



Accessibility initiatives in the EU

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European Disability Strategy 2010-2020

Adopted on 15 November 2010

Objectives:

- To empower people with disabilities to enjoy their full rights
- To Create a barrier-free Europe for all

> It provides a strategic and multiannual framework to facilitate the implementation of the UNCRPD by the EU and support Member States in their implementation

Three main documents:

- Communication on a European Disability Strategy 2010-2020
- List of Actions 2010-2015
- Background Document with facts and figures



Key Actions relevant for Tourism

Accessibility:

- Study on the cost benefit of accessibility of goods and services
- Accessibility Act
- Transport regulations for persons with reduced mobility
- Accessibility standardisation Mandates
- European Award for accessible cities
- Improve application of accessibility in structural funds

Participation:

- Explore mutual recognition of disability cards
- Portability of rights such as personal assistance
- Obstacles in exercising rights as EU citizens-> free movement & residency
- Develop and disseminate standards for accessibility of sports, **leisure**, and recreation organisations, activities, events and venues



Concepts

*Rights - > Non-discrimination -> **equal access!!!!***

Accessibility

(following design for all)

+

reasonable accommodation

(assistive technologies

assistance)



Recent developments on Accessibility

• Revision of the Public Procurement Directives COM(2011) 896

- *article 40 technical specifications*
- *article 61 quality assurance standards (accessibility)*
- *article 66 award of contracts (accessibility)*
- *article 84 public oversights (report includes accessibility)*

• New Structural Funds regulation COM(2011) 615

- *Article 7 on discrimination*
- *Article 87 operational programmes: description disability and accessibility*
- *article 100 monitoring: disability and accessibility*
- *article 101 reporting: disability and accessibility*
- *ex ante conditionalities: UN Convention and accessibility*

• Trans European Networks

- *article 4 objectives (accessibility)*
- *article 10 priorities (accessibility)*
- *article 39 use of new technologies (accessibility)*
- *article 43 accessibility for all users*

• Proposal for web accessibility public sector websites

essential web accessibility requirements

List of 12 public sector services websites

Reference to standards: Harmonized, European (M376), ISO

Methodology for monitoring

Reporting

Art 19 TFEU Treaty proposal COM (2008) 426

Scope

- **Social protection, including social security and healthcare;**
- **Social advantages;**
- **Education;**
- **Access to and supply of goods and other services which are available to the public, including housing.**

Principle of equal treatment of persons with disabilities

Art 4

- **Effective non-discriminatory access (accessibility)**
- **Anticipatory**
- **Conditions:**
 - Disproportionate burden
 - Fundamental alteration
 - Provisions of alternatives
- **Reasonable accommodation**
- **Conditions:**
 - Disproportionate burden



Accessibility related standardization work at EU level

Mandate 376: Accessibility requirements for public procurement of products and services in the **ICT** domain

Mandate 420: Accessibility requirements for public procurement in the **Built Environment** (including **transport infrastructures**)

Mandate 473 to:

- include Accessibility following Design For All in relevant standardization activities
- Develop standards addressing accessibility following Design for all in the manufacturing and service delivery processes.

Others.....



Training of Stakeholders on consultations on standardisation

training courses developed and implemented

- **for persons with disabilities to increase their effective participation in the standardisation process**
- **for experts in standardisation to become familiar with disability accessibility issues.**

Manuals available

Long term aim: to ensure that accessibility requirements and disability issues are included in the standardisation deliverables for relevant products and services.

Access City Award

- Awareness raising on urban accessibility: (transport, buildings and public spaces, ICT, public services provision)
- Commitment to improvements in accessibility
- Role model to inspire other cities
- Promote best practices
- First Launch of the competition 2010
 - Award 2011 Avila
 - Award 2012 Salzburg
 - Award 2013 Berlin
 - Award 2014 Gothenburg



EC work programme 2014 item 21

European Accessibility Act: improving accessibility of goods and services in the Internal Market

"The initiative will improve the market of goods and services that are accessible for persons with disabilities and elderly persons, based on a "design for all" approach. This business friendly initiative will include binding measures to promote procurement and harmonisation of accessibility standards. The initiative is currently in a consultation process with industry and stakeholders."



Eurobarometer

- Published 3rd December 2012
- Overall more than nine in ten respondents (93%) agree that barriers make it difficult for people with disabilities.
- 7 in 10 Europeans believe better accessibility of goods and services would very much improve the lives of people with disabilities, the elderly and others with accessibility issues.
- Two thirds (66%) of respondents say that they would buy, or pay, more for products if they were more accessible and better designed for all, with specific reference to the inclusion of people with disabilities and the elderly.



Eurobarometer

- 86% of Europeans agree that having similar accessibility solutions across Europe would enable them to travel, study and work in another EU country.
- 96% of Europeans agree that when public authorities provide goods and services they should be obliged to ensure that they are also accessible to people with disabilities.
- 94% of Europeans agree that more money should be spent on eliminating physical obstacles which make the lives of people with disabilities and the elderly difficult.
- 47% of Europeans believe better accessibility of goods and services would very much improve opportunities for industry to sell products to people with disabilities and the elderly.



Eurobarometer

- 93% of Europeans agree that manufacturers and service providers should be required to ensure accessibility of the goods and services that they sell.
- 85% of Europeans agree that it should be possible to complain and go to court to seek sanctions against manufacturers and service providers who do not comply with binding measures to improve accessibility.
- Across Europe as a whole, 48% agree that 'existing rules on accessibility are sufficient to ensure them a good access to goods and services', whilst 47% disagree. The reason behind this disparity has to do with the differences on legislation and its enforcement among MS.
- 78% of Europeans think that having common rules on accessibility in the EU will make it easier for companies to operate in another EU country.

Conclusions

- legal framework – Human Rights***
- Sector (accessibility) <-> non-discrimination (equal access)***
- Clear responsibilities and details***
- Adequate timeframe for implementation***
- The role of Standardization – Research***
- User involvement- technical expertise***
- Enforcement and redress mechanisms***
 - Complaints, improvement, compensation
- The public sector (funding & procurement)***
- The private sector (innovation & competition & compliance)***
- Monitoring and protection***

Useful weblinks

- *Report of the Ad Hoc Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care (2009)*
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=3992&langId=en>
- *Toolkit for using EU Structural and Cohesion Funds (2009)*
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=2740&langId=en>
- Mansell, J., Knapp, M., Beadle-Brown, J. & Beecham, J. (2007),
“Deinstitutionalisation and community living – outcomes and costs: Report of a European Study” (Report commissioned by the European Commission)
http://www.kent.ac.uk/tizard/research/research_projects/DECLOC_Volume_1_Exec_Summary.pdf
https://www.kent.ac.uk/tizard/research/DECL_network/documents/DECLOC_Volume_2_Report_for_Web.pdf
- Sixth Disability High Level Group Report (2013) on Implementation of the UNCRPD (chapter on disability and development)
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/dhlg_6th_report_en.pdf
- Study on the situation of women with disabilities in light of the UN Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2009)
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=4363&langId=en>