

## TALLINN CITY GOVERNMENT

### MINUTES OF THE SITTING

Tallinn

22 June 2016, No. 25

#### Item 46 on the agenda

Information on ‘Accessibility development trends in Tallinn from 2016–2020’

The following decisions were adopted:

1. the information presented in the Annex ‘Accessibility development trends in Tallinn in 2016–2022’ shall be appraised of;
2. the city’s financial services, offices, and city district governments shall consider the principles laid down in ‘Accessibility development trends in Tallinn in 2016–2022’ in the development of sectoral development plans;
3. the Social Welfare and Health Care Department of Tallinn shall coordinate the implementation of ‘Accessibility development trends in Tallinn in 2016–2022’.

Taavi Aas  
Deputy Mayor

Toomas Sepp  
City Secretary

# Accessibility development trends in Tallinn in 2016–2022

Social Welfare and Health Care Department of Tallinn

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## Introduction

**The purpose of accessibility development trends in Tallinn in 2016–2022 is to ensure a more accessible and obstacle-free environment and public services in the city of Tallinn by 2022. Accessibility is important for all people who move around the city and use public services.** The accessibility development trends in Tallinn are based on the proposals for solving problems and challenges pointed out in the [Tallinn City Accessibility Audit 2013](#). The proposals of city administrative agencies, accessibility workshops and committees, and the representative organisations of disabled people were considered in devising accessibility development trends. The planning and implementation of activities necessary to improve accessibility will be guided by the legislation and guides of the state and the city of Tallinn.

The rights of persons with disabilities to accessibility have been set out in the strategy [‘European Disability Strategy 2010–2020: A Renewed Commitment to a Barrier-Free Europe’](#). The accessibility and universal design principles as well as the common approach are based on the guidance material [‘Designing and creating an all-inclusive living environment’](#) prepared by the Union of Estonian Architects, the Estonian Design Centre, and the Estonian Academy of Arts after the Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre ordered it in 2011–2012.

The strategy [‘Tallinn 2030’](#) and [‘Tallinn Development Plan 2014–2022’](#) have already covered the accessibility topic discussed above, which creates a good background for continuing the systematic and goal-oriented activities. The improvement of accessibility needs to be addressed in four key areas:

- information and communication, including new technologies;
- transport and the related infrastructure;
- public facilities and services;
- improved environment and public space.

The goal of the development of the urban environment is ensuring that the urban space in Tallinn is cosy, inspiring, and environmentally friendly. Consequently, the activities specified in the development trends support an environment promoting a healthy lifestyle and are directed at the development of a state-of-the-art and accessible tourism infrastructure. The public space in Tallinn must be accessible to both city residents and guests. Therefore, the activities focus on the accessibility of the Old Town and the city centre. Additionally, they include building new cycle and pedestrian tracks and paths.

To achieve these goals, the accessibility development trends will be formed to be considered in preparing the Tallinn Development Plan as well as sectoral development plans.

Documentation of accessibility development trends is a unique activity in Estonia and Tallinn is the first local government in Estonia to, in cooperation with the interested parties, draw up a document addressing the improvement of accessibility. Preparing the document on accessibility development trends and implementing the activities set out therein supports the aspiration of Tallinn to obtain the Accessible City Award rewarded by the European Commission in 2022.

## 1. Definitions

**Accessibility**<sup>1</sup> – people with disabilities can access the physical environment, transport, information, communication technologies and systems, and other tools and services on the same bases as other people.

**Inclusive living environment**<sup>2</sup> – a well-functioning living environment that considers the capabilities of all members of the society. The principles of an inclusive living environment:

- respect – the environment must respect and develop all people; nobody should be left out, and everyone must have access to it;
- security – the accessible environment must be risk-free for all; all elements of which the environment is composed must consider safety above all (e.g. non-slippery floors, no easily separable elements);
- healthiness – the environment must promote a healthy lifestyle and use; it must also not be a threat to anyone's health or cause problems for people with health problems, such as allergies;
- functionality – the primary function of the environment must be accessible to all without problems;
- comprehensibility – everyone must be able to orientate in the environment without too much effort; therefore, the information must be clear and appropriately placed and easy to understand for all target groups;
- setting an example – an accessible environment is a positive example to businesses, institutions, and developers on how to follow the principles of universal design to ensure the accessibility of different objects.

**Universal design**<sup>3</sup> – designing products, the environment, programs, and services in a way that which makes them available, in the maximum extent, for all people without the need to make adjustments or use special design. Universal design does not exclude, if necessary, auxiliary equipment for specific groups of people with disabilities.

Principles of universal design<sup>4</sup>:

- universal design is a strategy, the purpose of which is to make the design and structure of different environments, communications, information technologies, and services as accessible, comprehensible, and usable as possible for everybody, in the most independent and natural way possible; preferably, without the need for adjustment;
- the purpose of universal design is to make the lives of everybody easier by making the built environment, communication, products, services, and social benefits accessible, usable, and comprehensible for everyone;
- universal design means a complete approach and putting more emphasis on being user-focused, considering the needs of people with disabilities, and paying attention to the changes and specifics that people experience during their lifetime.

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<sup>1</sup> Guidance material '[Designing and creating an all-inclusive living environment](#)' prepared by the Union of Estonian Architects, the Estonian Design Centre, and the Estonian Academy of Arts

<sup>2</sup> Guidance material '[Designing and creating an all-inclusive living environment](#)' prepared by the Union of Estonian Architects, the Estonian Design Centre, and the Estonian Academy of Arts

<sup>3</sup> [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol. Article 2](#)

<sup>4</sup> Final report '[Achieving full-inclusion through the implementation of the concept of universal design](#)' drawn up by the Committee of Experts on Universal Design (Accessibility) – a subunit of the Committee on the Rehabilitation and Integration of People with Disabilities, approved by the Council of Europe in 2007.

**Public building and facilities:**

- a building where administrative, legal, social, religious or other equivalent services; communication, traffic, or parking services; art or other cultural services; sports, mobility, hobby, holidays, or other equivalent services; trade, banking, accommodation, or catering services are provided to the public;
- hospitals, health care, or welfare institutions, or waiting, reception, and visiting rooms or similar institutions;
- an educational institution for students;
- a building with gathering places or rooms;
- public facilities through which public buildings are accessible to the public;
- streets, squares, green areas, and playgrounds.

**Disability**<sup>6</sup> – in accordance with the Social Benefits for Disabled Persons Act<sup>7</sup>, disability is the loss of or an abnormality in an anatomical, physiological or mental structure or function of a person which in conjunction with different relational and environmental restrictions prevents participation in social life on equal bases with the others.

Person with a disability – a person with a long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairment, which in conjunction with different restrictions prevents their participation in social life on equal bases with the others. In accordance with the convention, the term ‘disability’ changes over time and is the consequence of interactions between disadvantaged people and attitudes and environmental barriers.

## 2. Legislation and guidance material

The development trends are based on the document adopted by the UN, the European Commission, and the European Parliament, as well as the legislation of the Republic of Estonia, which sets out the requirements and guidelines for accessibility:

- [Article 9 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol](#) addresses the issue of accessibility, outlining the activities and requirements necessary to ensure accessibility;
- In 2011–2012, the Union of Estonian Architects, the Estonian Design Centre, and the Estonian Academy of Arts compiled the guidance material ‘[Designing and creating an all-inclusive living environment](#)’. The development of the guide was funded with the European Social Fund program ‘Welfare measures that support finding a job 2010–2013’;
- Notice of the European Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions ‘[European Disability Strategy 2010-2022: A Renewed Commitment to a Barrier-Free Europe for Disabled Persons](#)’ [‘ECONOMY](#)’, which sets the European Union guidelines for ensuring accessibility in the Member States;
- In March 2012, the Government of the Republic and representative organisations of disabled persons signed a [memorandum of cooperation](#), which sets out the principles for ensuring the active and full participation of people with disabilities in society;
- The [Building Code](#) came to force in the Republic of Estonia on 1 July 2015 and in accordance with clause 11 (2) 8) of this Act, the requirements for construction works encompass the special needs of disabled people.

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<sup>5</sup> Regulation No. 14 of 28 November 2002 of the Minister of Economic Affairs and Communications, established in accordance with subsection 3 (10) of the Building Act ‘[Requirements for ensuring accessibility for people with mobility, vision, and hearing disabilities in public buildings](#)’

<sup>6</sup> [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol, Article 1](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Social Benefits for Disabled Persons Act](#)

During its service time, the building must meet the requirements for its use and the minister responsible for the field can specify the requirements for the buildings in their regulation.

Until a new similar regulation is introduced, the basis shall be Regulation No. 14 of 28 November 2002 of the Minister of Economic Affairs and Communications [Requirements for ensuring accessibility for people with mobility, vision, and hearing disabilities in public buildings](#) to the extent which is not in conflict with the Building Code which entered into force on 1 July 2015.

### 3. Sources

Every person, regardless of age, gender, social activity, special needs, etc., must be able to participate in social life. The implementation of this goal must be supported by an accessible environment, public services, including business administration, and urban space. Accessibility can be significantly impeded by high curbstones or steps, lack of hearing aids, allergy-causing materials, bright light or large glass panes, the use of a font size that is too small, lack of colour schemes or tactile etc. marking, incomprehensible words and phrases, and inaccessible public services. Accessibility includes, in addition to physical movement, audition, sight, and comprehension.

Given the needs of the aging society, the goals of the work capacity reform, the need to use the city's budget in a sustainable manner, and to promote lifelong work and study in Tallinn, adaptable, renovated, or built residential and apartment buildings are also considered as an object of universal design and accessibility. Obstacle free self-realisation is not possible if a person cannot leave their home or get back there. The less obstacles there are in the residence, services, urban scape, and in the environment in general, the more independent people are, the less they need support services in their living environment, and the less money is spent on social services and benefits.

#### 3.1 History of activities related to accessibility in Tallinn

The accessibility of urban environments and services, in the context of an inclusive but aging society, lifelong work, and free movement and self-realisation, is becoming more and more relevant throughout the European Union and therefore, the city of Tallinn needs to further development this area.

The city of Tallinn has been developing its accessibility since the 2000s, but this has so far been rather project-based and non-systematic. During this time, the '[Accessibility Action Plan for Public Buildings and Services in the City Centre of Tallinn 2001–2004](#)' was completed, which was approved by the Tallinn City Government on 9 May 2001 with the order No. 1813-k.

The city of Tallinn has contributed to the development of the pan-Estonian information portal [www.liikumisvabadus.invainfo.ee](http://www.liikumisvabadus.invainfo.ee) of the Estonian Union of Persons with Mobility Impairment. This cooperation included collecting data on the city of Tallinn, during which the Association of Persons with Mobility Disability in Tallinn mapped 600 public buildings and facilities.

At the request of the Tourism Department of the Tallinn City Enterprise Department, the three main visit routes in Tallinn (Toompea, the Lower Town, Kadriorg) were mapped in 2007–2008 in terms of the possibility to use a mechanical or electric wheelchair.

In 2010, this was followed by the mapping of the Pirita visit route (Botanic Garden, Song Festival Grounds, Lillepi Park, Maarjamäe Memorial and Stadium, Metsakalmistu Cemetery, Estonian

Exhibitions, Orlov Castle, Pirita Centre, Pirita Road, etc.) in terms of accessibility for people with mobility difficulties. During this project, 11 routes and 50 social, national, and tourist objects near the region were assessed and mapped. The buildings were uploaded to an interactive map on the portal [www.liikumisvabadus.invainfo.ee](http://www.liikumisvabadus.invainfo.ee).

In 2011–2012, the Tourism Department of the Tallinn City Enterprise Department ordered the development of mapping criteria for accommodation establishments and their services from the Association of Persons with Mobility Disability in Tallinn. During this project, six hotels in Tallinn and their services were mapped in terms of accessibility for people with mobility and vision difficulties.

In 2011, the Association of Persons with Mobility Disability in Tallinn carried out a mapping project at the request of the Tallinn City Government ‘Mapping movement obstacles and movement safety on the sidewalks and pedestrian crossings in the city centre of Tallinn’. Its results are used to remove high curbstones and other movement obstacles from the sidewalks and to plan and construct pedestrian crossings. In 2012, the mapping of movement obstacles was continued in the northern part of Tallinn (Kalamaja, Tööstuse, and Kopli Street) and in 2014, the movement obstacles and handicapped parking spaces were mapped in the northern part of Tallinn (Sõle-Pelgulinna-Sitsi). During the project, more than 200 movement obstacles were found, all of which are listed on the web portal ([www.liikumisvabadus.invainfo.ee](http://www.liikumisvabadus.invainfo.ee)), where colour schemes are used to display movement routes, obstacles, and handicapped parking spots.

The Municipal Engineering Services Department has used the mappings and studies as support material for planning the reconstruction of streets and eliminating movement obstacles. A good example of this is the reconstruction of the Soo, Tehnika, and Telliskivi streets.

The Disability Commission of the Tallinn City Government (hereinafter: Disability Commission), created in 1993, has played an important role in raising accessibility issues. The purpose of the Disability Commission is to advise the city government and contribute to the activities of the city government used for creating equal opportunities for people with disabilities and other people. The idea to start an accessibility audit and prepare an accompanying action plan for accessibility came from the member organisations of the Disability Commission (Association of Persons with Mobility Disability in Tallinn, Tallinn City’s Board of Disabled People, and Northern-Estonian Association of the Blind), who made a joint proposal to compile an accessibility program for the city of Tallinn.

The Disability Commission approved the idea and so, under the guidance of the Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care Department, the Tallinn Accessibility Audit 2013 was completed and then approved by the Tallinn City Government on 10 April 2013. It appointed the Tallinn City Government on 10 April 2013 as its coordinator. The Tallinn Accessibility Audit helped to assemble the projects carried out so far and collaborate with stakeholders to make proposals for improving accessibility in Tallinn.

In 2014, the draft of the accessibility action plan was drawn up. The Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care Department had the leading role in the process with collecting the suggestions and source information from the city administrative agencies and organisations for disabled people.

Four information seminars have been organised: on 16 June 2014, in the premises of the Tallinn City’s Board of Disabled People at 9 Endla Street; on 5 November 2014, at the Tallinn University of Technology; on 11 February 2015, the seminar ‘Accessible Tallinn’ was carried out at 59 Endla Street; and on 15 March 2016, the seminar ‘Over the threshold’ at the conference centre of Hotel Euroopa. Additionally, information days and round-table meetings have taken place with the representatives of organisations for disabled people, as well as between authorities and the

working group of the Disability Commission.

### 3.2 Purpose and implementation of activities

**The purpose of accessibility development trends in Tallinn in 2016–2022 is to ensure a more accessible and obstacle-free environment and public services in the city of Tallinn by 2022. The compilation of city development plans and the accompanying sectoral plans can be based on the accessibility development trends. Planning, development, construction, and information activities must be based on:**

- a systematic and coordinated implementation to ensure accessibility, while considering the principles of universal design;
- following the principle of equal treatment, while promoting inclusive self-assertion in all social groups;
- the activities that accompany ensuring accessibility are financed from the city budget and, if possible, the European Union Structural Funds;
- taking accessibility into account in urban construction and planning, from design to construction and supervision.

Activities related to accessibility and universal design in the city of Tallinn are assembled and coordinated by a working group of the Disability Commission. The working group consists of the responsible public servants in city government offices and district governments. If necessary, representatives of organisations for disabled people are also involved.

The accessibility working group comes together at least twice a year to monitor the implementation and improvement of the activities fixed in the sectoral development plans of the offices and district governments. At the beginning of each year of activity, a comprehensive summary is prepared, which addresses the activities carried out during the previous financial year based on the economic activity reports issued by the offices and district governments. The summary is submitted to the Disability Commission.

It would be reasonable to appoint the Social Welfare and Health Care Department as the coordinator of the planned and systematic implementation of the accessibility development trends 2016–2022 at city level, who can conduct a dialogue between city services, offices, and district governments regarding the implementation of the development trends and shape the development of accessibility at city level.

To improve accessibility and ensure the planned and systematic implementation of the accessibility development trends 2016–2022 in the institutions administered by the city of Tallinn, it would be reasonable to analyse the possibility of creating an accessibility fund for the Social Welfare and Health Care Department. Institutions run by city administrative agencies (social centres, schools, kindergartens, museums, etc.) could apply for a one-time support based on a project from the accessibility fund to improve the accessibility of existing buildings.

To implement the accessibility development trends, i.e. maintaining the accessibility fund, managing the accessibility portal, etc. and fulfil other tasks specified in the development trends, it would be reasonable to analyse the need for additional workforce at the Social Welfare and Health Care Department.

## 4. Accessibility assessment methodology

‘Accessibility’ was defined as ensuring access to the physical environment, transport, information, communication technologies, and systems for all social groups on the same basis. For example, the

accessibility of intersections and pedestrian crossings anticipates the use of several solutions: people with a visual disability need sound signals, the correct marking of the zebra crossing, and definite marking the beginning and end of the zebra crossing. Wheelchair users, however, require appropriate heights and inclination angles of curbstones. Similar problems are encountered by people with strollers, old people, and cyclists, which means that it affects many people in Tallinn.

Therefore, when speaking about accessibility, physical and audio-visual access must be distinguished: in a wider sense, we must ensure an obstacle-free environment for everyone.

Of all types of access, ensuring physical access is the most expensive. Therefore, access standards contain the most requirements for physical access. A building that cannot be physically accessed (steps at the entrance, high threshold, no elevator, etc.) is usable or accessible for other types of disabilities (with an escort), although there are no specific adjustments.

It has been discovered that ignoring obstacles or not paying enough attention to them in new or renovated buildings is also rather costly. If an obstacle is not removed in the environment to save money in the short-term, its removal may later be many times costlier. Therefore, it is important to avoid and prevent obstacles, because the purpose of the building may change over time.

The mapping of accessibility of buildings and other objects (parks, beaches, health trails, etc.) is based, above all, on the existence of physical access and ensuring it. Depending on the existence or absence of physical access, a building or other object is considered accessible, accessible with limited access, or inaccessible.

The mapping, in addition to physical access, assesses many other universal design indicators, such as visual adjustments, the availability of hearing aids and sign language, the availability of materials, documents, and audio-visual material, the presence of a disabled toilet and handicapped parking lot as well as an elevator, access with a baby stroller, other adjustments that consider the elderly, parents, and infants, and the presence of trained staff. Within the framework of the accessibility development trends in Tallinn 2016–2022, the accessibility portal for Tallinn will also be launched. The plan is to collect and present accessibility information in the portal. It will also be a tool for city offices and a source of statistical information for mapping and monitoring the situation regarding accessibility, including the implementation of the development trends. The accessibility portal uses pictograms (Figures 1 and 2) with explanations to characterise the building or other object in terms of different aspects of universal design. The mapping is done by carrying out a visual observation, taking photos, determining the slopes, fixing the measurements with a measuring tape or laser distance meter, and measuring illumination and noise.



Figure 1. Pictograms

Source: Pictograms used on the website of Inclusive London



1. Universaalne informatsiooni piktogramm.
2. Rahvusvaheline ligipääsetavuse piktogramm.
3. Auidoubleering avalikel üritustel.
4. Auidoubleering filmidel ja TV-s.
5. Suure/ligipääsetava kirjaga trüki sümbol.
6. Juurdepääs nägemispuudega inimestele.
7. Braille' kirja piktogramm.
8. Tekstitelefoni (TTY) piktogramm.
9. Viipekeele tõlke piktogramm.
10. Abistav kuuldesüsteem.
11. Abistav kuuldesüsteem telefonile.
12. Subtiitrite piktogramm.

Figure 2. Pictograms

Source: guide for planning an all-inclusive living environment.

1. Pictogram of universal information
2. Pictogram of international accessibility
3. Audio-duplication at public events
4. Audio-duplication in movies and on TV
5. Large print
6. Access to people with visual disabilities
7. Pictogram of Braille.
8. Pictogram of TTY
9. Pictogram of sign language
10. Hearing aid
11. Hearing aid for a phone
12. Pictogram of subtitles

Another important way to assess the accessibility of buildings or other objects is **compiling accessibility audits or assessments**. Unlike collecting data for a portal, where only the existing situation is foxed, an accessibility audit is a very detailed study, during which the whole area of the building or object is covered; it is assessed based on its location, public transport, object marking and access roads, handicapped parking spots, elevators, internal conditions, disabled toilets, and the information on the website and information boards. The audit addresses, based on building regulations, the existing situation. Additionally, specific recommendations are provided for improving the situation for all types of disabilities or target groups.



Figure 3. Accessibility audit of Barons Hotel (upon the request of the Tallinn City Enterprise Department) and Mustamäe Polyclinic compiled by the Association of Persons with Mobility Disability in Tallinn

## 5. Areas of accessibility

### 5.1 Information and communication, including new technologies

In terms of information and communication technology (ICT), the goal is to implement modern IT infrastructure options in the work of administrative agencies and provide a wide range of e-services to people. To ensure a better access to public services, the volumes of e-service is increased. As a result, the availability of ICT in different fields is ensured.

#### 5.1.1 Portal Accessible Tallinn

In accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the general policy of the disability policy in the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Estonia and local governments must take steps to raise the society's awareness on people with disabilities, their equal rights and opportunities, and mobility possibilities. It is important that the people directly affected by this information could help with the dissemination, interpretation, and implementation of this information.

Thanks to the Union of Estonians with Mobility Disability, the web portal [www.liikumisvabadus.invainfo.ee](http://www.liikumisvabadus.invainfo.ee), was completed in 2014, which reflects on the accessibility of national and social objects for people with mobility disability in Estonia. The website allows collecting, processing, and analysing the accessibility of objects. In 2005, the Association of Persons with Mobility Disability in Tallinn mapped 600 public buildings in Tallinn (funded by the city of Tallinn). Now, this number has grown to more than 750. The portal was completed more than ten years ago and today, it is outdated both in terms of web technology and content. The accessibility portal of the Union of Estonians with Mobility Disability was project-based and is currently not sustainable. As the portal does not have a permanent team, the data is not monitored or updated continuously. Additionally, it has a major shortage: it only focuses on the mobility disabilities and physical accessibility.

Thus, a great need has risen for a Tallinn accessibility portal, which would be the key element in developing the accessibility of Tallinn in the years 2016–2022. The portal to be created is, above all, a place of collecting and presenting accessibility information, but it is also a tool for city authorities and a source of statistical information in the implementation of accessibility developments. The information provided through the portal must give a good overview of the accessibility of public objects to disabled people, their helpers, the elderly, people with baby strollers, health athletes, and visitors of the capital. The portal must also contain information about the handicapped parking spots, travel routes, movement obstacles, etc. in the city. Users looking for an accommodation or catering establishment, a public authority, or a cultural object from the portal, will see the access possibilities, the location on the map, and other necessary information related to the object. A comment or specification can be submitted through the feedback form.

The Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care Department would be responsible for managing the portal, collecting data, and adjusting data.

#### **The purpose of the portal**

- Collect and process accessibility information about Tallinn City for all major forms of disabilities and publish it on the portal (the planned web address is [www.accessible tallinn.ee](http://www.accessible tallinn.ee)).
- Ensure that the data on the portal is constantly updated and that the portal contains up-to-date information with constant funding.

- Provide accessibility and usability information for the disabled people of Estonia and other countries regarding the social, national, cultural, and tourist objects, as well as educational medical, and other institutions in Tallinn city.
- Map the public objects, handicapped parking spots, public transport spots, and other objects in the city of Tallinn in terms of accessibility and universal design.
- Collect the information in building norms and legislation regarding the accessibility of social objects.
- Continuously complete the portal with accessibility information on new objects and update the existing information.
- Motivate, based on the collected information, companies, organisations, and public authorities to ensure accessibility to these objects for people with disabilities.
- Share information on accessibility on the event's website and the accessibility portal when organising a public event.

An example here is a display of the similar, but more up-to-date Lithuanian accessibility portal [www.accessible-city.com](http://www.accessible-city.com) (Figure 4).

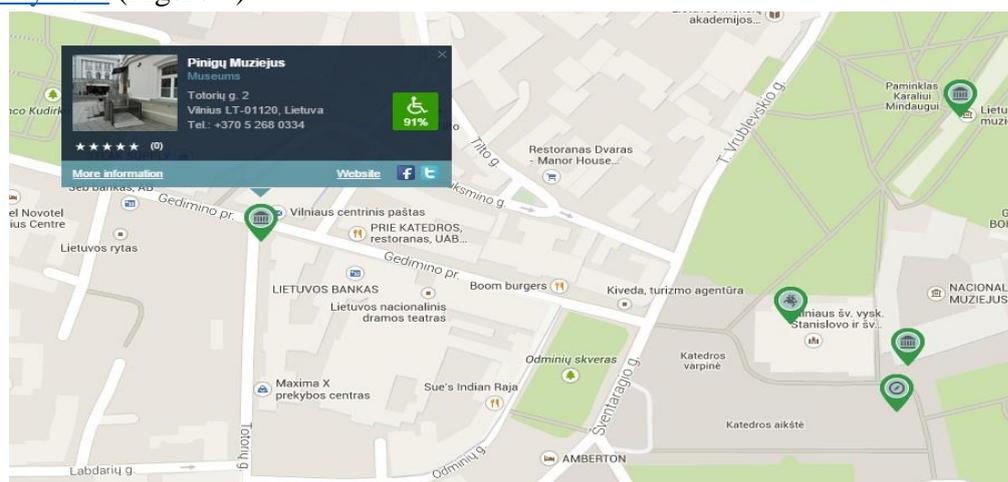


Figure 4. Lithuanian accessibility portal [www.accessible-city.com](http://www.accessible-city.com)

The created portal can, in the future, be combined with the page [www.visittallinn.ee](http://www.visittallinn.ee) or other information portals.

Due to the rapid development and wide spread of smart devices, free apps meant for these main platforms must be developed. Additionally, the content of the accessibility portal must be made available in them. The mobile applications must meet the requirements, including be multilingual and readable for people with visual disabilities.

#### 5.1.2 Accessibility of the website of the city of Tallinn and web services for people with hearing and visual disability

In the development of web pages and creating interfaces, the Tallinn City Office will follow the recommendations of the W3C Consortium (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Working Group – WCAG WG) and ensure compliance with the WCAG2.0 A-level requirements.

The WCAG2.0 A-level requirements are accessibility guidelines regarding web content: they provide information on how to make web content more accessible for people with disabilities. In

accordance with the standard, developers of the city's information systems must:

- ensure that the Tallinn web site meets the minimum requirements of WCAG2.0 A-level by the beginning of 2017;
- ensure the accessibility of the city's web services at the minimum of WCAG2.0 AA-level by the same time; they must also ensure that they are easy to use;
- ensure that all web pages of institutions managed by the city authorities meet the WCAG2.0 standards by 2022.

If an application created to manage and use a public service uses the call-function to order, monitor, or manage a public service, the opportunity to communicate with SMS messages is also added for people with hearing disabilities. The development of the applications makes sure that they facilitate the work of both the service user and the public servant as well as avoid the need to enter data twice. When developing applications, it is considered that a person with a disability can be both a user of the service and a public servant.

### 5.1.3 Accessibility of Tallinn Television shows for people with visual and hearing disability

To ensure accessibility of Tallinn Television shows for people with visual and hearing disability, the following steps must be taken:

- start providing a description translation of Tallinn television shows – by the beginning of 2022, at least 10% of the shows must have descriptive translations;
- start adding subtitles and/or sign language translation to Tallinn television show – by 2018, all Tallinn television shows, including the catch-up shows on the website, have subtitles;
- add audio-subtitles meant for people with visual disabilities and text-subtitles for people with hearing disabilities to all Tallinn television shows by the beginning of 2018;
- work together with universities to reduce costs and workload by using ICT tools for creating automatic subtitles (speech and text recognition) or reading descriptive subtitles.

### 5.1.4. Development of Tallinn Tourism Web

The goal of the website [www.visittallinn.ee](http://www.visittallinn.ee) is to actualise and structure the topic 'Tallinn for Everybody' (in terms of mobility, visual, hearing, and intellectual disabilities) based on the information obtained from competent mappers. The tourist information must be presented in a suitable format (seeing, hearing) and in at least four foreign languages.

## 5.2 Transport and the related infrastructure

In the field of urban transport, the goal is to integrate the traffic routes into a uniform conurbation-based wholesome, convenient, safe, and resource and energy-efficient moving environment, which provides good access to homes, workplaces, service and commercial establishments, and resting zones to the people of Tallinn.

In addition to considering people with special needs in Tallinn public transport vehicles, the city will provide various types of transport services (regular and non-scheduled transport services and the taxi service) for disabled people who cannot use public transport vehicles due to their disability through the social field. To improve the quality of public transport, the car park will be updated while considering the needs of people with disabilities. Additionally, solutions will be developed which show the real-time movement of public transport.

In addition, the number of parking spaces for disabled people is increased if necessary.

Long-term goals related to the accessibility development trends will be set to develop the public transport in Tallinn in order to ensure accessibility to disabled people, the elderly, people with baby strollers, and others who have difficulties in using and getting into public transport vehicles. In doing so, more and more audio notifications, marking poles, and other tools will be used, which help people with visual disabilities to understand where the doors of the public transport vehicle are in the stop. Additionally, public transport drivers will be trained.

### 5.2.1 Implementing accessibility in public transport

- In the case of public transport, the overall objective is to completely replace all vehicles with low-floor vehicles. This will be done when possible and in stages. Here, the city of Tartu can be highlighted as an example: the use of special transport has reduced after all buses were replaced with low-floor buses.
- Manual ramps will be gradually replaced with automatic ones (Figures 5 and 6).
- When purchasing used public transport vehicles, low-floor ones are always preferred. These will be provided with boards suitable for the visually impaired and the elderly. Additionally, an audio system indicating the bus stops will be installed there.
- Activities related to public transport, the planning and renovating of stops, and the development of principles and procurement conditions that are related to accessibility, will involve the Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care Department and representatives of representative organisations for disabled people in the Disability Commission.



Figure 5. Universal taxis used in New York and in many European capitals



Figure 6. A low-floor bus with an automatic ramp in London

- When testing new vehicles, competent servants of authorities and representatives of disabled people's representative organisations will be involved to assess the consideration of special needs.
- Working together with the taxi companies in Tallinn, which constitute a special category of public transport, to promote, in addition to special vehicles, the use of small taxis with universal ramps. In an aging society, this allows to serve both disabled and other people at a cheaper price and with a shorter waiting time.
- The development of technical solutions and chip or magnetic cards considers the principles of universal design. The card must be compatible with different systems, as well as be contrastive and embossed, making it recognisable and easily found from the wallet for visually impaired people.

### 5.2.2 Accessibility of public transport stops

There are about 900 public transport stops in Tallinn, some of which are not physically unavailable or not easily accessed with mobility equipment. The platforms are either high (without abasements), uneven, have holes in the asphalt, or are not there at all (including tram stop platforms).

- The Tallinn Transport Department does not have an overview of the status of stops in terms of accessibility for people with disabilities. The situation is complicated by the fact that the Tallinn Transport Department is responsible for the stops, but the Tallinn Municipal Engineering Services Department is responsible for road construction.
- To obtain an overview of the state of the stops, the accessibility of the stops must be mapped. Activities can be planned based on this to ensure accessible public transport stops for the people of Tallinn. An example is shown in Figure 7.
- The collected data must be displayed on the map of the accessibility portal and be accessible to everyone. The data is necessary for citizens so that they can plan their trips and for city authorities so that they can plan and monitor activities related to accessibility.
- Detailed requirements must be set out for public transport stops in cooperation with the organisations of disabled people in Tallinn. This will ensue that the stops

comply with the principles of universal design and the current construction requirements.



Figure 7. Urva stop in Maarjamäe: the curbstone of the pavement is 15 cm high, the asphalt has holes, unevenness, difficult access (Association of Persons with Mobility Disability in Tallinn)

Solutions for ensuring access to public transport for people with visual impairment are as follows:

- Public transport stops must be accessible, clearly marked, and illuminated. To mark the location of the first door of a public transport vehicle, an embossed guide plate must be used, which the drivers of public transport vehicles must consider to facilitate access to a public transport vehicle for disabled persons. Electronic information stands with audio notifications must be installed at the main stops of the city (Northern-Estonian Association of the Blind and NKL).
- A board must be installed at the stops informing people of the nearest departures and delays of public transport vehicles. At smaller stops, QR-codes, for example, can be used instead of the information board.



Figure 8. Embossed guide plate at a bus stop in Barcelona

- In cooperation with representative organisations of disabled people, city authorities, the city designer and other design specialists, standard solutions for platforms and stops must be developed or instructional materials for their design must be prepared. Public transport platforms and stops must facilitate access to public transport for disabled people and other people in accordance with the principles of universal design and include contemporary tactics, safety and identification elements, notifications, lighting, etc. (Figure 8 as an example).
- New obstacles must not be created: these mean solutions which must be compatible with a certain type of aid or communicators usable with a key, etc. The solution must require as little extra cost and time as possible for both the people of Tallinn

and tourists.



Figure 9. Example of a bus stop

- Based on the results of mapping public transport stops and the standard solutions for stops, the renovation of stops must be planned. Additionally, a relevant action plan must be drawn up.
- Access must also be provided to these public transport stops which are currently difficult to access, including the reconstruction of roads from the public transport stops on Laagna Road to the residential buildings. The height difference between bus stops and the ground on Laagna Road, which runs along a depression, is very big. There are stairs, which means that people who use mobility equipment (manual and electric wheelchairs, scooters, etc.) cannot move there at all, and people with baby strollers find it very difficult to move up and down the stairs. At times, they even find it impossible. The accessibility problem on Laagna Road depression must be eliminated with a modern architectural solution (lifts).

### 5.2.3. Pedestrian road-crossing signals that are understandable for everyone

In 2014, there were 30 pedestrian crossings with traffic lights that had sound signals in Tallinn. According to representatives of disabled people's organizations, this is not enough. The number of traffic lights with sound signals must be significantly increased in Tallinn. By 2020, in addition to the existing traffic lights with sound signals, they must be installed on 30 other most popular intersections used by pedestrians. Additionally, traffic lights should be installed on 15 other pedestrian crossings (Northern-Estonian Association of the Blind, NLK, Kakora). Representatives of disabled people's organisations must be involved in determining the exact needs and the locations of the traffic lights.

Generally understandable road-crossing signals should be preferred on pedestrian crossings (transmit the same information as visual signs (traffic lights) audibly and/or vibrotactile), which are also perceivable for the blind and the blind-deaf.

- Locations of existing traffic lights with sound signals should be added to the web map on the Tallinn accessibility portal and, if new traffic lights with sound signals are installed, they should also be added there.
- The so-called second-counter must be added as a visual addition to the most important traffic junctions, as they make crossing the streets much easier for

people with mobility disabilities and equipment. They also make them feel more secure.

- When installing signal devices with a push-button or touchpad, attention must be paid to the fact that people with mobility equipment must also be able to use them. Often, traffic signposts with push-buttons installed on green areas or on parts of road surface are outside the reach of people with mobility equipment, making them inaccessible for them. When installing traffic signposts, attention must be paid to the presence of access and hard-surfaced roads.
- In winter, snow must be removed from the pedestrian crossings and anti-slippery products must be used to ensure accessibility and safety for road users.

#### 5.2.4. Handicapped parking spaces

According to the data of Tallinn Transport Department, there is no overview of the current number and condition of handicapped parking spots. According to data from disability organisations, there are not enough handicapped parking spots, their marking does not often meet the construction requirements, the paint coating usually lasts for two years, and, if there is no additional board indicating the handicapped parking spot, it is useless. According to data of the Association of Persons with Mobility Disability in Tallinn, there are at least six useless handicapped parking spots in the city centre. Figure 10 shows examples of turned additional boards and unmarked road markings.



Figure 10. Handicapped parking spot near Solaris Centre and 7 Narva Road: the road markings are worn down and the additional board faces the building.

Organisations of disabled people (TLIÜ, PPÜ, and NLK) proposed to provide a sufficient number of handicapped parking spots, paying attention, above all, to the need for parking spaces near institutions important to disabled people, such as social services, medical institutions, the Unemployment Insurance Fund, and public transport stops.

- Every year, at least seven properly (dimensions, additional board, road markings) marked handicapped parking spots must be added.
- To obtain an overview of the existing handicapped parking spots and their condition, a web-based map application for handicapped parking spots must be implemented. The map will be available on the Tallinn accessibility portal. The map-based database of handicapped parking spots (Figure 11) gives an overview of their condition, helps authorities to plan to improve the spots, and provides information to city residents and tourists. The Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care Department

will manage the application by collecting data with the Association of Persons with Mobility Disability in Tallinn.

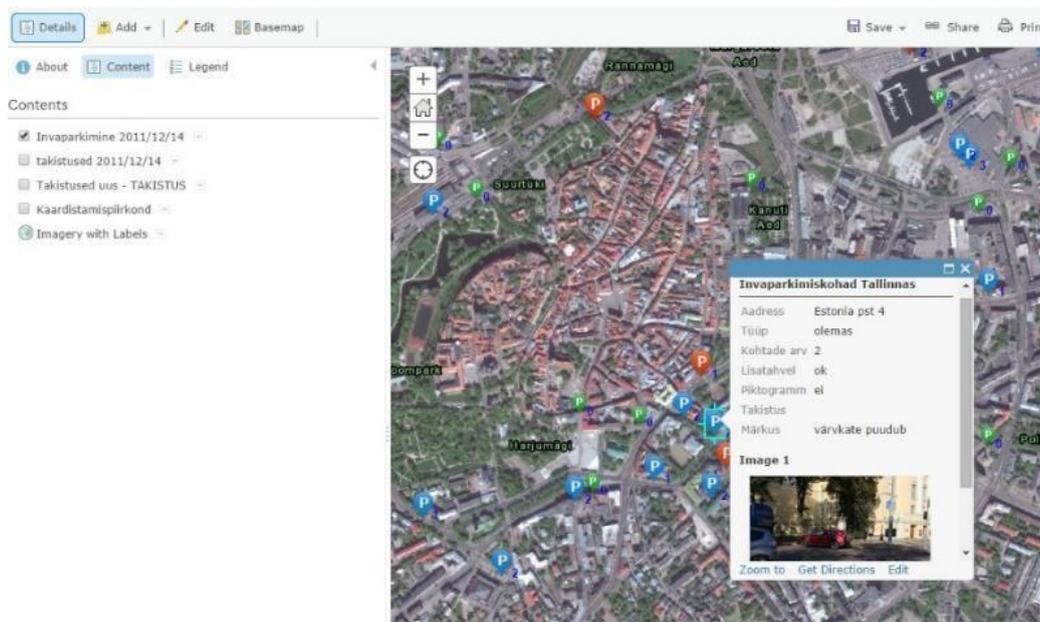


Figure 11. Web application of movement obstacles and handicapped parking spots (Association of Persons with Mobility Disability in Tallinn)

- Handicapped parking spots must be mapped, monitored, and adapted in accordance with the requirements (marking, additional board). The Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care Department will submit suggestions to the Tallinn Transport Department once a year.

### 5.3. Improved environment and public space

The goal of the development of the urban environment is ensuring that the urban space in Tallinn is cosy, inspiring, and environmentally friendly. Consequently, the activities specified in the development trends support an environment promoting a healthy lifestyle and are directed to the development of a state-of-the-art and accessible tourism infrastructure.

The public space in Tallinn must be accessible to both city residents and guests. Therefore, the activities focus on the accessibility of the Old Town and the city centre. Additionally, they include building new cycle and pedestrian tracks and paths.

Separate measures are planned to improve the movement possibilities of tourists (including those with special needs). To make the urban environment healthier, it is important to develop the network of trails and the green network, which is supported by Tallinn's nomination for the title of European Green Capital in 2018.

#### 5.3.1. Urban space planning

In 2010, the Tallinn Urban Planning Department, the Tallinn Urban Planning Department, and the Association of Persons with Mobility Disability in Tallinn agreed on the rules for ensuring control over the compliance of construction projects and buildings with the requirements specified in the Regulation No. 14 of 28 November 2002 of the Minister of Economic Affairs and Communications 'Requirements for ensuring accessibility for people with mobility, vision, and hearing disabilities in public buildings'. From 2014, the Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care Department is fully responsible for the coordination of disability requirements and the issuing of authorisations for use for buildings newly built based on pre-coordinated projects.

As the above-mentioned regulation stopped being valid after the new Construction Code entered into force on 1 July 2015, the Minister for Economic Affairs and Infrastructure initiated the development of a new similar regulation, but it has not yet been established. Based on good practise, the requirements of Regulation No. 14 are still considered. The development of the new regulation involved many disabled people's organisations and other community organisations, institutions, and offices, including Tallinn City authorities and disability organisations.

The Tallinn City Council adopted Regulation No. 42 'The Building Regulations of the Tallinn City' on 6 September 2012. The city of Tallinn must work together with city authorities, organisations of disabled people, designers, architects, and other specialists to establish the guidelines for the implementation of universal design in the city of Tallinn. Once they are ready, they must be introduced as the annex to Regulation No. 42 of 6 September 2012 of the Tallinn City Council 'The Building Regulations of the Tallinn City'. Example: guidelines for universal design in Toronto (Figure 12).

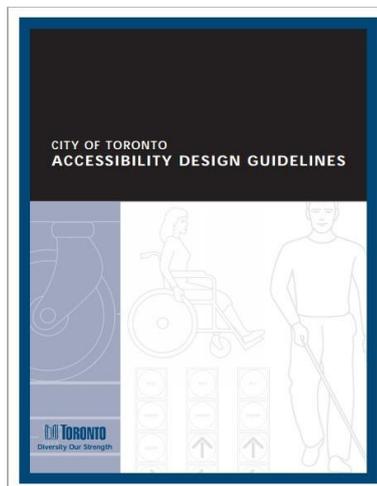


Figure 12. Guidelines for universal design in Toronto

- The Tallinn Urban Planning Department must continue to ensure the coordination of the Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care Department in the process of confirming construction projects for public buildings, as well as the participation of the Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care Department in the issuing of permits for those buildings.
- It is important to put as much emphasis on public buildings and residential developments, as in an aging society, universal design starts from the place of residence. An accessible urban space is useless if residential buildings are renovated or built without regard to the principles of universal design. In the context of lifelong learning and work, everyone is interested in being independent even at a high age, not needing a care-giver, and being able to leave their place of residence and return there on their own.
- At the meetings of the Disability Commission, organisations of disabled people in Tallinn have pointed out that the outdoor terraces of catering establishments built in summer are inaccessible and hinder movement. Before making the decision to allow an urban building to deal with trading, the Tallinn City Property Department must consider ensuring access to the outdoor terraces (Figure 13). This is important for city residents, tourists, people with mobility and visual disabilities, the elderly, and young children.

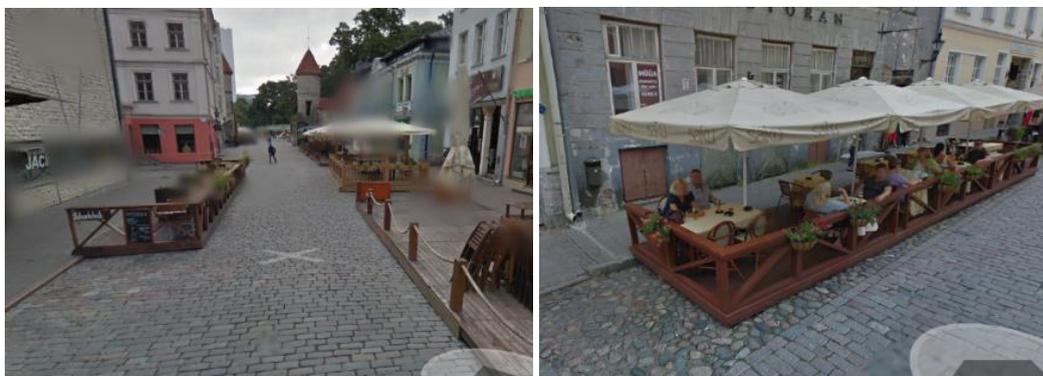


Figure 13. Inaccessible outdoor terraces of the Old Town

- To promote the principles of accessibility and universal design in society at large, conditions for recognising the best accessible public building of the year must be worked out by involving city authorities, the disability commission, and disability organisations. Architects, designers, builders, and representatives of disability organisations, who have made a significant contribution to ensuring accessibility in

Tallinn, must be recognised.

- Methodology for recognising the ‘Siia saab’ (This is accessible) title, initiated by the institution of the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner, must be implemented (<http://www.vordoigusvolinik.ee/siiasaab>). The title ‘Access for All’ values an environment that is open and accessible for everyone. When labelling accessibility, city authorities and city-owned buildings must apply for the title ‘This is accessible’.

### 5.3.2. Paths and pedestrian crossings in Tallinn

One of the goals of the capital construction and repair of roads in Tallinn is to ensure better mobility for pedestrians, cyclists, the elderly, and people with disabilities. The purpose of maintenance repair is to repair places that hinder mobility on the streets of Tallinn in order to improve accessibility for people with disabilities.

- The Tallinn Municipal Engineering Services Department must involve competent civil servants of the Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care Department or organisations for people with disabilities in the coordination of road and construction projects as well as in the acceptance of completed buildings.
- By involving specialists and organisations of people with disabilities, precise instructions and conditions for the use of the following road elements meant for designers and builders must be developed, or the existing ones must be supplemented, considering the needs of people with visual and mobility disabilities and modern universal design principles:
  - marking pedestrian crossings with embossed stones (schemes, requirements, and installation principles);
  - warning and directing tactile pavements, their installation principles and schemes (in important traffic junctions, in front of shopping centres, etc.);
  - lighted pedestrian crossings, so that pedestrians crossing the road would be more visible to drivers during the dark.



Figure 14. directing and warning tactile pavements in front of the building in 59 Endla Street

- In Tallinn, street gutters are only installed on walking and access roads if they are sloping or, in exceptional cases, covered with a grate (Figure 15). Concrete street gutters that are not covered are very dangerous for everybody, especially with people with reduced mobility and vision, and they must be replaced with sloping elements by the end of 2022.



Figure 15. The sloping street gutters on Kaarli Puiestee are perfect and not hindering for anyone

- When designing and renovating the cobblestone and limestone coverings in the Old Town and other areas, the principles of universal design must be respected; i.e. a smooth and level path must also be present in an area with uneven covering, as is the case in Harju Street.
- Specific requirements must be established for pathways, pedestrian crossings, and other similar objects (dimensions, colour, contrast marking, and location of signs).  
The placement of barriers, advertising stands, and bins must ensure a safe corridor for people with visual and mobility disabilities. It must also guarantee that the obstacles are easily visible.
- Barriers that are poorly distinguishable in terms of colour (for example, grey non-coloured concrete) from the covering must no longer be allowed to be installed on pavements. The use of grey barriers and obstacles on pedestrian crossings, currently present in the city, must also be stopped (Northern-Estonian Association of the Blind, NKL, Association of Persons with Mobility Disability in Tallinn). Bad visibility of concrete obstacles on the main pedestrian crossings has caused trauma to both people with visual and mobility disabilities (Figures 16 and 17).
- If possible, the existing barriers must be painted or, as soon as possible, replaced with contrasting ones. Barriers should only be used when absolutely needed. Instead, more attention should be paid to informing drivers of the need to follow the parking rules.



Figure 16. The concrete barriers on Harju Street are grey (poorly noticeable) and the space between them is sometimes too narrow (left image) for mobility equipment (electric wheelchair, scooter, etc.)

Figure 17. Hazardous barriers directly on the crosswalk in front of the National Opera Estonia

- Thanks to the city's funding, the Association of Persons with Mobility Disability in

Tallinn has mapped mobility obstacles on sidewalks and pedestrian crossings (non-covered high curbstones, street gutters, holes in covering, displaced hatches, poles, etc.) over a period of three years. The objects have been mapped in the city centre and the North-Tallinn district. Over 600 different obstacles have been identified during the work, which not only affect people with disabilities, but everyone: especially the elderly, pedestrians, cyclists, and people with reduced mobility. Web application for the mapped data <http://bit.ly/1DexUHI>.

- So far, the Tallinn Municipal Engineering Services Department has focused on renovating the whole street, although there is a great need to eliminate small obstacles. To improve accessibility, systematic and ongoing efforts should be made to eliminate the small obstacles on the walkways and pedestrian crossings. The activities must be systematic and follow an action plan. In particular, high curbstones, non-covered street gutters, holes, and the like must be eliminated from the paths.
- A good example is the renovation of Soo, Telliskivi, and Tehnika Streets in 2013, which ensured that the streets are now easily accessible; see the green signs in the picture. There are, however, many other disruptive and dangerous small obstacles in the city, which need to be eliminated without waiting for a major renovation project.



Figure 18. Mapping areas for mobility obstacles in 2011, 2012, and 2014

Figure 19. Eliminated and existing obstacles near Tehnika, Telliskivi, and Soo Streets

- According to representatives of disability organisations, there is a noticeable lack of traffic signposts. Often, these grey metal posts are installed on paths and people with poor eyesight can trip on them and get hurt (Figures 20 and 21).
- Solutions must be developed to mark the traffic signposts on paths.
- The Tallinn Transport Department must ensure the visibility of traffic signposts on traffic routes, pedestrian crossings, and other important places by using contrast labels on them (for example, yellow contrast strips).



Figure 20. There are grey, poorly visible traffic signposts on the reconstructed Soo Street



Figure 21. Traffic signposts that have contrast strips near Cinema Kosmos and the pedestrian crossing at the Tondi and Kotka Street crossing



Figure 22. The ‘Kotka kauplus’ and ‘Laagna’ stops on Laagna Street are completely inaccessible for people with mobility equipment

- Nature holidays, health trails, and ensuring access to them play an important role in shaping an inclusive living environment.
- The planning and building of paths, health, and sports trail, as well as green areas and parks must consider the principles of accessibility and universal design. Additionally, relevant solutions must be coordinated with specialists of the Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care Department or organisations of disabled people. To avoid mistakes in planning, designing, and constructing, responsible specialists of the district governments and other public servant must be involved in the process.
- By the beginning of 2022, the main part of Kadriorg Park and/or another park in another region of the city (Mustamäe, Kopli, etc.) must be made accessible for people with visual disabilities.



Figure 23. New beach road to the outdoor toilet in Pirita and an inaccessible disabled toilet (ascending ramp and a dangerous edge)



Figure 24. The boardwalk in Pääsküla Bog is very narrow and dangerous for a manual wheelchair; it is not accessible for an electric wheelchair

### 5.3.3. Tallinn tourist services and cultural values

- It is important to share correct and up-to-date information about accessibility to locals and tourists. To achieve this, the city's accommodation and catering sites, tourism objects, and tourist attractions must be mapped for the accessibility portal to be created and the Tallinn Tourism Web Site. The Tallinn City Enterprise Department will prepare the list of objects to be mapped, and the mapping will be carried out by competent organisations or authorities of disabled people. The data will be entered into the Accessibility Portal and can be used to make statistics and generate reports. Institutions with accessibility problems will be notified thereof and they will be recommended to order a more precise accessibility audit and ensure compliance with the law. Managers of the building must be made obliged to notify the parties carrying out the mapping project of changes in accessibility. The purpose of this is to collect accessibility data on all accommodation and catering facilities, tourism objects, and tourist attractions in the city by the end of the period.
- Accessibility mapping projects and/or audits must be carried out on tourism objects, tourist attractions, and accommodation and catering establishments that are important in terms of accessibility to ensure the best possible access to them for all people with special needs. The audits provide an overview of the current accessibility situation and its conformity with construction disability-specific requirements to the manager of the institution or building. They also give directions for improving the situation and ensuring access.

- The Tallinn City Enterprise Department monitors that the development documents of Tallinn cover the measures to improve the visitor's environment in Tallinn, as one of the priorities of tourism development in Tallinn is making sure that Tallinn is known as a hospitable destination with a good reputation. The Tallinn City Enterprise Department will continue working with partners to increase awareness of service providers of the principles of universal design in terms of people with special needs.
- Tallinn tourist information points must be fully accessible both physically and for people with visual or hearing disabilities and they must have the necessary special equipment (hearing loop for people with hearing disabilities, tablets with special software for information exchange, etc.). To obtain an overview, the department must be able to assess the situation competently and, if necessary, update the information points.
- To develop the competence of tourist information offices employees in working with clients with special needs, customer service training sessions must be organised.
- Tourist information posts and holders (about 40 pcs) must be installed in the city centre and North-Tallinn to facilitate people in orienteering to tourism attractions and the so-called city gates (port, railway station). The activity is coordinated by the Tallinn City Enterprise Department.
- The proportion of rollable city maps must be increased to make the map easier to read for the visually impaired, people in wheelchairs, and shorter people.
- The guide service must be adjusted for people with special needs.
- The awareness of tourism companies about service design for people with special needs to be raised.
- Tallinn's beaches as tourism objects must be more accessible for people with disabilities by building wheelchair-accessible roads and renting mobility equipment. Examples: [http://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/jul/28/beach-wheelchair-users-access-britain-beaches?CMP=fb\\_gu](http://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/jul/28/beach-wheelchair-users-access-britain-beaches?CMP=fb_gu).



Figure 25. This vehicle can be used on sand and in water.

Source: <http://beachpoweredmobility.com/rental-rates/>.

- In terms of visual disabilities, ensuring audio-visual access to cultural values and the urban space is crucial as it is important both for people with special needs and for tourists. To improve audio-visual accessibility, the following must be done:
  - make one of the city's architectural or artistic attractions accessible for people with visual disability every year. To do this, a three-dimensional model or an

embossed image is made of the object, which is recommended to be placed near the object or, if this is not possible, in an easily accessible place. The objects to be considered for making a three-dimensional model or an embossed image include: Estonian Drama Theatre, St. John's Church, Dome Church, Silhouette of Tallinn City, Kadriorg Palace, Song Festival Grounds (the whole area with the arch), Patarei Prison, Rotermann Quarter (part of it or the whole quarter), War of Independence Victory Column, and Russalka Memorial. An audio-visual introduction of the item should be added to the model or image;

- ensure that from the beginning of 2018, a reduced model or an embossed image is made of all sculptures built in the city space. The model or image should be located in a place where visually impaired people could visit it;
- finance the issuing of at least one tourist guide with embossed images (at least 12 images) which would, in addition to images of the city, include an embossed plan of it.
- Compiling a tourist guide on accessibility in Tallinn, based on data from the accessibility portal, which would include information on handicapped parking spots. This guide is important to tourists with special needs as well as to citizens. The publication must be updated regularly – every four years – and distributed at information points and hotels. The electronic version should be available on the Tallinn website. The publication must be adapted for people with special needs to the maximum possible extent and include, if possible, a simplified embossed city map.



Figure 26. Tourist guide on accessibility, compiled for the London Olympics – Open London

Figure 27. Tourist guide on the Catalonia region; the picture depicts how the hotels are marked based on accessibility and adjustments made for the disabled.

#### 5.4. Public facilities and services

One of the most important principles of accessibility is to provide better access to public buildings and facilities. Consequently, access to schools and kindergartens must be ensured both on foot and by bike – this creates the habit of walking and cycling in young people. People with special needs need to be guaranteed access to cultural, sports, educational, and public institutions. The plan also sets the goal of making public and private services available for people with special needs, as well as making it possible for them to cope and have an active lifestyle. As a result, many types of transport services will continue to be provided to people with disabilities. It is also planned to continue providing housing services to people with disabilities and supplementing the municipal housing fund while considering people with disabilities and special needs.

##### 5.4.1. Accessibility in education and hobby education

The purpose of the activities planned in the accessibility development trends in terms of the city's education field is ensuring a fully accessible and obtainable education for all children, including children with disabilities. There are over 200 educational and interest institutions, including kindergartens, as well as general education and hobby schools, under the administration of the education authority. In 2009, the Association of Persons with Mobility Disability in Tallinn mapped 72 school buildings and 11 youth centres. It was revealed that 57% of the schools were physically inaccessible, 18% had limited access, and 25% were fully accessible. Now, this data has become outdated and needs to be updated. It is important to emphasise that 75% of schools have major problems with accessibility: children and parents with disabilities, the elderly, people with baby strollers, and others find it difficult or impossible to access them. To attain a significant change in access to education institutions by the end of 2022, the following steps must be taken:

- map all educational institutions (kindergartens, schools, centres) and, in this context, update the accessibility portal data. Managers of the buildings must be made obliged to notify the parties carrying out the mapping project of changes in accessibility;
- order accessibility audits from disability organisations to plan and consider the accessibility factor of renovated buildings more precisely;
- ensure the availability of modern IT- and special equipment in the educational process of children with special needs.

##### 5.4.2. Accessibility in the field of sports and youth work

- All sports facilities, including outdoor equipment in parks and outdoor sports fields, in the city must be mapped. The data must be added to the accessibility portal and updated. Additionally, access to the sports facilities must be monitored throughout the period. If necessary, accessibility audits must also be ordered. Managers of the building must be made obliged to notify the parties carrying out the mapping project of changes in accessibility.
- By the beginning of 2019, at least two Tallinn sports centres must be adapted for visually impaired people.

### 5.4.3. Accessibility in the social field and in healthcare

The Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care Department coordinates and organises social welfare in the city of Tallinn and organises and coordinates the activities targeted at the prevention of diseases of the residents of Tallinn, as well as the promotion of their health.

Access to health care institutions is one of the fundamental rights of citizens, and it is the responsibility of the local government to guarantee it. To ensure full access and other necessary adjustments for people with special needs (handicapped parking, disabled toilets, contrasts, voice announcements in elevators, hearing aids, etc.) to medical institutions, accurate information is needed, based on which it is possible to plan and implement the relevant activities.

- All health facilities in the city, including polyclinics and hospitals, health and family health centres, must be mapped for the accessible portal to be created. The Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care Department will prepare the list of objects to be mapped. The mapping will be ordered from competent disability organisations or the department will carry it out itself. The data will be entered into the Accessibility Portal and can be used to make statistics and generate reports.
- Institutions with accessibility problems will be notified thereof and they will be recommended to order a more precise accessibility audit and ensure compliance with the law. Managers of the buildings must be made obliged to notify the parties carrying out the mapping project of changes in accessibility. The goal is to map all healthcare facilities in the city by the end of the period.
- By 2022, all medical institutions must be accessible for people with visual disability in the following extent:
  - numbers of rooms and floors, directional texts, and the numbers of elevator buttons must be embossed and clearly legible;
  - a voice system must be installed in new elevators to indicate the floor numbers and, if possible, also an emergency call system with a hearing loop for disabled people;
  - when decorating rooms, the needs of the visually impaired must be considered to make moving and orienteering in the rooms as easy and safe as possible. To do this, contrasting colours, guiding embossed guiding paths, etc. must be used.
- The need for hearing aids in servicing patients in medical institutions must be mapped. The need for portable and stationary hearing loops and other devices in information boards and registers or other information points must also be mapped. Specialists from organisations of people with hearing disabilities must be involved in the activities.
- The accessibility of welfare institutions (e.g. nursery homes, day care, work, and support centres) managed by the Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care Department must be mapped and audited to fix the situation of these institutions and plan activities to ensure accessibility and make adjustments. The Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care Department with the accessibility working team shall prepare the list of objects to be mapped. The mapping will be ordered from competent disability organisations or the department will carry it out itself. The data will be entered into the Accessibility Portal and can be used to make statistics and generate reports. The institutions must be constantly monitored and the accessibility

information must be updated.

- Websites of medical and welfare institutions, centres, and other organisations must provide information on the accessibility of rooms and services or the related problems. Additionally, the adaptations for people with special needs must be described (presence of handicapped parking spots and disabled toilets, special solutions for people with disabilities, etc.).

#### 5.4.4. Improving the accessibility of social housing and rental spaces

- We must continue to build and adapt social housing meant for disabled people considering the needs of people with different disabilities and ensuring accessibility and compliance with the disability-related requirements of the construction regulation. Competent public servants and organisations of people with disabilities must be involved in this process to prevent mistakes or non-conformities.
- The city of Tallinn shall support and help people with special needs in making their living space accessible by funding the adaptation work to the extent set by the city.
- Between 2016–2022, at least two support campaigns similar to the ‘Fix the Facades’ and ‘Fix the Courtyards’ campaigns will be organised to increase the accessibility of Tallinn’s residential buildings for people with visual disabilities.

#### 5.4.5. Accessibility to city administrative agencies

A person in a wheelchair can access city government buildings (to the city district elder) only in three districts (Pirita, Lasnamäe, and Nõmme). There is a separate disabled toilet in the Lasnamäe and Pirita city district governments; in other city district governments, there are none.

A person in a wheelchair can access the public servant in the social welfare department of eight city district governments. Since 2016, accessibility has been improved in the building of the Tallinn city government, where a modern elevator was installed. Additionally, a platform lift was installed to ensure access to the canteen located on the basement floor. Despite the modern elevator solutions, there is still a problem of accessing the building with mobility equipment. People entering the building from the Freedom Square face the lobby steps and people entering the building from the courtyard face a stairway with a difference in height of more than 0.5 meters. Solutions include rebuilding the main entrance of the building and adding an incline. The physical accessibility of Tallinn city council has been considerably improved: a vertical elevator has been installed to the staircase in the inner courtyard, a shaft lift will be installed in the building, and there is a modern disabled toilet.

To ensure maximum access to all city authorities by the end of 2022, the following should be done:

- In the long term, all buildings of city authorities must be audited in terms of accessibility: the current situation must be fixed and activities must be planned to ensure accessibility and adjustments. The audits will be ordered from competent organisations of people with disabilities. The Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care Department will enter the data to the accessibility portal and, if necessary, update the information.
- Cooperation regarding accessibility must be ensured between the construction specialist and other public servants of the city authorities and the public servants responsible for accessibility in the Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care

Department. Activities related to accessibility must be coordinated to ensure that the relevant building norms and principles of universal design are considered in the maximum extent.

- All service areas and information points in the city must be accessible for disabled clients, public servants, and trainees, regardless of the type of disability. The necessary special adjustments must be implemented in the rooms to ensure physical access to handicapped parking spots, ramps, and disabled toilets by building special paths and the like. Contrastive colour schemes, custom letters, guiding sliding keys, etc. should be used. Special solutions – portable or stationary hearing loops and other similar technology – must be ensured for people with hearing disabilities. The presence of this technology should be indicated by markings on the doors or service boxes.
- To specify more detailed needs, competent disability organisations must be involved to carry out accessibility audits which also focus on the need for carrying out training sessions on accessibility or preparing training material.



Figure 28. International hearing loop symbol

## 6. Training of city employees in the field of accessibility and disabled people

- Public servants will participate in the work of the accessibility workgroup ‘Barrier-free City for All’ of the Eurocities organisation and exchange experiences on accessibility and universal design with the member cities of the organisation.
- Public servants who are responsible for accessibility standards and requirements, as well as the principles of universal design, must be trained at least once every two years.
- An external training session on accessibility and an exchange of experiences must be organised for the public servants responsible for carrying out accessibility-related activities at least once every two years.
- The volume of training sessions on working with people with disabilities meant for public servants must be gradually increased. The goal is to reach a level by the end of 2017 where all public servants who directly work with city residents (social workers, service station staff, municipal policemen, public transport drivers, etc.) have received at least four hours of training on this subject and all new employees will receive such training during the first six months of work.
- Training on working with deaf people and people with hearing disabilities must be organised for public servants of city authorities, which would include the psychological and practical preparation of customer service.

## Used sources

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Toomas Sepp  
City Secretary

## **Explanatory memorandum**

regarding the item on the agenda 'Accessibility development trends in Tallinn in 2016–2022' of the minutes of the sitting of the Tallinn City Government

**The information on the accessibility development trends in Tallinn in 2016–2022 is apprised of with the item on the agenda of the minutes of the sitting of the Tallinn City Government. The purpose of the accessibility development trends is to ensure a more accessible and obstacle-free environment in the city of Tallinn for all citizens and tourists, people with mobility and visual disabilities, and the elderly and young children, by 2022. The accessibility development trends in Tallinn are based on the proposals for solving problems and challenges pointed out in the Tallinn City Accessibility Audit 2013. The devising of the accessibility development trends considered the proposals of city administrative agencies, accessibility workshops and commissions, and the representative organisations of disabled people. The planning and implementation of activities necessary to improve accessibility are guided by the legislation and guides.**

The topic of accessibility in Tallinn is addressed both in the strategy '[Tallinn 2030](#)' and the [Tallinn Development Plan 2014–2020](#). Objectives and activities set out in these development documents comply with the principles of an inclusive living environment; and support accessibility in four main areas: environment, transport, information, and public services. The purpose is to ensure a more accessible and obstacle-free environment and public services in the city of Tallinn by 2022. The compilation of city development plans and the accompanying sectoral plans can be based on the accessibility development trends. Planning, development, construction, and information activities must:

- have a systematic and coordinated approach to ensure accessibility, while considering the principles of universal design;
- follow the principle of equal treatment, while promoting active self-assertion in all social groups;
- finance the activities that accompany ensuring accessibility from the city budget and, if possible, the European Union Structural Funds;
- take accessibility into account in urban construction and planning, from design to construction and supervision.

The documentation of accessibility development trends is a unique activity in Estonia and Tallinn is the first local government in Estonia to, in cooperation with the interested parties, draw up a document which addresses the improvement of accessibility. Preparing the document on accessibility development trends and implementing the activities set out therein supports the aspiration of Tallinn to obtain the Accessible City Award rewarded by the European Commission in 2022.

The rights of persons with disabilities to accessibility have been set out in the strategy '[European Disability Strategy 2010–2020: A Renewed Commitment to a Barrier-Free Europe](#)'. The accessibility and universal design principles, as well as the common approach, are based on the guidance material '[Designing and creating an all-inclusive living environment](#)' prepared by the Union of Estonian Architects, the Estonian Design Centre, and the Estonian Academy of Arts after the Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre commissioned it in 2011–2012.

The document on the development trends proposes that the activities related to accessibility and universal design in the city of Tallinn are assembled and coordinated by a working group of the Disability Commission. The working group would consist of the responsible public servants in city government offices and district governments, and, if necessary, representatives of organisations for disabled people.

The Social Welfare and Health Care Department would act as the coordinator of the planned and systematic implementation of the accessibility development trends 2016–2022 at city level, who would hold a dialogue between city services, offices, and district governments regarding the implementation of the development trends to shape the development of accessibility at city level.

To keep up with the development of information technology, the Tallinn accessibility portal (Chapter 5.1.1) must be created to meet the needs. The portal would be the key element in developing the accessibility of Tallinn in the years 2016–2022. The portal to be created is, above all, a place of collecting and presenting accessibility information, but it is also a tool for city authorities and a source of statistical information in the implementation of accessibility developments. The information provided through the portal must give a good overview of the accessibility of public objects to disabled people, their helpers, the elderly, people with baby strollers, health athletes, and visitors of the capital. The portal must also contain information about the handicapped parking spots, travel routes, movement obstacles, etc. in the city. The Tallinn Social Welfare and Health Care Department would be responsible for managing the portal, collecting data, and adjusting data.

Given the needs of the aging society, the goals of the work capacity reform, the need to use the city's budget in a sustainable manner, and to promote lifelong work and study in Tallinn, adaptable, renovated, or built residential and apartment buildings are also considered an object of universal design and accessibility. Obstacle-free self-realisation is not possible if a person cannot leave their home or get back there. The less obstacles there are in the residence, services, urban scape, and in the environment in general, the more independent people are, the less they need support services in their living environment, and the less money is spent on social services and benefits.

The draft has been reviewed by the language editor of the legislative drafting and draft legislation of the city legal services department of the Tallinn City Office.

In the draft, proposals of the City Financial Services of the Tallinn City Office have been considered, the title has been re-worded as 'Information on the Accessibility Development Trends in Tallinn in 2016–2022' instead of 'Tallinn Accessibility Action Plan for 2016–2020', and the content has been corrected based on the title.

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2 March 2016