



Government of Malta

Reference: **GMICT S 0051-3:2011**

Version: **4.0**

Effective: 3 June 2011



Website Accessibility Standard

This document is part of the GMICT Policy Framework

<http://ictpolicies.gov.mt>

Underlined terms are defined in the **Vocabulary Standard**.

Purpose

This document seeks to ensure that Public Sector Websites are accessible and in line with Equal Opportunity legislation.

Scope and Applicability

1. The provisions of this document apply to all new Public Sector Websites¹
 - (a) for which:
 - a public procurement process
 - internal development, or
 - implementation of a content management system (CMS) that is immediately available for downloadhas not yet commenced upon the date when this document becomes effective, **and**
 - (b) that are:
 - Internet-based, public facing Websites that offer informational and/or transactional services
 - Intranet-based Websites intended for internal use by Public Sector employees
 - Web-based Information Systems intended for internal Government administrative purposes (for example those intended for the automation of a particular office or function)
- as follows:

¹ As defined in the Vocabulary GMICT X 0004

	Public (Internet)			Public Sector Employees (Intranet)	Web based Information Systems
	.gov.mt	.eu	Others ²	.intra.gov.mt	
Legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Web content accessibility guidelines	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Other	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

2. Public Service Websites and other Websites registered under the .gov.mt domain, for which:

- a public procurement process
- internal development, or
- implementation of a content management system (CMS) that is immediately available for download

had commenced prior to the date when this document became effective shall abide by the Website Standard (CIMU S 0051) Version 3.1, dated 15 April 2005.

²Such as .com, .org, .net, .edu, etc



1. Legislation

The Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act of 2000 (Chapter 413, Article 13) stipulates that no person with a disability shall be denied access to the services of any local or other public authority. The *Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility* (FITA) is the principal advocate and coordinator for ICT accessibility in Malta. FITA advises and acts on behalf of the *Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni b'Diżabilita'* (KNPD) on matters of ICT accessibility.

2. Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

1. The Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) defines Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) that explain how to make Web content accessible to people with disabilities.
2. Version 2.0 of the WCAG guidelines are adopted as the Government's Web accessibility requirements.
3. All Level A guidelines are mandatory and shall be addressed.
4. Level AA and AAA guidelines are being adopted as listed below:

Guideline	Level A	Level AA	Level AAA
1.1 Provide text alternatives for all non-text content	Mandatory		
1.2 Provide synchronized alternatives for multimedia	Mandatory	Desirable	
1.3 Ensure that information and structure can be separated from presentation	Mandatory		
1.4 Make it easy to distinguish foreground information from its background	Mandatory	Mandatory	
2.1 Make all functionality operable via a keyboard interface	Mandatory		
2.2 Allow users to control time limits on their reading or interaction	Mandatory	Mandatory	
2.2.3 No Timing			<i>Appropriate warning shall be made available and adequate time allowed for users of assisted technologies.</i>
2.2.4 Interruptions			



Guideline		Level A	Level AA	Level AAA
2.3	Allow users to avoid content that could cause seizures due to photosensitivity	Mandatory		Mandatory
2.4	Provide mechanisms to help users find content, orient themselves within it, and navigate through it	Mandatory		
<p><i>I-frames are a practical example since their location on screen does not necessarily match their placement within the page's source code.</i></p> <p><i>At least one access medium shall always be accessible to people, irrespective of their specific impairment group.</i></p>				
2.4.6	Focus	Mandatory		
2.4.7	Location			Mandatory
<p><i>Include notification of Website layout updates at the top left corner of the main page or in a What's New Section.</i></p>				
3.1	Make text content readable and understandable	Mandatory		
3.2	Make the placement and functionality of content predictable	Mandatory	Mandatory	
3.3	Help users avoid and correct mistakes	Mandatory		
4.1	Support compatibility with current and future user agents (including assistive technologies)	Mandatory		

Recommended Best Practice

Reference may be made to the following:

- WCAG Guidelines v2.0
<http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/>
- A help resource to assist in the achievement of these requirements
<http://www.w3.org/TR/UNDERSTANDING-WCAG20/Overview.html>
- A checklist to help identify whether a Web page satisfies the accessibility requirements
<http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/appendixB.html>
- Making Information Accessible – Practical advice on designing, producing and planning for accessible information
http://www.knpsd.org/mittsfita/dokumenti/sd_accessible_media.pdf
- Web Site Accessibility – Assessment and Implementation
<http://www.knpsd.org/mittsfita/dokumenti/webpages.doc>

Unclassified



3. Other

3.1 Colours

1. Hyperlink text shall be of a different colour than content text.
2. Colour combinations shall cater for the needs of colour blind persons.

3.2 Images

1. Images shall always be provided with meaningful tags (e.g. "Picture of Valletta" rather than "PIC01"). In case of decorative Images, the ALT tag shall be set to "**".
2. In case of images which include meaningful text as part of the image, the ALT tag shall include the same information.
3. If image maps are used, alternative text shall be provided for hotspots.
4. Where graphics are used for linking, a text alternative or a meaningful ALT tag shall be included.
5. The ALT tag for images that replace bullets shall be set to "bullet".
6. Where spacer images are used, their ALT tag shall read "spacer".

3.3 Graphs and Charts

Whenever a graph or chart is used, a suitable text summary or a 'longdesc' attribute shall be provided.

3.4 Multimedia

Links to any videos and audio files that are made available through the Website shall include meaningful tags. Captions and transcripts of audio should be provided whenever practical.

3.5 Menus

In cases of menu(s) that is(are) designed using tools and techniques that are not Hypertext interchange formats, an alternative menu shall be supplied using standard Hypertext interchange formats on another section of the page. Automatic triggering of page loads is not recommended.



Deviations from GMICT Policy

Instances where it may not be technically possible or cost-effective to comply with a particular GMICT Policy requirement shall be reported to Government's ICT Compliance function. This is done in order to evaluate the security, architectural, operational and other risks anticipated to result from the deviation, to identify additional compensating controls required to mitigate these risks and to formally acknowledge any residual risk and assign appropriate responsibility. In such instances, a request for exemption shall be forwarded to the ICT Compliance function for assessment in line with the Exemptions Policy and Procedure (GMICT P 0048, GMICT R 0048 respectively).

Breaches of GMICT Policy shall be brought to the attention of ICT Compliance function in order to determine appropriate corrective action and potential internal control improvements.

References

Name	Reference	Location
Website Policy	GMICT P 0051	http://www.ictpolicies.gov.mt
Website Directive	GMICT D 0051	http://www.ictpolicies.gov.mt
Web Content Accessibility Guidelines		http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20
Exemptions Policy	GMICT P 0048	http://www.ictpolicies.gov.mt
Exemptions Procedure	GMICT R 0048	http://www.ictpolicies.gov.mt

Modification History

Version	Effective Date	Changes
3.1	15/4/2005	
4.0	3/06/2011	

Issuing Authority

This document has been issued with the authority of the **Malta Information Technology Agency**.

Contact Information

Government ICT Policies, Directives, Standards and associated publications can be found at <http://ictpolicies.gov.mt>.

Any suggestions, queries or requests for clarification regarding Government ICT Policies, Directives and Standards may be forwarded to ictpolicies@gov.mt.