



The European Accessibility Act (EAA)

Proposal for a Directive

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Why an European Accessibility Act?

Economic reasons

- Free circulation of accessible products & services ⇒ more accessible and cheaper products/services for 80M of EU citizens
- Divergence of national legislations ⇒ fragmentation of the EU Market ⇒ counterproductive for enterprises
- Opening markets for being ready for global competitiveness

Why an European Accessibility Act?

Legal obligations

- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) entered into force for the EU in 2011
- Its obligations increase the risk of divergent accessibility legislations in MS
- The EAA helps to implement the obligations of article 9 on Accessibility

Impact Assessment

- Approved in 2013
- In-depth analysis of the accessibility legislation in nine EU Member States - covering about 80% of the EU GDP and 77% of the EU population
- 5 options discarded as not effective or realistic
- 4 options retained – assessment of detailed impacts

What is covered under the EAA?

- Accessibility requirements for carefully selected products and services
- Same accessibility requirements to be used in other EU law (for example Public Procurement)

Products & services in the scope of the EAA

- Computers and operating systems
- ATMs, ticketing and check-in machines
- Telephones and smartphones
- TV equipment related to digital television services
- Telephony services and related equipment
- Audio-visual media services (AVMS) and related equipment
- Air, bus, rail and waterborne passenger transport services
- Banking services
- E-books
- E-commerce

How does the EAA interact with other EU law?

- **Same accessibility requirements as in existing EU law:**
 - Public procurement
 - Structural and investments funds
 - Tenders for public passenger transport services
 - Transport infrastructure

What does the European Accessibility Act propose?

- **Functional accessibility requirements**
- **Free movement of products and services** meeting the accessibility requirements
- **Self-declaration of conformity** (lightest option)
- **Market surveillance**
- **Defines accessibility** under already existing obligations in other EU law

What the EAA does NOT do?

- **does not prescribe** to the level of technical details how to render a product or service accessible.
- **does not set obligations** for **all** manufacturers and service providers
- **does not impose burdensome requirements**
- **does not amend** existing EU sectorial legislation on accessibility

What is the timeline for implementation?

- Transposition period -> Two years after entry into force
- Enter into application -> Six years after entry into force
- Implementation report -> Five years after application