

Special session on "Remote working and the new elevated importance to build flexible work environments that facilitate PwDs socio-economic inclusion"

Digital accessibility a catalytic driver to ensure inclusive remote working and socio-economic development for persons with disabilities

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18 June 2021 | 16:00-17:15 CEST
Online meeting

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

REMOTE
WORKING

DIGITAL
ACCESSIBILITY

ENABLING
ENVIRONMENT

GOOD
PRACTICES

DIGITAL
INCLUSION



Held within the framework of

**Accessible
Europe**
ICT4ALL

Organized by

 **Zero Project**
For a world with zero barriers



Trends – Future of work landscape for persons with disabilities

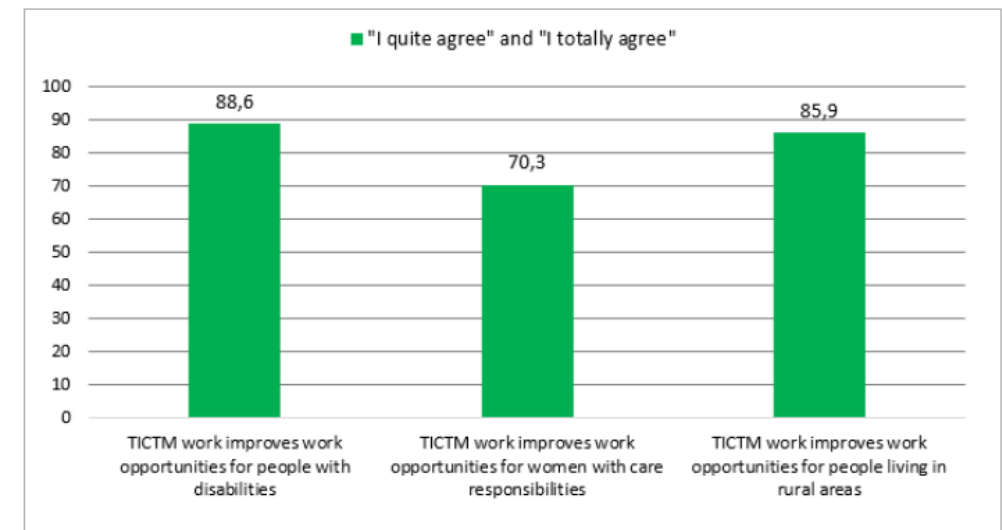
Source: <https://www.gartner.com/smarterwithgartner/gartner-top-strategic-predictions-for-2020-and-beyond/>

- ❑ By 2023, the number of people with disabilities employed will triple due to Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies, reducing barriers to access
- ❑ Disabilities will lead to “super abilities” where disabled people can do more than normal people, by using Augmented Reality (AR)
- ❑ Organizations that actively employ people with disabilities will see:
 - ❖ 72% increase in productivity
 - ❖ 89% higher retention rates
 - ❖ 29% increase in profitability

Telework and ICT-based mobile work - TICTM

Source: European Parliament Report “The impact of teleworking and digital work on work and society” (April 2021)

Figure 24: Agreement with the idea that the TICTM improves work opportunities (% of respondents answering I quite agree + % answering I totally agree)



Source: IRS web survey.

Note: The bars show the shares of respondents who answered 'quite agree' or 'totally agree' on the following scale: 1 - I do not know, 2 - I completely disagree, 3 - I quite disagree, 4 - I quite agree and 5 - I totally agree.

Covid19 opportunities

[Source: European Parliament Report “The impact of teleworking and digital work on workers and society” \(April 2021\)](#)

- ✓ Remote working can help those with disabilities to access the labour market by removing the need to be physically present at the workplace
- ✓ Benefits of teleworking include: greater autonomy, flexibility, control over work schedules, the possibility to receive personal care services at home during the working day and possibility to reduce disability-related bias and discrimination
- ✓ Teleworking may represent a **'silver lining' for workers with disabilities, as it makes working from home not only easier but also much more widespread and acceptable**

[Source : Policy Connect, 2020](#)

- ✓ ***'COVID-19 is to some extent levelling the playing field between disabled and non-disabled employees, as workers must find a way of accessing content remotely, attending meetings and having their voice heard virtually '***



Covid19 - challenges

[Source: European Parliament Report “The impact of teleworking and digital work on workers and society” \(April 2021\)](#)

- Persons with disabilities have a **lower level of access to internet connection** compared to persons without disabilities
- The **labour market risks related to the digital divide are likely to be aggravated** also due to both firms' and/or workers' lack of affinities with digital tools

[Source: European Accessibility Summit: “Accessibility and the Future of Work: The Role of Digital” \(June 1 and 2, 2021\)](#)

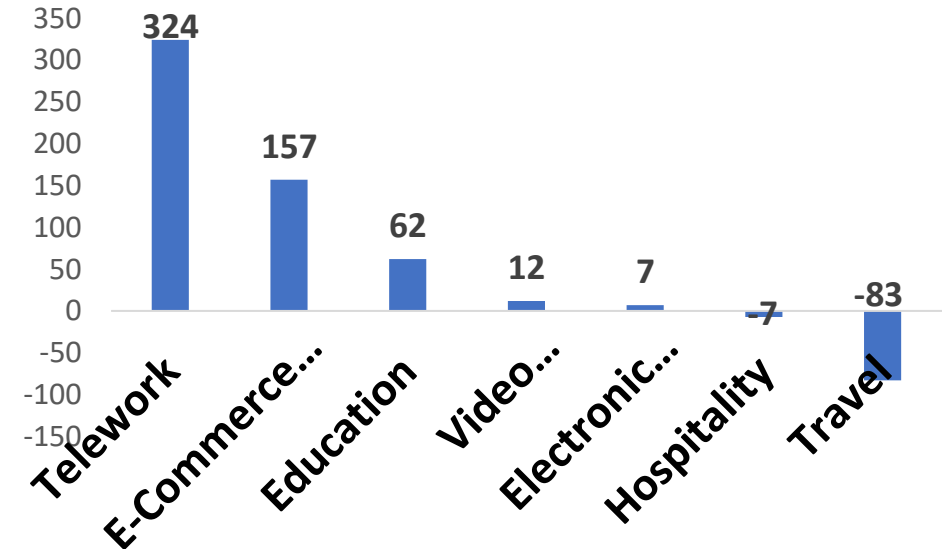
- **Lack of necessary resources, support, digital skills, and accessible digital infrastructure** are challenges that people with disabilities have faced when remote working during the pandemic

[Source : Commission's new Strategy for the Rights of persons with disabilities 2021- 2030 \(COM\(2021\) 101 final\)](#)

- **Only 64.3% of persons with disabilities** aged 16 + compared to **87.9% of persons without disabilities have an Internet connection**

Accelerated adoption of digital platforms

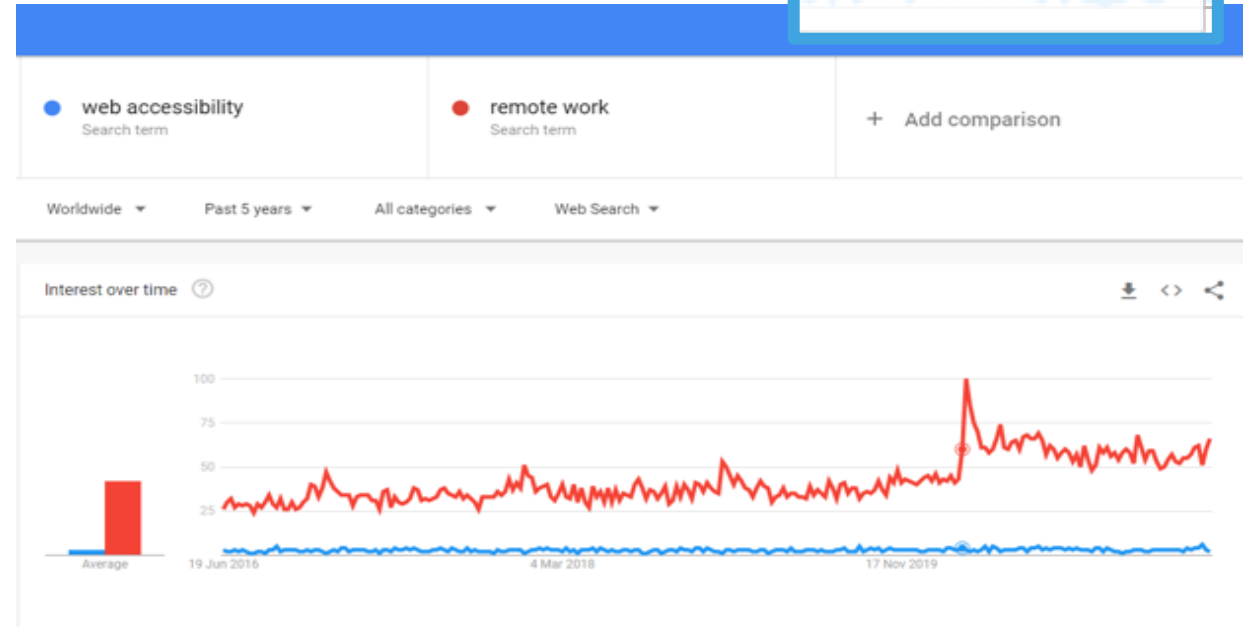
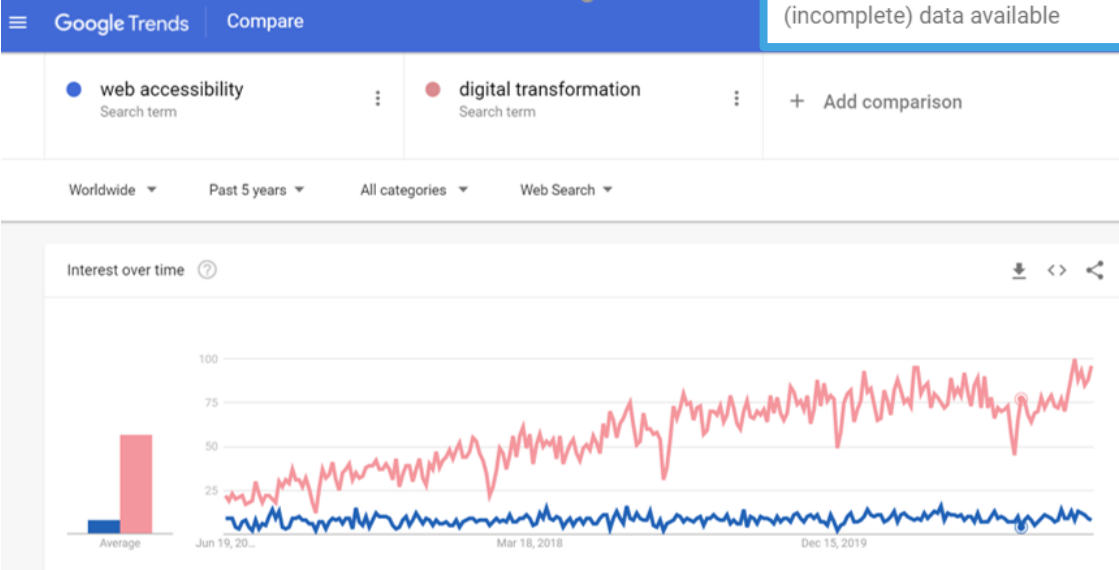
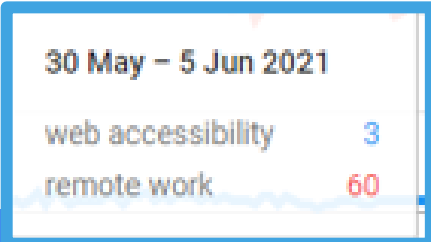
e.g. Latin Americas November 2020



Covid19 challenges

- **Gap between activities required to achieve the purpose**
e.g. significant differences in search trends during Covid-19 vs.

<https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=all&geo=US&q=web%20accessibility,digital%20transformation>



Guidelines on how to implement ICT accessibility as a key requirement to achieve digital inclusion and socio-economic development of persons with disabilities

- ✓ **Raise awareness**
- ✓ **Develop inclusive, flexible and accessible digital environments:**
 - ❖ Adopt ICT accessibility policies and strategies
 - ❖ Comply with accessibility requirements and standards
 - ❖ Develop and make tools and resources available to facilitate implementation
 - ❖ Conduct regular assessment and monitor ICT accessibility implementation
- ✓ **Develop capacities:**
 - ❖ Understand the accessibility barriers
 - ❖ Understand the role of digital accessibility to achieve digital inclusion
 - ❖ Learn how to communicate in digital accessible formats
 - ❖ Create knowledge platform to share challenges and good practices
- ✓ **Mainstreaming ICT accessibility at all levels and by all stakeholders**
- ✓ **Ensure involvement of end-users, persons with disabilities in all of above**

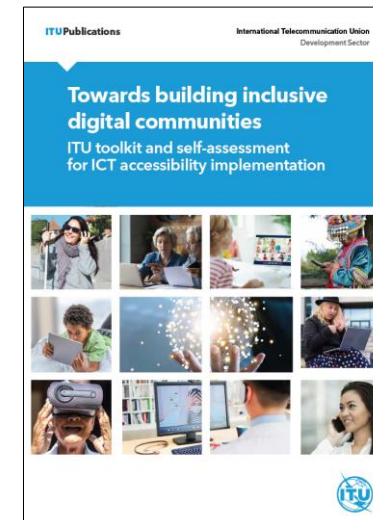
INCLUSIVE DIGITAL COMMUNICATION



ICT Accessibility: the key to inclusive communication
available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish

How to ensure inclusive digital communication during crises and emergency situations
available in English, French and Spanish

Web Accessibility: the cornerstone of an inclusive digital society
available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish



Steps to be taken within the digital transformation to achieve accessible work environments

- ✓ **Adopt accessible technologies and inclusive measures during virtual meetings such as:** enabling captions, audio description, sign language, screen reader identifying speakers, and sharing information in multiple ways (verbally and visually)
- ✓ **Ensure accessibility features** are designed not only for current employees, but also for applicants (job portals)
- ✓ **Help employees with disabilities acquire appropriate technology-based accommodations**—both in terms of software and equipment, such as braille displays, larger monitors, large print keyboards, and desktop magnification devices
- ✓ **Make digital content accessible:** data visualisations, documents, emails, images, presentation slides, social media, videos and multimedia and web content
- ✓ **Ensure that all working tools are digitally accessible** including sharing and collaboration tools
- ✓ **Lead by example to promote a digitally accessible and inclusive work environment and culture!**

For more information about ITU-D resources
on ICT accessibility please scan our QR



Thank you in sign language



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!
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