

Accessibility: making products and services in the EU easier to use



Video

https://www.multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/european-accessibility-act-better-access-for-the-disabled_N01-PUB-190304-ACCE_ev

The European Accessibility Act aims to ensure more products and services are accessible for elderly people and people living with a disability. Check out our video.

On 13 March [Parliament approved the European Accessibility Act](#) (EAA). The new rules are a step towards a [fairer and more inclusive Europe](#) and will improve the daily lives of the elderly and people with disabilities across the EU.

The final text will still need to be approved by the Council before it can enter into force. Once the legislation has been published in the EU's official journal, member States will have three years to transpose the new provisions into national law and six years to apply them.

More accessible products and services

More than **80 million people** live with disabilities in the EU and many have difficulties using everyday products, such as smartphones, computers, e-books, and encounter problems in accessing key services via ticket machines or ATMs.

The **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)** requires the EU and member states to ensure accessibility. Measures at EU level are needed to set common accessibility requirements for key products and services.

The European Accessibility Act sets standards for key products and services:

- ticketing and check-in machines
- ATMs and other payment terminals
- PCs and operating systems
- smartphones, tablets and TV equipment
- access to audio-visual media services, e-books
- e-commerce
- some elements of passenger transport services
- electronic communications, including the 112 emergency number

Opportunities for businesses and consumers

Having common standards at EU level will prevent member states from developing different laws? This will make it easier and more attractive for businesses to sell accessible products and services in the EU and abroad.

The new rules will encourage competition between economic operators and promote the free movement of accessible products and services. It is expected to give consumers more choice of accessible products and service and reduce their cost.

Exemptions for micro-enterprises

Because of their size and limited resources, exemptions would apply to some micro-enterprises, which are small companies with fewer than 10 employees and an annual turnover or balance sheet of less than €2 million.

However, these firms will be encouraged to manufacture and distribute products and provide services that comply with the accessibility requirements of the new rules.

EU countries will have to provide guidelines to these micro-enterprises to facilitate the implementation of the legislation.

Next steps

MEPs will vote on the draft directive during a plenary session in March. It will also need to be approved by the Council of Ministers before it can enter into force.

Find out more

[Approved text](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[Check progress on the legislative proposal](#)

[Briefing](#)