

Achieving full participation through Universal Design



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Achieving full participation through Universal Design

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In co-operation
with the Committee of Experts on Universal Design
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Executive summary

Universal Design is a strategy for making environments, products, communication, information technology and services accessible to and usable by everyone – particularly people with disabilities – to the greatest extent possible. Barriers to participation in social life can be avoided when Universal Design principles are applied to mainstream policies and solutions right from the early stages of planning.

This report shows that many European countries have had very positive experiences with Universal Design/Design for All initiatives, but also that full advantage of the possibilities has not yet been taken.

To change this, a number of recommendations to governments are presented under the headings of (1) Adoption and decision on principles; (2) Co-ordination; (3) Implementation; and (4) Evaluation, with a clear focus on the planning process.

A selection of examples of good practice is provided and linked to many of the key action lines in the Council of Europe Action Plan to promote the rights and full participation of people with disabilities in society: improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in Europe 2006-2015 (Recommendation Rec(2006)5).

1. Introduction

Many Europeans, especially people with disabilities, are unable to take part in important activities and aspects of society in an equal manner, simply because policies, societies and environments are not designed to meet their requirements. Additionally, with the number of elderly people increasing rapidly, future European societies face the challenge of adequately addressing the particular requirements of a growing number of people with disabilities. This report consequently invites member states to:

- promote full participation in community life by ensuring access to and usability of all aspects of society, including the built environment, transport, products and goods, information, public services, education, employment and care;
- implement Universal Design as a strategy to ensure equal and democratic rights in society for all individuals, regardless of age, abilities or cultural background, including persons with disabilities.

1.1. Definition of Universal Design/ Design for All

Building upon the Tomar Resolution¹ adopted in 2001:

- Universal Design is a strategy which aims to make the design and composition of different environments, products,

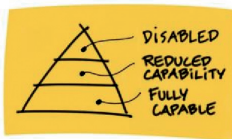
1. Council of Europe Resolution ResAP(2001)1 on the introduction of the principles of universal design into the curricula of all occupations working on the built environment ("Tomar Resolution").

communication, information technology and services accessible and understandable to, as well as usable by, everyone, to the greatest extent in the most independent and natural manner possible, preferably without the need for adaptation or specialised solutions.

- The aim of the Universal Design concept is to simplify life for everyone by making the built environment, communication, products and services equally accessible, usable and understandable.
- The Universal Design concept promotes a shift to more emphasis on user-centred design by following a holistic approach and aiming to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities, including the changes that people experience in the course of life.
- Consequently, Universal Design is a concept that extends beyond the issues of mere accessibility of buildings for people with disabilities and should become an integrated part of policies and planning in all aspects of society.

For the purpose of this report the terms “Design for All”, “integral accessibility”, “accessible design”, “inclusive design”, “barrier-free design”, “transgenerational design” and “accessibility for all” are regarded as converging towards the term “Universal Design” used in this text.

The general idea is that planning and shaping policies, built environments, information, products and services must be made responsive to the needs of people with diverse abilities.



The challenge is to develop mainstream solutions with built-in adaptability and compatibility, accommodating as many people as possible, including people with disabilities. For people with special needs, assistive technology and personal services will be part of the total solution, and this solution will cover more people if, for example, standardised interfaces are integrated into the design.

To cater for this in practice, Universal Design offers a philosophy and strategy which support the implementation of full citizenship, independent living and integration. Mainstreaming is a keyword in this process, implying that all policies and solutions have to be carefully designed to accommodate all users. The aim is to achieve this to the greatest extent possible, diminishing the need for segregated solutions and special services.

As a design-in-time methodology Universal Design contributes to the prevention and elimination of barriers to integration, whether psychological, educational, family-related, cultural, social, professional, urban or architectural. Universal Design thus has the potential to help define a coherent European policy of integrating people with disabilities, strengthening the European goal of enhancing the autonomy of people and making them self-supporting.

In the Council of Europe perspective, human rights, participation and inclusion are brought together in the Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015, and Universal Design is one of the means of accomplishing the goals set in the Action Plan.

From an industry perspective the International Organization for Standardization has contributed with Universal Design and Accessible Design guides on the requirements of groups of disabled citizens. The guides assist industry in translating the basic values into products and environments that in fact are more usable for more citizens, regardless of age or disabilities.

The European Commission Public Procurement Directive and rules for future European Union legislation also incorporate Universal Design to reach the long-term goals of full participation and inclusion.

1.2. Accessibility

All universally designed buildings, websites, services, etc. have to be accessible. It is important that accessibility as a feature is built into solutions in a way that promotes integration, and not just solves a technical problem.

Universal Design can be said to add principles like “the same entrance for all” or “the same opportunity for all” to accessibility, in order to ensure participation and integration in a more equal manner.

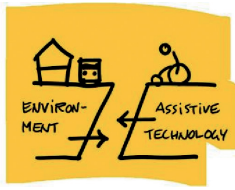
For this reason it is necessary to be specific about accessibility requirements of major user groups, in order to give planners and designers an idea about the specific Universal Design targets. It is also necessary to make it clear that Universal Design consultants and representatives of end users have to be involved early in the planning process.



Suggested user groups that should be involved in establishing accessibility guidelines, mainstream policies and solutions are wheelchair users and persons with reduced mobility, with visual or hearing impairments, with intellectual disabilities, or with asthma and allergies. In the majority of cases the requirements of these groups will also cover most other user groups.

1.3. Universal Design and assistive technology

Universal Design makes an environment, a communication device or a service easier to use for everyone and for people with disabilities in particular, but does not make assistive technology obsolete. People with disabilities in need of a certain level of support will continue to require the use of assistive technology, and Universal Design solutions must be able to interact with these technologies.



Compatibility and adaptability to commonly available assistive technology devices become keywords, and in-depth knowledge of user requirements and assistive technology is thus indispensable when shaping society's services and environments. Without this knowledge the results will be costly adaptations, retrofitting or a low degree of usability.

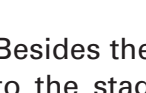
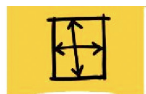
Examples of Universal Design and assistive technology interaction:

- A built environment designed for use by all types and sizes of wheelchairs, walking frames, etc., is an efficient environment for users of this kind of assistive technology, and is at the same time easier to use for parents with prams, travellers with suitcases on wheels, etc.
- In a cinema many people with hearing aids can hear the sound track if the cinema is equipped with a compatible induction loop system.
- A website complying with web accessibility requirements is more useful for blind and dyslexic persons with screen readers reading the page aloud, and screen readers are increasingly becoming a standard feature of common software.
- Powered height-adjustable tables, when properly designed, can be seen as compatible with wheelchairs, as they allow everyone, including wheelchair users, to find a comfortable working position.

1.4. Universal Design as a method

The most widespread method of working with Universal Design on a national basis is through defining accessibility requirements with the underlying principles of "the same entrance for all" or "the same opportunities for all". Traditionally, the

following seven main principles² are listed when explaining Universal Design, but it should be noted that they have their roots in the design of built environments and products, and that they have to be expanded further. When it comes to achieving equal rights, accessibility and democracy through Universal Design, the challenge is to incorporate these seven principles into mainstream thinking, planning and methods in all fields of society:

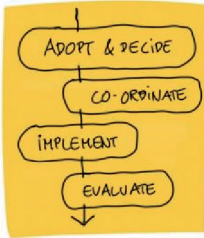


- equitable use: useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities;
- flexibility in use: accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities;
- simple and intuitive use: easy to understand regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level;
- perceptible information: communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities;
- tolerance for error: minimises hazards and adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions;
- low physical effort: can be used effectively and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue;
- size and space: appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation and use, regardless of the user's body size, posture or mobility.

Besides the translation of principles, attention should be paid to the stages of the Universal Design process, not least in national or local projects that need to be robust, sustainable

2. University of North Carolina, Center for Universal Design, 1995.

over time and with lower costs. If practical results are desired the focus should be placed on:



- adoption and decision on principles;
- co-ordination between key actors;
- practical implementation;
- evaluation and efficient follow-up.

In this sense Universal Design projects do not differ from other projects or policies.

In product- and service-oriented organisations it is essential to have strategies for supporting planners and designers in the development process, and some of the ingredients are: provision of adequate tools, skills and education of personnel, accompanied by assigning of responsibilities in Universal Design to management levels, ranging from research over development and engineering to marketing.

2. European position on Universal Design

2.1. Historical events

To understand the current position on Universal Design a number of significant international events play an important role, in addition to the numerous contributions made over time by certain instruments and NGOs, as set out in chronological order in the following non-exhaustive list:

1950	European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms
1981	The United Nations International Year of People with Disabilities
1982-1992	The United Nations Decade of People with Disabilities
1990	The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) with its set of regulations banning discrimination against people with disabilities in almost every aspect of society. The ADA has been a world-wide inspiration on equal rights for people with disabilities
1991-1994	EU Technology Initiative for Disabled and Elderly People (TIDE)
1992	Council of Europe Recommendation No. R (92) 6 on a coherent policy for people with disabilities, influencing disability policies at national and international level
1993	The UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.

“Equalization of opportunities” is defined as “the process through which the various systems of society and the environment, such as services, activities, information and documentation are made available to all, particularly to persons with disabilities”. The rules describe preconditions, target areas and implementation measures for equal participation, with 22 rules describing initiatives ranging from awareness raising and accessibility to information and research.

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 1995 | The principles of Universal Design are formulated at the University of North Carolina Center for Universal Design |
| 1996 | First version of the European Concept for Accessibility (ECA) |
| 1997 | The Treaty of Amsterdam of the European Union, including Article 13 on non-discrimination |
| 1997-1999 | The Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) by the W3C organisation develops the first accessibility guidelines for the Internet |
| 1998-2002 | eAccessibility in the EU FP5 (Applications Relating to Persons with Special Needs Including the Disabled and Elderly) |
| 1998 | Section 508 of the US Rehabilitation Act is the first act within information technology that includes accessibility requirements in public procurement policies |
| 1999 | Accessibility Guidelines first established in the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) |
| 2001 | The Council of Europe (Tomar) Resolution ResAP(2001)1 states that the principles of Universal Design need to be introduced into the curricula of all occupations working on the built environment. The Tomar Resolution definition |

- of Universal Design forms the basis of the definitions in this report.
- 2001 The Council of Europe Resolution ResAP(2001)3 “Towards full citizenship of persons with disabilities through inclusive new technologies”
- 2002 e-Europe 2002 Action Plan by the European Commission aims to achieve “an Information Society for All”. The Plan includes a separate action line on WAI guidelines, national centres of excellence, curricula for designers and Design for All standards. The European Design for All e-Accessibility Network (EDeAN) is established as a result. The action plan is followed by the European Council resolution on eAccessibility – improving the access of people with disabilities to the knowledge-based society.
- 2002 ISO Guide 71: “Guidelines for standards developers to address the needs of older persons and persons with disabilities”, forming the basis of CEN/CENELEC Guide 6
- 2003 EU Ministerial Declaration on e-inclusion (Greece) states that the overall approach should be based on the principles of Design for All, availability, accessibility and affordability of products and services appropriate to meeting the needs of citizens with disabilities. WAI guidelines, best practices in Design for All, accessibility requirements in public procurement policies and mainstream products and services are main issues.
- 2003 The Malaga Ministerial Declaration on integration policies for people with disabilities states that the main aim for the next decade is to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities and their families. Emphasis is laid on integration and full participation in society, as a

- participative and accessible society is of benefit to the whole population.
- 2003 European Commission Resolution on promoting the employment and social integration of people with disabilities, having equal rights as other citizens
- 2003 Second version of the European Concept for Accessibility (ECA)
- 2005 European Commission Communication COM(2005) 425 on eAccessibility Implementation, contributing to the implementation of "i2010 – A European Information Society for growth and employment"
- 2005 The Third Summit of Heads of State and Government held by the Council of Europe in Warsaw. In the Warsaw Action Plan, the Heads of State and Government agree to "consolidate the Council of Europe's work on disability issues and support the adoption and implementation of a ten-year action plan designed to make decisive progress in ensuring equal rights for people with disabilities" (Chapter III.1.).
- 2005 The European Union launches a mandate to the European Standardisation Organisations to develop a standard on accessibility requirements to be used in public procurement in the ICT domain (renewed in 2007). Dialogue is ongoing with the US with a view to harmonisation of European and US standards, in order to foster a global market.
- 2006 The Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015 seeks to translate the aims of the Council of Europe with regard to human rights, non-discrimination, equal opportunities, full citizenship and participation of people with disabilities into a European policy framework on

	disability. The intention is to assist policy makers in designing, adjusting, refocusing and implementing appropriate plans, programmes and innovative strategies.
2006	The Riga Declaration mentions accessibility and the design of new technologies, supporting EU community action plans.
2007	The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is opened for signature. Universal Design is mentioned in particular under “general obligations”.
2007	The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All highlights equal rights and anti-discrimination as main issues. It is backed by information campaigns on relevant EU legislation and Directives. The perspective is broader than disability and encompasses many other groups.
2007	Council of Europe Resolution ResAP(2007)3 on “Achieving full participation through Universal Design” is adopted.
2008	The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities enters into force.

2.2. The current situation

Based on questionnaires that were circulated at the beginning of the work and additional information from the delegates of the contributing member states, it can be concluded that many of the aforementioned events and resolutions appear to have been translated into national, regional and local initiatives.

It can be concluded that a definition of Universal Design is present in Europe, and that there is a clear belief in the need for Universal Design to enable people with disabilities to reach full democracy and economic advantages. Europe now sees the adoption of an increasing number of national disability

action plans and intends to give them their proper place, acknowledging that concrete actions are needed, good intentions not being enough.

Universal Design – under different headings – and accessibility are on the agenda in many countries, translating human rights, anti-discrimination and democratic values into concrete policies. Issues within health care, integration, accessibility, education or employment often bear the characteristics of Universal Design approaches.

Legislation can be subdivided into rights, acts, provisions and local regulations, backed by methods to enforce legislative measures, and, in some cases, standards on accessibility. Awareness programmes are targeted at selected professions through media and communication instruments. Public procurement policies are mentioned and frequently listed as effective means. Anti-discrimination legislation is present in some countries and the recent EU Procurement Directive on social issues, as an additional example, backs the incorporation of accessibility and Universal Design features in technical specifications.

Overview of Universal Design/Design for All, selected European countries

Universal Design/Design for All	Belgium	Denmark	Germany	Hungary	Ireland	Luxembourg	Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Spain
Primary policy headline	Universal Design	Accessibility for All	Barrier-free design	Universal Design	Universal Design	Accessible design	Design for All	Universal Design	Design for All	Design for All	Universal Access, Accessibility
Other policy headlines		Design for All, Universal Design			Accessibility for All		Inclusive Policy, Accessibility, Usability		Accessibility for All		Equal Opportunities, Non-discrimination
UD/DFA on the political agenda	Yes	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes*	Partly	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes*
National UD/DFA plan	No	No	Yes*	Partly	Yes	Yes*	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes*
Legislation on UD/DFA	No	Partly	Yes*	No	Yes	Yes*	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes*
Disability Discrimination Act	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
National monitoring system on UD	No	Yes	Yes*	No	No	No	No	Partly	No	No	No
Awareness programmes on UD/DFA	No	Yes*	Yes*	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes*
Public procurement policies include UD/DFA	No	Partly	Yes*	Yes	Yes*	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Partly
Disability organisations take part via a structured dialogue	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Industry participation via a structured dialogue	No	No	Yes*	No	No	No	Yes*	Yes	Yes	No	Partly
UD in built environment education curricula	Yes	Partly	No	Yes	No	Partly	Partly	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes*
Research programmes on UD/DFA	No	Partly	Yes*	Yes	Partly	Partly	Yes*	Yes	Yes	No	Yes*
Labelling system on UD/DFA	No	Yes*	No	Yes*	Yes*	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Yes	No	Partly

UD/DFA: Universal Design/Design for All

Yes*: yes, but under different headline

Wide sets of complementary measures are mentioned. The more robust Universal Design plans described seem to be national and local programmes with top-down spreading of the philosophy; they are especially efficient when backed by legislation, acts and regulations for implementation and follow-up. NGOs in general play a very important part in establishing the plans. Unco-ordinated campaigns are regarded as unsatisfactory.

Accessibility is seen as a prerequisite for achieving equal opportunities for people with disabilities in all fields of society. To promote the prevention of barriers, avoiding retrofitting, policies based on user requirements or user-centred dialogue have become prevalent in many countries.

The sustainability of the Universal Design process is an important issue in the implementation of action plans and initiatives, as the processes have to be functional over a long period of time in order to achieve results.

Several countries have seen a clear shift from organising society via legislation to organising it through the market. Other countries, however, have brought legislation back into focus, owing to the inadequate response of market mechanisms when it comes to ensuring equal rights.

In disability issues there has been a shift from a medical model towards a model of independent living and the promotion of human rights. Likewise a social model has been combined with a human rights model, and Universal Design is brought up on the political agenda as a bridge between the two models, at many different levels.

Within education, several member states have undertaken efforts to integrate children and students in mainstream primary and secondary schools, and there seems to be an overall improvement in the availability of facilities and personal provisions for people with disabilities attending higher education.

Half the countries in the overview have introduced Universal Design into the curricula of professions working on the built environment.

Research programmes and a more widespread use of guidelines and standards are mentioned in member states' replies. Co-ordinated information databases on products and assistive technologies that can be used for Universal Design purposes are running in several countries.

Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) guidelines have been implemented in mainstream websites in many states. Not all final products are fully accessible yet, but progress is visible.

Many countries, organisations and cities test labelling as a tool for tourist information and publicity campaigns in member states.

In many cases, public organisations in member states are running projects within disability management programmes. In the private sector of some member states major companies are including disability management as part of corporate policies, in parallel with human resource management for employees with disabilities.

It should be noted, however, that despite the many positive initiatives, responses to our questionnaire show that many initiatives still have to be taken, or need to be coupled with more effective processes.

3. Recommendations to governments

The overview of historical events and the current situation demonstrates that the work carried out to improve accessibility, including Universal Design measures, has in fact led to greater participation of people with disabilities in public life.

Many European states, however, are not taking full advantage of the potential of Universal Design, and to cope with ageing and the increasing number of people with disabilities new measures are clearly needed.³

Consequently, further steps to integrate people with disabilities as fully fledged members of society, allowing for their participation in public life (employment, political participation, etc.) should be taken.

Progress in the enjoyment of human rights at international, European, national or regional level depends on governments and elective bodies as driving forces. Implementing and enforcing Universal Design strategies can facilitate the promotion of equal rights of all citizens in all aspects of society. However, the private sector should not be forgotten when it comes to implementation, which often means involving public and private bodies on an equal footing.

3. (Rec(2006)5: "considering that the estimated proportion of persons with disabilities in the total population in Europe is 10-15%, that the main causes of disability are disease, accidents and disabling conditions among the elderly, and that the number of people with disabilities is expected to grow steadily due to increasing life expectancy, *inter alia* ...".)



Member states should take actions incorporating the principles of Universal Design, encompassing all aspects of society, for example the built environment, ICT networks, transport, services, tourism, products and goods, information, employment and education. Co-ordinated initiatives should be undertaken through the Council of Europe Action Plan to promote the rights and full participation of people with disabilities in society: improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in Europe 2006-2015 (Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015), carefully examining how its key action lines relate to Universal Design and accessibility.

In order to develop, implement and maintain Universal Design strategies, incentives should be given to key actors in different sectors of society, public as well as private. With countries organising their social life differently in Europe, both the market and legislation are important arenas and must be addressed by policy makers.

The more specific recommendations are arranged under the four headings of:

- adopt and decide
- co-ordinate
- implement
- evaluate

accompanied by a collection of examples of good practice in Universal Design, linked to the action lines of the Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015.

3.1. Recommendation 1: Adopt and decide

Policy makers should first of all adopt a co-ordinated, harmonised and intersectorial approach to the Universal Design con-

cept. Policies on disability at national level must be inclusive and should mainstream disability issues in all policy areas, incorporating Universal Design. Bearing in mind that Universal Design policies deal with equal opportunities, these policies must be at the highest level of legal responsibility, and should include enforcement measures. The issues and action lines of the Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015 provide the relevant framework.



Examples of basic issues to be decided upon are plans for improvements in participation in political, public and cultural life, accessible communication systems and information, education, the built environment, transport systems, health care, research and development. All areas should apply Universal Design strategies.

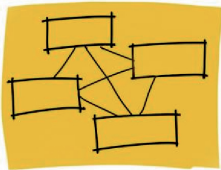
The input of experienced representatives from user organisations, research groups and knowledge centres should be ensured at all levels where decisions are made on Universal Design principles. The different requirements of various groups of people can in this way be taken into account, and the involvement of experienced users and/or their representatives also helps to mobilise the critical mass and to trigger political action.

Examples with focus on adoption and decision on principles

- The Government Action Plan for increased accessibility for persons with disabilities. Plan for Universal Design in key areas of society, Norway
- Act on equal opportunities 2002, Germany
- Accessible Beaches in Valencia Community, Spain
- 1st National Accessibility Plan 2004-2012, Spain

3.2. Recommendation 2: Co-ordinate

Policy makers should involve key actors from all sectors of society, public as well as private, centralised as well as decentralised. Co-ordination is also important at European level, as co-ordination between member states, sharing knowledge, best practice, methods, etc., simplifying the process for governments, planners and designers, in addition to making European societies more coherent for people with disabilities. At national level it should be ensured that different ministries co-ordinate from the initial stages, for example within the framework of the Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015. The co-ordination between and stimulation of public and private partnerships, such as target agreements, are vital.



Incentives should be given to designers, architects and engineers to consider the needs of people of different ages, capabilities and cultural origins when designing, and can be accomplished by the inclusion of Universal Design requirements in public procurement. This should be accompanied by an information flow on Universal Design to professionals, by making compliance with accessibility standards compulsory, and by following up through quality assessment procedures.

Governments should set up a framework for the education sector to instil the principles of Universal Design. Education professionals should be involved in this process and contribute to the introduction of the principles of Universal Design into the curricula. In particular all occupations working on the built environment need to do this, but those offering services, information and products should also cater for this. Courses in teaching Universal Design will be needed, as well as teaching material complying with Universal Design principles. Considering that curricula are sometimes difficult for governments to influence, the allocation of money to Universal Design

training programmes may be a means of raising awareness within the education sector.



Courses should be planned at all levels ranging from basic to more specialised and aimed at different professions, preferably backed by an advisory service from experts on Universal Design.

Researchers, knowledge centres and representatives of end-user groups should be asked to contribute with clearly defined user requirements for guidelines and standards, based on research comprising a multitude of user groups.

In order to make marketers and developers target broader user groups and markets, policy makers should be at the forefront by including Universal Design features in public procurements. Job markets in the private as well as the public sector can be opened to wider groups of people through target agreements with managers and employers.

Examples with focus on co-ordination

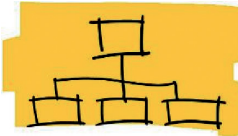
- Guidelines for e-administration, Sweden
- CEPACC – Network of Science and Enterprise for Accessibility in Communication, Spain
- IMSERSO, ONCE, Autonomous Communities and Local Authorities Agreements – Spain
- Network of municipalities using Universal Design as an overall strategy, Norway

3.3. Recommendation 3: Implement

When it comes to the implementation of Universal Design strategies, policy makers should introduce legislative measures and provisions in order to provide a basic framework for implementation mechanisms.



Provision of information on legislative measures, social services, products, assistive technology etc., to citizens and user organisations empowers users to make their own decisions. Activities for the raising of public awareness about Universal Design are recommended, too, with the Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015 as a framework. Acceptance of Universal Design requires new ways of thinking along with implementation of strategies and guidelines, and communication showing how Universal Design can be visible, tangible and realistic to apply should be provided as a strong basis for this change of thinking. This applies to countries with high levels of acceptance of Universal Design as well as countries starting from scratch.



Responsibility in Universal Design issues should be assigned to key persons in organisations to ensure acceptance throughout. A task force of influential captains of industry should be established to promote social interaction between all citizens, especially including people with disabilities. Adequate financial resources are needed in order to allow for Universal Design action plans to be implemented, and these should be accompanied by procedures for the conveying of detailed requirements, guidelines and standards. Especially important are plans for improved accessibility to the existing environment, utilising Universal Design methods, but non-physical environments like information technology and communication are to be addressed as well.

Cost-benefit analyses of the application of Universal Design principles to several areas such as education, labour and transport should be carried out and the results communicated to promote inclusive policy within the various policy areas or Universal Design in product development.

Knowledge centres on Universal Design with the defined task of ensuring easy access to information for the public and stakeholders should be established. Examples of good practice of the use of Universal Design principles should be compiled.

Examples with focus on implementation

- Accessible Beach – Beach for All, Portugal
- Regulations for accessible information technology, Germany
- Public transport system, Barcelona, Spain
- Design for All – the educative programmes related to the built environment and information technologies. White Book of Design for All in the University, Spain
- Universal Design principles integrated into the education of architects, Hungary
- Internet Dictionary, Hungary

3.4. Recommendation 4: Evaluate

Quality assessment and feedback in the course of and following the implementation of action plans based on Universal Design principles are important tools in making processes effective.



Progress should be benchmarked, follow-up procedures put in place, and monitoring should lead to the correction of goals and methods if necessary. Skilled assessors in quality assessment and research should be asked to translate clearly defined, evidence-based user requirements into instruments for the statistical measuring

of effects, including social aspects as well as technical issues. Monitoring whether the human rights of the user groups are respected becomes simpler if resources are allocated to representatives of end users, enabling them to participate.

Example with focus on evaluation

- The Government Action Plan for increased accessibility for persons with disabilities. Plan for Universal Design in key areas of society, Norway

4. Examples of good practice in relation to the Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015 and its action lines


Linked to the action lines of the Council of Europe Action Plan to promote the rights and full participation of people with disabilities in society: improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in Europe 2006-2015 (Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015), a selection of examples of good practice in Universal Design is presented together with additional issues. Universal Design features and limitations of the examples are brought forward as an inspiration to national and local initiatives.

NB: Not all examples are perfect in every respect, but nevertheless feature aspects of Universal Design considered noteworthy.

Besides co-ordination with the Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015, the examples take note of the phases in the process of Universal Design: Adoption and decision on principle, Co-ordination, Implementation and Evaluation. The Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015 in itself is a good example of a general action plan focusing its action lines on the same principles.

4.1. General actions

1st National Accessibility Plan 2004-2012, Spain

	Sector:	National action plans
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	Spain

Description: The 1st National Accessibility Plan is a strategic framework to promote and consolidate the measures of the Spanish Government, together with other government administrations and public and private organisations, planning to remove barriers and to introduce the Design for All concept.

It was created in the context of Act 51/2003 on Equal Opportunities, Non-discrimination and Universal Access for People with Disabilities to enable the Spanish Government to foster implementation of this legislation. Its aim, therefore, is to promote equal opportunities and non-discrimination for people with disabilities, while simultaneously improving the quality of life for the population as a whole.

The main objectives of the plan are to carry out those studies needed to fulfil the general aspects of the Act to regulate the basic conditions for accessibility and non-discrimination and to promote accessibility. Special attention is devoted to social services, justice, new technologies of information and communication, and infrastructure for leisure and tourism. Activities considered within the plan include awareness-raising campaigns, training on “Accessibility” and “Design for All” in universities, promotion of research in this area and co-operation between different actors.

The plan has been commissioned by the Spanish Ministry for Employment and Social Services (MTAS), who will supervise implementation of the plan, but it will not be the only body responsible for carrying it out: many public and private agents have to play a role in making accessibility more widespread in buildings, streets, services and products.

In operation: 2004-2012.

The Government Action Plan for increased accessibility for persons with disabilities. Plan for Universal Design in key areas of society, Norway

	Sector:	National action plans
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: The Government Action Plan for increased accessibility for persons with disabilities aims to enhance accessibility for all, and directs a special focus towards persons with functional impairments. These include disabilities affecting vision, hearing, cognition and sensitivity to environmental factors (individuals with asthma and allergies).

The action plan is designed to unify and strengthen efforts to increase accessibility to buildings, outdoor environments, products and other important areas of society. The plan incorporates initiatives under the auspices of 15 different ministries.

The following five principles form the basis for the action plan:

- o It incorporates all important areas of society.
- o It is rooted in the principle of sector responsibility.

- o Government initiatives will be co-ordinated.
- o Efforts will be based on user participation at all levels.
- o Measures and their impact will be assessed on an ongoing basis.


The plan includes more than 100 concrete actions with an annual budget of more than €35 million. €2.5 million is used each year to stimulate innovation and new actions. Budgetary guidelines help to set priorities in directorates and other central agencies.

Universal Design features: The action plan emphasises the importance of embedding the Universal Design strategy into government policies and administration, as has already been done in several acts relating to universities, colleges, and vocational school education. The Universal Design strategy will be included in acts for public procurement, building and planning.

Link: www.universal-design.environment.no

In operation: 2005-2009, with a major revision in 2007.

Design for All – a Nordic programme for action, the Nordic countries

	Sector:	Action plans
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All Nordic citizens
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	The Nordic countries

Description: The Nordic Action Plan 2005-2007 *Design for All – the Nordic Programme for Action* was adopted by the Nordic Council of Ministers⁴ in 2005.

The action plan, which is based on the principle of mainstreaming, announces Universal Design/Design for All as a crucial strategy for improving accessibility within the Nordic Council of Ministers and offers 17 measures, which are divided into three parts: an overall strategy; information strategy; and accessibility to the institutions of the Nordic Council of Ministers. The action plan is based on the proposal worked out by the Secretariat of the Nordic Council on Disability Policy.

The action plan is aimed at developing awareness within the area of Design for All and promoting systematic work towards full accessibility within the Nordic Council of Ministers, its institutions and, in the long run, of society in the Nordic countries for all citizens.

This strategic document implies a change of policy, permanent commitment towards accessibility of all work undertaken by the Nordic Council of Ministers from 2006 onwards, allocation of more considerable financing, necessity of research and assessment of consequences for people with disabilities as part of the planning process.

All institutions of the Nordic Council of Ministers that co-ordinate Nordic co-operation in different sectors must implement the action plan and include accessibility aspects in their policies and budgets. All Nordic Council of Ministers institutions must apply the Nordic Council on Disability Policy's competence and experience whenever their work addresses issues of concern to people with disabilities.

Universal Design features: The Nordic Action Plan *Design for All – a Nordic Programme for Action* underlines the importance of incorporating a Design for All perspective into existing and new programmes and action plans for co-operation between

4. The Nordic Council of Ministers was formed in 1971 as the Forum for Nordic governmental co-operation.

the Nordic countries within all sectors and on different levels as well as co-operation with the adjacent areas.

Link: www.nsh.se

In operation: 2005-2007.

Equal Treatment on the Grounds of Disability or Chronic Illness Act (initiative of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport), the Netherlands

Description: This Act prohibits unequal treatment on the grounds of disability or chronic illness. This Act currently applies to three areas: work, professional and vocational education and public transport (commencing date 2010 (buses) and 2030 (trains)).	Sector:	
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All people with disabilities
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	

Taskforce Disability and Society, Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, the Netherlands

Description: Taskforce Disability and Society (initiative of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport) The members, people with key positions in Dutch society, politics or industry, dedicate themselves to improving the integration of people with disabilities in all layers of society. Target group: people in key positions in society and organisations Universal Design features: prerequisite for Universal Design	Sector:	
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All people with disabilities
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All people with disabilities

4.2. Action line 1:

Participation in political and public life

Specific action	Example
1. To ensure that voting procedures and facilities are appropriate and accessible to people with disabilities so that they are able to exercise their democratic rights, and allow, where necessary, the provision of assistance in voting.	Law on assistance to disabled persons when voting: Germany
4. To ensure that election information is available and accessible in all necessary alternative formats, and easy to understand.	Law on assistance to disabled persons when voting: Germany

4.3. Action line 2:

Participation in cultural life



Specific action	Examples
1. To encourage institutions, and relevant bodies at national, regional, local and international levels to make literature and other cultural information materials accessible to people with disabilities, making full use of electronic technology where appropriate, and in simple and understandable wording.	E17 web library for people with difficulties in reading printed material, Denmark www.e17.dk

6. To enable people with disabilities to enjoy access to culture, sports, tourism and leisure activities by, for example, encouraging providers to make their premises and services accessible through whatever means that are necessary.	Standardised registration, assessment and description of accessible supply in hotels and catering, Germany
	Accessible travel infopoint: Belgium/Flanders
	Accessible Beaches in Valencia Community, Spain
	Accessible Beach – Beach for All, Portugal
	Tourism, Luxembourg
	Tactile Exhibition, Hungary

Standardised registration, assessment and description of accessible supply in hotels and catering, Germany

<p>Description: The aim is to create and implement standards for registration, assessment and description of accessible supply in hotels and catering. Therefore categories and standards with labels for hotels and restaurants and a checklist for inspection were put in place.</p> <p>Universal Design features: Measures will bring people with and without disabilities together in the sector of tourism and will help to prevent stigma and social exclusion. Labels offer transparent information about the usability of facilities and equipments.</p> <p>In operation: 2005.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 2: Participation in cultural life, Action 6
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All users, especially elderly people and people with disabilities
	Limitations:	Use of standards by the hotels and restaurants is voluntary
	Feasibility:	All countries

Accessible travel infopoint: Belgium/Flanders

 	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 2: Participation in cultural life, Action 6
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: With a link to the general website of Tourism Flanders, a website has been created for tourism opportunities for people with disabilities, www.toegankelijkreizen.be

Universal Design features: the starting point is that all people can benefit, including people with disabilities, senior citizens, parents with young children, etc.


A fundamental principle is that “travelling with a disability” is considered primarily as a tourism matter with a welfare aspect, and not the other way round.

The example starts from the global treatment of “accessibility”, which not only deals with accessible infrastructure but also with the accessibility of services and of information.

Strategic elements employed: there is a policy plan from the Ministry of Employment and Tourism with the following main lines of action monitored by a special department in the general office of tourism: financial support for accessibility changes, development of an accessibility label, awareness campaigns and training, provision of information to users (database, website), screening of facilities.

In operation: 2001.

Accessible Beaches in Valencia Community, Spain

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 2: Participation in cultural life, Action 6
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All people, in particular people with reduced mobility, elderly people
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	Spain

Description: The *Accessible Beaches Project of the Valencia Region* has already made 74 beaches completely accessible and equipped. Several municipalities have requested to be included in the project, bearing in mind the benefits that universal accessibility provides to all their citizens and for the attraction of tourists. For this purpose, parking, signs, ramps, special walkways to the seashore, amphibian chairs or a rest area with sunshades and special furnishings, bathing huts, WCs and showers with bathing chairs have been installed. Detailed information is available on the official webpage in Spanish, English, French, German, Chinese and Japanese.

The Plan of Accessible Beaches of the Valencia Region is being developed by the Generalitat Valenciana, Conselleria de Benestar Social.

Universal Design features: Implementation of accessibility in tourism.


More information:

www.comunitatvalenciana.com/playas/playas1.htm?

www.bsocial.gva.es

In operation: Since 2001.

Accessible Beach – Beach for All, Portugal

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action line 2: Participation in cultural life, Action 6
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	People with disabilities and the population at large
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: Since 2004, Portugal has carried out this project with a view to making the coast and inland urban beaches fully accessible to people with disabilities.

Prerequisites include: Pedestrian access with ramps, properly designed parking, access to the bathing area, pathways throughout the sand, adapted sanitary facilities (toilets), access to first aid stations, bars and restaurants accessible, amphibious sea aids to assist bathing.

Universal Design features: adapted sanitary facilities (toilets), pathways allowing people to cross when passing one another at the same time.

In operation: Since 2004.

Tourism, Luxembourg

<p>Description: The Luxembourg concept of Accessibility (2004) incorporates actions of awareness raising, information, technical counselling by professional experts, involvement of key actors on the scene as well as labelling systems for the level of accessibility.</p> <p>In close co-operation with the Saarland (Germany) in the domain of accessible tourism, the two partners have prepared two pamphlets, the first of which aims at identifying hotels and restaurants accessible to all, and the second presents various sites in Saarland and Luxembourg that distinguish themselves by their accessibility and/or Universal Design features. The project addresses the public at large.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 2: Participation in cultural life, Action 6
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	The public at large
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Wheelchair-accessible quays and paths in nature reserves,
Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality,
the Netherlands

<p>Description: Construction of wheelchair-accessible quays and paths in nature reserves</p> <p>Universal Design features: improvement of accessibility in different tourist areas</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 2: Participation in cultural life, Action 6
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	Wheelchair users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	

Tactile Exhibition, Hungary



Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 2: Participation in cultural life, Action 6
Adoption and decision on principle	✓
Co-ordination	✓
Implementation	✓
Evaluation	
Beneficial for:	
Limitations:	None
Feasibility:	All countries

Description: From 18 March to 18 June 2006 the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, hosted a Tactile Exhibition corresponding with the exhibition Sigismundus Rex et Imperator – Art and Culture in the Age of Sigismund of Luxembourg 1387-1437. Although this special exhibition of 23 objects was organised mainly for the blind, the exhibition also intends to pique the curiosity of everyone with any sort of aesthetic sensitivity. The public was welcome to touch the duplicates of the coins, seals, tiles and statuettes on view in the main exhibition, as well as the reconstructions of a sword, helmets, and clothes from the age of Sigismund of Luxembourg. Audio-guides and Braille texts were also available (in Hungarian).

Universal Design features: With the tool of touchable objects and materials coupled with different means of written and audible information (simple text, Braille text, audio-guide) everyone could participate in the cultural life, while the protected objects are preserved.


In operation: 2006.

4.4. Action line 3: Information and communication

Specific action	Examples
1. To seek to provide official information to people with disabilities in accessible formats and technologies, acknowledging the needs arising from different impairments (for example Braille, audio-tape, or easy-to-read versions).	Act on equal opportunities 2002, Germany
	Law on “electronic communication”, the Netherlands
	Internet Dictionary, Hungary
3. To encourage that all e-learning materials be accessible to persons with disabilities through compliance with existing accessibility standards.	Accessibility of Government websites, Luxembourg
6. To ensure public authorities and other public bodies make their information and communications accessible to people with disabilities, including their websites, which shall comply with current international accessibility guidelines.	www.webrichtlijnen.overheid.nl, Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, the Netherlands
	Guidelines for e-administration, Sweden
	CEPACC – Network of Science and Enterprise for Accessibility in Communication, Spain
7. To encourage all private bodies, particularly those that receive public funding, to make their information and communication accessible to people with disabilities.	www.drempelsweg.nl, Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, the Netherlands
	Pfizer Germany commitment to creating websites accessible to disabled users, Germany

9. To encourage that all new information and communication technology developments be in compliance with Universal Design principles.	University courses, Linz, Austria
	Regulations for accessible information technology, Germany
	European Commission DG Information Society

Act on equal opportunities 2002, Germany

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 3: Information and communication, Action 1
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: A series of e-government manuals have been published to assist government institutions in addressing the public, incorporating a wide range of Design for All and accessibility aspects. Partial result of general Act on equal opportunities 2002.


Link: www.bund.de

In operation: 2002, guidelines 2005.

Law on “electronic communication”, the Netherlands

<p>Description: The new law on “electronic communication” gives the opportunity to act on “Universal service” if initiatives are not taken by the market. The Ministries of Economic Affairs and Health are working together on the application and development of ICT initiatives not restricted to people with disabilities.</p> <p>In operation: 2005.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 3: Information and communication, Action 1
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Internet Dictionary, Hungary

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 3: Information and communication, Action 1
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users, hard of hearing or deaf persons
	Limitations:	
	Feasibility:	All countries

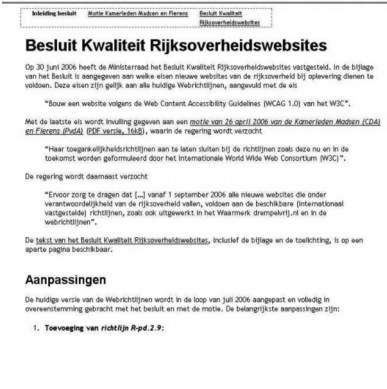
Description: The dictionary includes sign-language and talking dictionary options, as well as widely used text size and contrast adjustment features. The words in the dictionary can be translated into different languages, and the equivalent sign language can be seen on the same screen module.

Universal Design features: The dictionary helps to develop communication abilities, to provide access to information for everybody, and to develop an understanding of the different languages, including sign languages.

Link: <http://szotar.sztaki.hu/index.hu.jhtml>

In operation: 2005.

Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, the Netherlands

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 3: Information and communication, Action 6
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: This website gives guidelines to local and civil authorities for the accessibility of their websites, putting the emphasis on uniform design, meaning a uniform browser, the same requirements of accessibility, and cheaper maintenance.


All 13 Dutch ministries have made the commitment to make their websites accessible by the end of 2006, according to the W3C guidelines.

Target groups: Local and civil authorities.

Universal Design features: Instructions for use, implementation of W3C guidelines.

Link: www.webrichtlijnen.overheid.nl

Guidelines for e-administration, Sweden


	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 3: Information and communication, Action 6
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: Universal Design standards and guidelines for internal and external electronic communication from Swedish public authorities. Detailed standards and guidelines developed with a very wide set of user groups in mind. Examples of 24-hour public service topics covered: standardisation, co-operation, web-authoring, information production, test and validation, management and updating, publishing tools and assistive technology.

Link: www.verva.se

In operation: 2003.

CEPACC – Network of Science and Enterprise for Accessibility in Communication, Spain

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 3: Information and communication, Action 6
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All people
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	Spain. National scope

Description: Scientific and technical network mainly formed by universities and with an enterprise component. The main objective of CEPACC is to promote research and knowledge exchange to improve accessibility in the areas of communication, information and new technologies, giving special attention to the needs of people that could potentially be excluded from these areas, either because of their disabilities or for any other reason. CEPACC has been created as a framework for co-operation between scientific institutions and the enterprise sector.

Universal Design features: Areas of research have been defined including principles of Design for All, and all types of impairments and disabilities are brought to study. Among the activities of the network there is co-ordination and participation in the elaboration of guidelines for the design of accessible interfaces and tools for content management, as well as the detection of emergent technologies, considering in these actions the variety of user requirements, in particular those of people with disabilities. Beneficial for all people, including people with disabilities and elderly people, users of communication technologies.


More information: www.cepacc.net/

In operation: Since 2005.

Accessibility of Government websites, Luxembourg

<p>Description: Following an initiative by the Information and Press Department, the portal of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg meets the priority 2 level of the internationally recognised W3C standards and the accessibility rules recommended by the WAI. Priority 2 level means that not only will persons suffering from an impairment have a minimum level of access but they will also no longer experience difficulties in accessing the site. The sites of the other public administrations are to follow suit in the coming months.</p> <p>Universal Design features: This service is intended for all people suffering from an impairment, regardless of their disability.</p> <p>In operation: In the coming months.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 3: Information and communication, Action 3
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All Internet users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	

www.drempelsweg.nl, Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, the Netherlands

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 3: Information and communication, Action 7
	Adoption and decision on principle	
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries


Description: Project from the Dutch National Accessibility Agency to promote the accessibility of the Internet for everyone, including people with disabilities (mental and physical),

by increasing the awareness of website designers, companies and organisations to the barriers they erect, often unconsciously, and by promoting the use of the W3C guidelines.

Evaluation of 436 government websites led to the conclusion that only 3% of the websites of civil authorities comply with the W3C guidelines. 70% were not accessible for people with an impairment. One of the recommendations of the research was to integrate the W3C guidelines into European legislation. Target groups: website designers and people with disabilities.

Universal Design features: Accessibility of the Internet to everyone.

Pfizer Germany commitment to creating websites accessible to disabled users, Germany


	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 3: Information and communication, Action 7
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: Pfizer Germany undertakes to establish the accessibility and usability of its website content for disabled users according to the minimum standards and timetable also stipulated in this target agreement. The minimum standards for establishing the accessibility of website content are those stipulated in the priority 1 (“AA” of the W3C WAI-guidelines) requirements and conditions as of the Annex to the “Barrierefreie Informationstechnik Verordnung BITV”

(Accessible Information Technology Ordinance) of 17 July 2002 based on the Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz BGG (Act on Equal Opportunities for Disabled Persons).

Universal Design features: All users interested in information and help provided by Pfizer on its Internet websites should be able to profit from them without any barriers. Pfizer worked in co-operation with the NGOs involved and the German initiative for barrier-free information technology.

**University courses,
Linz, Austria**

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 3: Information and communication, Action 9
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: The University of Linz offers two university courses which include e-accessibility Design for All aspects. The first, related to barrier-free web design (university degree, four semesters, e-learning), started in autumn 2005.

Link: For more information please visit the Web Design Course website at: www.bfwd.at

In operation: 2005.

Regulations for accessible information technology, Germany

Description: Regulations for accessible information technology under the Act on equal opportunities with measures taken on Internet contents and unrestricted access to all public websites (following WAI guidelines of W3C). Full accessibility of graphic interfaces analogous to the Internet, without specific regulations.	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 3: Information and communication, Action 9
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries


European Commission DG Information Society, EU

Description: The European Commission DG Information Society provides detailed information about the WAI guidelines on the EU website. The EU has produced legislation known as the Electronics Communication Package, dealing with telephone networks.	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 3: Information and communication, Action 9
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

4.5. Action line 4: Education

Council of Europe Disability Action Plan specific action	Examples
2. To encourage and support the development of a unified education system, including mainstream and special educational provision, which promotes the sharing of expertise and greater inclusion of disabled children, young people and adults in the community.	Alert School Programme, Portugal
7. To ensure that all educational material and schemes provided through the general educational system are accessible to persons with disabilities.	Tyflological school atlas for vision-impaired students, Poland
	Study materials for primary and secondary schools in blind-friendly version, Hungary
10. To take steps to make education and training places accessible for people with disabilities, including by provision of personal support and the provision of reasonable adjustments (including equipment) needed for individuals with disabilities.	The Government Action Plan for increased accessibility for persons with disabilities. Plan for Universal Design in key areas of society, Norway

Alert School Programme, Portugal

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 4: Education, Action 2
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	Schools, students and teachers
	Limitations:	
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: Raising awareness of secondary school students of the problems regarding the integration of children with special needs. Awards for the best works on the elimination of structural and architectural barriers.

Universal Design features: To invite all pupils to improve their school and respective environment by eliminating physical, architectural and structural barriers, and to study procedures and methods for teaching students with special educational needs how to read and write.

In operation: 2003.

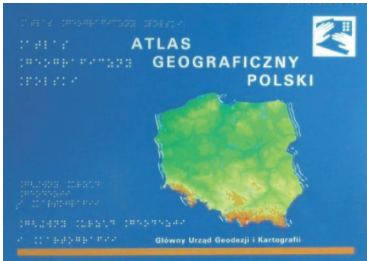
Inclusive education, the Netherlands

Description: The Perspective Foundation promotes education of children with disabilities in a regular neighbourhood school, independent of their learning (dis)ability. This applies to all forms of education.	Sector:	Education
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	
	Implementation	
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All children with disabilities
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	

Guide for study counsellors of the Technical University of Delft (subsidy of the Ministry of Education), the Netherlands

Description: Increasing the accessibility of academic education for students with a disability or chronic illness by, for example, improving the technical accessibility of information systems and the content of this information, adaptation of the teaching material to the learning ability of the student (inclusive education), enhancing the expertise of teachers and study counsellors and increasing the accessibility of the university buildings. Universal Design features: Inclusive education.	Sector:	
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	
	Implementation	
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All students with disabilities
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	

Tyflological school atlas for vision-impaired students, Poland

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 4: Education, Action 7
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	Schools, students and teachers
	Limitations:	
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: One of the largest atlases of its kind, covering Poland and Poland as part of Europe.

Universal Design features: Maps are presented in such a way that they are readable by blind and vision-impaired pupils as well as by pupils without disabilities.

In operation: 2004.

Study materials for primary and secondary schools in blind-friendly version, Hungary

Description: All newly prepared educational materials used in primary and secondary schools are available in printed and electronic versions.

Universal Design features: According to the Law 2004/XVII, all educational material printed by the national textbook publisher company should be available in a blind-friendly version. The electronic versions of the textbooks are compatible with the most common screen-reader programmes.

In operation: 2004

Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 4: Education, Action 7
Adoption and decision on principle	✓
Co-ordination	
Implementation	✓
Evaluation	
Beneficial for:	Blind and visually impaired users
Limitations:	Currently the electronic versions are available only through the Association of Blind and Visually Impaired Persons.
Feasibility:	All countries

4.6. Action line 5: Employment

Specific action	Examples
<p>5. To encourage employers to employ people with disabilities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – applying recruitment procedures (e.g. advertising, interview, assessment, selection) which ensure that job opportunities are positively made available to people with disabilities; – making reasonable adjustments to the workplace or working conditions, including telecommuting, part-time work and work from home, in order to accommodate the special requirements of employees with disabilities; – increasing disability awareness across management and staff through relevant training. 	Awareness-raising project, the Netherlands
	Adaptation of workplaces, Luxembourg
	Work and working conditions, the Netherlands
	Age-proof: research on age diversity management, the Netherlands
	TV spots on the integration of people with disabilities, Poland
<p>14. To promote measures, including legislative and integration management, that enable persons who become disabled while in work to stay within the labour market.</p>	De Wereldzaak, the Netherlands
	EU: Council Directive 2000/78/EC on equal treatment in employment and occupation

Awareness-raising project, the Netherlands

<p>Description: In the Netherlands a large awareness-raising project was carried out in autumn 2006, prepared by social partners and the government.</p> <p>Universal Design features: To make employers hire more people with disabilities instead of excluding them from jobs.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 5: Employment, action 5
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All people with disabilities
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Adaptation of workplaces, Luxembourg

<p>Description: The Law of 12 September 2003 on people with disabilities has put in place a compensatory system of protected workplaces, in order to ensure adequate salaries for employees with disabilities. It creates an income for people with disabilities which they would not have been able to earn during their life.</p> <p>The law promotes activation and participation of people with disabilities, by replacing traditional policies of assistance to people with disabilities, and following the concept of human rights.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 5: Employment, Action 5
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All people with disabilities
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries


Work and working conditions, the Netherlands

<p>Description: Design for All and disability management: methodology which enables an organisation to make a cost-benefit analysis (through several pilot projects) of Design for All and disability management.</p> <p>Universal Design features: An inclusive policy measure.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 5: Employment, Action 5
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	
	Implementation	
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All people with disabilities
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	

Age-proof: research on age diversity management, the Netherlands

<p>Description: Development of instruments that will improve the availability of personnel – independent of age – for all kinds of jobs (work ability index, age profiling).</p> <p>Universal Design features: Instruments for making jobs age-proof.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 5: Employment, Action 5
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All people with disabilities, employees of all ages
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	

TV spots on the integration of people with disabilities, Poland

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 5: Employment, Action 5
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All people with disabilities
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: A series of TV spots on Polish television addressing the integration of people with disabilities in society, including the area of employment.

De Wereldzaak, the Netherlands

<p>Description: A restaurant run by people who have problems finding employment (e.g. long-term unemployed and people with a mental or physical disability) – through work experience and internal training the employees increase their job opportunities.</p> <p>Aimed at long-term unemployed and people with a mental or physical disability.</p> <p>Universal Design features: Inclusive policy.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 5: Employment, Action 5
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

4.7. Action line 6: The built environment

Specific action	Examples
1. To ensure that all relevant policy areas include the overarching aim of creating a barrier-free built environment.	IMSERSO, ONCE, Autonomous Communities and Local Authorities Agreements – Spain Philharmonie, Luxembourg
2. To develop guidelines and standards, and if necessary legislation, to promote public buildings, and public indoor as well as outdoor environments to be accessible to and usable by people with disabilities, taking into account the specific nature of historic buildings.	Network of municipalities using Universal Design as an overall strategy, Norway Programme of Demands booklet, the Netherlands
3. To ensure that universities and institutions responsible for the training of all occupations working on the built environment (such as architects and town planners, professionals in the construction sector, cultural heritage conservators and cultural tourism specialists) promote the principle of Universal Design through curricula for initial and further training and other appropriate means.	Universal Design principles integrated into the education of architects, Hungary Postgraduate Course on Universal Accessibility and Design for All. University Centre La Salle, Spain
5. To support the creation, nomination, and maintenance of centres that promote the concept of Universal Design.	LID – Laboratory, Innovation and Design, Portugal

8. To consider implementing Resolution ResAP(2001)1 on the introduction of the principles of Universal Design into the curricula of all occupations working on the built environment.	Postgraduate course on Universal Accessibility on Design for All, University Centre La Salle, Spain
	Universal Design principles integrated into the education of architects, Hungary
	Reception in a local administration building, Slovenia
	Telephone booth, the Netherlands
	Academigebouw, Utrecht, the Netherlands
	Village of Natchulka, Municipality of Sliven, Bulgaria
	Signalling system for blind and partially sighted people, Portugal

IMSERSO, ONCE, Autonomous Communities and Local Authorities Agreements – Spain

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 6: Built environment, Action 1
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All people, including people with disabilities and elderly people
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	Spain. National scope.

Description: The Institute of Elderly and Social Services (IMSERSO), Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, has created a framework of collaboration with ONCE, the Autonomous Communities and the Local Authorities, to develop local and regional plans of accessibility based on the concept of global accessibility, including access to communication and information services. Within this framework, several agreements have been signed since 1999 with local and regional authorities to establish action plans and to define implementation mechanisms.


This framework includes mechanisms to implement measures for the education and training of public employees and to work out reference documents. An outcome of this action is the *White Book for the inclusion of principles of Universal Design into the University*.

Universal Design features: Plans of Accessibility presented by local and regional authorities are based on Universal Design principles, considered to be the strategy for achieving global

accessibility. Universal Design is taken into account from the planning phase onwards.

In operation: Since 1999.

Philharmonie, Luxembourg

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 6: Built environment, Action 1
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	See below
	Feasibility:	All countries


Description: The three halls of the Philharmonie, the Grand Auditorium, the Chamber Music Hall and the Espace Découverte have been designed to accommodate all spectators, making no distinction between people with or without reduced mobility.

Universal Design features: People with or without reduced mobility can enter the Philharmonie through the same main entrance and follow spacious and lightly inclined access routes all the way to their seats in the three halls. All concert spectators and visitors benefit from the visionary project of architect Christian de Portzamparc.

Limitations: It should be noted that the wide, long ramps characteristic of the halls of the Philharmonie require a building to have ample space and floor area.

In operation: 2005.

Network of municipalities using Universal Design as an overall strategy, Norway

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 6: Built environment, Action 2
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	Norway

The main street of Trysil, Norway, is designed according to Universal Design principles. A municipal design identity manual has been developed with Universal Design as a principle because of good accessibility for all, design, enhanced environmental opportunities, sustainability and increased traffic safety. The main street of Trysil displays reduced vehicle speed, safety measures for pedestrians in general, accessibility details like tactile ground paving indicators and crossings implemented according to Universal Design features in the design manual. The extensive use of the colour red in the main street is the designer's link to the numerous red farming buildings in the area.

Description: Norwegian municipalities control the main instruments for the development and implementation of Universal Design, and 16 municipalities have been chosen as pilot municipalities for Universal Design. Supported financially and administratively by the government, the municipalities aim to implement Universal Design as an overall strategy in policymaking and planning. The city of Kristiansand, with long-lasting achievements in the field of accessibility and Universal Design, serves a mentor to the municipalities. The network also includes representatives from the government, government directorates, the county administration and NGOs.

The municipalities in the network comprise a cross-section of Norwegian communities. Small rural municipalities as well as cities are represented. The experience and knowledge

acquired in each municipality and in the network as a whole serve as a basis for national recommendations, guidelines and instructions.

The network is part of the Norwegian Government’s Action Plan for increased accessibility for persons with disabilities, Plan for Universal Design in key areas of society.


Universal Design features: The network emphasises the importance of embedding the Universal Design strategy into municipal policies, planning and administration. Creating environments with Universal Design qualities is the main objective.

In operation: 2005-2009.

“Programme of demands” booklet, the Netherlands

<p>Description: SBR, as the advisory board for the building sector, promotes adequate steps to be taken when constructing a building. These are contained in a booklet, named “Programme of demands”, which is used as a set of guidelines for communication with architects and builders.</p> <p>Universal Design features: The guidelines refer to working conditions of users, the future of the building, Universal Design legislation, etc. Benefits everyone – promotes inclusive design.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 6: Built environment, Action 2
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Design for All in the educative programmes related to the built environment and information technologies. White Book of Design for All in the University, Spain

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 6: Built environment, Actions 3 and 8
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: IMSERSO (Institute of Social Services and the Elderly, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), ONCE Foundation and the Design for All Co-ordinator have developed a project to introduce the principles of Universal Design into the university curricula of all occupations working on the built environment.

The main objective is to put into practice the Council of Europe Resolution on the introduction of the principles of Universal Design into the curricula of all occupations working on the built environment (“Tomar” Resolution ResAP(2001)1).

The outcome of this project is the publication of the *White Book of Design for All in the University (Libro Blanco del Diseño para Todos en la Universidad)*, edited in February 2006 (ISBN: 84-689-6790-4).

Universal Design features: In this White Book, the concept of Design for All is established in the context of equal opportunities. It includes information about several initiatives on Design for All carried out in Europe and in Spain. This book also describes the objectives and methodology of the project, and several recommendations to implement the inclusion of the Design for All principles at universities and to define the contents required in the relevant studies.

More information:


http://www.fundaciononce.es/libros/libro%20blanco_1Ht.pdf

In operation: 2005.

Universal Design principles integrated into the education of architects, Hungary

<p>Description: Universal Design principles have been an integrated part of the undergraduate education of architects since 2002 in the Szent Istvan University, YMMF School of Architecture.</p> <p>Universal Design features: The YMMF School of Architecture has introduced Universal Design principles into education via a compulsory course for all architects, following the preparation of specific teaching materials and courses for educators. According to Resolution 1015/2005 of the government on the barrier-free environment and civil services for all, schools and universities involved in the education of all professions working on the built environment should have introduced the principles of Universal Design into the curriculum by 31 December 2005.</p> <p>In operation: 2002.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 6: Built environment, Action 3
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	Unknown
	Feasibility:	All countries

Postgraduate Course on Universal Accessibility and Design for All. University Centre La Salle, Spain.

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 6: Built environment, Actions 3 and 8
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: The course “Expert on Universal Accessibility and Design for All” is the Spanish University Centre La Salle’s answer to the requirement established in the Spanish National Plan of Universal Accessibility 2004-2012 encouraging the development of activities aimed at training new professionals as “Advisors on Accessibility”.

The objective is to solve the problem of a lack of postgraduate studies on accessibility in Spain and, therefore, the lack of awareness on Design for All in the professional environment.

Universal Design features: Universal Accessibility and Design for All are considered in this course in the context of the Law of Equal Opportunities, Non-discrimination and Universal Access for People with Disabilities, on the basis of the concept of quality of life and equal rights for all persons, including people with disabilities. The involvement and co-ordination of all responsible stakeholders is considered as a mandatory element for the realisation of these rights.

The main target groups are architects, town planners, engineers, designers, and professionals in sectors such as computers and telecommunications (CICT), tourism, education, enterprise and the economy.


Link: www.eulasalle.com/alumno/entra/espacios/viv_accesible.htm

In operation: 6 October 2006 to 14 July 2007.

LID – Laboratory, Innovation and Design, Portugal

Description: The LID Centre at the Lisbon Faculty of Architecture gathers and collects information and documentation on Universal Design and backs up studies and initiatives promoted by students and several entities, with students and municipalities, companies and research centres.	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 6: Built environment, Action 5
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Reception in a local administration building, Slovenia

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 6: Built environment, Action 8
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: The counter is carefully designed to meet Universal Design requirements functionally and aesthetically.

Universal Design features: Example of careful planning and implementation of a building element suited for both visitors and employees. The counter is of a height which is suitable for standing and seated people, room for footrests on wheelchairs, an induction loop system for people with hearing aids, and direct line of sight to visitors for employees seated behind the counter.

In operation: 2005.

Telephone booth, the Netherlands




Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 6: Built Environment, Action 8
Adoption and decision on principle	✓
Co-ordination	
Implementation	✓
Evaluation	
Beneficial for:	All users
Limitations:	None
Feasibility:	All countries

Description: Telephone booth accessible to wheelchair users as well as people who are able to stand.

Universal Design features: Implementation of a “same solution for all” principle.

Academiegebouw Utrecht, the Netherlands

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 6: Built Environment, Action 8
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: The Academiegebouw Utrecht now features a stepped entrance modified with ramped access designed to match the architecture of a historic building.

Universal Design features: “Same entrance for all” principle.

Village of Katchulka, Municipality of Sliven, Bulgaria

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 6: Built environment, Action 8
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	Unknown
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: Universal Design is a main priority in the reconstruction and building processes of all houses and equipment in the territory of the village of Katchulka.

During 2004 the municipal government took the decision that accessibility in Katchulka could be of great interest in the context of EU accession and undertook a number of initiatives and engagements directed at the development of the mountain area, accepting the principle of Universal Design as fundamental for all innovations. The municipality of Sliven took a number of political decisions and launched a number of innovative administrative measures: political documents were created (plans for the development of the municipality; strategy for the development of Katchulka, etc.); structural changes in the municipal administration were carried out; a special fund for project co-financing was established; a series of agreements with civil, professional and scientific units were signed; new bilateral interrelations were started at international level, etc.

Simultaneously, the municipality started the development of two pilot projects on the principles of Universal Design to demonstrate their capacity to use European resources. It is envisaged that these projects will relate to homes for people with different specific needs. They were entirely in conformity with the national legislation on accessibility; however, a special expert group developed criteria on how to improve each project.

Special attention was paid to the building materials as well as materials for the interior design in terms of possible allergic reactions.

Physical accessibility was thoroughly reconstructed according to the specific needs of all people concerned, including people with different disabilities, and also according to the multifunctionality of the building: special lifts were constructed, suitable for people with physical, sensory and intellectual disabilities; internal marking was established to direct people with visual and also with intellectual disabilities; all interior elements (including decorative elements on terraces and in grounds) are a result of design solutions consistent with the specific requirements of mentally disabled persons; sanitary facilities were reconstructed in such a way as to be suitable for people of lower stature or wheelchair users; all assembled

units recognised the possible requirements of consumers with reduced mobility.

Particular attention has also been paid to landscape design and planning. Plants were chosen to respect the requirements of people with mental disabilities and illnesses.

Wires and cables in the buildings signify revolutionary changes in the ICT sphere as well as opportunities to improve security. Infrared movement sensors were installed in every room without threatening the rights of people to privacy but in order to assure the functioning of all technical systems. The corridors and main exits were equipped with cameras.

All the colours, including those on the facades, were also chosen according to the specific requirements of people with mental disabilities.

The heating, plumbing, sewerage and electric systems were entirely reconstructed. Owing to the mountain locality, all systems were reinforced against bad weather conditions or natural disasters. The reconstruction was also enforced by alterations in the location of equipment in the building, and changes in room sizes with the aim of being of maximal and universal use. Heaters were chosen according to an entirely new concept.

The biggest challenge for the team was the limited financial resources. Consequently, all improvements and reconstructions were made in terms of maximal effectiveness (optimal cost-benefit ratio).

First results show that all rooms reconstructed in conformity with the principles of Universal Design could be used with full value by all people, regardless of their specific needs, at any time of the year, with different purposes – for working rooms, everyday necessities or other purposes.

The next step will be to improve the village infrastructure in such a way as to let all people use all equipment in the complex and to move around freely without the need of assistance.

In operation: 2004.

Signalling scheme for blind and partially sighted persons, Portugal


<p>Description: Setting tactile orientation strips on the pavement to be perceived by blind and partially sighted persons in railway and underground stations as well as streets, especially on pedestrian crossings.</p> <p>Universal Design features: Ongoing procedure.</p> <p>In operation: 2005.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 6: Built environment, Action 8
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	Blind, partially sighted and people with other visual disabilities
	Limitations:	Not completely available in all stations
	Feasibility:	Portugal

4.8. Action line 7: Transport

Specific action	Examples
1. To take account of the recommendations, reports and guidelines developed and agreed by international bodies, particularly in relation to the development of standards, guidelines, strategies and, if appropriate, legislation, to ensure the accessibility of transport services and infrastructure including the built environment.	Public transport system, Barcelona, Spain
	Deutsche Bahn AG, Germany
	Ultra Low Floor system, Austria
	Chip card for all public transport, Ministry of Transport, the Netherlands
	Training of bus drivers, the Netherlands

7. To ensure that information on public transport services will be made accessible as far as possible in diverse formats and through diverse communications systems to cater for people with disabilities.	Accessible car park spaces or parking bays, Luxembourg
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Public transport system, Barcelona, Spain

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 7: Transport, Action 1
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	People who may require special assistance: people with reduced mobility, hearing-impaired and visually impaired people, elderly people, persons with baby prams, pregnant women, etc.
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	Barcelona, Spain

Description: Transports Metropolitans de Barcelona (TMB) has started a process for the improvement of accessibility in all public transport in Barcelona city. The master plan has been entrusted to a working group which includes the Municipal Institute of People with Disabilities and other relevant groups. Furthermore, TMB has signed an agreement to collaborate


with the Consorci de Recursos per a la Integració de la Diversitat (CRID) – the technical department of the Diputació de Barcelona – which validates accessibility. Nowadays, accessibility is ensured in most parts of the public transport network in the city, together with an information service about the best combination of adapted public transport. A complimentary “door-to-door” service is offered to address the needs of people with serious mobility limitations who may face difficulties at certain moments or in routine activities. This service is provided by the City Council of Barcelona, through the Municipal Institute for people with disabilities, with the collaboration of the Metropolitan Transport Authority and the Metropolitan Transport Entity.

Universal Design features: Decision, co-ordination and evaluation of accessibility in public transport. Universal accessibility is considered in a holistic concept: diversity of needs and variety of users are taken into account. Physical accessibility – already at a good level of implementation – as well as accessible communication and information systems are concerned, that is, users can enjoy WAP mobile phones or electronic diaries (PDAs) to plan their travel, both through on-line and off-line TMB services.

More information in English: www.tmb.net/en_US/barcelona/bonviatge/transportpertothom.jsp

In operation: Since 1992.

Deutsche Bahn AG, Germany

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 7: Transport, Action 1
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All passengers, especially passengers with mobility impairments.
	Limitations:	See below
	Feasibility:	See below

Description: Deutsche Bahn AG continues to implement Universal Design in the areas of trains, stations and services, to achieve a comfortable travel experience for all passengers.

Universal Design Features: DB AG is implementing Universal Design progressively in all sectors: on long-distance services all trains have one or two wheelchair spaces and an adjacent toilet for passengers with disabilities. Vehicle-mounted boarding aids and further measures are part of the specifications for all new train systems. On regional services all trains are already equipped with a mounted boarding aid, toilets for passengers with disabilities, and digital information systems providing visual and auditory passenger information. Boarding, alighting, and connecting services are available in more than 300 of the 460 stations in the long-distance network. A customer service centre for disability matters co-ordinates all activities within DB AG relating to passengers with special needs. It develops, manages and implements innovative services for mobility-impaired customers and acts as a liaison to respective associations and political groups. For passengers requiring support beyond Universal Design features, DB AG offers the Mobility Service Centre, providing assistance and

technical equipment to enable passengers to board, alight from and change trains. It also provides travel information specifically for people with disabilities, for example how to choose direct routes or reserve suitable seats. The information brochure "Mobility for all – services for mobility-impaired passengers" provides advice and an overview of DB AG services for passengers, and is also available online and on CD for blind and visually impaired people. Accessible websites, timetable software and speech-operated interactive voice systems support convenient travel planning and ticketing for all passengers.

In operation: Activities and service centres started in 1999; ongoing replacement and upgrade of vehicles and stations.

Feasibility: Originating in Germany, in strong co-operation with European Railways, for example harmonised quality standards in order to make cross-border travel more comfortable for persons with disabilities and to simplify the travel experience as a whole.

Beneficial for: All passengers, especially passengers with mobility impairments.

Limitations: Owing to the long life of trains and the large number of stations, measures can only be applied incrementally over a fairly long period of time.

Ultra Low Floor system, Austria



Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 7: Transport, Action 1
Adoption and decision on principle	✓
Co-ordination	✓
Implementation	✓
Evaluation	✓
Beneficial for:	See below
Limitations:	Unknown
Feasibility:	See below

Description: The Ultra Low Floor (ULF) system allows passengers easier access to vehicles by providing a lower standard access height and an additional ride-height adjustment, while also eliminating any interior steps or pedestals and providing optical and tactile guidance to passengers.

Universal Design features: Surpassing existing low-floor vehicles, the ULF system provides a lower general access height of just 197 mm, an additional bending front segment of 80 mm, and an optional retractable mechanical ramp, allowing convenient and step-less entry for all passengers and support for people with reduced mobility, even for street-level tram stops. The ULF system also allows the interior space to be free of any obstructions such as steps or pedestals and incorporates both optical and tactile guidance systems outside and inside the vehicle, making it easy and convenient for passengers to move around.

In operation: 1997; 150 vehicles in Vienna (Austria), 150 more ordered.

Feasibility: All countries; of specific interest to cities that have been growing historically and thus frequently have street-level public transport stops without elevated platforms for pedestrians.

Beneficial for: All passengers; special benefit for passengers with reduced mobility, such as passengers in wheelchairs, elderly passengers, passengers with pushchairs, passengers with visual impairments.

Chip card for all public transport, Ministry of Transport, the Netherlands

<p>Description: This card replaces all forms of subscription and tickets for public transport. This is a pilot in the city of Rotterdam, not yet evaluated. This card is part of making public transport more accessible for people with disabilities. This implies that in 2010 all buses and in 2030 all trains will be accessible to everyone.</p> <p>Universal Design features: Universal chip card.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 7: Transport, Action 1
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All Dutch citizens
	Limitations:	Unknown
	Feasibility:	All countries

Training of bus drivers, the Netherlands

<p>Description: Extra training of bus drivers of the biggest Dutch national bus company in 2006. Through this training bus drivers learned how to handle people with a physical impairment or wheelchair users.</p> <p>Universal Design features: Handling of Universal Design applications.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 7: Transport, Action 1
	Adoption and decision on principle	
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All Dutch citizens
	Limitations:	Unknown
	Feasibility:	All countries

Accessible car park spaces or parking bays (Luxembourg)

<p>Description: Article 5 of the Grand Ducal regulations of 23 November implementing Articles 1 and 2 of the Law of 29 March 2001 on accessibility of public places stipulates accessibility for car park spaces, parking bays and collective garages. Of every 50 parking spaces or bays close to the entries or exits to public places at least 5% are reserved for disabled persons. Car park spaces and parking bays for disabled persons are at least 350 cm wide. They are marked out by lines on the ground and a signpost bearing a symbol.</p> <p>Parking meters and pay-and-display ticket dispensers are located in the direct vicinity of disabled parking spaces or bays.</p> <p>The button panels of parking meters, ticket dispensers and automatic payment machines are installed no lower than 85 cm and no higher than 110 cm from the ground.</p> <p>Universal Design features: These regulations are intended to ensure accessibility of public places. The height of parking meters, for example, and other measures have been chosen to accommodate as many people as possible.</p> <p>In operation: The regulations entered into force in 2001.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 7: Transport, Action 7
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	See below
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	

4.9. Action line 8: Community living

Specific action	Examples
2. To develop and promote housing policies which facilitate people with disabilities to live in suitable housing in their local community.	Promotion of building so-called <i>nul-treden</i> (zero steps) houses, the Netherlands

Promotion of building so called *nul-treden* (zero steps) houses, the Netherlands

Description: Zero-steps houses placed at ground floor level and made adaptable to any resident with any kind of impairment. Universal Design features: Part of an inclusive policy for residents with any kind of impairment.	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 8: Community living, Action 2
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

4.10. Action line 12: Legal protection

Specific action	Examples
1. To provide protection against discrimination through the setting up of specific legislative measures, bodies, reporting procedures and redress mechanisms.	Anti-discrimination law, the Netherlands

Anti-discrimination law, the Netherlands

Description: As from 1 January 2006 discrimination against people with disabilities is prohibited by law (Dutch criminal law).	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 12: Legal protection, Action 1
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All people with disabilities
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries


4.11. Action line 14: Research and development

Specific action	Examples
1. To develop statistical and information strategies for disability policy and standard development based on a social and human rights model of disability, and to review the effectiveness of existing national strategies and databases.	Guidelines for the elaboration and implementation of practices, norms and policies aimed at applying the principle of universal accessibility, Spain
9. To support applied scientific research into the design of new information and communication technologies, technical aids, products and devices which can contribute to the independent living and participation of people with disabilities in society.	Mobile text-to-speech reading assistant, Luxembourg
10. To encourage all product research to take account of Universal Design principles.	Innovation for all, Norway
	Implementation of the Design for All principles in the curriculum of the European Institute of Design in Madrid, Spain
	Consumer brochure for user-friendly mainstream products, Germany
	Accessibility features in software programmes, Microsoft
	Siemens Home Appliances, Germany
	SULO waste disposal, the Netherlands

Guidelines for the elaboration and implementation of practices, norms and policies aimed at applying the principle of universal accessibility, Spain

<p>Description: A group of researchers of the “Catedra Norberto Bobbio” of Equality and Non-Discrimination (Institute of Human Rights Bartolomé de las Casas, Carlos III University of Madrid) has carried out a study to serve as a practical tool for the planning and implementation of practices, norms and policies aimed at applying the principle of universal accessibility.</p> <p>Universal Design features: This guide offers an analysis of the most relevant aspects of universal accessibility, in the context of a changing society, and within the scope of the Spanish legislation. This document provides answers to the main questions arising from the debate on the harmonisation of the mandatory requirement of universal accessibility and the enjoyment of other rights provided by law.</p> <p>The main target group of this study is composed of: public administration, juridical professionals, stakeholders directly involved in planning, development and implementation of actions related to universal accessibility.</p> <p>This study has been conducted in the framework of the agreement between the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Carlos III University of Madrid.</p> <p>Link: http://sid.usal.es</p> <p>Title of the guide in Spanish: Guía básica sobre las principales pautas a seguir en la preparación y ejecución de prácticas, normativas y decisiones dirigidas a la satisfacción del principio de accesibilidad universal.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 14: Research and Development, Action 1
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Mobile text-to-speech reading assistant, Luxembourg


	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 14: Research and Development, Action 9
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: The Motto S.A. company, based in Luxembourg, has been working on a large-scale project in conjunction with Copenhagen University and the Danish Building Institute. The project is aimed at using new technologies to develop an educational electronic assistant, *inter alia* for people with difficulties in reading, blind people and, in particular, people with dyslexia. It entails providing people with difficulties with everyday assistance via their pocket computer (PDA), helping them to read technical guides, restaurant menus or customs forms for example. The device is used to capture an image of the text, which will then be read aloud to them. Programmes are also being developed to enable people with difficulties to improve their reading ability without their reading problem being revealed to the people around them. These programmes might provide a solution to the problems experienced by one third of European adults with difficulties in reading, which affect their training, professional life and leisure.

Universal Design features: This project is geared to improving the quality of life of all those who, at some time or other, experience difficulties in reading. It is aimed as much at young people with dyslexia or impaired vision as it is at older people whose sight often diminishes with age.

In operation: The different applications will be launched over a period of 18 months starting in October 2006. The initial studies on the ground will take place in summer 2006 and involve 50 employees working in the construction sector and affected by difficulties in reading.

Innovation for all, Norway

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 14: Research and development, Action 10
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: Innovation for All is a product development programme administered and operated by the Norwegian Design Council's part of a government action plan for increased access for persons with disabilities and for the elderly. The aim of the programme is to contribute to and support new development in Norwegian industry for goods and services based on the principles of Universal Design. Innovation for All focuses on product areas in which both consumers and industry benefit from new developments and innovation.

Surveys and projects are carried out in the fields of packaging, home equipment and ICT equipment. The latter includes automatic queue management and ticketing machines.

The programme uses a user-centred approach, involving a wide range of user groups.


The Norwegian Design Council has established a Design for All category in the design awards to Norwegian businesses. Design for All is also a category in the Young Talent Award, which is aimed at design students.

Innovation for all is part of the Norwegian Government’s Action Plan for increased accessibility for persons with disabilities: Plan for Universal Design in key areas of society.

Universal Design features: The Innovation for All programme is designed to implement Universal Design in new product development in industry, to the benefit of both industry and users.

In operation: 2005-2008.

Implementation of the Design for All principles in the curriculum of the European Institute of Design in Madrid, Spain

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 14: Research and development, Action 10
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: IMSERSO-CEAPAT (Spanish Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) has co-operated with the European Institute of Design to promote the implementation of the Design for All principles in the creation of new products among its trainees, students of several areas of design.

This co-operation started with the idea of raising awareness among future designers about the importance of the philosophy of universality when designing products and services, in order to fulfil the needs of all users. Designers should be conscious of the diversity of users, including people with disabilities and elderly people. During the academic year, students have participated in several visits to the technical aids exhibition in CEAPAT headquarters, carried out interviews with professionals from different areas and consulted the documentation held in the CEAPAT library.

IMSERSO-CEAPAT has presented the projects developed by students of the European Institute of Design, in the area of industrial design, during the fair "Madrid for Science" (Madrid, 14-17 April 2005). A wide space at the stand of CEAPAT was devoted to showing these activities under the motto "Universal Design", with the purpose of disseminating the concept of Design for All among the general public. Protagonists of this event were two young designers from Madrid and the wheelchair Duosys which they created as the final project of their studies in the Institute. This wheelchair was awarded the silver medal at the Salon des Inventions de Genève.

Link: www.ied.es/led/esp/sedi/madrid/disenoparatodos.html?start

Madrid for Science: www.madrimasd.org/Madridporlaciencia/Feria_VI/Participantes/Default.aspx?idStand=95&idArea=3

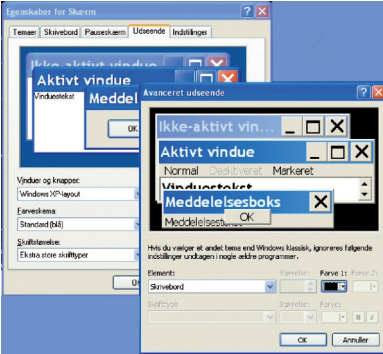
European Institute of Design: www.ied.es/madrid/news-point/05_04/ampli05_04/05_04_feria.html

In operation: 2005.

Consumer brochure for user-friendly mainstream products, Germany

<p>Description: Federal Ministry of Consumer Protection, Food and Agriculture (in co-operation with other organisations). The brochure consists of checklists for buying several Universal Design products. Facts and layout based on two pre-studies: survey on seniors' problems and requests of senior citizens and evaluation of already existing checklists.</p> <p>Universal Design features: Recommendations (Universal Design features only) given for products the use of which may be problematic for elderly people: cell phones, telephones, stereo systems, video-recorders/ DVD-players, corkscrews, can openers.</p> <p>In operation: 2005 pre-studies; 2006 brochure with checklists.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 14: Research and development, Action 10
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	✓
	Beneficial for:	All users, esp. elderly people
	Limitations:	Unknown
	Feasibility:	All countries

Accessibility features in mainstream software programs, Microsoft

	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 14: Research and development, Action 10
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All users
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: With Section 508 affecting public procurement in the United States of America, many software companies have introduced standard accessibility features in their mainstream software, offering a much higher degree of adaptability to all users.

A mainstream computer operating system such as Windows includes features to adjust text size, contrast and colour, visual and auditive feedback, and keyboard actions. Interaction with assistive software and devices is possible, too, for example via standardised interfaces. All these standard features improve the usability of PCs for many persons with or without impairments.

Siemens Home Appliances, Germany



Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 14: Research and development, Action 10
Adoption and decision on principle	✓
Co-ordination	
Implementation	✓
Evaluation	
Beneficial for:	Convenient operation for all users; special benefit for physically impaired users, e.g. elderly people, users in wheelchairs
Limitations:	None
Feasibility:	All countries

Description: The new line of Siemens home appliances allows easy access to components, controls and physical content of devices.

Universal Design features: Devices in the new line have specific features for universal access.

Wall oven (see figure): Easy to reach from three sides through open construction and free choice of wall mount height; safe extending mechanism prevents risk of getting burned.

Active Clean system makes oven cleaning obsolete.

Stove top: Less depth allows for safe and convenient operation from any work level.



Chimney: Remote control for easy operation, reduced operating noise.

Refrigerator: Pull-out shelves with non-tilt drawers allow safe and easy access to all food items; optimal illumination; temperature can be easily monitored and controlled from the outside.

Washing machine: Remote controlled through serve@Home function, large 30 cm porthole door with 180° opening angle.

In operation: Not yet.

SULO waste disposal, the Netherlands

 	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 14: Research and development, Action 10
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	Wheelchair users, Persons with mobility impairment
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

Description: Waste disposal system featuring low working height for consumers and less straining workloads for the waste disposal operator.

Universal Design features: Low operating heights, less back pain caused by heavy containers, less sick leave absence, cleaner work process.

4.12. Action line 15: Awareness raising

Awareness-raising project, the Netherlands

<p>Description: In the Netherlands a large awareness-raising project was carried out in autumn 2006, prepared by social partners and the government.</p> <p>Universal Design features: In order to make employers hire more people with disabilities.</p>	Sector:	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan, Action line 15: Awareness raising
	Adoption and decision on principle	✓
	Co-ordination	✓
	Implementation	✓
	Evaluation	
	Beneficial for:	All people with disabilities
	Limitations:	None
	Feasibility:	All countries

APPENDIX

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1. The State Union of Serbia and Montenegro existed between 2003 and 2006. Since June 2006 the Republic of Montenegro and the Republic of Serbia are independent countries. Both countries are members of the Council of Europe.

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