



Adore

Accessibility in Digital Communication Higher Education Curricula



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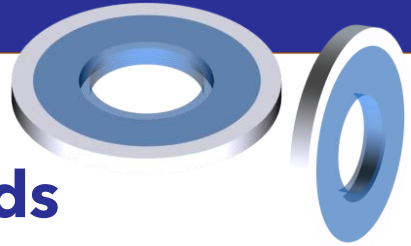
Module A, content:

1. What is accessibility
2. User needs - this document
3. Policy and legislation
4. **Accessibility standards - this document**
5. Web accessibility basics



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4 Accessibility standards



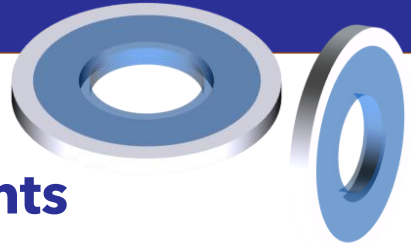
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EN 301 549

Accessibility Requirements for ICT Products and Services



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European norm EN 301 549

- CEN/CENELEC/ETSI
- Harmonised standard
 - presumed conformance
- Current version 3.2.1
- Updated in 2025



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Notes

When European legislation points to standards for technical specifications, these standards need to be harmonised European standards, so called European norms (EN). For web accessibility, the most important standard is the EN301549. This standards cover ICT products and services and was originally developed to support the 2017 update of the procurement directive. Annex A contains the minimum requirements of the Web Accessibility Directive, and the standard is currently being updated to support the European Accessibility Directive in the same way.

Content of the standard

- 0-3: Background, Definitions etc
- 4: Functional performance
- 5: Generic requirements
- 6: ICT and two-way voice communication
- 7: ICT with video possibilities
- 8: Hardware

- 9: Web
- 10: Non-web documents
- 11: Software
- 12: Documentation and support services
- 13: ICT for emergency services
- 14: Conformance



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Useful Annexes

Annex A: Relationship with the Web Accessibility Directive

Annex B: Relationship between requirements and functional performance statements

Annex C: Determination of conformance

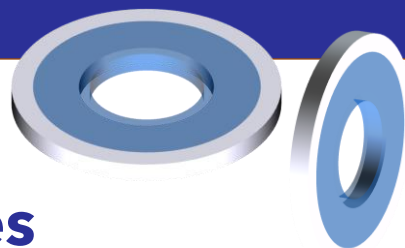
Annex D: Further resources for cognitive accessibility

Annex E: Guidance for usage of the standard



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Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)



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WCAG 2.1

- W3C
- Global standard
- Current version 2.1 (new version 2023/4)
- Three levels:
 - A
 - AA
 - AAA

Notes

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) is a global standard developed by W3C.

To avoid having 2 standards covering the same things, the EN301549 is referencing WCAG when it comes to web accessibility. This means that the EU and for example the US can have the same minimum requirements. However, the US legislation is still pointing to the old version of WCAG (2.0), whereas the EN301549 references WCAG 2.1.

The next version, WCAG 2.2, will most probably be released as a stable standard during the last part of 2023 or early 2024.

There are three levels of conformance to WCAG:

- Level A is the minimum level.
- Level AA includes all Level A and AA requirements. This is the level EN301549 references.
- Level AAA includes all Level A, AA, and AAA requirements. According to W3C, all level AAA success criteria is not possible to satisfy for some content.



Perceivable



Operable



Understandable



Robust

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Notes

WCAG is divided into 4 Principles of Accessibility (explained in the following pages).

Perceivable

Users must be able to perceive the information being presented (it can't be invisible to all of their senses)



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Operable

Users must be able to operate the interface (the interface cannot require interaction that a user cannot perform)



Understandable

Users must be able to understand the information as well as the operation of the user interface (the content or operation cannot be beyond their understanding)...



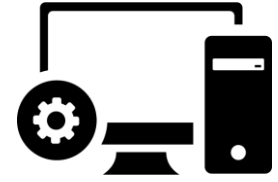
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Robust

Users must be able to access the content as technologies advance (as technologies and user agents evolve, the content should remain accessible)



Communications-related criteria

- a) Technical skills: how to make sure the content can be used by people with assistive technology
- b) Structure and layout skills: how to make the order of content logical and place objects in an understandable way
- c) Content skills: how to write readable text, explain difficult words and provide visual elements to enhance understanding

Perceivable to all audiences

- Making documents and websites accessible and compatible with assistive technology
- Providing options to non-text-based information, including images but also audio
- And more...



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Understandable to all audiences

- Structuring texts in readable chunks
- Plain language as a standard way of writing
- Using combinations of text and images to enhance information
- And more...



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Exercise / activity

- Plenty of free resources available
 - [Colour contrast analyser](#)
 - [PDF accessibility checker](#)
 - [Website accessibility checker](#)
- NB: Manual checks are needed for full audit

Resources

- [EN 301 549](#)
- [The EN videos](#)
- [WCAG 2.1](#)
- [W3Cs list of tools for automatic testing](#)



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