

European Accessibility Act - Practice-based approaches to meeting accessibility requirements

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ABSTRACT

The European Accessibility Act (EAA) sets accessibility requirements for a wide range of products and services provided by public bodies and private companies, the implementation of which in Germany is defined by the *Barrierefreiheitsstärkungsgesetz* (BFSG). Despite numerous approaches to make information and communication technologies (ICT) accessible, non-accessible software solutions still exist due to a lack of technical knowledge, resources and motivation. The workshop aims to discuss practical approaches and perspectives using HCI methods to support all stakeholders involved in the development of accessible ICT solutions, including end-users, decision-makers, designers, developers, quality assurance and companies as a whole. The prioritisation of accessibility needs to be rethought in the short term in order to meet the requirements of the BFSG (and thus the EAA). In particular, the individual needs and social contexts of socio-technical systems must be taken into account. The aim of the workshop is to gather and discuss different perspectives, opinions and approaches in an interdisciplinary combination of researchers, practitioners and directly and indirectly affected groups of people.

CCS CONCEPTS

• **Human-centered computing** → **Accessibility; Human computer interaction (HCI); Collaborative and social computing.**

KEYWORDS

Accessibility, Human-Computer-Interaction, Disability Studies, Inclusion

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1 INTRODUCTION

The European Accessibility Act (EAA), also known as Directive (EU) 2019/882 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on accessibility requirements for products and services [4], sets accessibility requirements for a wide range of products and services and addresses not only public bodies but also private companies. On 22.07.2021, the associated law transposing the directive was published in Germany as the *Barrierefreiheitsstärkungsgesetz* (BFSG). Its requirements apply from 28.06.2025 for products placed on the market and for services provided from that date. There have been various approaches to accessible design of information and communication technologies for some time, e.g. Universal Design (UD), Design for All (DfA) or Ability-based Design (ABD), to name but a few [3, 5, 9]. Despite the various approaches and the insight that accessibility must be considered in all phases of product development [8] and that accessibility is clearly gaining relevance against the background of digitalisation and demographic change [2], there are still too many software solutions in practice that are not accessible [1]. In addition, there is a lack of practical approaches for implementing the principles of accessibility on a broad level and as a standard in the everyday practice of technology development and consulting.

The reasons for non-accessible developments range from a lack of technical know-how to a lack of resources, arguments about overly complex standards and guidelines, and a lack of awareness and motivation for the topic [1, 10]. To further strengthen the accessibility of IT artefacts, more than a purely technical-methodological approach is needed. Rather, attention must also be paid to taking the design and development teams, the companies as a whole and the users along on the journey in order to develop practical solutions in a comprehensive manner. In particular, the individual needs and social contexts of the groups of actors involved as well as the effects and interactions on the socio-technical structures must be taken into account [6, 7]. Against the background of the regulations of the BFSG (and thus the implementation of the EAA), which come into force in 2025, there are major challenges for both research and a large number of companies in coping with accessibility requirements. With this workshop at the "Mensch und Computer" Conference 2023, we would like to raise awareness of this topic and jointly collect, develop, present, discuss and evaluate practical approaches, perspectives, opinions and solutions, thus making a valuable contribution to meeting accessibility requirements.

2 AIM OF THE WORKSHOP

In our workshop, we would like to discuss with you how we can use HCI methods to support all stakeholder groups involved in

the development of accessible IT solutions. This includes not only the end users who will ultimately be able to operate the product, but also all the stakeholder groups involved up to that point, such as companies and decision-makers, designers, developers, quality assurance and others. We can already assume that a rethinking of the prioritisation of accessibility will have to take place in a fairly short period of time in order to meet the requirements of the BFSG. Furthermore, what are the next "Big Challenges" for the stakeholder groups as well as for HCI researchers to be able to deal well with the expected requirements? The aim of the workshop is to gather and discuss different perspectives and opinions as well as different approaches in an interdisciplinary combination of researchers, practitioners and directly and indirectly affected groups of people. To this end, we cordially invite you to apply with a contribution to our workshop (for details see below: Call for Papers). The jointly developed results are to be published at national and international conferences and thus made available to a larger group for application and discussion.

3 CALL FOR PAPERS

We would like to ask interested participants to submit a short position paper (max. 4 pages excl. references) with their ideas on this topic until 16.06.2023 via the [ConfTool](https://www.conftool.com/muc2023) (see below for additional information) of the conference and, if accepted, to present it on site during the workshop. Furthermore, there is the possibility to publish the contributions (further information after acceptance of the contribution).

Submission deadline: 16.06.2023

Notification: 07.07.2023

Via ConfTool:

<https://www.conftool.com/muc2023>

Format template:

Please use the ACM SIGCHI 2-column format.

- **Overleaf & LaTeX**, use `\documentclass[manuscript,review]{acmart}`
- **Word** (as a two-column document)

Length:

Max. 4 pages excl. references, in case of planned publication 4 pages excl. bibliography and short biographies.

Language:

English preferred. Papers resulting from the workshop will be published in English.

3.1 Additional notes for the ConfTool

If the direct link above does not work, log in to the [ConfTool](https://www.conftool.com/muc2023) and select the title "MCI-WS07: European Accessibility Act - Practice-based approaches to meeting accessibility requirements" in the "Submissions" section.

- Link to ConfTool: <https://www.conftool.com/muc2023>
- Direct link ConfTool section "Submissions": <https://www.conftool.com/muc2023/index.php?page=submissions>
- Direct link ConfTool area "Workshop": https://www.conftool.com/muc2023/index.php?page=newPaper&form_contributiontypeID=168&newpaper=true

If you have any questions about the submission, please contact Mr. Bittenbinder (sven.bittenbinder@uni-siegen.de).

4 POSSIBLE WORKSHOP TOPICS

Areas that could be addressed in a position paper (non-exhaustive list):

- Empowerment of companies, employees and people with disabilities.
- Raising awareness and motivation for the topic of accessibility
- Accessibility strategy as part of the digitalisation strategy
- Addressing usability and accessibility on an equal footing
- Test catalogues, guidelines, own evaluation criteria
- Implementation of processes and methods in practice
- Know-how transfer, teaching and learning formats
- Inclusive management
- Socio-informatic perspective, view on micro, meso and macro level
- Sustainability / sustainable processes, methods, models and their appropriation
- AI-supported tools
- Challenges for HCI researchers in the field of accessibility

5 WEBSITE

All information about the workshop, how to contact us and a list of accepted contributions can be found on the website <https://ws-a11y-muc2023.wineme.wiwi.uni-siegen.de/>.

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A WORKSHOP ORGANIZERS

Sven Bittenbinder is a PhD student at the Information Systems department, especially IT for the Ageing Society at the University of Siegen. He is working in the area of accessible software and how to sensitize and support the general public to include vulnerable groups in everyday life and in the use of new technologies. More information about [IT for the Ageing Society](#) or [Sven Bittenbinder](#)

Claudia Müller is a Professor (Subst.) of Socio-Informatics, specialising in “IT for the ageing society” at the University of Siegen, Germany. Her expertise is Participatory Design with and for older adults, vulnerable user groups and local communities. She is representative chairwoman of the commission of the Eighth Federal Government Report on Older People. More information about [IT](#)

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Zeynep Tuncer is a professor and Head of Media Informatics (Master), Human-Computer-Interaction (Master) and Digital Media (Bachelor) at Wilhelm Büchner University, where she also serves as an ombudsperson monitoring the rules of good scientific practice in research. In addition, she is a spokesperson for the Media Informatics group and a member of the Human-Computer Interaction board of directors at the German Informatics Society (GI e.V.). She is strongly committed to promoting women in STEM fields and also works as a volunteer mentor at Mentoring Hessen. Further information about Ms. Tuncer is available on her website (www.ztuncer.com).