



Digital Accessibility for Enterprises:

How to ensure compliance with the
European Accessibility Act (EAA)

The European Accessibility Act (EAA) is coming

Are you ready?

Today, 27% of people in the EU live with some form of disability. This includes individuals with visual impairments, hearing impairments, mobility issues, cognitive disabilities, and other conditions that affect their ability to navigate digital and physical spaces.

Many depend on digital products and services like computers, smartphones, websites, video platforms, and online communication tools to

access information, stay connected and engage with the world around them. However, accessibility barriers continue to limit full participation for individuals with disabilities. These barriers can include low-contrast text on websites, the absence of alternative text or voiceovers for individuals with visual impairments, and the lack of captions or sign language interpretation for those with auditory impairments – among many others.

Yet, digital accessibility has often been treated as a nice-to-have rather than a must-have. This is partly because it is perceived as costly, time-consuming, and resource intensive. In a world driven by KPIs and ROI, efforts often prioritise what is easiest to measure—leaving accessibility overlooked, despite its potential to enhance the customer experience for more than a fourth of users. The impact of elements like video captions or improved website contrast can be difficult to quantify, but the absence of these features creates persistent barriers that

prevent millions from fully engaging in a digital world that others navigate with ease.

However, change is on the horizon. Soon, the EAA will make it a legal requirement for essential digital products and services to be fully accessible to people with disabilities, the elderly and others who face accessibility challenges. It's a groundbreaking piece of legislation. And it aims to ensure no one is excluded.

In this white paper, learn more about:



What the EAA means for you and your business



Translating WCAG success criteria into actionable, inclusive content strategies



Quick facts about the EAA



Your digital accessibility partner



How to navigate the EAA

What does EAA mean to you?

Does your business operate in the EU? Does it design, develop, sell, or distribute digital products within the region?

Then the EAA applies to you. The Act emphasises complete digital inclusivity, meaning your digital offerings must be understandable, navigable and technically usable for everyone.

Preparing for the EAA may seem daunting, but it's a valuable opportunity to rethink how your enterprise approaches accessibility and accessible design.

And it's a chance to be part of a movement that's creating genuine, far-reaching inclusivity across the EU and beyond.



The good news? You don't have to do it alone.

This white paper breaks down the EAA, helping you understand what it means for your business and how to prepare. It provides practical guidance, outlines key requirements, and offers a roadmap to help your business achieve compliance.

By acting now, you'll not only meet legal obligations but also unlock new opportunities, strengthen your brand reputation, and ensure that your digital products and services are accessible to everyone.

A word from our CEO

The European Accessibility Act challenges us to rethink how we design and deliver language, information, and digital experiences. It's a push to break down barriers and create products and services that enable everyone, regardless of ability, to engage meaningfully. It's an ongoing commitment. It requires reflection, adaptation, and a willingness to evolve... Businesses today have a unique opportunity - not just to meet regulations, but to lead meaningful change, build a more inclusive, connected world where everyone is included.

Søren Bech Justesen
CEO, LanguageWire



EAA Quick Facts

What is the EAA?

The European Accessibility Act (EAA) (Directive (EU) 2019/882) is a landmark EU regulation designed to harmonise accessibility standards for digital products and services across the EU Single Market. Its goal is to create a more inclusive society by removing barriers that prevent individuals with disabilities from fully participating in the digital world.

Why was it created?

The EAA was created from a need for action. For years, accessibility standards varied widely among EU member states. Some countries had strong national accessibility laws, while others had minimal or inconsistent regulations. This lack of uniformity created legal uncertainty, unequal protections, and difficulties for businesses operating across borders. The EAA addresses these challenges by establishing common accessibility requirements, ensuring accessibility regulations are no longer fragmented across the EU.

Which products and services does it cover?

Products

- Computers
- Smartphones, tablets
- ATMs, ticketing and check-in machines
- E-readers
- Payment terminals

Services

- E-commerce platforms
- Banking
- Transport services
- Audiovisual media services (TV, streaming platforms, digital content, etc.)
- Websites

When will the EAA come into effect?

The EAA officially comes into effect on June 28, 2025. Any new digital products or services placed on the market or updated after this date must conform to the Act's accessibility requirements. Products or services already on the market and not updated before this date do not have to conform until June 28, 2030, at the latest.

How will the EAA be enforced?

The EAA will be enforced through a combination of national authorities, compliance monitoring, and penalties. Each EU member state is responsible for implementing and overseeing enforcement within its jurisdiction.

Who or what is exempt?



Micro-enterprises

Businesses with fewer than 10 employees and an annual turnover of under €2 million



Businesses

May be exempt if compliance causes excessive financial or technical burden or fundamentally alters a product's core function, but they must justify exemptions and meet requirements where possible.



Certain types of content, including:

- Pre-recorded time-based media published before the June 2025 deadline.
- Office file formats published before the June 2025 deadline.
- Third-party content not funded, created or controlled by your business.
- Archived websites or apps that won't be updated after the June 2025 deadline.

What are the consequences for non-compliance?

Failing to meet EAA accessibility requirements can result in:



Legal penalties

Fines, sanctions, and potential litigation costs.



Market restrictions

Limited ability to operate within the EU.



Reputational damage

A loss of trust in an increasingly accessibility-conscious market.



Missed opportunities

Exclusion from audience segments that value or need digital inclusivity.

How to navigate the EAA

Like many regulatory frameworks, the EAA is difficult to navigate. While it sets clear accessibility goals, it lacks a detailed, step-by-step guide on how to achieve them. Compliance is somewhat confusing, leaving many businesses uncertain about the path forward.

The recommended approach

To stay ahead and ensure your business meets the EAA's requirements, aligning with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and EN 301 549 is the most widely accepted strategy. Consider them your roadmaps.

1. Understand EN 301 549

EN 301 549 is also known as the European Standard on accessibility requirements for Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) products and services.

While the European Accessibility Act (EAA) is the legislation that defines which products/services need to be accessible, EN 301 549 is the technical standard that defines how to make these products/services accessible. Think of this standard as the toolkit to

help you comply with the EAA, as it provides the concrete criteria and testable requirements for businesses to follow.

To define web and software accessibility, EN 301 549 directly references the WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) published by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C).

2. Understand the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

WCAG is published by the W3C, an international organisation whose mission is to "make the web work, for everyone" and to lead the web to its full potential by developing open standards and guidelines that ensure accessibility, internationalisation, and interoperability.



The first version – WCAG 1.0

The first official version of the guidelines, which primarily focused on HTML content, was published in 1999.



The overhaul – WCAG 2.0

In 2008, there was a major overhaul of the guidelines, which introduced 61 success criteria, divided into four core principles and three testable conformance levels. Unlike WCAG 1.0, these guidelines weren't limited to HTML content but applied to all web technologies.



POUR: The four core principles

POUR is an acronym that represents the four essential principles of digital accessibility: Perceivable, Operable, Understandable, and Robust. These principles form the foundation of the WCAG and are also at the heart of the EN 301 549 standard.

Perceivable

Can all users, regardless of ability, access the information presented on your platform? Are there text alternatives for images, subtitles for videos, and audio descriptions where necessary?

Operable

Can users navigate and interact with your digital content using a keyboard, screen reader, or other assistive technologies? Are all interactive elements easy to use?

Understandable

Is your content written in clear, simple language? Is navigation predictable and intuitive? Do users receive helpful feedback when errors occur?

Robust

Is your digital content compatible with assistive technologies and adaptable to different devices and future accessibility innovations?

Levels of conformance: From A to AAA

Each conformance level outlines specific guidelines that must be met to ensure a website is accessible to all users. These levels provide developers with a clear framework for achieving minimum, acceptable, and optimal accessibility.

Level A

Basic accessibility needs and essential for all websites.

Level AA

Addresses more user needs and often the common legal requirement.

Level AAA

Highest level of accessibility. Not recommended as the legal requirement, as it is not always practical or possible to implement across an entire site.

3. The current baseline - WCAG 2.1

Released in 2018, 17 new success criteria were introduced to address low vision improvements, mobile accessibility and cognitive and learning disabilities.

These guidelines primarily apply to websites, but also digital documents, mobile apps, and even physical digital interfaces like ATMs, ticket machines

and payment systems—essentially any product or platform that displays information or content digitally.

If your digital services meet WCAG 2.1 AA, you're meeting the core accessibility requirements of EN 301 549 – and by extension, supporting compliance with the European Accessibility Act.

4. The latest release – WCAG 2.2

Released in 2023, 9 additional success criteria were added to the existing guidelines. These focused on better usability for users with cognitive disabilities, low vision, and limited mobility.

While EN 301 549 currently aligns with WCAG 2.1 AA, the guidelines are continually evolving to meet emerging needs. WCAG 2.2 is already in place and is expected to be incorporated into EN 301 549 by late 2025. To future-proof your accessibility compliance, aligning with WCAG 2.2 AA now is a proactive move.

Note: Meeting the requirements of WCAG 2.2 at a given level (A, AA, or AAA) also ensures conformance with WCAG 2.1 and 2.0 at the same

level or any lower level. This is because each WCAG 2.x update builds on the previous version by adding new success criteria, while retaining all existing ones.

For example, WCAG 2.2 AA compliance means you also comply with:

- WCAG 2.2 A
- WCAG 2.1 AA
- WCAG 2.1 A
- WCAG 2.0 AA
- WCAG 2.0 A



Below you can see an overview of the four core principals, the three conformance levels, and the specific success criteria added as part of the 2.0, 2.1 and 2.2 WCAG release.

Principles	1. Perceivable				2. Operable					3. Understandable			4. Robust
Guidelines	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	3.1	3.2	3.3	4.1
Success Criteria Level A	1.1.1	1.2.1	1.3.1	1.4.1	2.1.1	2.2.1	2.3.1	2.4.1	2.5.1	3.1.1	3.2.1	3.3.1	4.1.1
		1.2.2	1.3.2	1.4.2	2.1.2	2.2.2		2.4.2	2.5.2		3.2.2	3.3.2	
		1.2.3	1.3.3		2.1.4			2.4.4	2.5.3		3.2.6*	3.3.9	
									2.5.4				
Success Criteria Level AA		1.2.4	1.3.4	1.4.3				2.4.3	2.5.7	3.1.2	3.2.3	3.3.3	4.1.2
		1.2.5	1.3.5	1.4.4				2.4.5	2.5.8		3.2.4	3.3.4	4.1.3
				1.4.5				2.4.6	2.5.9*			3.3.7	
				1.4.10				2.4.7					
				1.4.11				2.4.11					
				1.4.12									
				1.4.13*									
Success Criteria Level AAA		1.2.6	1.3.6	1.4.6	2.1.3	2.2.3	2.3.2	2.4.8	2.5.5	3.1.3	3.2.5	3.3.5	
		1.2.7		1.4.7		2.2.4	2.3.3	2.4.9	2.5.6	3.1.4		3.3.6	
		1.2.8		1.4.8		2.2.5		2.4.10		3.1.5		3.3.8	
		1.2.9		1.4.9		2.2.6		2.4.12		3.1.6			
								2.4.13					

WCAG 2.0
 WCAG 2.1
 WCAG 2.2

Notes:

- 1.4.13 - Introduced in WCAG 2.1, with clearer expectations and stronger emphasis in WCAG 2.2.
- 2.5.9 - Introduced as a more practical and enforceable alternative to 2.5.5.
- 3.2.6 - Functionally, this aligns more with the “Operable” principle in WCAG, but its numbering structure places it within the “Understandable” section.

Translating WCAG success criteria into actionable, inclusive content strategies

With the EAA set to take effect on 28 June 2025, businesses operating within the EU will be required to implement many of the success criteria outlined in WCAG 2.1 to ensure compliance.

Varying requirements across industries

While the scope and application of these requirements may vary depending on the nature of the business—such as tech companies developing digital interfaces versus organisations primarily creating content—the pressure to deliver accessible digital experiences has never been greater.

Organisations today are expected to publish timely, relevant, and high-quality information across multiple platforms, tailored to increasingly diverse and global audiences. Users are not just browsing; they are seeking relevant, helpful, and informative content. Yet the process of creating such content

is resource-intensive, requiring significant time, expertise, and alignment with evolving accessibility standards, including WCAG.

The challenge of universal accessibility

A fundamental challenge lies in the fact that no single format of content can guarantee universal accessibility. What works well for one group may unintentionally exclude another. This highlights the need for a more strategic and inclusive approach—one that embraces varied formats and channels to meet the broadest range of user needs.



Take global, online meetings as an example. While WCAG highlights the importance of sign language interpretation, broader linguistic and cultural interpretation can greatly enhance engagement and comprehension for international participants.

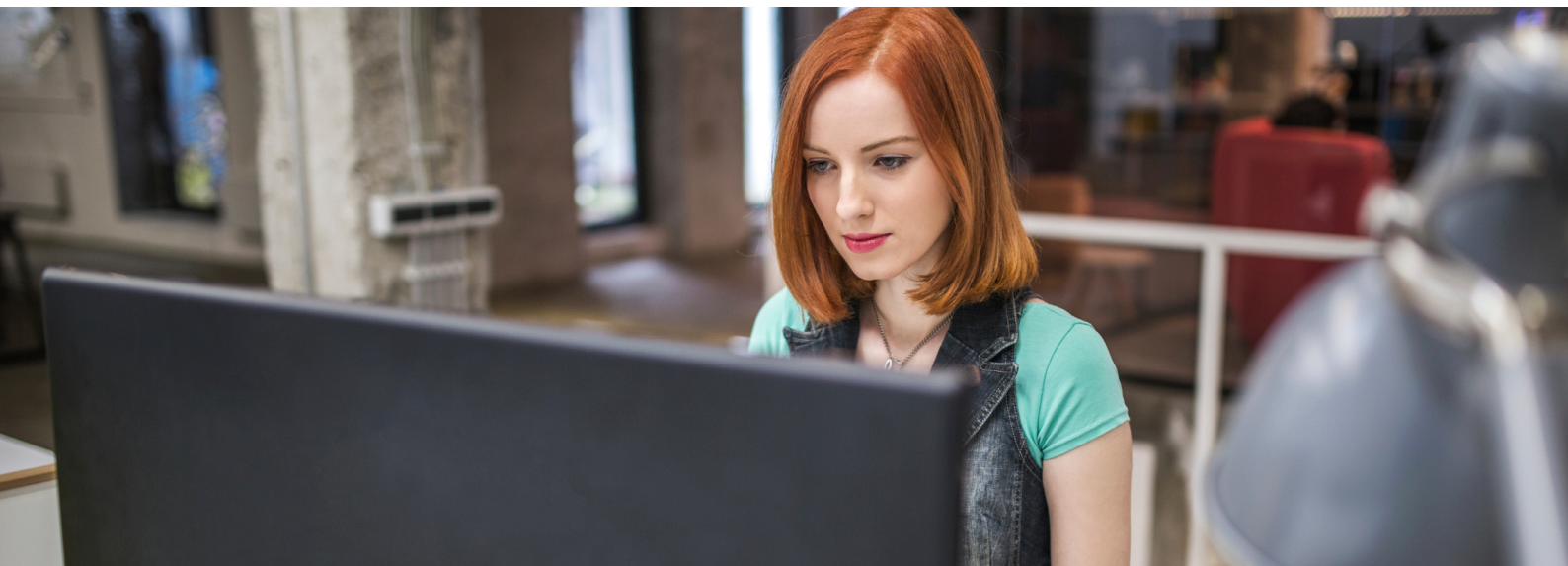
Balancing visual and auditory accessibility in video content

Video content presents another important case. It has become a dominant format due to its visual appeal and dynamism. Captions, animated text, and subtitles support users with hearing impairments and also benefit those accessing content in sound-sensitive environments. However, this visual-first focus can exclude users with visual impairments. Adding voiceovers, audio descriptions, and AI-powered dubbing helps make video content accessible to those who rely on sound or screen readers.

The power of localisation

These accessibility efforts become even more nuanced when considering the role of localisation. While maintaining a consistent global brand voice is important, true inclusivity goes further. Localising content across formats—text, audio, video, and layout—can significantly enhance usability and relatability in different regions and cultures.

For example, a video with translated subtitles might support non-native speakers, but it may still fall short for viewers with visual impairments in non-English-speaking markets. Adding localised voiceovers, audio descriptions, or dubbing in the target language bridges this gap, ensuring content is accessible both linguistically and functionally.



Applying inclusivity across all content types

This principle applies across all content types—from webpages to documents to multimedia assets. Localisation, when applied thoughtfully, improves both accessibility and engagement. It ensures that content isn't just available—it's usable and meaningful for audiences everywhere.

This applies equally to desktop publishing (DTP) content. DTP services—responsible for preparing materials for print or digital distribution, often in

multiple languages—intersect with accessibility principles around layout, readability, structure, and compatibility with assistive technologies. When executed with accessibility in mind, DTP not only ensures compliance but also supports an inclusive and localised user experience.

In short, accessible content must be flexible, multi-modal, and inclusive by design. Compliance is just the beginning. To truly connect with all users, content strategies must embed accessibility and localisation as core principles of communication.

Let us help you navigate how to improve accessibility on a global scale

The EAA's requirements bring a host of complexities, from navigating evolving regulations to managing tight deadlines, resource constraints, and the need for consistent quality. As one of the most comprehensive digital accessibility regulations to date, it demands your business to rethink how it designs, develops, and delivers digital services, products, and content.

Meeting these requirements may seem daunting, especially with the many challenges ahead. But with us as your accessibility partner, it doesn't have to be. We'll help you tackle everything from bridging the expertise gap to managing costs effectively, ensuring that your digital platforms meet the highest accessibility standards. With our guidance,

we'll streamline the process, minimise errors, and make compliance a smooth, achievable goal.

LanguageWire offers a comprehensive suite of multimedia services to help you create inclusive, engaging, and accessible content—no matter the language, market, or ability.



Voiceover: Bringing your content to life for the visually impaired and beyond

Professional voiceovers help localise your content while ensuring inclusivity. For people with visual impairments, voiceover narration provides vital auditory access to video content. We transcribe and localise your script, find the right native-speaking voice, and deliver high-quality recordings tailored to your style and audience.



Whether it's explainer videos, podcasts, or on-hold messages, voiceover supports accessibility in one language and expands easily across multiple markets. Additional services such as audio description and lip-sync dubbing help align with EAA requirements, while enhancing user engagement and comprehension.

Voiceover highlights:



Native-speaking voice talent and localised scripts



Multilingual audio for global reach



Audio description for visually impaired users



Perfect for training, podcasts, explainer videos, and more

AI Dubbing: Scalable, cost-effective video accessibility

AI dubbing is an ideal solution for organisations looking to quickly and affordably make video content accessible in multiple languages. From training materials to marketing campaigns, AI dubbing offers clear and synchronised voiceovers using high-quality, natural-sounding AI voices or voice clones.

This solution not only supports users who prefer or require auditory content—it also guarantees accurate pronunciation of business-specific terminology and allows for seamless scaling. AI dubbing helps you deliver compliant, accessible content across geographies without the high costs of traditional dubbing.



AI dubbing highlights:



Natural AI or cloned voices in dozens of languages



Aligned video-audio sync for professional output



Accurate terminology and pronunciation



Fast, scalable localisation for diverse content types

Subtitling: Making video content accessible for all

Subtitles are essential for users who are deaf or hard of hearing—and also for those who prefer to watch content without sound. Our subtitling solution combines intelligent technology with expert linguistic validation to produce synchronised, multilingual subtitles that meet EAA requirements.

Whether you're creating educational content, social videos, or corporate communications, subtitles increase retention, improve comprehension, and broaden your message's impact.



Subtitling highlights:



Professional, synchronised subtitles in multiple languages



Boosts engagement, comprehension, and social media reach



Accessibility for the hearing-impaired and non-native speakers



Streamlined, scalable workflows for quick turnaround

Interpreting: Real-time inclusion across languages

Live interpreting services are a vital part of accessible communication, particularly in public services, corporate meetings, and events. Whether onsite or remote, interpreting allows participants to engage in their native language, improving understanding and promoting inclusion.

From conference interpreting to community settings, LanguageWire ensures cultural and linguistic accuracy, helping you meet accessibility requirements while fostering respect and connection across audiences.



Interpreting highlights:



Onsite or remote interpreting for events, meetings, and public services



Inclusive, real-time communication in any language



Native-speaking interpreters for cultural and linguistic clarity



Ideal for corporate, governmental, and community settings

Desktop Publishing (DTP): Visually accessible design in any language

Accessibility isn't just about words—it's also about how they're presented. Our multilingual DTP experts adapt layouts for different languages and reading directions, ensuring content is both compliant and visually appealing. This is especially important when translated text expands or contracts,

or when layouts need to support right-to-left languages.

From product documentation to presentations and annual reports, we help ensure your visual content meets accessibility standards and local market expectations.



DTP highlights:



Layout adjustments for text length, structure, and reading direction



In-layout proofreading and review workflows



Localised visual elements for cultural relevance



Accessible documentation, marketing materials, and more

Simplify your path to accessible content

Making your content more accessible is no longer optional—but figuring out how to do it can feel overwhelming. With an increasing list of requirements to meet, managing multiple providers, disconnected workflows, and tight deadlines can quickly complicate your efforts.

That's why having the right partner makes all the difference.

LanguageWire brings everything together—voiceovers, AI dubbing, subtitling, interpreting, and multilingual DTP—all supported by a single platform that also handles your translations. It's a streamlined, scalable solution designed to help your team create accessible content efficiently and consistently across every language and market.

Our platform enables you to:



Use voiceover, AI dubbing, and subtitling to make videos more accessible and engaging



Provide interpreting services for inclusive, real-time communication



Ensure accessible layouts in any language with expert DTP services



Seamlessly integrate translation at every stage of your content journey

Instead of coordinating multiple vendors and processes, you'll have one trusted partner. That means better oversight, faster delivery, and fewer errors—so you can focus on building inclusive experiences that meet accessibility standards and connect with every audience.

Conclusion: Accessibility starts with intention



The EAA marks a significant turning point for digital accessibility across the EU. Supported by the technical standards of EN 301 549 and guided by the principles of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), the EAA provides a clear legal and practical framework for building inclusive digital products and services.

But while compliance with legislation and standards is essential, accessibility goes far beyond checklists and technical conformance. True accessibility is about reimagining the digital experience from the ground up—considering how every customer, regardless of ability, language, or location, can engage meaningfully with your brand.

It's not just about meeting minimum requirements.

It's about elevating user experience for all. That means embracing diverse content formats, investing in localisation, integrating assistive technologies, and designing for real-world needs—not just regulatory ones.

As we approach the June 2025 deadline, businesses have an opportunity to do more than comply. They can lead. By embedding accessibility into every customer journey—from websites and videos to documentation and live interactions—we don't just meet obligations. We create better, more connected, and more human digital experiences for everyone.

Because accessibility isn't a box to tick. It's a mindset.

Now is the time to act.

Partner with LanguageWire to make accessibility part of your strategy—not just for compliance, but for connection. Let's build a more inclusive digital future – together.

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