as respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, were particularly affected, with data from Spain and Portugal showing most people who died were over the age of 65.

This is in keeping with earlier data, which shows in 2021, 90% of heat-related deaths in the United Kingdom were among people 65 and older. When France had its deadliest heatwave in 2003, most of the 15,000 people who died were older people.

Heat is also more likely to affect people with disabilities or those with pre-existing conditions that limit their ability to stay cool, including diabetes, spinal-cord and traumatic brain injuries, and cerebral palsy. People with psychosocial disabilities have triple the risk of death from heat, in part because some medications interfere with the body's ability to regulate its temperature.

While some European countries such as Belgium and France have heat action plans that target at-risk populations like older people and people with disabilities, most European countries have inadequate plans for addressing increasing temperatures that lead to thousands of preventable deaths each year.

Governments need to implement plans and policies to protect older people and people with disabilities from increasingly common extreme heat by consulting with these communities to better understand their needs and concerns.

Eastenders actress Rose Ayling-Ellis unveils first Barbie doll with hearing aids.

The latest collection from Mattel, released in August, also features a number of other dolls representing diverse characteristics.

Rose Ayling-Ellis, who won **BBC's** Strictly Come Dancing in 2021, features in the new Rose, Barbie and Friends campaign, which includes a number of other diverse dolls including the first Ken doll with vitiligo, a Barbie with a prosthetic limb and another who uses a wheelchair.

Rose, who has been deaf since birth, says she used to draw hearing aids on her Barbies when she was a child to make them look like her. 'It's so important for children to be able to see themselves represented in the toys they play with', she said.

Before creating the toy, **Mattel** consulted with experts about how to accurately portray the hearing aids. Rosie Eggleston, participation manager at the **National Deaf Children's Society**, said the charity is 'delighted' the doll has come out, saying it 'will give all children a much greater appreciation of the diversity of people around them and provide a window into the world of deafness.'

This is a positive step towards inclusion from Mattel, because it will help to normalise disability among the younger generation as well as enabling D/deaf children to see themselves represented in the toys they play with, fostering a sense of pride in their identity.



Accessible travel platform raises €1.5m in funding.

mobee travel offers accommodation and activity bookings on its platform for travellers with disabilities and wants to become the leader in Europe for accessible and sustainable tourism.

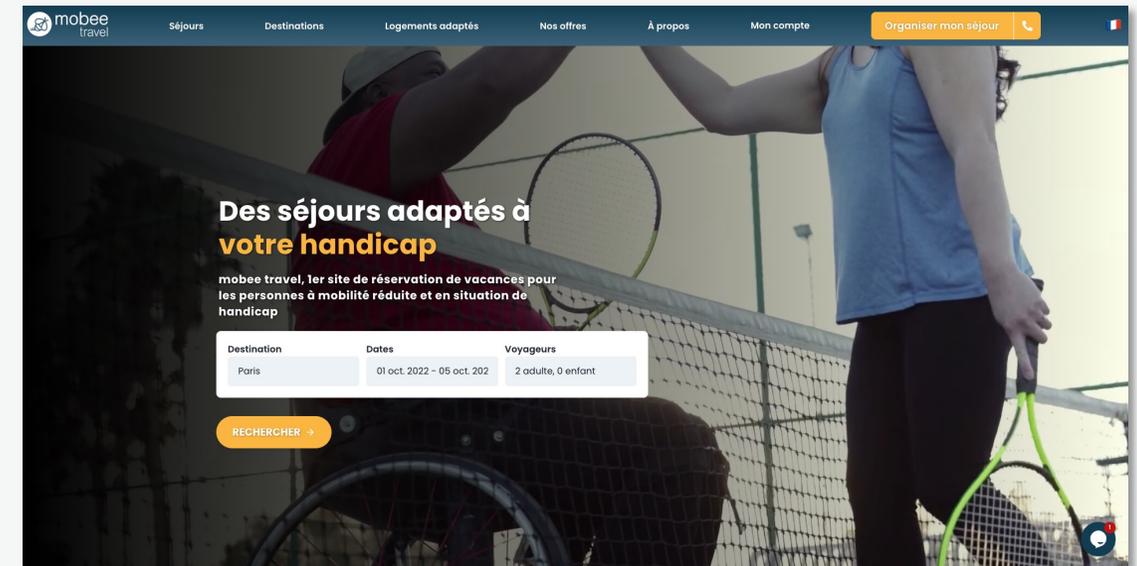
The France-based company **mobee travel** was launched in 2016 and has recently raised €1.5 million in investment from **BPI France** and a group of other investors, illustrating the scale of the opportunity for growth in the accessible travel market.

According to a statement, mobee has seen a significant boost in bookings since travel restrictions were lifted a year ago with business volumes reaching €1.5 million in 2021. The company, which also offers services for the corporate travel community, plans to increase the size of its team from 12 to 20 this year, thanks in part to the new investment.

According to mobeetravel.com, everything offered on the platform is verified and certified by mobee ambassadors or directly by the company's team and scrutinised against more than 130 differentiating criteria.

Mobee claims to offer more than 30,000 accessible accommodations worldwide, from hotels to villas, all of which can be booked online. The platform also offers tailor-made trips organised by a customer-service team that works with clients both before and during the travel experience to ensure it's as hassle-free as possible.

Finally, mobee states it offers 'reasonable prices' to avoid the usual additional costs of this type of service, adding, 'The stay of a person with a disability or reduced mobility should not cost more.'



With mobee travel, our mission is simple: to allow everyone to book a vacation that is accessible to their needs (no matter how complex they are), while paying a fair price and within the market average.

Lucas Gebhardt,
mobee travel CEO

Tropic Skincare's new typeface is designed for all.

The skincare brand has created a new typeface designed for dyslexic readers.

Tropic Skincare has introduced a new reader-friendly typeface for people with dyslexia across its branding after discovering that customers were experiencing difficulties accessing its website and communications.

Lewis Moberly was tasked with designing a new typeface without drastically changing the well-established identity. The studio's creative director Emily Fox says, 'We were given the brief of designing Tropic their own bespoke typeface that was going to be much more accessible to dyslexic readers.'

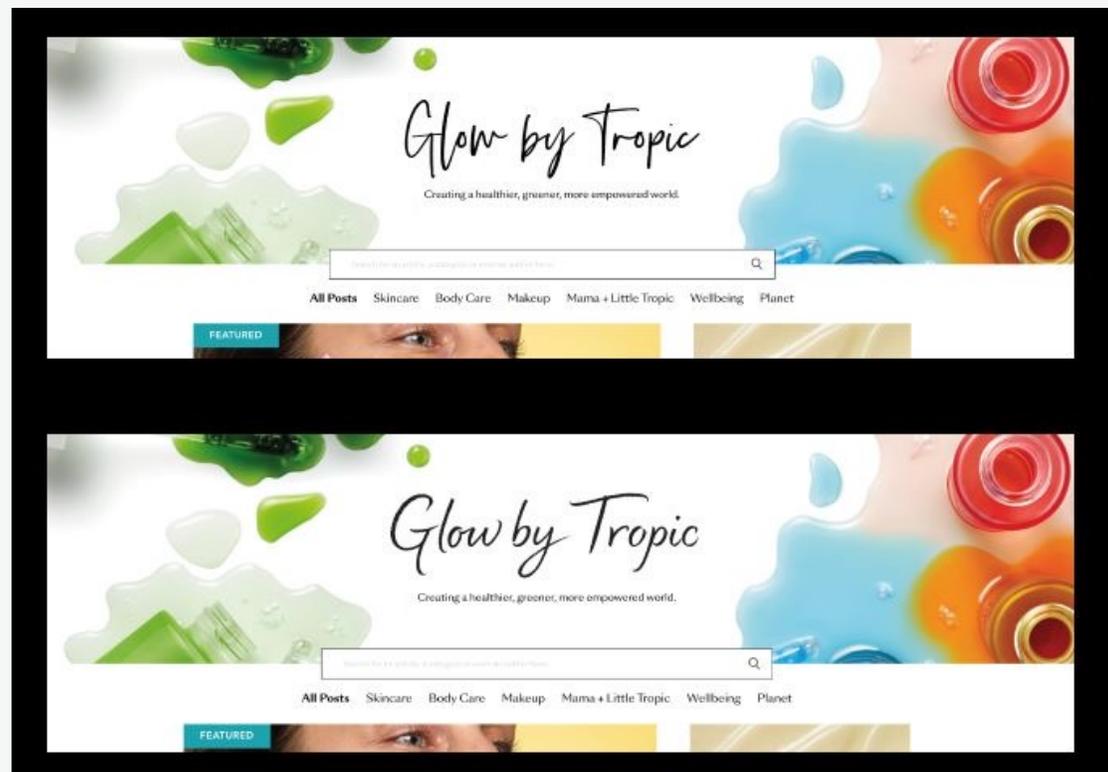
The project was driven by a piece of research which showed that 25% of workers within the beauty industry are dyslexic and across all industries one in seven people have difficulty reading and writing.

Typefaces that are accessible to people in the neuro-diverse community have lacked in variety and imagination, but both the brand and the design agency say they did not want to compromise on sophistication and style with this project. The studio worked to test and refine the typeface to ensure legibility, while not compromising on the design.

Untangling the letters of the script produced open and approachable forms with textured irregularities. It also includes several alternative versions of letters to align with the handwritten feel, according to Lewis Moberly.

The brand claims this is the first intentionally inclusive script type to cater to neuro-diverse readers and will roll it out across product packaging, the consumer facing website, and the free magazines that are sent out with every order.

Founder of Tropic, Susie Ma, says the new typeface complements the current branding and resonates with the brand's 'overall core values around inclusivity.'



Website header before (top) and after (bottom)

Disabled sports take off this summer.

Coverage of Wimbledon 2022 and the Commonwealth Games contributed to a rise in the popularity of disabled sports.

The Commonwealth Games

The 2022 Commonwealth Games which took place in Birmingham, UK this summer featured the largest para-sport programme at a Commonwealth Games to date, with a total of 386 para-athlete entries across 31 teams taking part.

The Commonwealth Games is the only major multi-sport event with an integrated para-sport programme, and this year was the biggest in history, with 43 events across eight sports.

Wimbledon

Wheelchair tennis was in the spotlight at this year's Wimbledon tennis tournament as Great Britain's Alfie Hewett took on Argentina's Gustavo Fernandez in the first ever men's wheelchair tennis match to be played on No.1 Court.

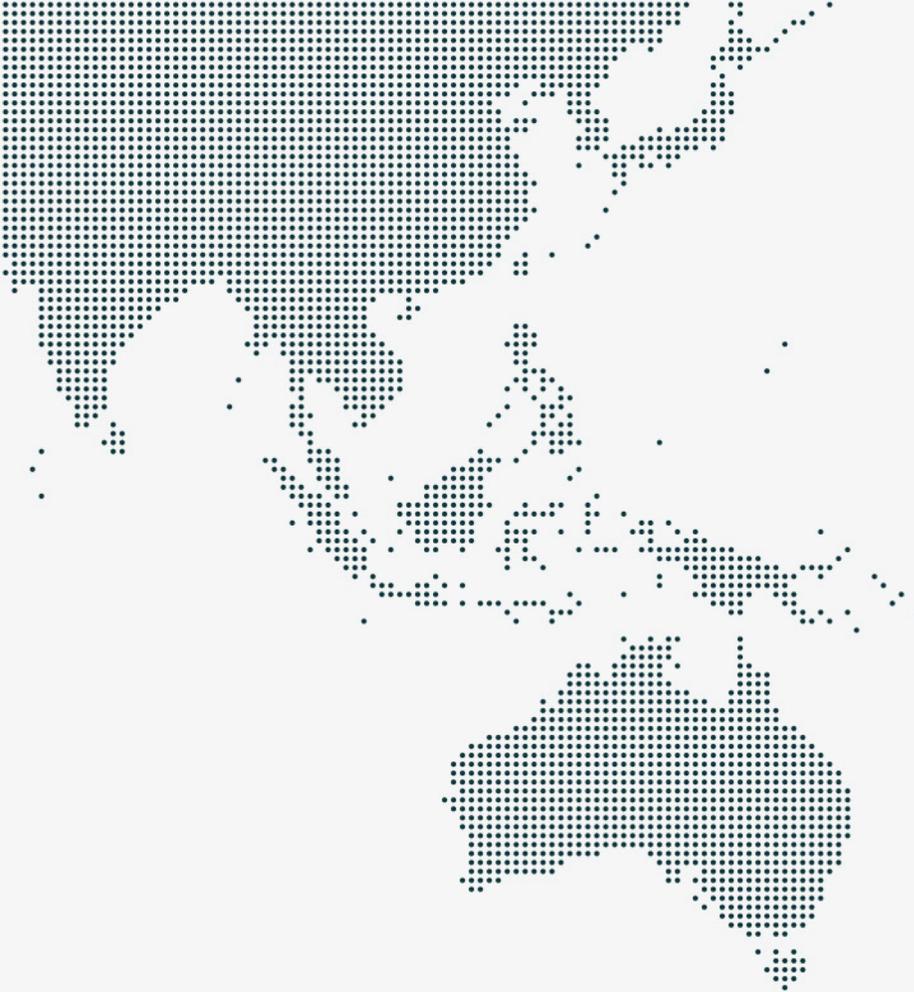
The day before, Hewett had commented after his quarter-final on Court 14 that he had been disappointed the match had not been played on a bigger court – a view that reflected the progress the sport has made, and the desire to continue to push further and realise its potential. It seems that the tournament's organisers were listening, as his semi-final was to be the first of three wheelchair matches staged on No.1 Court this year.

It all meant that more people watched wheelchair tennis at Wimbledon this year than ever before, with the TV audience for the men's singles final twice that of last year.

That was incredible – I've never experienced anything like it before. We try to improve the exposure of our sport and I think we showcased a pretty good level today.

Alfie Hewett





ASIA PACIFIC



Hiring trends

- There continues to be a wide range of diversity and inclusion jobs on offer, particularly in Australia, but in the last few months a variety of roles have also been advertised in other countries including Hong Kong, Singapore and India.
- Accessibility consultants and specialists are in high demand, particularly in Australia, where companies across multiple sectors are advertising for positions in this area.
- Greater emphasis is placed on the importance of accessibility in job descriptions for diversity and inclusion roles than in other regions, implying more of a focus on disability than elsewhere.
- Both regional branches of global firms and organisations headquartered in the area were advertising roles, suggesting corporate inclusion is experiencing a significant focus in the region itself.



Sample of diversity, inclusion & accessibility roles posted on LinkedIn May – September 2022



Principal DEI, PV India, Prime Video Diversity Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility

Amazon
(India)



Global Director of Diversity and Inclusion

Habitat for Humanity
(Philippines)



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Manager

The Walt Disney Company
(Hong Kong)



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Senior Manager/Associate Director

Agoda
(South Korea)



Associate Director, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Consumer Reports
(Mongolia)



Accessibility Specialist – Senior Consultant

Deloitte
(Australia)

Meta's 3D Avatars launch in Asia Pacific with options for disabled people.

The 3D Avatars have been launched with disability features across Meta's Facebook, Instagram, and Messenger platforms.

As of May 2022, it's now possible for users of **Meta** services in the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, and India to create 3D Avatars of themselves using the newly-released options for people with disabilities. Previously, Meta users could only choose facial features, body types and clothing. Now it is possible to include assistive devices for people with disabilities such as hearing aids, wheelchairs and cochlear implants.

This move is part of a wider focus from Meta on inclusion for underrepresented individuals and groups. Currently there are over 690 million people living with disabilities in Asia Pacific, and Meta wants everyone to be able to express themselves equally.

Meta embarked on multi-million dollar research partnerships with universities and members of the disabled community for advice and input on how to create authentic and accurate Avatars.

Now people with disabilities will have the choice to represent themselves using their assistive devices but Meta has announced that this is just the beginning of their Avatar journey. Future users will also have the option of expressing themselves with both sound and voice.



Our expansion into facial shapes and assistive devices for people with disabilities is part of an ongoing, long-term effort to improve the look of Avatars and make it easier for people to express their identities.

Aigerim Shorman,
General Manager of
Avatars and Identity at Meta

India's aviation authority adds new disability rule for airlines.

India has amended its existing rules to protect travellers with disabilities from discrimination, and ensure they receive necessary assistance.

As of 21 July 2022, the **Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)** has amended its rules to state that airlines cannot unilaterally deny boarding to passengers with disabilities. To ensure the safety of all passengers, only a qualified doctor can ascertain if a passenger is medically unfit to fly.

The changes to the rules came as a direct result of an incident in May 2022, when a teenager with a disability was visibly distressed before boarding a plane. Although the situation was brought under control, the teenager and his family were denied access to the flight by a member of staff. The incident led to widespread outrage on social media, with much of the criticism being levelled at the existing laws which many believed to be both outdated and discriminatory.

The DGCA responded quickly, reviewing the existing rules and making appropriate amendments. However, this incident highlighted the outdated attitudes and lack of understanding of the needs of neurodiverse passengers. Whilst the new regulations are more prescriptive on how to treat passengers with physical disabilities, they do not address cognitive or invisible disabilities. Campaigners are now calling for staff to be properly trained and educated on how to support a wide variety of different disabilities with compassion and understanding.



DGCA's regulation on how to treat disabled passengers is age-old and doesn't recognise developmental challenges... The first reaction that most people in our country have after seeing the slightest of emotional disorder is shock. That should change with mandatory training.

Neha Arora,
Founder of Planet Abled

Web-guide for disabled access to Australian beaches is launched.

Non-profit organisation Accessible Beaches Australia has partnered with Deloitte Digital to launch a new online guide detailing the nation's disability-friendly beaches.

For many people with disabilities in Australia, a trip to the beach is out of the question due to a lack of accessible facilities. A new online platform called Beach Directory aims to revolutionise the disabled community's experience of Australia's beaches. The web-guide gives beach-goers information on the accessibility features of beaches in advance, so they can plan their trip with confidence.

The creator, Shane Hryhorec is the founder and chair of charity **Accessible Beaches Australia**. As a wheelchair user, Shane had great difficulty accessing beaches because the wheels of his chair would get stuck in the sand. When Shane came across Mobi-mats (wheelchair-friendly beach mats), he began to advocate for their inclusion on Australia's beaches.



The more information we can provide about accessibility to Australian beaches for people with disabilities, the better equipped those people will be to know if that beach is appropriate for them or not. Information is power.

Shane Hryhorec, Accessible Beaches Australia
Founder and Chair

The success of Shane's work led him to create the charity. The mission statement was clear: improve the quality of life for people living with disabilities by ensuring they can safely access a beach.

Since its inception, Accessible Beaches has broadened its scope. Now, not only has the charity created the Directory, but it also provides an accessibility rating for beaches and lists the accessibility features available, including:

- Accessible beach matting
- Beach wheelchair availability
- Accessible parking
- Lead-up pathways
- Accessible bathrooms and changing facilities
- Local retail options.

New hub provides services to people with disabilities in Singapore.

Launched by SG Enable in May 2022, the Enabling Academy provides courses for people with disabilities, as well as for their caregivers and employers.

With a special focus on training and employment, the Enabling Academy Hub offers lifelong learning opportunities for people with disabilities. The hub also serves to upskill the network of support around people with disabilities.

A driving force in creating the hub was the understanding that learning and education is key to fostering an inclusive society.



Source: [The Straits Times](#), [SG Enable](#)

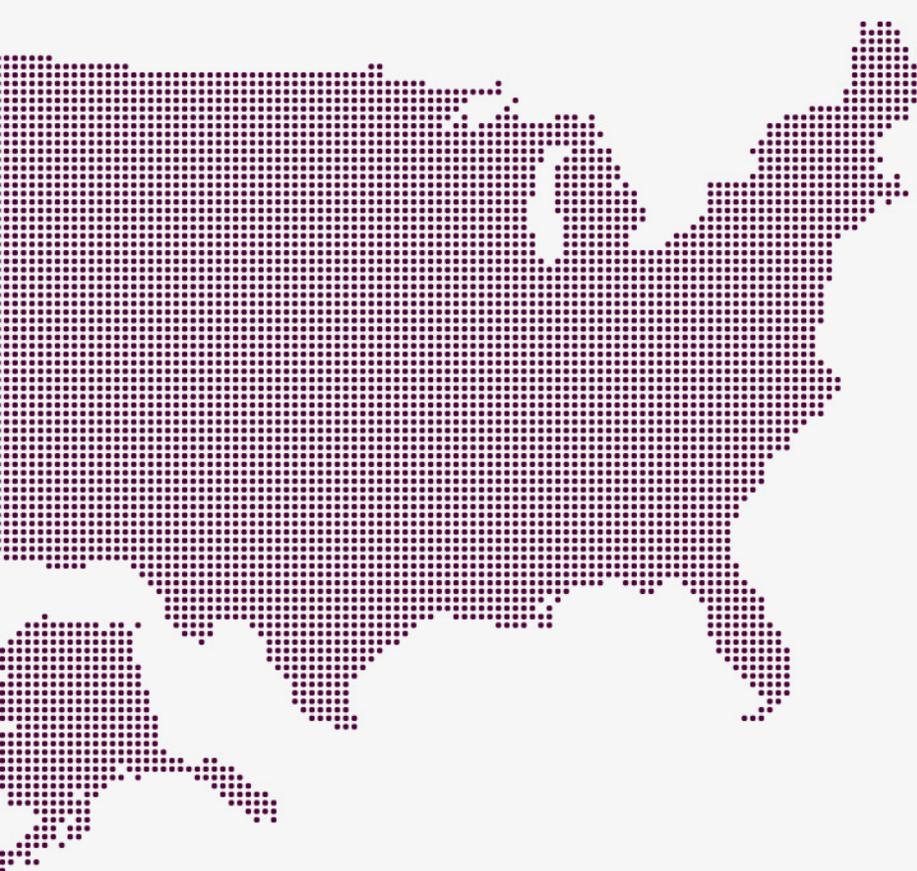
As a focal point for ongoing learning, the hub contains links to over 110 free or subsidised courses to improve the employability and personal growth of people with disabilities using the platform.

Companies such as **VMware** and **Google** have recognised the potential and are offering courses and programmes for users. VMware is providing free digital skills training and Google is offering scholarships for their Google Career Certificates programme.

36 partners from a variety of sectors have already signed up to provide courses and support. The academy also provides support for employers and caregivers to build confidence in disability-inclusive hiring and practices.

“ We need to build up the disability training space so that people with disabilities can access learning opportunities at every life stage, and inclusive employers and partners can then come together and align their efforts.

Eric Chua, Parliamentary Secretary for Social and Family Development



NORTH AMERICA



Hiring trends

- In line with other periods of study, there continued to be a higher proportion of diversity and inclusion roles advertised in North America than in any other region.
- There was also a large number of positions advertised for accessibility specialists in senior positions, although these were predominantly concentrated in the tech and professional services sectors.
- Diversity and inclusion roles in multiple sectors were much higher-level than elsewhere, with multiple positions advertised for strategic programme leads and business partners. This suggests more of a strategic focus to diversity and inclusion functions than in other regions.



Sample of diversity, inclusion & accessibility roles posted on LinkedIn May – September 2022



Digital Accessibility Specialist

Adecco
(Canada)



Diversity Business Partner

Meta
(USA)



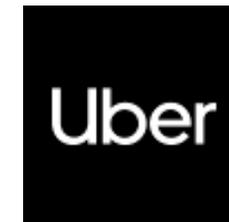
Principal Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Business Partner, Alexa/EDS HR

Amazon
(USA)



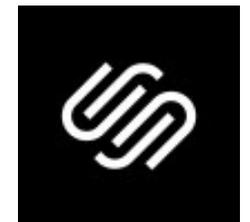
Senior Talent Acquisition Programmatic Lead

Morgan Stanley
(USA)



Director, Diversity & Inclusion

Uber
(USA)



Diversity and Inclusion Program Lead

SquareSpace
(USA)

JSX is making travel easier for autistic individuals.

The air carrier has launched a programme dedicated to empowering crew members to serve autistic people and their families better.

While on a business trip **JSX** CEO, Alex Wilcox, met a family with an autistic child who was so overwhelmed by the airport experience that the family were unable to board their flight. This encounter inspired Wilcox to partner with **Autism Double-Checked**, an organisation founded by travel industry professionals, which aims to create a safe and enjoyable space for autistic people and their families when they travel away from home.

Some features of the partnership include passengers being able to bypass crowds and long lines at security (while still enjoying screening that meets and exceeds TSA standards) and board just 20 minutes before departure.

In addition, all JSX staff, from pilots to flight attendants and customer service agents, have undergone training to assist passengers with autism better. JSX also worked with Autism Double-Checked to create a passenger guide for people flying with autistic passengers.

Among other things, the guide alerts passengers to issues of safety, crowds, waiting, noise, body awareness, heat or cold, light, taste or smell, fine motor issues, and surprise elements they might encounter at the various airports and private terminals JSX serves, or on its flights.

JSX Vice President, Hospitality Sherry Groff says she hopes more air carriers and travel brands will 'join us in advocating for the needs of humankind.'

Sources: [Forbes](#), [Autism-checked](#)

JSX



Most JSX facilities offer a quiet room where customers needing a less stimulating environment can wait for their flight. Ear plugs are also available for customers who'd like them.

In addition, our crewmembers are trained to interact with neurodiverse customers, whether verbal or non-verbal, using a communication device or aid.

Sherry Groff,
Vice President, Hospitality at JSX

Vancouver Pride planners say the pandemic brought lessons on improving access for all.

The event's organisers worked with advocates from the disabled community to ensure Pride was more inclusive than in the past.

Among lesbian, gay and bisexual adults, 30% of men and 36% of women have a disability. However, Pride events which are designed to celebrate and promote equality for LGBTQ+ people are rarely accessible or inclusive of people with disabilities.

This year's Vancouver Pride Parade aimed to change that, in collaboration with advocates from disabled communities. The celebration's organisers said the event's return after a three-year hiatus due to the pandemic prioritised making the parade more accessible to all.

After having to cancel events during the Covid-19 pandemic and hold some online, the organisers received positive feedback on their streamed content from people who weren't able to attend live and in-person.

30% of gay and bisexual men have a disability.

36% of lesbian and bisexual women have a disability.

Sources: [CBC](#), [Respectability](#), [Disabled World](#)

Lee Keple, interim executive director of the **Vancouver Pride Society**, said, 'It really challenged our thinking, and we decided as a society to step up our accessibility features', adding, 'To be honest, we thought about the ways in the past that Pride has been centred to certain demographics, and has certainly been ableist, and our staff thought we should change that.'

This year's measures included three accessible shaded viewing platforms that featured sign language interpretation and visual description, a 'low-sensory chill zone' at Sunset Beach, and shuttles to help people move around throughout the events around downtown.

For the first time, **VocalEye Descriptive Arts Society** – an organization that makes arts and events more accessible for people who are blind or partially sighted – provided a live interpretation of Sunday's parade. The organisers say this is just one way the annual events are hoping to improve accessibility.



Kim Kardashian's Skims debuts adaptive collection.

The new collection includes adaptive-wear for customers with limited mobility.

Kim Kardashian's shapewear brand **Skims** describes itself as a 'solutions-oriented company', and its newest adaptive product range was conceived to address a gap in the accessibility market, providing colour options and fashion-conscious features in a broad range of sizes.

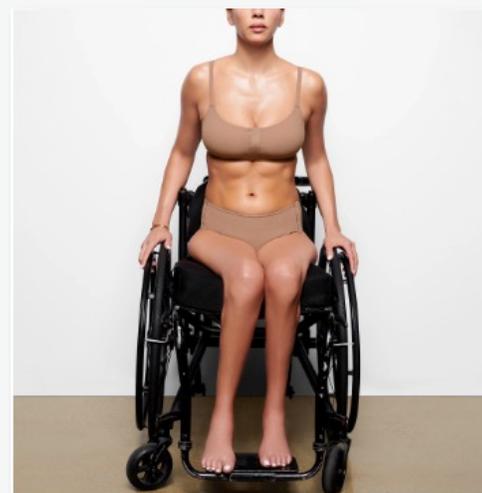
The adaptive collection aims to address a gap in the accessibility market with each piece featuring lay-flat hook-and-eye closures located towards the front of the garment for convenience and ease of mobility.

Skims has also added ultra-lightweight micro-bonded construction to fastenings, which are invisible underneath clothing but designed to mould to the body and not dig in, unlike firm zippers, heavy magnets, and Velcro that catches onto other fabrics.

To launch the adaptive collection, Skims teamed up with American Paralympic track and field athlete Scout Bassett, who said in a statement, 'When I tried these super soft pieces, the hook and eye closures made getting dressed and styling my everyday outfits so much easier.'

The initial Skims adaptive collection includes four of the brand's signature styles, a bralette, boy shorts, thong and briefs, which are available in four neutral colourways – clay, sienna, cocoa, and onyx, and in sizes XXS – 4X. Prices range from £18 for a thong to £32 for a bralette. The wide range of colours and sizes, as well as the relatively low price-point, makes this collection a rare and welcome offering in the adaptive clothing sector.

Sources: [The Independent](#), [Fashion United](#), [Skims](#)



ADAPTIVE FITS EVERYBODY SCOOP BRALETTE

£32



When I tried these super soft pieces, the hook and eye closures made getting dressed and styling my everyday outfits so much easier.

Scout Bassett,
Paralympic Athlete

SHRM Foundation announces launch of new Employing Abilities at Work Certificate programme.

The new certificate aims to educate human resource (HR) professionals, people managers and business leaders about the benefits of providing a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive workplace



In May, **SHRM Foundation**, the philanthropic arm of the **Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)**, announced the launch of its free Employing Abilities at Work Certificate programme, made possible by an initial investment grant from **Kessler Foundation** and in partnership with **Global Disability Inclusion**.

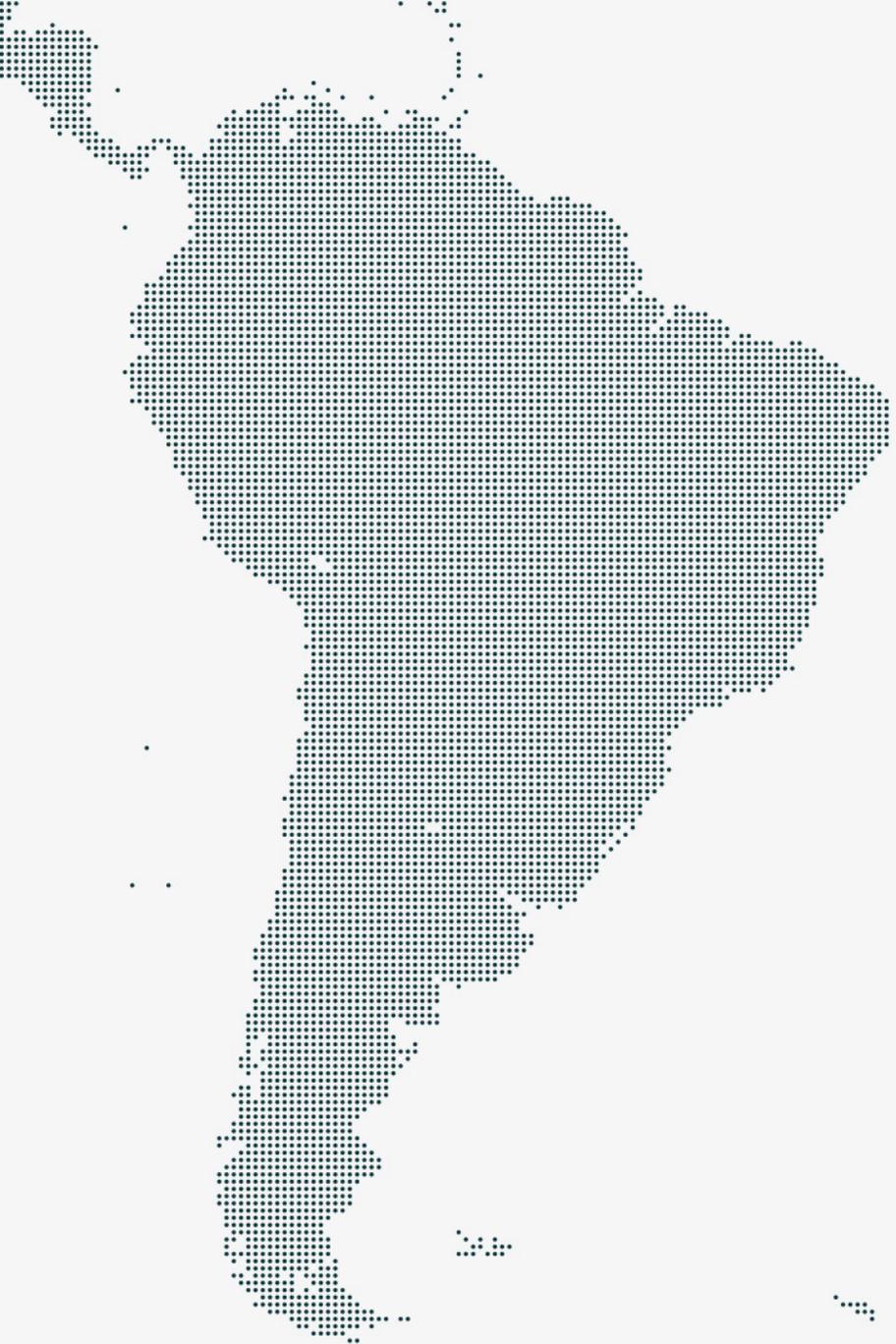
The certificate programme, which consists of seven modules, takes participants through the organisational lifecycle of employing people with disabilities. The course establishes baseline knowledge of how accommodation resources can operate and, with each module, shows how HR departments can adapt their hiring practices to fit individual needs.

According to SHRM, this practice benefits companies long-term as organisations will see increased tenure, enjoy more significant innovation and attract customers from a population with a different world perspective. Additionally, participants who are SHRM-certified will earn 10 professional development credits (PDCs) toward their recertification.

According to **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** data, more than 1 in 4 individuals in the US (26%) identify as having a disability, so this community provides a large, unrealised pool of candidates with considerable skills and strengths.

The certificate programme is designed to allow candidates with disabilities to enter into settings where HR managers, people managers and business leaders have learned about disability inclusion and best practices for its implementation. Because while including disability diversity in hiring best practices brings many benefits, this cannot occur without an organisation's support.

26% or 1 in 4
people in the US identify as having
a disability.



SOUTH AMERICA



Hiring trends

- There was a significant increase in the number of diversity and inclusion roles advertised compared to other periods of study, notably from some big employers headquartered in the region.
- These roles spanned multiple sectors from fintech to food production and professional services.
- Whereas in other periods of study diversity and inclusion roles were concentrated in Brazil, in the last three months positions have been advertised in Chile, Mexico and Argentina.
- Accessibility-related roles were also advertised but these positions were largely confined to global organisations with a regional presence in South America, as opposed to South American businesses.



Sample of diversity, inclusion & accessibility roles posted on LinkedIn May – September 2022



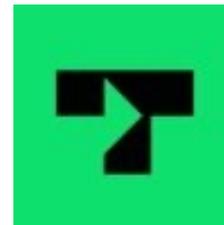
Senior Accessibility Specialist
Thomson Reuters
(Mexico)



**Coordinator Diversity,
Equity and Inclusion – LAS**
EY
(Chile)



**People | Global Well-Being
& Diversity Specialist**
Hurb
(Brazil)



**Inclusion of People
with Disabilities**
Trustly
(Brazil)



DEI Program Manager
Popular
(Puerto Rico)



Accessibility Auditor
Backoffice Abroad
(Argentina)

Panama City unveils accessible travel campaign.

The 'Fun.For.All.' campaign promotes accessible state-wide resources and activities, as well as shining a spotlight on Panama City's accessible travel options.

Planning a trip to a new destination can be a challenge for anyone, but a lack of accessibility information makes it almost impossible for people with disabilities.

By highlighting Panama City's accessible beaches, attractions, lodgings and restaurants, Panama City Beach has established itself as a 'must see' destination for people with disabilities.



Sources: [Travel Pulse](#), [The Global Economics of Disability 2020](#), [Panama City Beach](#)

The Panama City website offers lots of information on how to plan the perfect accessible holiday, from scenic beaches and family friendly events, to restaurants and vibrant nightlife.

Travel and tourism is a significant source of income for Panama. In 2019 it accounted for 14.9% of GDP and it is growing at an average annual rate of 7.96%.

Given that in the US alone, people with disabilities have a disposable income of \$1.68 trillion, it is a savvy move by Panama City to advertise more effectively to the disabled community.



We believe every traveller should be able to experience our beaches, restaurants, hotels and resorts, as well as the endless activities and events we offer year-round.

Dan Rowe,
CEO and President of Visit Panama City Beach

Wheelchair users rally for better accessibility in Mexico City.

Hundreds of people rallied around Mexico City in August to demonstrate uneven surfaces, speed bumps and inaccessible pavements. The protesters called for the government to make the city more accessible.

The rally was organised by **Independent Living Mexico (VIM)**, which was set up to help people with disabilities gain independence and integrate into society. The service offers rehabilitation and practical assistance for people learning how to use a wheelchair. The group organised the rally to shed light on the inaccessible conditions and call on the government to take action and make changes to the infrastructure of the city.

It is estimated that 500,000 inhabitants of Mexico City live with disabilities. The need to move freely and safely is paramount and, whilst there are areas which are accessible, the provision of wheelchair ramps, elevators and even surfaces is inconsistent.

Mexico City's Accessible Tourism report from 2017 states that 'Mexico City deliberately chooses to be an inclusive space, that all can enjoy freely and under equal conditions.' However, this statement seems to be at odds with the experience of locals and visitors alike. One travel writer and wheelchair user, Laura Olds, states 'Mexico City is a place of potholes, stairs, and uneven sidewalks. In other words, it's not ideal for wheelchair users ... We didn't come across a single accessible public restroom during our three-week stay.'

”

Being in a wheelchair does not prevent us from doing certain things. We have virtues and capacities we can show ourselves and others.

Protester



Persisting in the Pandemic: conversations between Latin American women with disabilities.

A new project of stories from six women with disabilities highlights the stories of lives which are rarely reported in the media. This project gives voice to the impact that the coronavirus pandemic has had on their lives, and raises important considerations for accessibility during a global crisis.

The project, entitled 'In Their Own Words', was produced with support from the **International Center for Journalists** and the **Hearst Foundation**. Rather than conducting the research through the usual angle of journalistic interviews, the project took the form of group discussions via Zoom. This allowed for freedom of expression in a way that individual interviews would not have been able to achieve. The project also brought a sense of community and shared experience to a group of people living in isolation.

”

The global health crisis has demonstrated that people with disabilities deserve to have resources and services adapted to their needs in emergency situations.

Cristina, Interviewee



The result was a rich, narrative-driven discussion that provided the research team with a wealth of information.

Whilst the project witnessed great resilience, it also highlighted increased barriers and reduced caregiving support which make day to day living extremely challenging.

Strikingly, the project explored the intersectionality of identity and the resulting discrimination that many of these women face on a daily basis. This group of people are not strangers to figuring out how to take care of themselves in inaccessible environments, and they are often used to handling confinement, loneliness and discrimination.

Summer Deaflympics held in South America for the first time.

The 24th Summer Deaflympics took place in Brazil this year: the first time the games have ever been hosted by a South American country.

First held in Paris, 1924, the **Deaflympics** is an international multi-sport event, organised by the **International Committee of Sports for the Deaf (ICSD)**. The tournament has a special place in history as it was the first sporting event for people with disabilities.

The games were due to take place last year however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, they had to be postponed. Whilst this was disappointing for all the athletes who had trained for the 2021 games, they returned for a fantastic tournament with record-breaking moments and stunning finishes.

The unifying power of the Deaflympics is stronger than the forces that want to divide us. Through sport, we will demonstrate the best of humanity and highlight the value of the deaf sport.

Gustavo Perazzolo,
ICSD President

Sources: [Deaflympics.com](https://deaflympics.com), [Deaflympics YouTube Channel](#), [InsideTheGames](#)

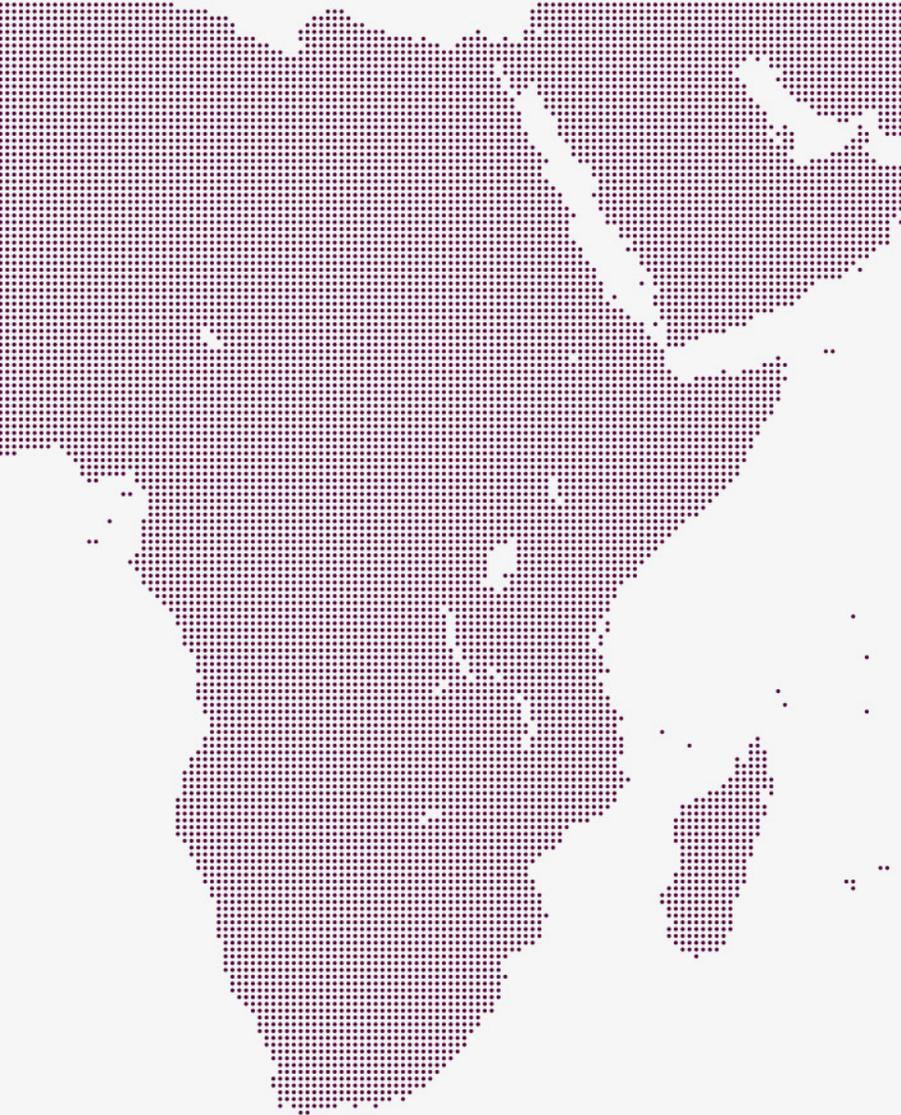
During the two-week tournament, which ran from 1 to 15 May in Caxias du Sol, elite athletes from 66 nations competed in 17 different sports including athletics, badminton, cycling, golf, swimming, tennis and many others.

The games, though well received, were not without controversy. Due to the ongoing conflict, the ICSD took the decision to deny entry to delegates from Russia and Belarus.

In his opening remarks, the president of the ICSD stated 'you will live peacefully together with no discrimination', as a poignant message to the delegates from Ukraine. Ukraine ended the Deaflympics on a high note, as they took home a staggering 138 medals, 62 of them gold.

The Deaflympics will return in 2025 for its 100th anniversary, when Tokyo will serve as the host city.





MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA



Hiring trends

- Diversity and inclusion roles were advertised across a variety of sectors including education, recruitment and FMCG, where previously these roles were largely concentrated in the consultancy, hospitality and tech industries.
- However, the majority of roles were posted in the UAE at regional branches of global organisations, rather than with businesses headquartered in the region.
- A number of roles were posted with Israel-based accessible web design start-up **accessiBe**, suggesting growth in the market for accessibility services.



Sample of diversity, inclusion & accessibility roles posted on LinkedIn May – September 2022



Inclusion, Diversity and Belonging Manager
Oliver Wyman Group
(UAE)



Director of Inclusion
Gems Education
(UAE)



Inclusion & Diversity Manager
Robert Walters
(UAE)



Employer Branding, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator
Unilever
(Morocco)



Head of Content
accessiBe
(Israel)

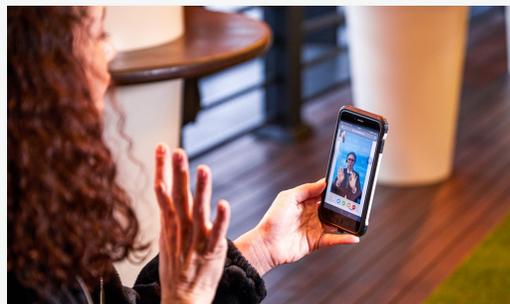
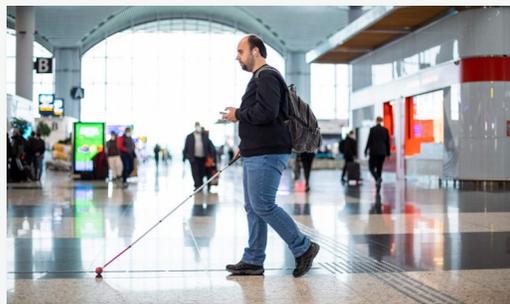
Accessible travel is possible at iGA Istanbul Airport.

The airport focuses on providing an accessible and independent experience for all visitors, but especially for people with disabilities.

Given that accessibility is embedded in **iGA Istanbul Airport's** culture, it is unsurprising that it received the 'Accessible Airport' award from ACI for its accessibility culture and barrier-free airport concept in 2021.

To understand passenger needs and expectations, the Passenger Experience Design team consults with NGOs working with different disability groups, as well as members of the disabled community. Every step of the journey throughout the airport has been planned with a variety of access needs in mind.

Working collaboratively with disabled colleagues and members of the disability community, the Passenger Experience Team continues to build awareness, provide training to staff, and run events to raise awareness for colleagues and passengers.



Accessible practices available throughout the airport:

- **The Loud Steps app:** This app is available as a guide for visually impaired guests.
- **Sign language services:** These offerings are available from the digital kiosks and the Video Call Centre.
- **Sunflower lanyards:** Anyone with invisible disabilities can request a lanyard free of charge.
- **Passenger service points:** Quiet spaces are provided for people with sensitivities to noises and crowds.
- **Very special guest cards:** These cards offer the use of specially designed guest rooms, changing rooms and/or buggy vehicles free of charge.
- **Trained staff:** Members of staff who are specially trained are available for any passengers requiring assistance throughout the airport.

We continue to work for disabled people by offering an accessible, independent, and enjoyable travel experience with the mind-set of "Everybody has the right to travel independently and comfortably".

Hilal Kahraman,
Passenger Experience Design Chief at iGA Istanbul Airport

Mastercard publishes white paper on digital inclusion.

A new study has found that digital inclusion for people with disabilities leads to greater financial independence in the Middle East and Africa.

The study is entitled 'Bridging the Disability Gap: An Opportunity to Make a Positive Impact' and finds that there can be a combination of constraints which prevent many people with disabilities from banking independently. Depending on the type of disability, this may result in a complete lack of financial privacy, as one respondent to the study highlighted.

'No one should know the details of your banking transactions, your balance, and how much you are spending.'

Emerging innovative technology has the potential to address financial independence, but there must be a focus on closing the mobile digital disability gap.

62% of adults with disabilities own mobile phones.

21% of these adults own Smart phones.



The study found that an increase in smartphone ownership, digital literacy and access to internet usage for mobile devices would significantly impact the financial independence of people with disabilities.

With access to mobile devices, financial inclusion can be significantly improved through:

- Increased use of mobile banking
- Artificial intelligence and chat-bots
- Contactless payments
- Speech-enabled technology.

The white paper also recommends that a collaborative approach will have a positive impact on millions of lives throughout the world.

Qatar promises most accessible FIFA World Cup of all time.

The FIFA World Cup 2022 looks set to kickstart a new era for accessibility in Qatar.

The announcement that this year's World Cup will be the most accessible **FIFA** World Cup of all time is a surprising and welcome development. Most importantly, the proposed changes point to a long term approach to disability inclusion in Qatar which could pave the way for a more accessible future, across the country.

The Accessibility Forum was established in 2016 in preparation for the event, so that the organisers could work collaboratively with disabled people throughout the design phase. This was key to helping the organisers understand different accessibility needs for the event, as well as investing in important relationships with disabled communities throughout Qatar.

People with disabilities have become more visible and more active. The country has changed in every way possible, and this includes the way disabled people are perceived and respected.

Professor Joselia Neves,
Associate Dean for Social Engagement and Access at QF's Hamad Bin Khalifa University



Some of the key accessibility commitments are:

- **Infrastructure:** \$220 billion has been spent on new roads, hotels, public transport and facilities.
- **Specialist accessibility volunteers:** Volunteers, trained by the Qatar Foundation, will be available to assist event-goers with disabilities.
- **Communications:** Audio-descriptive commentary will be available for blind people along with captioning for the D/deaf and hard of hearing communities.
- **Sensory rooms:** Three of the eight stadiums will offer these rooms for members of the neurodiverse community.
- **Accommodation:** Accessible rooms that meet international standards will be available.
- **Tourist destinations:** Barrier-free entry to key tourist destinations has been introduced for improved accessibility.

This project has served to normalise accessibility and introduce it to the wider population in a way that has had a ripple effect on the country as whole.

Saudi Arabia's football team win gold at Special Olympics.

Saudi Arabia's men's football team has won gold after competing in the Special Olympics Unified Cup for the first time since the tournament began in 1968.

This year's **Special Olympics** took place in Detroit, USA from 31 July to 6 August. 300 footballers and 24 nations took part and the tournament was watched by hundreds of millions of viewers around the world.

However, the story of the tournament belonged to the Saudi Arabian men's team. Having never entered a team into the tournament before, Saudi Arabia went on to take the gold medal. In the opening ceremony, Saudi Princess Reema bint Bander expressed her pride in the team and praised them for their performance.

The success of the team can be directly linked to Saudi Arabia's recent focus on the sports industry. In 2021 a programme for athletes with disabilities was created. Its purpose was to promote opportunities for men and women to represent the country in local and international tournaments. It is clear that this programme has had a significant impact, as less than a year after it was created, the men's football team not only entered the Unified Cup for the first time, but won the whole tournament.

300 footballers competed in the Special Olympics 2022.

24 nations sent teams to the Games.





CONCLUSION



Recommendations

01 Disability and the climate crisis

People with disabilities and older people must be meaningfully consulted and included in national plans and policies formulated in response to the climate crisis.

02 Post-Covid inclusion

Important lessons can be learned from the pandemic and the continued impact of long-Covid, providing businesses are not afraid to innovate and try new approaches.

03 Data-driven inclusion

Businesses can use their expertise to play a major role in the disaggregation of worldwide disability data, which will be vital to ending inequality for disabled people.

04 Investing in the next generation

Businesses should promote diversity in children's entertainment, including disability, so that equal representation may foster a more inclusive mindset among the next generation.

05 Digital forces for change

Digital platforms can be spaces for disabled communities to communicate and activate for change, provided accessibility and inclusion are prioritised by developers and community managers.

06 Travel accessibility

Travel providers must learn from mistakes in recent months and take tangible steps to make travel more inclusive and accessible, in partnership with the disabled community.

07 Accessible experiences

Businesses should invest in the growing market opportunity for accessible travel and experiences, mirrored by a continued accessibility effort from national governments.

08 Rise in disabled sports

Organisers of sporting events should recognise the growth in popularity of disabled sports and look to provide increased programmes, opportunities and coverage in the future.

09 Fashion and beauty for all

Brands in the fashion and beauty space need to respond to the growing interest in, and desire for, adaptive products and accessible communications in order to meet customer demand.

10 Digital disability employment resources

Businesses should work with government bodies to further digitise disability employment schemes and platforms in order to attract the best talent.

**DISABILITY
IS OUR
BUSINESS.**

 **Valuable
500**

