



# **ICT4All - Session 6: Advancing Web Accessibility**

## **... through the implementation of the Web Accessibility Directive**

**Gudrun Stock**

Deputy Head of Unit

European Commission, DG Connect G3

Accessibility, Multilingualism and Safer Internet

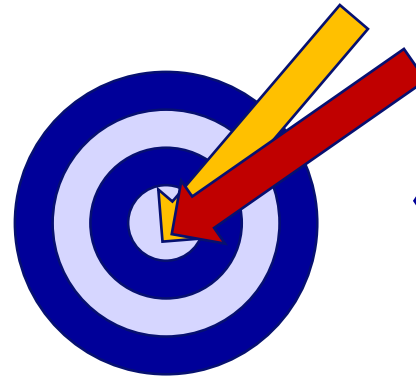
[Gudrun.Stock@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Gudrun.Stock@ec.europa.eu)

**Accessible Europe: ICT 4 ALL – 5 December 2019**

# The Web Accessibility Directive

## A dual objective

To increase digital inclusion by ensuring that the **websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies are more accessible** to users, in particular to persons with disabilities.

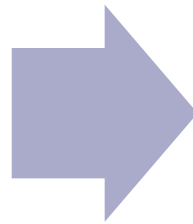


To improve the functioning of the internal market by establishing **common accessibility requirements**.

# Evolution of the scope

## Proposal of 2012

- Starting with a limited set of public services, including
  - job search,
  - income tax,
  - requests for passports/driving licenses,
  - social/health-related services...
- Only websites



## Directive 2016/2102

- **Websites and mobile apps** of public sector bodies
- Some exceptions; disproportionate burden derogation
- Private sector encouraged

# Main elements of the Directive

## Advancing accessibility

- For websites and mobile apps of public sector bodies across the EU
- Some exclusions regarding organisations, websites, content types
- Derogation for disproportionate burden

## Harmonising the market

- Common accessibility requirements (POUR)
- Harmonised European standard EN 301 549 v.2.1.2 provides presumption of conformity

## Benefits for users

- Accessibility statements
- Feed-back mechanism
- Possibility to ask for excluded content („on-demand“)

## Monitoring & enforcement

- Through national bodies in charge of:
  - monitoring
  - reporting
  - enforcement

## Supporting measures

- Training staff of public sector bodies
- Building capacity
- Raising awareness of the benefits of web accessibility
- Involving stakeholders

# Scope of the Directive

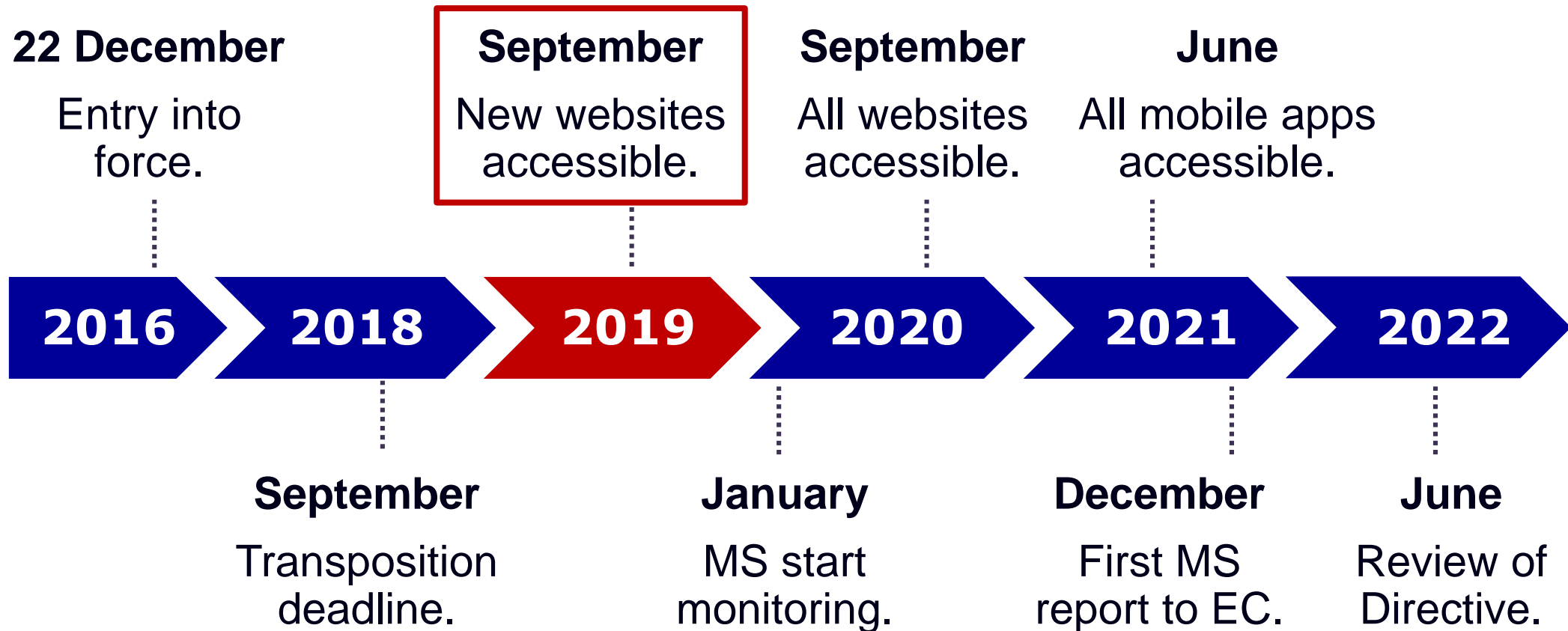
## Public Sector Bodies

- **Excludes** public service broadcasters (-> AVMSD);
- **Includes** NGOs that provide services essential to the public, or services meant for persons with disabilities;
- **Opt-out** for schools, kindergartens or nurseries, but not for essential online administrative functions.

## Websites; Mobile apps

- **Limited exclusions (legacy):** office files, pre-recorded time-based media, archives, extranet and intranet;
- **Limited exclusions (feasibility/control):** maps and mapping services, third-party content, certain reproductions of heritage collections items;
- **Full exclusion:** live time-based media;
- **Disproportionate burden** (justified and proportional exclusion).

# Timeline of practical application



# Advancing web accessibility (1)

## Fuelling a virtuous cycle ...

- Accessibility opens up digital public services to a broader audience.
- Member States start monitoring in January 2020.
- Feedback on monitoring results helps public sector bodies address deficiencies.
- Member States report to EC in December 2021.
- Monitoring, reporting and exchanging good practices provide insights for solving common accessibility issues.
- The monitoring framework offers opportunities for industry to develop new tools and services.



## Advancing web accessibility (2)

In transposition, some MS are going the “extra mile”; they ...

- do not use opt-out for schools;
- extend the application to all intranet and extranet websites;
- require sign language for administrative services;
- create obligations for the procurement of accessible websites and apps;
- publish **yearly** evaluation reports;
- oblige public sector bodies to self-assess and to publish the results;
- extend obligations to some private sector entities.





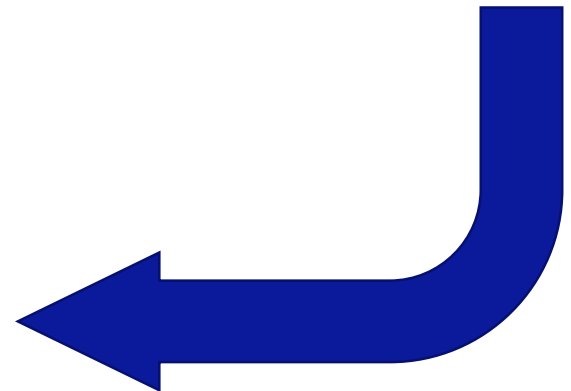
## Advancing web accessibility (3)

### Review of the Directive by June 2022, to assess:

- the actual effect of the directive;
- the market developments and technological advances „*making accessibility easier*”;

### ... and based on those:

- the content exclusions;
- the monitoring methodology;
- anything else that may have become “obsolete”.



# Supporting implementation (1)



**W3C<sup>®</sup>** **WAI-tools:**  
Tools for scalable web  
accessibility assessments.



**WADcher:**  
Platform and tools for accessibility  
evaluation, monitoring and reporting.

**W3C<sup>®</sup>** **WAI-Guide:**  
Support for training, awareness  
raising, capacity building and  
implementation of web accessibility.



**WE4AUTHORS:**  
Authoring tools helping to respect  
accessibility requirements by default.



**Web Access by Default Preparatory Action**

Solutions for „accessible by default” authoring tools

**Web Accessibility Directive  
Expert Group (WADEX)**

## Supporting implementation (2)

### ■ **Digital Accessibility Observatory (CSA)**

- Support the implementation of the **Web Accessibility Directive** by helping relevant actors identify the most appropriate accessibility solutions
- Call for proposals: 05/11/2019 - 12/03/2020

### ■ **An empowering, inclusive Next Generation Internet (RIA)**

- Novel mobile applications translating between speech and sign languages
- Call for proposals: 19/11/2019 - 22/04/2020

## Useful links

- [Web Accessibility Directive](#)
  - [List of national transposing measures](#)
- [Model accessibility statement](#)
- [Monitoring and reporting methodology](#)
- [Harmonised Standard EN 301 549 v.2.1.2](#)
  - [Implementing decision on the harmonised standard](#)
- [Digital Single Market webpage on Web Accessibility](#)
- [Information on the WADEX meetings](#)
- [List of national monitoring, reporting and enforcement bodies](#)
- [Contact: CNECT-WAD@ec.europa.eu](mailto:CNECT-WAD@ec.europa.eu)



**Thank you for your attention!**