



FOLKETINGET
STATSREVISORERNE



FOLKETINGET
RIGSREVISIONEN

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submitted to the Public Accounts Committee

Web accessibility provided by the public sector

1. Introduction and conclusion

Purpose and conclusion

1. This report concerns the digital accessibility of websites provided by the Danish government and regions. The act on *the accessibility of websites and mobile applications provided by the public sector* is known as the Web Accessibility Act. The purpose of the act is to ensure equal access to or use of public websites for all citizens, irrespective of disabilities.

2. The digital society is a challenge to approx. 20% of the adult population in Denmark. Various types of cognitive or physical disabilities, like impaired sight and hearing, colour-blindness, dyslexia or developmental coordination disorders can be the reason. For this group of citizens, web accessibility can be crucial for their active participation in the digital society.

3. The report examines whether the ministries and the regions have ensured that their websites are accessible to citizens with a disability, and whether the Agency for Digital Government has monitored the ministries and regions' compliance with the Web Accessibility Act in a satisfactory manner.

4. The ministries and the regions are responsible for ensuring that their websites comply with the Web Accessibility Act. First, they must publish an accessibility statement for each of their websites, documenting the accessibility status of the websites, cf. section 4 of the Web Accessibility Act and executive order no. 904 of 22 August 2019. Secondly, they must ensure that their websites comply with the requirements on accessibility to citizens with disabilities, cf. section 3 of the Web Accessibility Act and executive order no. 2180 of 26 November 2021.

Under the Ministry of Digital Government and Gender Equality, the Agency for Digital Government monitors whether the websites of public authorities comply with the requirements of the Web Accessibility Act. The monitoring conducted by the agency is governed by the European Commission's implementing decision of 11 October 2018 (2018/1524) under executive order no. 904 of 22 August 2019.

Disability

Citizens have a disability if they are psychically or mentally impaired and thus, in combination with various barriers, prevented from participating fully and effectively in community life on equal footing with other citizens.

Legislation

When reference is made to the legislation in this report, it includes the Web Accessibility Act as well as the executive order.

5. The non-compliance of public sector websites with the Web Accessibility Act has been an issue for some time. Over the past three years, statistics published by the Agency for Digital Government show that on average 71% of the tested websites do not comply with the Web Accessibility Act despite the fact that the act took effect in September 2020. The agency's statistics are based on samples. Rigsrevisionen has examined all websites provided by the government and regions. The study includes 526 public sector websites distributed among 21 ministries and five regions.

6. Rigsrevisionen took the initiative to do the study in March 2023.



Conclusion

The ministries and the regions have not fully ensured that their websites are accessible to citizens with disabilities. This is considered unsatisfactory by Rigsrevisionen. Furthermore, the Agency for Digital Government's monitoring of compliance with the Web Accessibility Act has not been entirely satisfactory, and citizens with disabilities have therefore not had the same opportunities as other citizens to use or access important information on public sector websites.

Twelve out of 21 ministries and three out of five regions had not - as required by the law - published website accessibility statements for all the websites they are responsible for, according to our examination. Forty-six per cent of the published statements that the ministries and the regions had published were filled out incorrectly. Several ministries and regions have published website accessibility statements for all their websites, following Rigsrevisionen's examination.

Rigsrevisionen's examination showed that 61% of the home pages of the ministries and the regions' websites did not meet one or several of the requirements of website accessibility. With the exception of the Prime Minister's Office, this applies to all ministries and regions. Thus, the ministries and regions still have difficulties complying with the Web Accessibility Act.

Minimum 18% of the ministries and regions' websites are not included in the population from which the Agency for Digital Government selects websites for inspection. As a result, the basis for the agency's monitoring is incomplete. The study found that the websites that are not included in the agency's population are less compliant with the website accessibility rules than those included in the population. This means that the least compliant websites are not immediately at risk of being selected for inspection.

The Agency for Digital Government follows the monitoring requirements of the European Commission regarding the size of the random sample, its composition and the involvement of relevant stakeholders. The requirement for implementation of the monitoring has been partially observed. Follow-up and response requirements regarding the monitoring are also observed by the agency.

Authorities have been instructed by the Agency for Digital Government to address issues with their accessibility statements. However, the agency has not checked whether the authorities have followed the instructions. The agency has not provided instructions to public authorities whose websites are not in compliance with the Web Accessibility Act.