



ACHIEVING FULL PARTICIPATION THROUGH UNIVERSAL DESIGN

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COE Report on Universal Design

- **Universal Design**
 - What?
 - For whom?
 - How?
- Examples of **UD** aspects
 - Disability action plan
 - Process stages





Universal Design

What is it?

- It is a **strategy...**
- to make the **design** of environments
- **accessible, understandable, usable**
- by everyone, **to the greatest extent possible**
- **in the most natural manner**
- **without the need for adaptation.**



Definitions

Converging headlines

- Universal Design
- Design for all
- Integral accessibility
- Accessible Design
- Inclusive Design
- Barrier-free Design
- Transgenerational Design
- Accessibility for all



Universal Design

What is essential?

It is a strategy, not a technique.

It is to be used
from the **early stages of the planning.**



Universal Design

What is essential?

Universality **to the greatest extent possible.**

Challenge is to design **mainstream solutions** for as many people as possible including people with disabilities/impairments.

The needs of people of **different ages and capabilities** are to be considered.



Universal Design – Working field

All aspects of society:

- Built environment
- Information and communication networks
- Public Transport
- Services, products and goods
- Tourism
- Employment
- Education





Universal Design Why?

Improving life quality of people with disabilities/functional impairments

- > equal rights
- > full participation in society
- > enhancing autonomy



Universal Design Why?

Policies, societies and environments
have not been designed to meet
the requirements of people
with functional impairments/disabilities

The population with impairments
is **growing**.

It also includes **elderly people**.



Universal Design Effectiveness

- **Avoids and prevents** problems of accessibility which are/could be barriers to participation in society.
No need of eliminating them afterwards (costly).
- Give people with impairments **equal rights**.
They don't need to claim accessibility (adaptations) or help.



Universal Design

Basic principle

= Mainstreaming

- Entrance suitable for people with impairments is also easy to use for parents with prams, travellers with suitcases on wheels, etc.
- Websites accessible for blind people are easy to read and use for older people.





Universal Design

Basic principle



France



Austria



Shift in disability policy

UD is outcome of evolution in disability policies from:

- a **medical** model = disability = care
- towards a **social** model = ability = integration
- nowadays a democratic **human rights** model = full citizenship and independent living.



UD is a democratic strategy

- **Universal Design:**
 - is user-centred
 - is responsive to the needs of people with **diverse abilities**
 - includes the changes people experience in the course of life.
- **Disability/impairment is an element of diversity.**



Universal Design and Accessibility

- Accessibility is a prerequisite for achieving equal opportunities for people with disabilities and is often realised by adapting environments.
- **Universal Design tries to prevent problems by making design adaptable**
= adaptability instead of adaptation.
- Accessibility policies deliver information about requirements of major user groups.



Universal Design vs. Assistive technology

- **UD** does not make assistive technology obsolete. Some people with disabilities will continue to need assistive technology.
- Assistive technology is a resource of information.
e.g. screen readers developed for visual impaired people become a standard feature of common software.
- Assistive Technology brings a new challenge: **Universal Designed** solutions must be able to interact with these technologies: interoperability.
e.g. Internet dictionary, Hungary includes sign-language (can be seen on the screen) and talking options as well as widely used text size and contrast adjustment features + words can be translated in different languages.



Historical Events – Equal rights

- **1950**: European Convention for the protection of **Human Rights** and Fundamental Freedoms for people with disabilities.
- **1993**: UN standard rules on the **Equalization of Opportunities** for persons with disabilities.
- **2001**: The Council of Europe Resolution ResAP (2001)3 “Towards **full citizenship** of persons with disabilities through inclusive technologies”.
- **2005**: The Warsaw Action Plan (Chapter III 1.) ensuring **equal rights**.
- **2006**: The Council of Europe Disability Action Plan (2006-2015): **human rights, non- discrimination, equal opportunities, full citizenship and participation of people with disabilities into a European policy framework on disability.**



Historical Events Anti-discrimination

- **1990**: Americans with Disabilities Act with a set of regulations banning **discrimination.**
- **1997**: The Treaty of Amsterdam of the European Union, including Art.13 on **non- discrimination.**



Historical Events Universal Design

- **1995**: Principles of **UD** formulated at University of North Carolina.
- **2001**: The CoE (Tomar) Resolution ResAP(2001)1 introduction of principles of **UD** into the curricula of all occupations working on the built environment.
- **2007**: The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities mentions **Universal Design** under “general obligations”.
- **2007**: Council of Europe Resolution ResAP (2007)3 on “Achieving full participation through Universal Design” is adopted.



Historical Events - Instruments

- **1999: accessibility guidelines** in the International Organization for Standardization (**ISO**).
- **2002: e-Europe 2002 Action Plan (EC)** to achieve “an Information Society” with **guidelines, national centres of excellence, curricula for designers** and **UD-standards**.
- **2002: European Design for All e-accessibility Network (EDeAN)**.
- **2005: European Union mandate** to the European Standardisation Organisations to develop a **standard on accessibility requirements** to be used in **public procurement** in ICT.



Current situation Council of Europe

- Human rights, participation and inclusion in **Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015.**
- **Universal Design** is one of the means of accomplishing the goals set in the Action Plan:
 - a **definition** is present
 - there is a **clear belief** in **UD.**
- Many of the aforementioned resolutions are translated into national initiatives.



Current situation European Commission

- Public Procurement Directive
- Rules for future European legislation incorporate **UD**

Aim:

To reach the long-term goals of full participation and inclusion.



Current Situation - Industry

- The International Organization for Standardisation has contributed with **UD** guides on the requirements of groups of disabled citizens.

Aim:

To enable industry to translate the basic values into usable products.



Situation in Member states

Review in 11 member states:

- **UD** on the **political agenda**: 11
- National **UD plan**: 6 + 1 partly
- **Legislation**: 7 + 1 partly
- Awareness program on **UD**: 8



Situation in Member states

- **Public procurement incl. UD: 5 + 2 partly**
- **Disability organisations involved: 11**
- **Industry participation: 4 + 1 partly**
- **UD in curricula: 6 + 3 partly**



Situation in member states

- **UD Research programmes:** 6 + 3 partly
- **UD Labelling** system & standards: 7 + 1 partly
- **UD National monitoring system:** 3
- **Disability discrimination act:** 5



Situation in member states

- **Very positive experiences** with UD initiatives.
- **Full advantage** of the possibilities has **not yet been taken.**
- **New measures** and **initiatives** are clearly needed...
- to cope with **ageing and increasing number** of people with **disabilities.**



How to achieve?

To facilitate full participation in community life:

- ensuring
access and usability
of built environment
- implementing **UD**
as a strategy
to ensure equal and democratic rights.





Recommendations to Governments

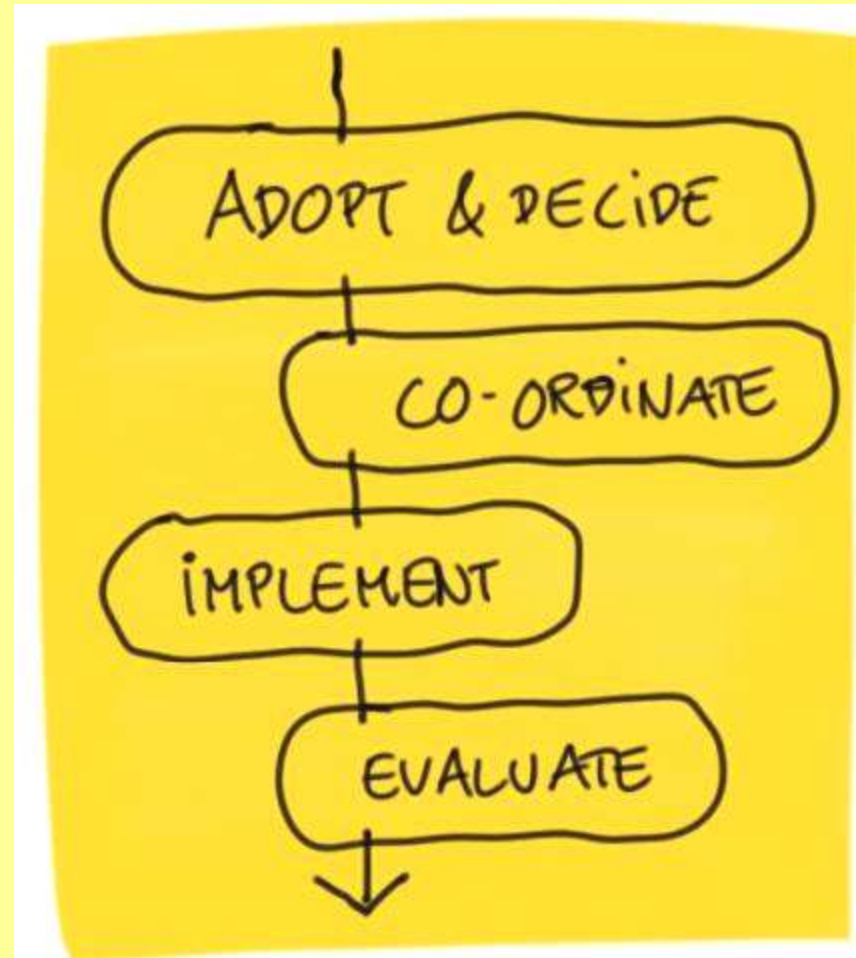
- Successful **UD**: look to the process.
- Promote the application of **UD** in implementation of the 2006-2015 Disability Action Plan.

Action Lines

- 3.1. Participation in political and public life
- 3.2. Participation in cultural life
- 3.3. Information and communication
- 3.4. Education
- 3.5. Employment, vocational guidance and training
- 3.6. The built environment
- 3.7. Transport
- 3.8. Community living
- 3.9. Health care
- 3.10. Rehabilitation
- 3.11. Social protection
- 3.12. Legal protection
- 3.13. Safeguarding people with disabilities against violence
- 3.14. Research and development
- 3.15. Awareness raising



Four-stage process

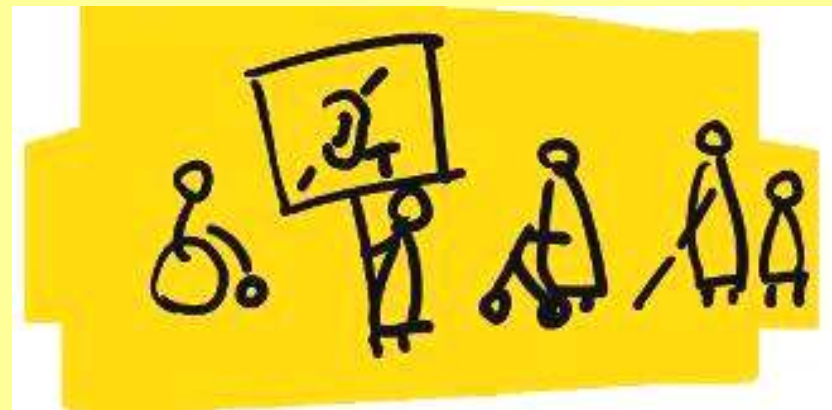
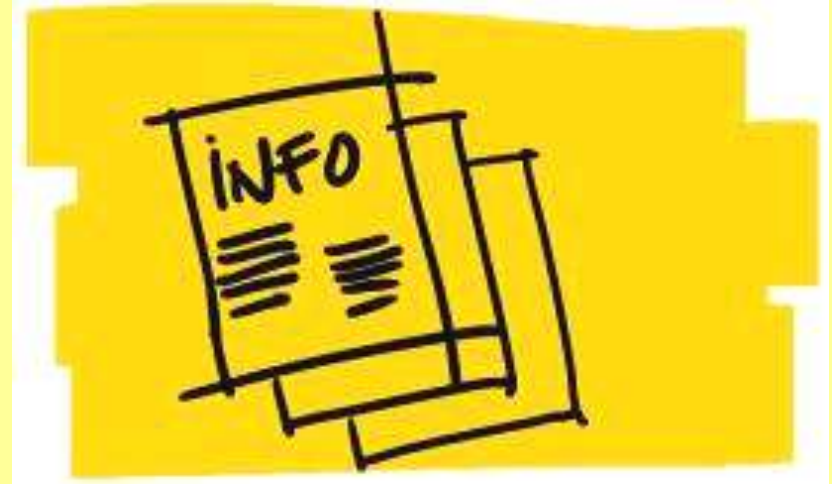




Recommendation 1

Adopt, Decide

- **UD** policies deal with equal opportunities.
- Thus these policies must be **at the highest level of legal responsibility...**
- and should include **enforcement measures.**
e.g. inclusion of **UD-**requirements in **public procurement.**
- Compulsory standards.





Adoptions and Decisions Examples

- Legislation: building regulations
 - strictly enforced
 - refurbishing included
 - more than just persons in wheelchairs.
- Discrimination acts.
- Standards:
 - covering relevant user groups
 - linked to legislation.





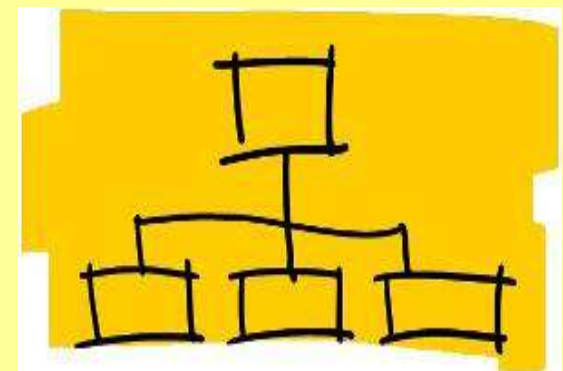
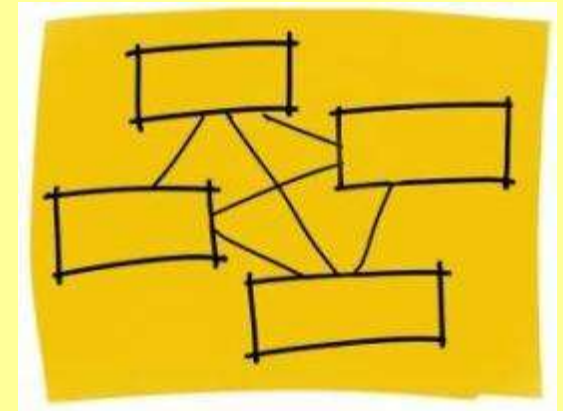
Recommendation 2

Co-ordinate

- Need for **co-ordinated approach** between **different ministries**, between **public and private partnerships**.
- Need for an **intersectorial** approach (see broad working field).

Policies should mainstream disability issues **in all policy areas** incorporating **UD** in political, public and cultural life.

e.g. introduction of **UD** in curricula – courses – teaching materials.





Co-ordination Examples

Assigning responsibility to high-ranking persons in organisations.



Information on
legislative
measures,
social services,
products,
assistive
technology.



Recommendation 3

Implement

Information to professionals.

Research and **development**.

Incentives to designers, architects and engineers.

UD Training at all levels ranging from basic to more specialised and aimed at different professions.

UD knowledge centres.

Involvement of end-user groups.

Guidelines and **standards**.

Financial resources.





Implementation

Raising awareness

- Acceptance of **UD** requires new ways of thinking.
- **UD** must be made visible, tangible and realistic (lack of perception on **UD**).
- Participation of captains of industry.
- Convincing argument: cost-benefit analyses (preventing problems is cheaper than solving).



Implementation Examples

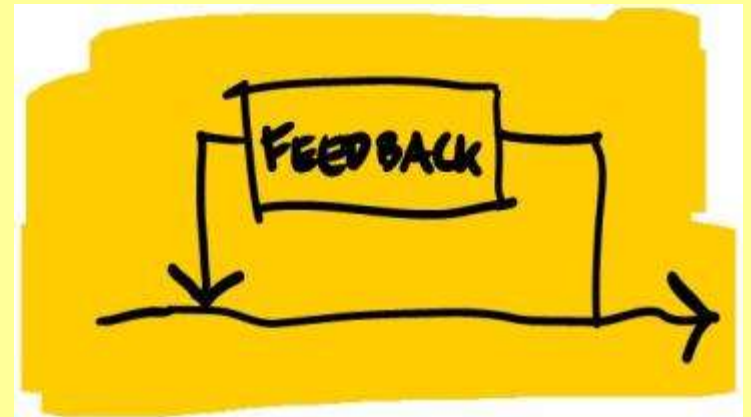
- **Accessible travel info point:**
Website - financial incentives – labelling – user involvement, Flanders.
- Private initiative:
Pfizer Germany commitment to creating accessible websites.
- Guidelines for **e-administration**, Sweden.
- Network of science and enterprise for accessibility and communication - **CEPACC**, Spain.
- **University courses:** Austria, Spain.
- **Awards** for the best works on the elimination of structural barriers in education, Portugal.



Recommendation 4

Evaluate

- Quality assessment and feedback in the course of the implementation of action plans.
- Skilled assessors in quality assessment and research should be asked to translate clearly defined evidence-based user requirements into instruments for the statistical measuring of effects.
 - benchmarking
 - monitoring





Evaluation Examples


- Quality assessment

- Feedback

- Follow-up procedures

The Government Action Plan for increased accessibility for persons with disabilities
Plan for universal design in key areas of society, Norway

Example of Universal design



Sector:	National plans
Adoption and decision on principle	✓
Co-ordination	✓
Implementation	✓
Evaluation	✓
Beneficial for:	All users
Limitations:	None
Feasibility:	All countries

Description: The Government Action Plan for increased accessibility for persons with disabili-

- Instruments for measuring of effects



Essential: User involvement

The input of experienced
representatives from user organisations
should be ensured at all
levels where decisions are made.



Universal Design Requirement no. 1

DETERMINATION!



Thank you.