

ACCESSIBLE EUROPE 2019 – CONTRIBUTION

Department of Translation Technology (TIM), Faculty of Translation and
Interpreting
University of Geneva



Innovation in Multilingual Digital Accessibility

ACTIVITY COVERAGE

- Regional cooperation and stakeholder engagement: the activity strengthens and supports regional cooperation and the engagement of all relevant stakeholders, in line with the European Accessibility act, in the development and implementation of ICT accessibility policies and solutions in the European region.
- ICT accessibility policies: raising awareness and/or promoting relevant guidelines on public policies, including exchanging knowledge and sharing best practices on ICT accessibility. This may include the development of standards.
- Public procurement with accessibility features: promoting regional and in-country deliver of public procurement as a tool to improve the inclusion of persons with disabilities and specific needs.
- Web Accessibility: developing regional and in country capacity through web accessibility features and/or training to ensure that websites and related services are available and accessible to all citizens.
- Media Services Accessibility: raising awareness about accessibility possibilities of TV and video streaming on digital platforms, and promoting the implementation of appropriate solutions.
- Innovation and Accessibility: promoting the development of regional and in-country capacity building on programming for all, including persons with disabilities and specific needs. This may include embedding “accessible by design” in the product’s innovation/development process.



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DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT/RECENT ACTIVITIES

1. Over the last 10 years, the TIM Department has been committed to multilingual digital accessibility (MDA), conducting original fundamental and applied research on the following related subdomains:
 - Accessibility of Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) Tools: Research has been carried out in this yet vastly unexplored area over the last years in order to guarantee equal opportunities for translation and interpreting professionals with visual impairments both during training and in the job market.
 - Accessibility of Multilingual Websites: Localisation best practices have been defined on how to achieve high levels of web accessibility in multilingual websites. These are the result of innovative research work that has been undertaken with the participation of all relevant stakeholders: web localisation practitioners, web accessibility experts, web professionals, end users, and translation and localisation trainees.
 - Development of Speech Translation Applications for Minority Languages: Research has been carried out over the last years to create translation applications for minority languages, including Swiss French Sign Language. Sign language applications have been created in collaboration with the Deaf community. Our applications currently use videos done by real humans (Deaf translators). Research on virtual signing avatars is ongoing.

2. The TIM Department is one of the main partners of the Swiss Centre for Barrier-free Communication (BFC), a 4-year project (2017-2020) which aims at promoting inclusion for people with disabilities in higher education through research on multilingual and accessible ICT. All the work that has been conducted, including workshops organised and publications from the Centre members, is referred to in the BFC website: <https://bfc.unige.ch>

3. The TIM Department has been always committed to join forces with non-for-profit external partners to promote change and social inclusion through multilingual and accessible ICT. The following projects are an example of that:
 - a. BabelDr: Language barriers pose serious problems regarding the quality, security and equitability of health care. BabelDr is speech a translation application that has been developed and tested in collaboration with the Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève (HUG) to tackle this issue. Swiss French Sign Language has been recently added to the list of languages available along with other minority languages. More info at: <https://babeldr.unige.ch/>
 - b. HandiCapable: The Swiss NGO HandiCapable launched a project to collect research-based evidence on the positive socio-economic impact of inclusive education on the lives of children with cerebral palsy (CP). The TIM department is currently involved in the first phase of the project (March 2019-February 2020), in which the use of Easy-to-Read materials and technology is being explored as a key pedagogical tool for this population group.

Activity running in:

- 2016 or before
 2017
 2018
 2019
 2020
 2021
 2022
 2023



CALL FOR COLLABORATION/COMMITMENT TO FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- 1) The TIM Department is actively looking for partners to develop standards and training materials on multilingual digital accessibility, especially in the field of translation technologies. We are currently exploring the overlap between W3C standards, including WCAG, HTML, XML and WAI-ARIA, and localisation-oriented standards, such as XLIFF and TMX.
- 2) ICT accessibility in the medical domain: Together with the University of Sydney (Usyd), the TIM Department has recently started a project to work on culturally-effective, patient-oriented healthcare translation and communication. We are currently seeking additional funding to develop accessible guidance and technology in this domain.

ORGANISATION INFORMATION

Organisation Name: Faculty of Translation and Interpreting, University of Geneva
 Country: Switzerland

Organisation/Activity URL: <https://www.unige.ch/fti/en/faculte/departements/dtim/>

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