**Leaving no one behind during the European Development Days (EDD)**

**Recommendations for accessible and inclusive EDDs, based on 2018 and 2019 editions.**

This section aims to provide concrete recommendations to enhance the accessibility of future European Development Days. As mentioned in the letters sent to the EDD organisers, we believe it is extremely important that EU events are accessible for all persons with disabilities, regardless of the type of disability, in line with the EU’s obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

* The **main entrance should be fully accessible**
	+ - **Recommendations**: ensure from the start that during the next EDDs that one single entrance is accessible to all.
* **Staff should be properly trained** on accessibility and sufficiently informed of the measures that are in place during the event, including the location and use of accessible toilets.
	+ **Recommendations**: Provide awareness and training on accessibility to **all** staff involved in the event, as well as the team working on communications and digital accessibility.
* **Include clear indications** both inside and outside the venue to indicate main rooms, areas and for general orientation. There is often a lack of signs, including exit, fire escape, fast track line, prayer room, relief areas for service animals and quiet room signs. There were standing maps for this purpose, which should have been placed in more and different points inside the venue.
	+ **Recommendations:** Include more signs and clear indications accessible to all participants. The dedicated phone number for assistance should be visible in different parts of the venue, so it is handy to anyone who might need it.
* **Toilets** designated for persons with disabilities should be fully accessible with a passcode, as for previous years.
	+ **Recommendations**: Indicate the passcode to enter the toilet in a more visible way, the size of characters should be bigger. Speakers on the line for support should be able to speak English.
* We welcome the sign language interpretation during live streamed sessions. Therefore, we strongly encourage to consider hiring **velotyping/speech to text service** for key moments and high-level panels. This is useful not only for deaf and hard of hearing persons, but others who might struggle to follow the discussion, for instance, due to lack of fluency in the English. Sign language interpretation and captioning services should be seen as complementary to each other.
* The event should also be made more accessible to persons with **intellectual disabilities**.
	+ **Recommendations**: Information on the main sessions/auditoriums should be provided also in Easy-to-Read versions, bothon paper and on the website. Also, we strongly encourage to consider booking a ‘quiet room’ for participants who need a break from the overwhelming amount of information received and activities taking place during the two days. This room should be clearly indicated in maps and this information should be included in the accessibility statement.
* **Shuttle buses** and information related to them should be clear and concise. Also, buses should be accessible for persons with reduced mobility or wheelchair users.
	+ **Recommendations**: Provide clear signs and indications to participants beforehand, making a distinction between the two different shuttle bus services (Tour & taxis / EDD). Please also consider that pick-up and drop off points should be in accessible locations, so that persons with disabilities are actually able to reach the shuttle buses, which should be accessible to all.
* The access from the main rooms to the **food truck court** should be accessible.
	+ **Recommendations**: Ensure access to the food court includes a ramp in order to make it fully accessible. Persons with reduced mobility and wheel-chair users should be able to access the food area by themselves.
* Avoid **obstacles** inside session and auditorium rooms, such as cables on the floor and ramps to access the stage blocked by stage furniture.
	+ **Recommendations**: Session rooms should all be subject to a thorough  accessibility check by an expert the evening before the event or in the morning of the first day.
* **Music** **and noise** in the open spaces should not be too loud and distracting as it prevents the audience from hearing the speakers, interfering also the job of interpreters. This can be very disturbing for persons with intellectual, psychosocial and other types of disabilities, like autism.
	+ **Recommendations**: Auditorium rooms should be better insulated or coordination of activities should be improved.
* Both the **mobile APP and website** should be fully accessible and intuitive.
	+ **Recommendations**: Digital resources should be developed in line with the EU standard EN 301549, version 2.1. A guideline should be made available beforehand to participants, exhibitors and speakers on how to use the app correctly.