ITU Events

Accessible Europe

ICT 4 ALL - 2021

23-25 March 2021

Setting the Regional Context
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http://itu.int/go/Accessible-Europe-21

Organized within the framework of the Regional Initiative for Europe on Accessibility, affordability and skills development for all to ensure digital inclusion and sustainable development

DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY   POLICY OUTLOOK   INNOVATION / EMERGING ISSUES   REGIONAL COOPERATION   GOOD PRACTICES

Hosted by
2021 PORTUGAL.EU
REPÚBLICA PORTUGUESA XXII GOVERNO CONSTITUCION

Coordinated by
ITU

Contributing to
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
2025 World Summit on the Information Society
#ICT4SDG

Organized by
European Commission
ITU

Regional Initiative for Europe

EUROPE
REGIONAL INITIATIVES
BUENOS AIRES ACTION PLAN | 2018-2021

To bridge the digital divide and equip all groups of society, including persons with disabilities and specific needs, to take advantage of ICTs.

Strategic Goals of ITU

GROWTH

Enable and foster access to and increased use of telecommunications/ICT in support of the digital economy and society

PARTNERSHIP

Strengthen cooperation among ITU membership and all other stakeholders in support of the ITU strategic goals

INNOVATION

Enable innovation in telecommunications/ICT in support of the digital transformation of society

INCLUSIVENESS

Bridge the digital divide and provide broadband access for all

SUSTAINABILITY

Manage emerging risks, challenges and opportunities resulting from the rapid growth of telecommunications/ICT

CONNECT 2030 STRATEGIC GOALS

1 GROWTH
2 INCLUSIVENESS
3 SUSTAINABILITY
4 INNOVATION
5 PARTNERSHIP

Member States in the Europe region have made significant progress towards **ITU's Target 2.9** of establishing enabling environments ensuring accessible telecommunications/ ICTs for persons with disabilities in all countries by 2023

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ICT accessibility assessment for Europe region

Read the full report =>

http://itu.int/go/Accessible-Europe-21

ITUPublications
Europe

International Telecommunication Union

ICT accessibility assessment for Europe region

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United Nations CRPD

UNCRPD: Signed by <u>45 countries</u> from the ITU Europe region and ratified by 44 of them.

UNCRPD Optional Protocol: Signed by 43 and ratified by 29 of the 46 countries.

Marrakesh Treaty: Signed by 20 and ratified by 6 of the 46 countries.

Anti-discrimination and equality law: The majority of countries have adopted anti-discrimination and equality laws, and implemented the provisions of the UNCRPD in national law, ensuring non-discrimination and equality for persons with disabilities.

Recognition of sign language: According to ITU data, sign language is recognized by 23 countries, of which 4 have recognized national sign languages in their constitutions.

Web Accessibility

Website accessibility: A total of <u>41 countries have adopted</u> or plan to adopt web accessibility laws or statutory requirements.

Among these, the <u>27 EU Member States</u> have transposed the EU Web Accessibility Directive and the three EEA countries and Switzerland are also expected to do so, although they are seeking longer transition periods.
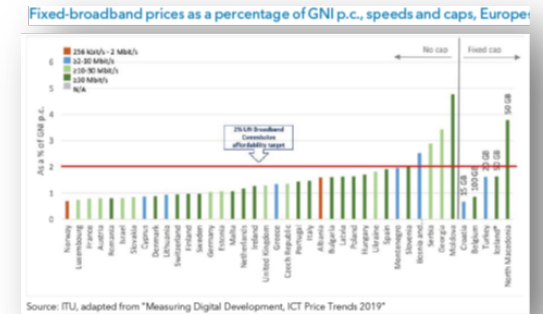
The <u>five EU candidate countries</u> are also expected to transpose the EU Accessibility Directive and several other countries also closely follow the EU law.
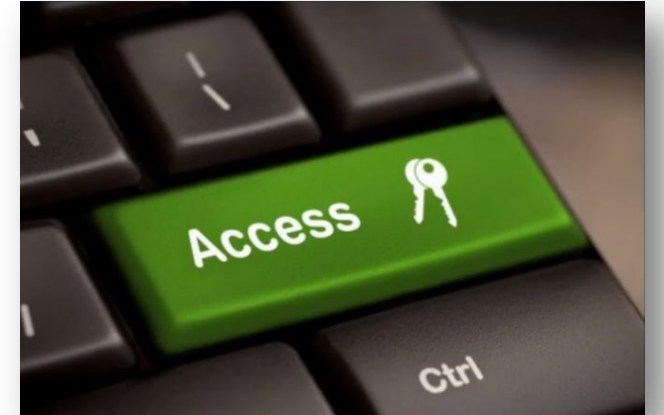
Electronic Communications

Electronic communications: The majority of countries have adopted laws or regulations specifying requirements to be met by providers of publicly available electronic communications services.

- *Affordable adequate broadband Internet access:* Europe is the region with the lowest fixed-broadband basket price as a percentage of GNI p.c. (1.5 per cent).

- *Emergency services:* Access to emergency services via SMS for persons with disabilities is provided in 22 EU Member States, the United Kingdom, the three EEA countries and Switzerland. Most countries: 112

- *Text and/or video relay services:* In 10 countries, there are text and/or video relay services available for the deaf and hard of hearing. Video relay service (VRS) is usually not available 24/7, which is a serious limitation. In several countries, there are also video remote-interpreting services available.

Fixed-broadband prices as a percentage of GNI p.c., speeds and caps, Europe

Source: ITU, adapted from "Measuring Digital Development, ICT Price Trends 2019"

Subtitles: In <u>27 countries</u>, media service providers (i.e. broadcasters) are required to provide subtitles. In 21 of them, the requirements apply to all media service providers, while in the other six the requirements apply only to PSM organizations.

Live subtitles: In <u>at least 21 countries</u>, media service providers provide live subtitles.

Audio subtitles: In <u>at least 10 countries</u>, media service providers provide spoken subtitles.

Audio description: In <u>17 countries</u>, media service providers are required to provide audio description. In 11 of them, the requirements apply to all media service providers, while in the other six the requirements apply only to PSM organizations.

Signing: In 24 countries, media service providers are required to provide signed programmes. In 13 of them, the requirements apply to all media service providers, while in the other 11 the requirements apply only to PSM organizations.

Live signing: In at least 23 countries, media service providers provide live signing. During the COVID-19 pandemic, 40 out of the 46 Europe region countries have been providing sign-language access to COVID-19 public broadcasts, such as national press conferences or news broadcasts.

Website accessibility: In 10 countries, PSM organizations are required to make their websites accessible to persons with disabilities.

Must-carry obligation: More than half of the countries confirmed they have a must-carry obligation enshrined in law and also define accessibility requirements for the transmission of specified radio and television broadcast channels and related complementary services.

Accessibility Requirements for Products and Services

Public procurement of ICT products and services: ITU estimates that over 30 countries have enshrined in law functional accessibility requirements for public procurement of ICT products and services, following the adoption of the European public procurement directives in 2014. Some of the non-EU/EEA countries have also reported the application of these requirements in national procurement laws.

Accessibility requirements for products and services: ITU estimates that around one third of the countries regulate specific aspects of accessibility requirements for products and services as foreseen in the European Accessibility Act. There is a lot of room for improvement in this area.

Accessibility requirements for ICT accessibility in education: ITU estimates that more than half of the countries have laws and regulations in place defining accessibility requirements for ICT services and content procured, developed, maintained, made available and used in public and/or private education institutions by administrators, teachers, students and staff.

Main Conclusions

Most of the countries across the region **have adopted strong general equality and non-discrimination laws**.

Apart from EU Member States and non-EU members of the European Economic Area (EEA), **many other European countries** are also committed to **follow EU accessibility rules**.

Adoption of laws or regulations

- Majority of countries: **web accessibility and electronic communication.**
- Considerable number of countries: **audio-visual media services, public procurement of ICT products and services, accessibility requirements for ICT accessibility in education.**
- Few countries: **accessibility requirements for products and services.**

Implementation capacity

➤ Strong commitment in:

- **standards and guidelines** for the accessibility of ICT products and services;
- **facilitating the use of sign languages and Braille** in official interactions;
- **ICT Accessibility training** for stakeholders;
- **awareness campaigns** on ICT accessibility issues facing PwD.

➤ Should be strengthened in the following areas:

- facilitation and promotion of **universal design of ICT products and services** for all;
- **engagement and participation of DPOs;**
- employment of **qualified staff in digital accessibility** in the education sector;
- promotion of the adoption of **ICT accessibility in education;**
- promoting the use of emerging technologies to drive **innovation in ICT accessibility**.

Addressing Gaps and Advancing Implementation

Accessible Europe Initiative (Ecosystem)

Policy and Strategy Review Advisory and Implementation

Standards for Products and Services

Innovation Ecosystem for Accessible Europe

Capacity Development

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THANK YOU

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