

# Planning Inclusive Communities

Inclusive regulation: the proposal for a Web-Accessibility Directive

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## The Web-Accessibility Directive

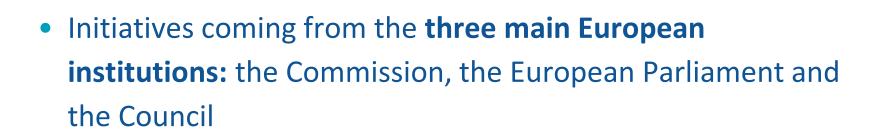
- 1. Background
- 2. The proposal
- 3. Impact on municipalities



Many initiatives at European level in Web-Accessibility since
 2000

Committempin

• "Soft law" = Encouragements and Commitment





#### **European Commission**

- eEurope Action Plan (2000) and Communication on eEurope 2002: Accessibility of Public Web Sites and their Content (2001)
- Communications on eAccessibility (2005)
- Towards and accessible information society (2008)

#### European Parliament

Resolution on the Commission Communication on eEurope 2002

#### <u>Council</u>

- Resolutions on eEurope Action Plan (2002)
- Riga Ministerial Declaration (2006)
- o Conclusions on the EC Communication on the accessible information society (2009)



- In addition to the European efforts, there have been parallel actions:
- > National measures: 24 Member States
  - Most of them cover regional and local administrations
- ➤ International measures: United Nations
  Convention on the Rights of Persons with
  Disabilities (UNCRPD) signed by all MS and
  ratified by 25 = ACTUAL COMMITMENT





 Despite all these efforts, the situation of Web-Accessibility in the EU today:

Low accessibility of public sector websites: less than 55% of websites accessible

➤ Diverging and uncoordinated efforts: leading to varying national specifications





#### Line to take

- So what now?
- "Soft EU law" + National initiatives => "Harder EU law"
- Harder law: current & upcoming complementary legislative proposals
- 1. Proposal for new Public Procurement Directive
- 2. Proposal for a Directive on the accessibility of public sector bodies' websites (Web-Accessibility Directive)
- 3. European Accessibility Act



- Identification of the problem:
- Non-functioning of the internal market for provision of webaccessibility;
- Drivers to the problem:
- Fragmentation due to different national web accessibility (WA) specifications
- Uncertainty for the procurers / owners



The proposal establishes harmonised accessibility
 requirements for a set of public sector bodies' websites

#### Requirements

• In line with four Principles of WCAG 2.0:

Websites to be accessible in "an adequate way for user's perception, operation and understanding" and "in a way which facilitates interoperability with a variety of user agents and assistive technologies at Union and international level"

#### Scope

- Websites owned by public sector bodies
- offering 12 types of essential services for citizens



#### Use of standards

Presumption of conformity for websites which meet future
 European harmonised standard – WCAG 2.0 AA-

#### Monitoring and reporting

- Compulsory monitoring and reporting to the Commission
- Harmonized monitoring methodology to be decided by MS and the EC

#### Additional measures

• Statement on accessibility of the website



Summary & explanations

#### What's the objective?

- Tackle the problem of the internal market on web-accessibility
- by establishing harmonised requirements for a specific set of websites and, at the same time,
- help MS to fulfil their commitments and ensure webaccessibility in EU

#### Why set of websites?

 It's a "Silver bullet" – Obligation on a set of websites that will generate a "spill-over" effect to national legislations



## 3. Impact on municipalities

- <u>Websites falling under scope of the proposal</u>: Websites of the municipalities offering the following services
- (1) Income taxes: declaration, notification of assessment
- (2) Job search services by labour offices
- (3) Social-security benefits: unemployment benefits, child allowances, medical costs (reimbursement or direct settlement), student grants.
- (4) Personal documents: passports or driving license
- (5) Car registration
- (6) Application for building permission



## 3. Impact on municipalities

- (7) Declaration to police, e.g. in case of theft
- (8) Public libraries, e.g. catalogues and search tools
- (9) Request and delivery of birth or marriage certificates
- (10) Enrolment in higher education or university
- (11) Notification of change of residence
- (12) Health-related services: interactive advice on the availability of services, online services for patients, appointments.
  - In-direct impact on the basis of spill-over effect: All those municipalities covered by national measures
    - They would remain outside scope of the proposa so no monitoring & reporting obligations



## 3. Impact on municipalities

- EP's 1<sup>st</sup> Reading Resolution
- Amendment for extending the scope to cover "all public sector websites", including municipalities' websites, and "websites providing services of general interest"
  - Municipalities' websites subject to obligations of the proposal (monitoring and reporting)
- Current status and next steps:
- Commission to follow-up EP's resolution
- Council to resume discussions on the file
- Upcoming changes: new EP, new Commission, new Presidency



## Thank you!