



**Diverse  
Integration**



# An Introduction to the European Accessibility Act

## Why accessibility legislation matters:

**Globally, an estimated 1.3 billion people live with a disability, around 16 percent of the world's population. In Europe, that proportion is higher, with nearly one in four people affected in some countries. Despite this, more than 100 million people across Europe continue to face exclusion from education, employment, services, and everyday participation because products and services are not designed with accessibility in mind.**

The European Accessibility Act was introduced to address this systemic exclusion. Its purpose is to remove barriers by creating a clear, harmonised approach to accessibility across the European Union, applying to both public and private sectors.

By setting consistent accessibility requirements, the Act aims to enable people with disabilities to live, work, travel, and participate more freely across Europe, open access to education and employment, and create a more inclusive market where products and services can be used by as many people as possible.

At its core, this legislation is not only about compliance. It is about fair access, better design, and unlocking opportunity for individuals, organisations, and wider society.

If you design, manufacture, sell, or provide products or services to consumers in the EU, including digital services, online platforms, or connected products, this legislation is likely to apply to you. Since June 2025, accessibility is a legal requirement, not a future aspiration. Organisations that fall within scope must be able to demonstrate how accessibility has been considered, implemented, and evidenced across their products and services. Understanding your obligations early is essential to reducing risk, avoiding disruption, and protecting market access.



## How the Act works in practice

The legislation establishes a common accessibility framework across the EU, while allowing each Member State to apply and enforce the requirements through national law.

It works by defining which products and services are in scope, setting functional accessibility requirements focused on outcomes rather than prescriptive design, requiring Member States to transpose the Directive into domestic legislation, and assigning responsibility for monitoring and enforcement at national level.

The requirements apply to products placed on the EU market and services provided to consumers from 28 June 2025 onwards. Organisations must be able to demonstrate that accessibility has been considered and addressed throughout design, development, and delivery.

The focus is on usability for people with disabilities, not just technical compliance. Organisations are expected to consider how people with a range of access needs, including visual, hearing, mobility, and cognitive impairments, can independently perceive, understand, and use products and services.

To support consistency, the framework is underpinned by harmonised European standards. Using these standards provides a presumption of conformity while allowing flexibility in implementation. Six standards sit under the legislation, covering services and the built environment. For product designers, the most relevant is EN 301549, which incorporates the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

## What makes this legislation different

Accessibility requirements in Europe have historically focused on public bodies, with limited and inconsistent obligations for the private sector. This framework marks a clear shift.

For the first time, accessibility obligations are applied consistently to private sector organisations, including manufacturers, service providers, importers, and distributors. Accessibility is no longer optional or aspirational. Organisations must demonstrate compliance, respond to complaints, and take corrective action where needed.

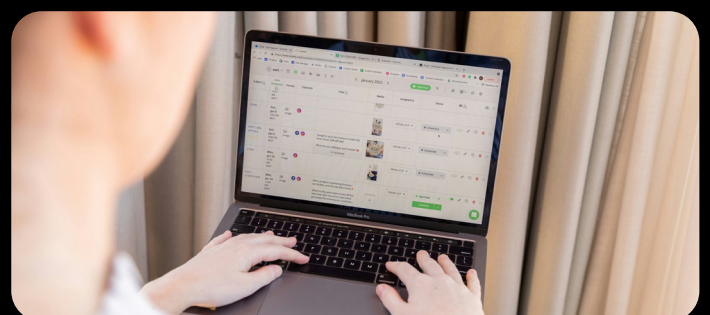
Accessibility is also now mandatory within public procurement. Public bodies must purchase accessible products and services where they are in scope. As a result, accessibility has become a gateway requirement for public sector contracts and a tangible commercial advantage.

A harmonised approach across the EU reduces fragmentation, supports cross-border trade, and gives organisations greater clarity when operating in multiple markets.

## Who are Diverse Integration and how can we help?

Diverse Integration is a disability-led accessibility and inclusion consultancy supporting product owners, manufacturers and service providers across Europe. Founded by a leader with lived experience of disability and over 20 years' experience in the testing, inspection and certification (TIC) industry, the organisation brings a perspective that places real-world usability first — underpinned by deep regulatory and compliance expertise.

We are supported by a trusted network of accessibility specialists spanning digital, products, services and organisational processes, enabling us to deliver credible, practical and sector-specific expertise where it matters most.





## Supporting your European Accessibility Act journey

The European Accessibility Act is purpose-led rather than technology-led. Whether something falls within scope depends not only on what it is, but how it is used, who it is for, and the access it enables. For many organisations, understanding scope is the critical first step.

## Our Compliance Solution

- **Scope Evaluation**
- **Co-Creation Insights**
- **Compliance Design Review & Gap Analysis**
- **Risk Assessment**
- **Training & Mentoring**
- **Compliance Verification & Roadmap**

We work in partnership with our clients to interpret the EAA with clarity and confidence — ensuring accessibility is embedded into design, development and governance processes, supported by evidence that stands up to internal assurance and external scrutiny.



## What this means for you

You gain clarity on your obligations, confidence in your compliance position, and a structured pathway for embedding accessibility across your organisation. Beyond meeting regulatory requirements, you strengthen inclusion, reduce risk, and create products and services that work for more people.

Accessibility becomes part of how you operate, innovate and lead.

Start or accelerate your accessibility journey today. Get in touch to discuss how Diverse Integration can support your organisation.

**Contact us at [info@diverseintegration.co.uk](mailto:info@diverseintegration.co.uk) or call +44 (0)7825 226855 to start the conversation.**

