



Access•City

Award 2013

Inspiring EU cities
to become more accessible



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Foreword



This is the third year of the Access•City Award – the European prize for making cities more accessible to disabled and older people. I am delighted to introduce this booklet which celebrates the cities that were recognised this year.

But this award is not just about celebration, it is also about inspiration. We want to share the good work, commitment and innovation that have been shown by the cities featured here. Their initiatives provide a wealth of ideas for policy directions and practical projects to make all our cities better places to live in for our growing populations of disabled and older people. And, of course, making cities better for disabled and older people makes them better for all of us.

I warmly congratulate all the cities featured in this booklet and I urge all of you in cities all over Europe to learn from and share in their achievements.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Reding', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Viviane Reding

Vice-President of the European Commission
Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights
and Citizenship

Access•City Award 2013

Introduction



Around 80 million people living in the European Union have some kind of disability that impacts on their daily lives. Europe, in common with much of the world, also has an ageing population. There is a strong correlation between age and disability. Some two thirds of people with disabilities are over retirement age.

These trends mean that there is both an economic and a social imperative to create societies within which older and disabled people can live without barriers and can enjoy the same opportunities and life chances as every other citizen.

These imperatives are clearly set out both in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and in the European Union's Disability Strategy 2010–2020.

Accessibility and inclusion must be at the heart of all aspects of city life, from barrier-free streets, buildings and public transport to accessible websites and online information.

The Access•City Award, created in 2010, set out to recognise and celebrate cities that have worked to achieve accessible environments in all areas of life.

One of the key goals of the Access•City Award is also to promote best practice in cities across Europe by highlighting innovative and inspiring

projects and programmes to meet the needs of disabled and older people.

This brochure showcases some of the initiatives taken by the winning City, the two other finalist cities and the four cities which were awarded a 'special mention'.

The projects have been selected for their originality and effectiveness. They are, in every case, part of more comprehensive initiatives to address accessibility issues.

The Cities are spread across Europe and range from capital cities to small regional centres. Some have major budgets and long-standing political commitment to accessibility. Others are seeking to make progress with limited budgets and on a step-by-step basis.

The projects illustrated here demonstrate that the most important factors, in every case, are commitment at the highest level within the City to improved accessibility and a clear and continuing link between the City at political and operational levels and disabled and older citizens.



Berlin, Germany

Winner

Berlin is the capital city and seat of government of the Federal Republic of Germany. It is both a federal state and a city and forms the centre of the metropolitan region of Berlin/Brandenburg.

With 3.5 million inhabitants, Berlin is the most populous city and, at 892 km², the largest city by area in Germany and Central Europe. Berlin is divided into twelve independent boroughs.

After reunification in 1990, the two halves of the city had to be brought together and different transport and planning systems standardised. Today, Berlin is an important regional, national and international transport hub. It is also considered to be an international city of culture, politics, media and science.

Berlin is the winner of the 2013 Access•City Award for its strategic and inclusive accessibility policies, which cover all aspects of city life and are firmly embedded in both the political and budgetary frameworks of the city.

The projects highlighted here demonstrate the innovative approaches that have been taken to address accessibility in the city.

Free database on barrier-free living:
www.mobidat.net

Berlin has created a database with 31 000 entries, giving information on the accessibility of facilities in all areas of life.

“**Berlin should be accessible in all its diversity, without obstacles. Therefore, our task will be to continue changing public buildings and spaces so that they can be used by everyone independently, simply, intuitively and comfortably. Berlin can and will play a leading role here. The principles of Design for All remain a challenge which will determine the quality of our city.**”

Ephraim Gothe, State Secretary for Building and Housing of the Senate Department for Urban Development and Environment



Screenshot of Mobidat website

The information provided by mobidat.net includes leisure and culture, health, welfare and lifestyle. The website is aimed at people with sensory, mobility and cognitive impairments, helping them with information about accessibility in their everyday lives and encouraging them to explore Berlin for themselves.

The information is produced by an organisation for social and health services in cooperation with the Federal State of Berlin and an IT service provider.

The Mobidat project has been working for 20 years on documenting accessibility

in Berlin and on implementing new accessibility measures.

Verifying information and keeping it up to date

Data collection is based on German standards for barrier-free building with DIN 18024, 18025 and 18040.

For each place or facility, a questionnaire is created, with the degree of accessibility documented and archived for further editing. The information is verified on site by experts in accessible design and construction and by volunteers, often disabled people themselves.

In addition, the data is checked again before public release, and sent to the organisations concerned for their information and consideration.

The aim is to keep all information up to date by checking it every two to three years. Each data entry contains information on the original survey date and the last date it was modified. In addition, users can also provide information directly, and



Verifying data for the Mobidat website

give feedback and reviews on the individual entries on the internet.

Funding

Financial support comes from the Federal State of Berlin. The funds for the human resources needed for data collection come from different funding sources in the Federal Government, the Federal Employment Agency, the Berlin Job Centre and the Federal State of Berlin.

Research funding for the further development of the technical system comes from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research as part of the funding priority 'mobile into old age' through a project entitled 'WikiNavi': the development of a specific routing and navigation system for people with physical disabilities.

Involving disabled people

Stakeholders are involved in the project through networks of disabled and older people in Berlin.

In the Mobidat project, people with different disabilities are always included as workers. For example, within the framework of a large employment promotion programme from 2009 to 2011, some 40 severely disabled employees were hired. The fields of activity within the Mobidat project are organised in such a way that they can be undertaken by people with different degrees of disability.

This link between the social objective and the work that needs to be done provides disabled people with the opportunity to help others with disabilities to get more out of life in the city. At the same time, Mobidat benefits from the expertise of employees with personal experience of barriers to mobility.

In addition, there is regular feedback into the project from different organisations of disabled and older people in the city of Berlin.

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Thorsten Stellmacher kontakt@mobidat.net



A member of the Mobidat staff team



Members of the Round Table

Round Table 'Barrier-free City'

Berlin has set itself the objective of achieving accessibility without barriers for disabled and older people. One key tool for delivering this objective is the Round Table 'Barrier-free City'.

This has been set up under the direction of the Senate Department for Urban Development and the Environment to bring together stakeholders from government, business and organisations representing disabled and older people. The aim is to agree on priorities and initiatives which will improve the accessibility of Berlin.

Structure and organisation

The Round Table is chaired by the Permanent Secretary for Building and Housing. This means that it has high-level decision-making powers.

It includes representatives of a wide range of sectors in the economy, including tourism, hotels and restaurants, industry, commerce and transport.

Experts from other Senate departments and from Berlin's boroughs as well as the Berlin

Commissioner for People with Disabilities also have a seat at the Round Table.

The State Advisory Council for People with Disabilities, which represents all the major associations of people with disabilities in Berlin, is also a member.

The Round Table meets four times a year.

Terms of reference

To implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Berlin Senate adopted 10 disability policy guidelines to be implemented by 2020. These policies are based on a 'design for all' approach. This represents a paradigm shift in city policy.

The future task will be to ensure that all public buildings and spaces are able to be used by everyone independently, simply, intuitively and comfortably. This means that special solutions for people with disabilities will be largely redundant and future generations, regardless of age, gender, ability or cultural background, will be able to take part in social, economic and recreational activities as independently as possible.

Setting the agenda

The agenda is drawn up in close consultation with all members of the Round Table. A record of all meetings is written and sent to the members for confirmation. Each member has the opportunity to propose topics for discussion.

The work of the Round Table is coordinated by the Senate Department for Urban Development and the Environment. This Department also coordinates the EUROCITIES Working Group 'Barrier-free City for All'.

Priority for 2013

The priority for the coming year will be to focus on developing Berlin as an accessible tourism venue, recognising the growing demand for accessible tourism.

The Senate Department for Urban Development and Environment as the planning body plays a particularly important role. This includes the development of quality assurance measures for an accessible travel and service chain (arrival, accommodation, programme of tourist activities, departure).

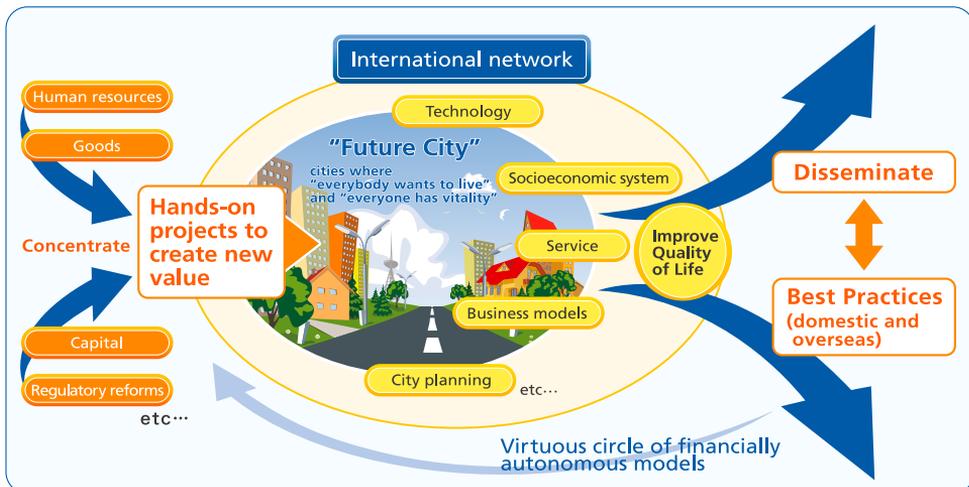
The goal is to establish a common platform to bring together information, products and services in the field of accessible travel and tourism and to ensure that Berlin positions itself both nationally and internationally as an 'accessible city'.

For further information contact: Gerd.Grenner@SenStadtUm.Berlin.de

The winner of the Access•City Award gets noticed in Japan

The Government of Japan has been inspired by Berlin's strategic approach to creating an accessible city for all.

PricewaterhouseCoopers Aarata (based in Japan), have been commissioned by the Japanese Government's Cabinet Office to promote the 'FutureCity' Initiative (see <http://futurecity.rro.go.jp/en/>). They are conducting research on environmentally-friendly and age-friendly cities around the world and have visited Berlin to learn from its experience.



Illustrating the FutureCity network

Nantes, France

Finalist

The sixth largest municipality in France, Nantes, is situated on the Loire Estuary near the Atlantic coast and has a total population of 590 000 of whom 291 000 live in the city.

Nantes has a long-standing commitment, both political and practical, to improving facilities and services for disabled people across all aspects of city life. The city has taken the view that what is good for disabled people is of benefit to everyone.

The underlying philosophy that Nantes has adopted is based on a cross-disciplinary approach involving all areas of municipal activity and on continuous dialogue with disabled people.

The two projects described here illustrate the imaginative and collaborative work on accessibility which characterises the City of Nantes.

Auditing Accessibility

As part of the Disability Action Plan which the City has adopted, 430 access audits of public buildings and public open space (highways and the pedestrian environment) have been carried

“ **Whatever is done for disabled people is also of benefit to the majority of people.** ”

Member of the Nantes Council
of Disabled People

out or are scheduled. 130 have already taken place and the remaining 300 are planned for 2013–2014.

Scope of the audits

The audits of public buildings are carried out either by staff of the municipality or by external consultants. In the highways and pedestrian environment, the audits form part of the City Plan for Accessibility of Highways and Public Space and they are carried out by technical staff from the municipality.

Site visits are organised by technicians and the city's Department of Disability at the request of disabled residents to look at local access problems and schedule improvements.

Involving disabled people

Site visits to audit facilities in the pedestrian environment are often carried out with people with mobility difficulties and vision impairment.



Testing facilities for bikes and pedestrians

Deciding priorities

Priorities both for public building access and for the street and pedestrian environment are agreed with the Nantes Council of Disabled People and decisions are made on the basis of levels of usage and the significance of the area in terms of seamless travel.

Measuring accessibility

Accessibility is determined primarily in accordance with the French National Law of 2005 on the equality of rights and opportunities, participation and citizenship of disabled people and the regulations that flow from that law.

Equally important, however, are the views of the members of the Council of Disabled People based on their practical experience of the area.

Delivering improvements

Once the need for particular improvements has been identified and agreed, they are added to the city's rolling programme for the delivery and funding of public works.

Paying for the audits

The City of Nantes pays for the audits of the buildings and other facilities it owns, while the owners of other buildings are required by law to fund access audits.



New tramway provides easier access for wheelchair user

Maintaining standards

A tracking system to monitor access improvements made to public buildings owned by the city was introduced in 2012. This comprises an Excel spreadsheet on the city's shared intranet. Data is entered by the official responsible for each building and includes the accessibility needs that have been defined, the costs of improvement and the status of the work. A similar tool for use in the area of streets and pavements is currently being developed and the Department of Disability organises training for technicians in the city and the metropolitan area.

Ensuring accessibility of the whole travel experience

Another key objective of the Disability Action Plan is to ensure that every stage of the journey is accessible to everyone, whatever their disability. This includes upgrading parts of the transport system that are already accessible and gradually expanding the accessible network across the city.

Identifying accessibility needs

Accessibility gaps and needs are identified by associations of disabled people, by other local

people with an interest in accessible public transport and by transport providers which have a responsibility to deliver accessibility under the national law of 2005.

A team from the Department of Disability works with the Nantes Council of People with Disabilities (CNPH) to gather information on every aspect of the daily living needs of disabled people, including access to housing, education, culture and the transport environment.

Involving disabled people

Disabled people are at the heart of this and all other initiatives of the City of Nantes. There are a total of 11 different workshops under the Council of People with Disabilities, each looking at a different topic such as employment, housing and urban design. Sometimes there is collaborative work between the Council of People with Disabilities and the local councillor.

Reaching consensus

There can be different needs, for example wheelchair users need a level surface, while blind people need a change of level to help them distinguish whether or not they are on the right side of a space shared by cyclists and pedestrians. In such cases, the city will work



**What does the Council of Disabled People mean to me?
A huge improvement in the way we live. I believe that our
views will carry more and more weight with the City's
decision makers.**

Member of the Nantes Council of Disabled People



“ The Council of Disabled People provides a forum for free expression among all citizens, with and without disabilities, on the world around us and on local politics to improve daily life in the City. ”

Member of the Nantes Council of People with Disability

with the different disability groups to try to find a solution that can meet everyone's needs.

Deciding priorities

Priorities for improving accessibility to the public space network and for all projects are agreed by the Department of Disability, members of the Council of People with Disabilities and the local councillor.

In addition, professionals from the city and the metropolitan area are involved in setting priorities in order to guarantee follow-up.

Paying for improvements

Each department of the City Council has a specific budget allocated to improvements to meet the needs of disabled people. For transport and the pedestrian environment, the finance comes directly from the municipality and the metropolitan area.

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Consulting with disabled people on access improvements

Stockholm, Sweden

Finalist

Stockholm, Sweden's capital city, has a population of nearly 869 000. It was founded in the mid-13th century and is located on 14 islands around one of Europe's largest mediaeval city centres.

The city has a long-standing commitment to accessibility and has been running extensive accessibility programmes since 1999. It was the first city in Sweden to acquire a Disability Ombudsman in 2002. It also has a Vice-Mayor for accessibility.

The three projects described here underline that accessibility is embedded within both the political and executive functioning of every aspect of life in the city.

Participation programme for people with disabilities 2011–2016

Stockholm's programme for people with disabilities is one of the city's key policies. It is a directive for all of the city's committees and company boards. The underlying principles of the programme are the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the goals of the Swedish National Action Plan 2011–2015, and the city's Vision 2030.

Priority targets

In 2011, Stockholm's City Council decided on seven priority targets for the years 2011–2016 to increase the participation of people with disabilities in the life of the city:

1. Everyone must be able to travel around, visit and enjoy Stockholm's indoor and outdoor environment.
2. Everyone must be able to receive information and to communicate on the basis of their individual needs.
3. Everyone must be treated with understanding and respect and be personally involved in decisions on all issues that apply to him or her.
4. All children, adolescents and adults must be able to participate in education and receive the support that is required to attain their goals.
5. Everyone's capacity to work must be utilised.
6. Everyone must have accommodation that is individually adapted to their needs.
7. Everyone must be given the necessary means to participate in and benefit from leisure activities.



Delivering results

The City Council sets the budget for and governs all city operations. In the budget, the City Council establishes a number of indicators and activities that will contribute to the achievement of the disability policy goals. Committees and company boards must decide which three relevant activities will be prioritised during the financial year to contribute to achieving the targets.

Monitoring accessibility

All committees and company boards report their progress in achieving targets both in four-monthly reports and in the annual financial statement. The goals relating to accessibility are monitored through the city's monitoring and follow-up system (ILS).

Advisory Councils for Disability Issues linked to every committee and company board, which include representation from disability organisations, actively contribute to operational planning and monitoring of the results on disability issues.

The Ombudsman for Disability Issues also monitors disability-related responsibilities, including developing procedures for dealing with ongoing problems and proposing corrective measures. The committees and company boards are responsible for quality assurance and handling complaints.

Indicators

The Participation Programme for People with Disabilities comprises a range of indicators

“ **The ramp is a real boon, people coming here keep telling us. The lift too is very smart and functional. We're so glad not having to send people round to the back entrance anymore.** ”

Mårten Castenfors, Director of Liljevalchs Art Gallery in Stockholm

to measure the extent to which accessibility targets are met. These include:

- the proportion of the city's indoor and outdoor environments that comply with the applicable building regulations;
- the proportion of disabled people who perceive that the city's indoor and outdoor environments are accessible and usable;
- the proportion of disabled people who perceive that they can access and understand the city's information;
- the proportion of the city's e-services that are accessible to people with disabilities.

Ensuring compliance

There are no sanctions or penalties for non-compliance. The city Executive Office ensures through follow-up that objectives are achieved and that the committees and company boards implement their respective activities.

The role of elected disability officials

The Vice-Mayor for Social Affairs has a special focus on accessibility and equal opportunities for people with disabilities in the City of Stockholm.

The Vice-Mayor monitors all areas related to accessibility and disability in the city. The Vice-Mayor participates in the decision-making and deliberations of the governing coalition and ensures that the disability perspective is maintained within the city's different fields of responsibility and policy (e.g. social affairs, city planning, culture, sports, housing).

The Ombudsman for Disability Issues is a city official appointed through ordinary recruitment from interested and qualified applicants. The Ombudsman operates directly under the city Executive Board.

The Ombudsman's four main responsibilities are:

1. To follow external developments and share knowledge and experience within the city's committees and companies.
2. To monitor the enforcement of legislation, city guidelines, policy statements and projects at municipal level.
3. To provide information, advice and guidance to individuals, organisations, committees, boards, public agencies and others.
4. To develop good cooperation with relevant central government bodies, the regional County Council and the city's own operations.

Handbook for the design of an accessible and useable environment

The 'Handbook for the design of an accessible and useable environment' is the third version of design programmes developed by the City of Stockholm. The compilation of the two earlier versions entailed extensive dialogue with disability organisations. A major goal has been to clarify the building legislation and to supplement it with Stockholm's design principles.

The inventory

A network of routes important for accessibility has been agreed and comprises essential streets, walkways, park paths, etc. The mapping was produced in cooperation with the local Advisory Councils for Disability Issues in the respective city districts.

Prioritised routes, junctions and public transport nodes, such as areas in the proximity of underground stations and railway stations, have been audited and an inventory of all key features

“ You need to think holistically when rebuilding a neighbourhood. The kerbstones at the bus stop have to be as high as possible, but then it’s very important that people should be able to reach the bus stop by way of accessible crossings and passages. ”

Pernilla Johnni, District Accessibility Inspector

drawn up. These audits have included pedestrian crossings, bus stops, stairs, seats and obstacles. A more detailed audit of the public transport hubs has been conducted, e.g. of orientation options and parking spaces for disabled people. The inventory has been conducted with the aid of hand-held computers and all the data has been collected in a database for processing and analysis. The inventory was carried out by students over summer.

Resolving conflicting needs

The experience shows that conflicting needs of different disability groups have not been a problem. Straightforward and constructive dialogue has produced solutions that work for everyone. The so-called Stockholm Model for pedestrian crossings is an example of this, with one part of the crossing containing a ramp and the rest constructed with kerbstones and contrast markings.

Deciding priorities

The planned accessibility measures are prioritised based on the inventories and are compiled in an action plan. The action plan is reviewed by the Traffic Administration’s Advisory Council for Disability Issues and is subject to political decision.

Dealing with problems

Problems are identified through the information gathered in the inventory. Inadequacies can also be reported by the public. Reports can be made by telephone, via an app or on the city’s website.

Inadequacies that are highlighted through the inventories are addressed gradually by means of yearly action plans or as part of refurbishment projects. Priority is given to problems reported by the public.

Funding

For the years 2013–2015, funds are designated for reconstruction and for tackling shortcomings in the existing environment. There is always a risk of budget cuts, but there is a political consensus that disability issues are important and that Stockholm must be a city



Pedestrian crossing designed to meet the needs of blind people and wheelchair users

“ A great supplement that I can use when I need it.

It provides the kind of navigation aids that my stick fails to provide.

Users of the e-Adept system

”

for everyone. Aside from funds earmarked for accessibility measures, all regular projects must include measures to ensure good accessibility for disabled people.

e-Adept: digital pedestrian network

e-Adept is a cooperative project for personal navigation, travel planning and safety. The aim of the project is to increase pedestrian accessibility for older people and people with disabilities.

The service facilities are offered via a mobile telephone. Positioning equipment is connected to the hand unit. The positioning unit is based on GPS and inertia navigation equipment. The combination of these technologies allows for navigation both outside and indoors.

Unlike many existing navigation solutions, e-Adept is based on a digitalised road network for pedestrians and cyclists. Combined with a precise and reliable positioning system, the e-Adept solution provides a much more detailed route indication for the pedestrian user than the use of road maps aimed at car drivers. The pedestrian route network also makes it possible for the user to be guided along sidewalks, pathways and pedestrian crossings.

The user receives information on his or her mobile telephone, both as a spoken message and as an illustration on a map.

The entire City of Stockholm is covered.

Users

The service has been developed for people with impaired vision, but has great potential for further development. Possible groups are people with cognitive disabilities as well as tourists and visitors. In order to utilise the service, a mobile telephone with Symbian 60, the appropriate software, and a positioning box is required.

Funding

Development costs have been divided between the City of Stockholm, the Swedish Post and Telecom Authority (PTS) and the Swedish Transport Administration (Trafikverket). Discussions on how the final service is to be established are under way.

User training

Those who have tested and evaluated the service during the development phase have received instructions and have had access to support. A users' manual and a 'cheat sheet' have been developed.

For further information contact:
annika.raab@stockholm.se

Gdynia, Poland

Special mention for transport and related infrastructure

Located on the Baltic Sea, Gdynia is a relatively young city and was developed together with the construction of the port in the 1920s. It has a population of just under 250 000.

For the past two decades, the city has maintained a comprehensive policy to make Gdynia accessible to all citizens both in terms of removing barriers and in terms of promoting awareness and understanding of disability.

An important part of that policy is the systematic training of public transport drivers to understand and meet the needs of passengers with disabilities.

Gdynia received a special mention for this transport initiative.

The project described here underlines the importance of investing in staff training, even

where not all vehicles and infrastructure are accessible.

Training public transport drivers

Training of public transport drivers in Gdynia is delivered by individual carriers operating in the city, as a requirement of their contracts with the city Transport Authority. The results of the training are verified through external tests – in both written and oral form.

Passing the tests is a non-negotiable requirement for taking up a job as a driver. Each training session covers passenger service (including passengers with disabilities) and service quality.

Applicants who want to drive demand-responsive minibuses specifically for disabled people have to undergo more thorough

“ I’m impressed by the comprehensive and far-reaching way in which Gdynia approaches the issue of accessibility. Year by year, the City consistently eliminates barriers that contribute to social exclusion of people with disabilities. ”

Piotr Pawłowski, President of the Friends of Integration Association

training. This includes a practical part, during which would-be drivers observe their more experienced colleagues at work.

Basic training takes on average one week, but precise timing depends on the ability of the individual driver. Extended training can last up to two weeks. The training has to be repeated only for drivers who receive more than 10 contractual penalties or legitimate complaints in the course of a year.

Benefits of training

People who have undergone the training show higher levels of understanding in their everyday work. They know how to interact with a disabled person and are more willing to help.

There is also evidence that the training has influenced the quality of life of disabled people in Gdynia by improving their comfort and confidence to travel.

Funding

The cost of basic training is covered by the transport provider, but the extended training programme is funded on a 50/50 basis by the company and the applicant for the driving job.

Future plans

The training programme will continue, as there is still much to be done in this field.

For further information contact:
j.leman@gdynia.pl

Low-floor accessible buses benefit everyone



Reducing the gap for wheelchair users: the result of driver training

Bilbao, Spain

Special mention for information, communication and ICT

Bilbao is a city in northern Spain and is the capital of the province of Biscay in the autonomous community of the Basque Country. With an area of 40.65 km² and a population of about 355 000, it is the main city in a metropolitan area of 900 000 inhabitants along the banks of the Nervión river.

Bilbao received a special mention for its use of information and communication technology (ICT) to the benefit of people with disabilities.

The project described here demonstrates the city's commitment to equal access for all citizens to information about every aspect of city life.

Development of Municipal Portal www.Bilbao.net

www.Bilbao.net is a municipal website giving information on every aspect of life in the city, including transport, activities and leisure facilities.

The City of Bilbao has made a commitment that the website should be accessible in order to provide equal access and equal opportunity to people with disabilities. The city believes that an accessible Web can also help people with disabilities to participate more actively in society.

“

The Municipal Portal of Bilbao aims to provide universal access and, as part of that commitment, has obtained independent certification of the website's accessibility. Other accessible technical facilities include information by telephone and online services. There are 20 accessible electronic offices called 'Bilbao Click', while videoconference services are also offered to sign language users.

Cristina Rodríguez-Porrero Miret, Director of CEAPAT-IMSERSO

”



Screenshot from www.Bilbao.net – tabbed browsing, an alternative to using a mouse

Accessibility features

The website is designed to meet the needs of the majority of disabilities (physical, visual, hearing and cognitive), and also the needs of older people. People with hearing and vision impairments in particular have been involved in the development.

www.Bilbao.net has been developed using accessible design and programming, with the goal of ensuring universal access to as many users as possible. These criteria are based on the WCAG / WAI recommendations of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), an international consortium that is responsible for the supervision of internet technologies and standards.

Features of www.Bilbao.net include:

- adaptation of the content of the website for users of sign language;
- implementation of a ReadSpeaker tool that converts content into high quality digital speech;

- shortcuts and hotkeys: keyboard shortcuts that provide quick access to key points of the various web pages;
- text sizes and interface: all font sizes and other site elements can be changed using the controls of each browser.

Funding

The website is funded through the City's budget and continuity has been assured for 2013.

Future developments

The goal over the coming years is to achieve compliance level 'AAA' in the Accessibility Guidelines, recommended by the working group of the W3C WAI.

For further information contact:
e.sanz@ayto.bilbao.net

Pamplona, Spain

Special mention for built environment and public spaces

Pamplona, in northern Spain, is the capital city of the autonomous region of Navarra and has a population of just under 200 000. The old fortified city has been expanded and developed over the years, with the modern city comprising both the old town and more recent developments. The combination of old and new and the city's location spanning the river Arga present particular challenges for accessibility.

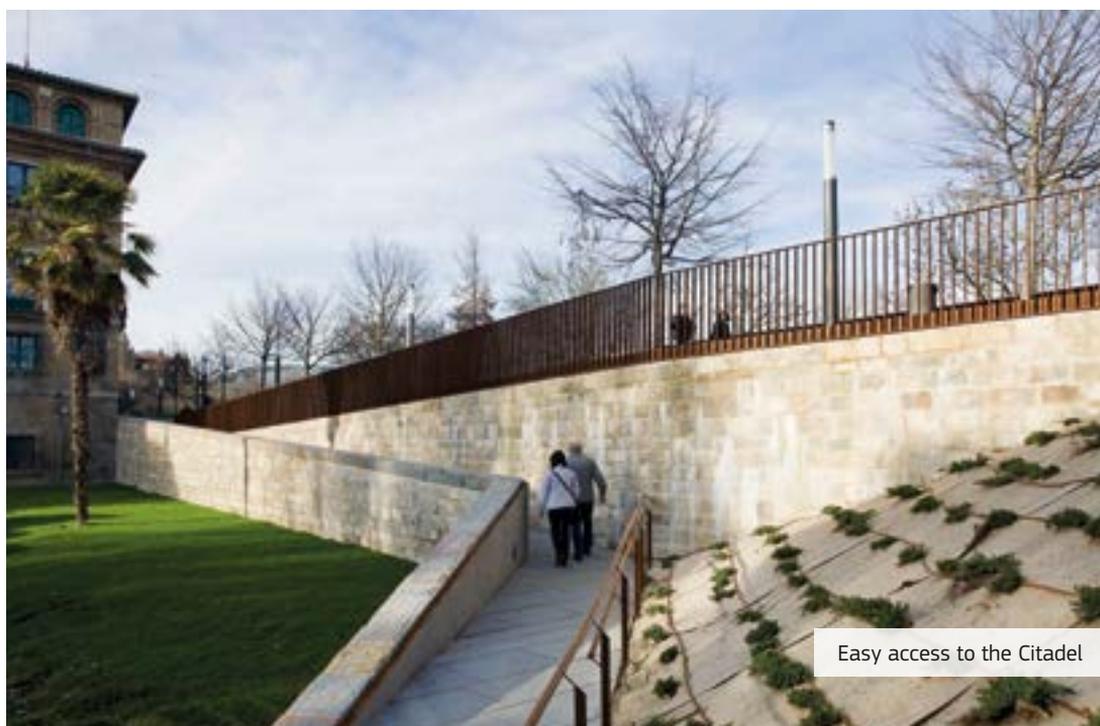
Pamplona has been given a special mention for its accessible urban environment and sustainable environmental policies.

The project described here demonstrates the possibilities of achieving good access even in historic cities with challenging terrain.

Rehabilitation of the fortified enclosure and the Citadel and restoration of the walls and other aspects of the historic city

The project comprises rehabilitation of the ancient fortified enclosure and the Citadel. This has included restoration of a 5 km path along the walls that surround the city.

In addition, there is a four-year plan to renovate the local infrastructure both in the old town and in newer developments in the city. This includes pavement improvements and urban furniture renovation: 100% of the pavements have been lowered; accessible playgrounds and fitness parks for older people have been introduced.



Easy access to the Citadel



The accessibility in the historic part of the city includes the possibility for everybody to visit the walls and old buildings and to walk by the river, where they will find new innovative bridges and lifts, lighting, accessible signals and interactive information for all visitors.

The playgrounds and fitness parks for elderly persons have been designed to meet all accessibility criteria.

Cristina Rodríguez-Porrero Miret, Director of CEAPAT-IMSERSO



Furthermore, nine lifts (and four more planned), two ramps or escalators and six footbridges have been built to overcome obstacles and solve accessibility problems.

Reconciling the need to preserve the historic integrity with the demands of accessibility

Pamplona has created a completely accessible tour of the walls by building roads and walkways that meet accessibility standards. They have also introduced accessible information panels explaining the history.

All the access improvements were designed in a way that respects the architectural heritage and were carried out with the permission and supervision of the National Organisation for the Protection of Heritage. All materials and specifications were approved in advance.

Two areas are not currently accessible, however there are plans to add lifts.

Involving disabled people

The project has been carried out in close collaboration with wheelchair users, people with mobility difficulties, blind people in the city, and regional disability associations.

Funding

This project has been built in phases to spread the cost. Funding has come from a range of sources including local (City of Pamplona), autonomous region (Navarra), and Central Government (1% from the Government of Spain's Cultural and Local Investment Fund).

For further information contact:
ji.alfonso@pamplona.es

Tallaght, Ireland

Special mention for accessible services and facilities

Tallaght is the main ‘County Town’ for South Dublin County. Its growth from a village of 2 500 people in the mid-1960s to the present day population of approximately 83 152 has made Tallaght one of Ireland’s major urban centres. It has extensive residential and employment areas and is served by a range of social, civic and commercial facilities, and a number of new public spaces linked by a high quality, accessible pedestrian network.

The project described is an example of a scheme for all citizens, which has proved to be particularly useful to disabled and older people.

Fixyourstreet.ie: publicly accessible website

Launched in August 2011, www.fixyourstreet.ie is a publicly accessible website with associated mobile phone technologies to enable citizens to report non-emergency issues such as street

lighting, drainage, graffiti, illegal dumping and road and footpath maintenance to their local authority. The scheme was piloted in South Dublin County Council and has now been rolled out nationally.

The technology

www.fixyourstreet.ie features interactive content which is crowd-sourced but moderated by the Council to ensure a safe browsing experience for users of the service. The Citizen becomes the ‘sensor’ on the ground in order to advise the local authority of issues of interest and/or concern in the local area.

The website itself www.fixyourstreet.ie is mobile-enabled, providing a simple interface for viewing and reporting issues through the mobile phone web browser. Fix Your Street also supports Twitter and email reporting of issues to the local authority.

“

‘Can’t be done’ is never accepted as an excuse not to include disabled people. In South Dublin County Council, it’s certainly a policy of Access ALL areas.

Carolyn, disabled resident, South Dublin County

”



The upgrade work carried out throughout the county on designated parking spaces and the addition of new ones has proved of great benefit to disabled drivers like me.



Michael, disabled resident, South Dublin County

Response times

Whenever possible, issues are resolved within 48 hours. However, most issues require a number of steps to be taken, and so a guaranteed response is received by the citizen within two working days, advising them what action is being taken / will be taken to resolve the matter. As actions are taken, the report is updated on www.fixyourstreet.ie. The initiative is based on the concept of open data, and all reported issues, including the Council's response, are kept in public view so there is openness and transparency.

Take up by disabled people

www.fixyourstreet.ie was not designed with the specific goal of enabling disabled people to bring access issues to the attention of the local authority. However, this initiative has shown potential for identifying and resolving urgent access issues which result in barriers for disabled people.

The category that has been found to have the most impact on disabled pedestrians is road and path defects. In 2012, South Dublin County Council received 4648 reports of issues requiring attention in the County via www.fixyourstreet.ie. The 'Road or path defects' category accounted for 622 of those reports.

Examples of actions undertaken, which have improved access, include the repair of damaged dished paths to make road crossing safer for wheelchair users, widening of narrow footpaths, repair of broken footpaths and installation of a designated accessible parking space.

Feedback from disabled people has been very positive.

Funding

Fix Your Street has been deployed using open source software so there has been no software purchase or ongoing licensing costs. The costs thus far relate to the graphic design and branding works required and some development of a related theme to apply to the website. These costs are one off. The mobile apps are also based on a one off procurement cost and have no ongoing cost implications in their present form.

The operation of the service has the ongoing costs of staff resources required to moderate the reports and respond to calls, however it is measurably more sustainable and more cost effective for reports of issues to be dealt with through an online service such as Fix Your Street than by more traditional means.

Logo for Fix Your Street website



For further information contact:
hello@fixyourstreet.ie

Participating in the Access•City Award 2014

The Access•City Award is organised by the European Commission with the involvement of the European Disability Forum. It aims to encourage cities to share their experience and to improve accessibility for the benefit of all.

Would you like to have your city projects featured in the next booklet of the Access•City Award? Do you want to share your experiences and actions with other cities?

We need your participation, so please take part in Access•City Award 2014!

The launch of the fourth award is expected to take place in May 2013.

Applications must be made by completing and submitting the online application form by the set deadline.

Detailed information will be available at: www.accesscityaward.eu

Participating in the Access•City Award initiative is not only an opportunity to win and be recognised, but also a unique chance to review the current situation in your city for your own internal auditing purposes and to measure progress.

Studying the questions in the application form is an excellent way to analyse your accessibility policies and identify their strengths and weaknesses.

Who can apply?

The applicant must be a government authority of a city of over 50 000 inhabitants in one of the EU Member States. In Member States with fewer than two such cities, urban areas composed of two or more towns may also participate if their combined population exceeds 50 000 inhabitants.

As the Access•City Award cannot be won by the same city in two consecutive years, the winning city in 2013 is not invited to take part again in 2014.

All other cities, including the runners-up, the finalists and those receiving special mentions, are encouraged to participate again.

Selection process

The Juries will consider measures taken and planned in the following **areas**:

- Built environment and public spaces
- Transport and related infrastructure

- Information and communication, including new technologies (ICTs)
- Public facilities and services

The Juries will evaluate the applications taking into account the following 5 **criteria**:

1. Scope of the actions
2. Ownership, level of commitment
3. Impact
4. Quality and sustainability of results
5. Involvement of people with disabilities and relevant partners

The selection process is divided into two phases: pre-selection at national level and final selection at European level.

The Juries are composed of accessibility experts, public authorities and representatives of the European Disability Forum and the AGE Platform.

The National Juries select a maximum of three cities (called national candidates) from among the national applicants using the evaluation criteria provided by the European Commission.

The national candidates are put forward to the second phase of the competition and assessed by the **European Jury**.

The winner of the Access•City Award 2014 will be announced on 3 December 2013. The ceremony is part of the annual European Day of People with Disabilities Conference organised in close cooperation with the European Disability Forum in Brussels.

The Access•City Award Secretariat

The application process and the work of the Jury are facilitated by the Access•City Award Secretariat. If you need any additional information, please contact:

secretariat@accesscityaward.eu



The new design of the trophy handed to the winner of the Access•City Award 2013. The trophy was designed for first time by the Polish artist, Emilia BOGUĆKA, for the European Commission annual award.

European Commission

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