AccessibleEU at Four Years: Advancing Accessibility to Strengthen Europe's Competitiveness

Venue: Espacio Ventas. Calle Alcalá, 182. 28028 Madrid
Date: Tuesday 24 and Wednesday 25 November 2026
Format: Hybrid. Livestreamed from 9:00 to 14:00 both days
Language: English with translation into Spanish

Organised by:

Accessible centre EU · Ametic LA VOZ DE LA INDUSTRIA DIGITAL · eVIA

European Accessibility Resource Centre - AccessibleEU

Working together to build a more accessible European Union.
We move with you!

Consortium composed of:

Fundación ONCE · ENAT European Network for Accessible Tourism · EASPD · JKU Johannes Kepler University Linz · UNE Normalización Española

Context

AccessibleEU, the European Commission's Resource Centre on Accessibility, celebrates its first four years of activity. Since its launch, the initiative has become a key driver in advancing accessibility across the European Union, supporting Member States, businesses, professionals and civil society in implementing accessibility policies, standards and best practices.

This milestone provides an ideal moment to reflect on progress, strengthen strategic alliances and outline the future direction of accessibility in Europe. The event will convene high-level representatives from national governments, EU institutions, the private sector, academia and organisations of persons with disabilities.

In its first four years, AccessibleEU has:

- ✓ Built a pan-European network of accessibility experts.
- ✓ Produced technical guidance, methodologies and tools to support implementation of accessibility requirements.
- ✓ Strengthened cooperation among Member States in the context of the European Accessibility Act (EAA).
- ✓ Promoted best practices across key sectors: transport, built environment, digital accessibility, services and standardisation.
- ✓ Fostered dialogue between public authorities, industry, academia and civil society.

This event will showcase these achievements while reinforcing AccessibleEU's role as a strategic catalyst for accessibility transformation in Europe.

In addition, throughout both days of the event, an exhibition area will feature innovative startups and technology providers developing accessibility solutions and assistive technologies for persons with disabilities. This innovation showcase will offer participants the opportunity to discover emerging

technologies, exchange knowledge with entrepreneurs and explore practical solutions that are transforming accessibility across different sectors.

Furthermore, the programme on 25 November will be organised in collaboration with EVIA, the Technology Platform for Independent Living and Accessibility, jointly promoted by Fundación ONCE and Multisectoral Association of Information Technology, Communications and Electronics Companies (AMETIC) since 2008. This collaboration will strengthen the dialogue between policymakers, industry leaders, researchers and innovators, highlighting the strategic role of accessibility-driven innovation in Europe's competitiveness and digital transformation.

2. Objectives

General Objective

To present the key achievements of AccessibleEU during its first four years, strengthen strategic alliances and outline a shared vision for the future of accessibility in Europe.

Specific Objectives

- Highlight the milestones and impact of AccessibleEU.
- Bring together high-level representatives from the five strategic pillars of AccessibleEU through dialogues with leading international accessibility figures in:
    - Accessible Transport
    - Built Environment
    - Digital Accessibility and Technology
    - Standardisation
    - Rights and Participation of Persons with Disabilities

- Showcase European best practices selected for their innovation and replicability.
- Promote innovative accessibility solutions by providing visibility to startups, assistive technology developers and emerging enterprises working to improve inclusion and independent living for persons with disabilities.
- Strengthen cooperation with key institutions:
  - European Commission
  - National governments
  - Business sector
  - Organisations of persons with disabilities
  - Professional bodies
- Present and discuss the future of accessibility in Europe and beyond.

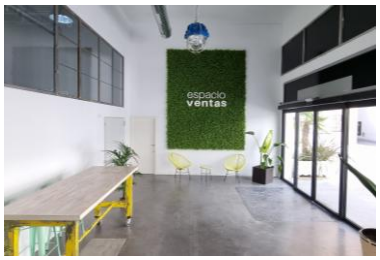
This addition fits perfectly with the event's positioning as a platform for innovation, competitiveness and knowledge transfer. It also provides valuable visibility to both the EVIA-AMETIC collaboration and the growing ecosystem of accessibility and assistive technology startups, showcasing how innovation can contribute to greater inclusion, independence and quality of life for persons with disabilities.

3. Target Audience

- EU institutions and national authorities
- Business sector and industry associations
- Organisations of persons with disabilities
- Accessibility, universal design and standardisation experts
- Universities and research centres
- Media specialised in social policy, innovation and accessibility

4. Venue

The event will take place at **Espacio Ventas**, a modern and versatile venue located in the heart of Madrid. The venue provides an ideal setting for conferences, meetings and innovation-focused events, fostering networking, knowledge exchange and collaboration among participants.

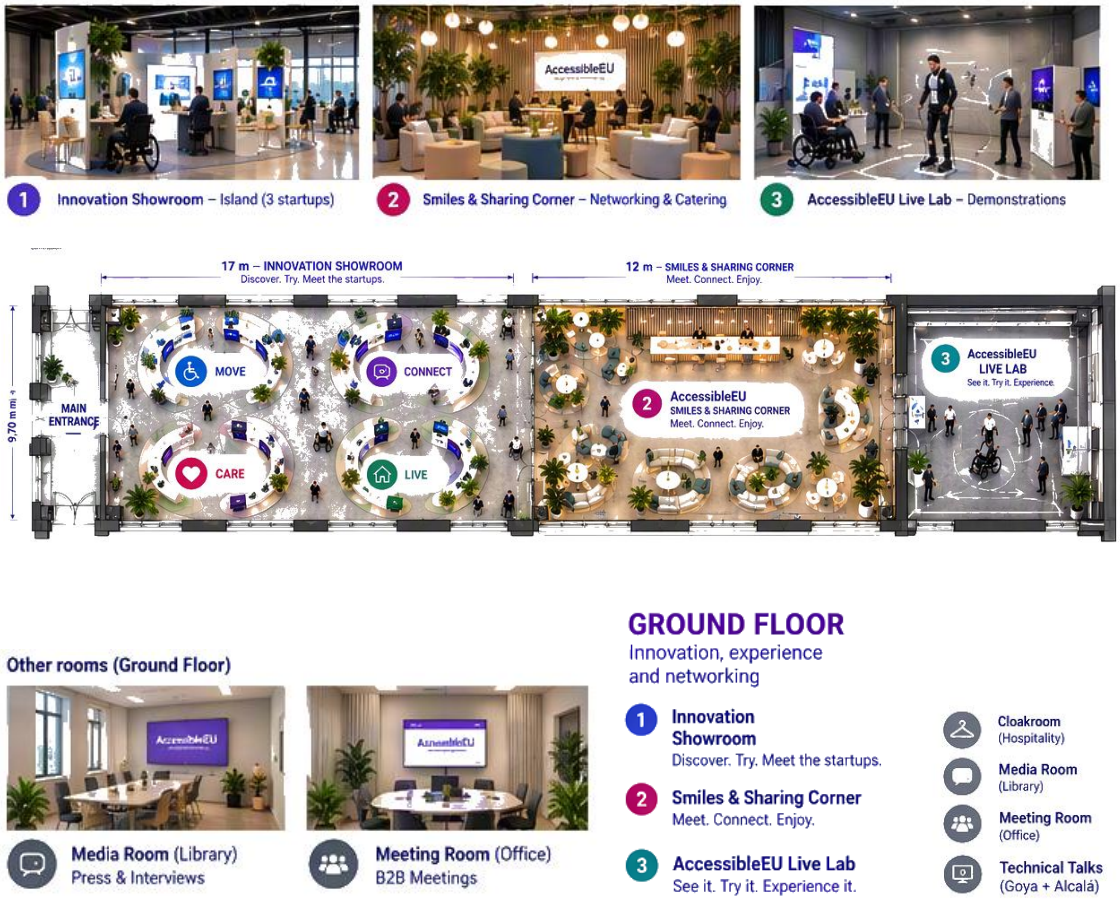


In line with the event's commitment to inclusion and equal participation, the venue offers accessibility features designed to facilitate access and participation for people with disabilities. Should you require any specific accommodation or accessibility support, please let us know in advance and we will be pleased to assist.

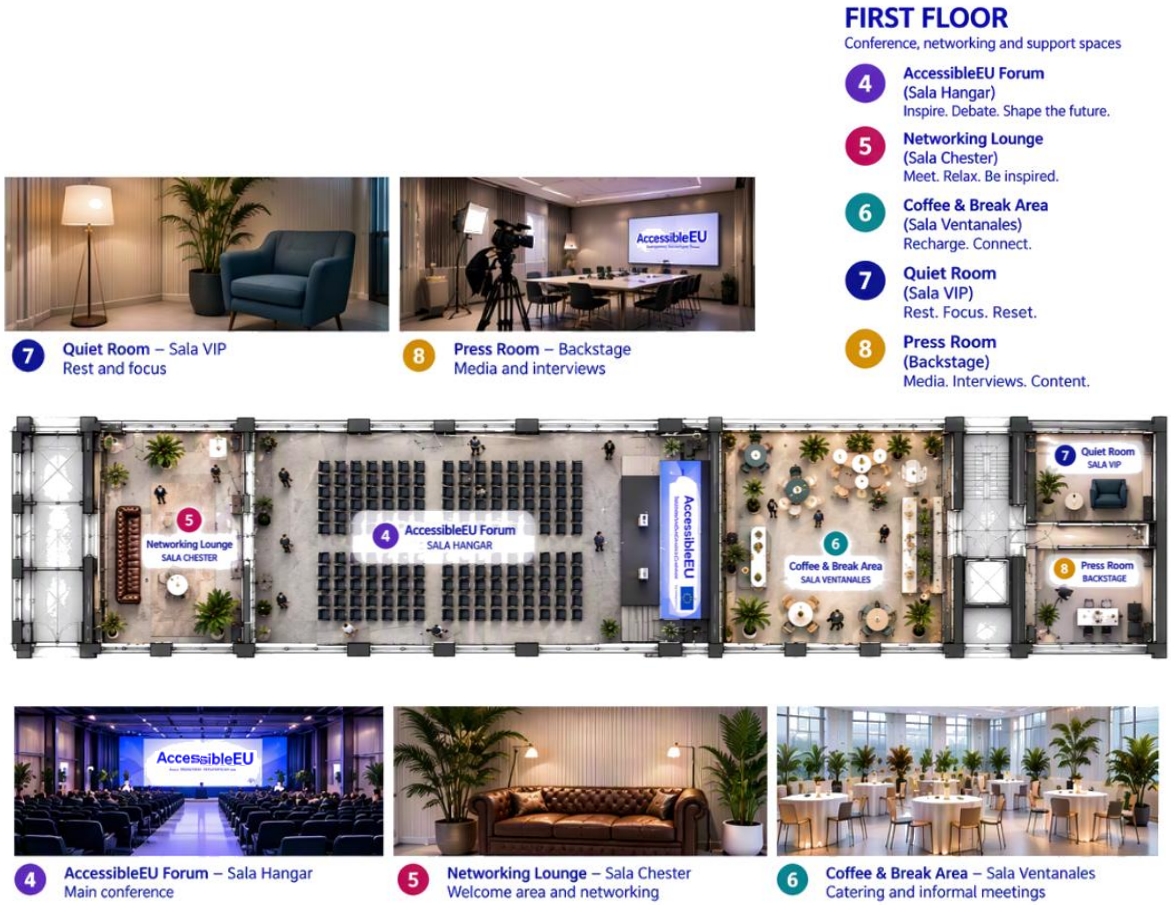
Venue Address
Espacio Ventas
Calle Alcalá, 182
28028 Madrid, Spain

For directions and location details, please visit:Espacio Ventas. Calle Alcalá, 182. 28028 Madrid

A dedicated area designed to provide a quiet and comfortable environment where participants can take a break, relax, and recharge throughout the event. This space promotes well-being, reduces sensory overload, and supports an inclusive experience for all attendees.



Conceptual design of the event spaces AccessibleEU at Four Years: Advancing Accessibility to Strengthen Europe's Competitiveness (ground floor)



Conceptual design of the event spaces AccessibleEU at Four Years: Advancing Accessibility to Strengthen Europe's Competitiveness (first floor)

5. Agenda (Invited speakers)

Event presented by: Jose Luis Borau Jordán

DAY 1, November 24th 2026

08:30 – 09:00 | Registration and Welcome Coffee

09:00 – 09:30 | INSTITUTIONAL CORNER

- **Miguel Carballeda**, President of the ONCE Social Group
- **Gunta Anca**, European Disability Forum President
- **Diana Morant,** Minister for Science, Innovation and Universities of Spain
- **Luis Cayo Pérez Bueno**, President of the Spanish Committee of Representatives of Persons with Disabilities (CERMI)
- **Heidrun Mollenkopf**, President of AGE Platform Europe (AGE)

09:30 – 09:45 PERFORMANCE

09:45 – 10:15 INSPIRING CORNER 1

High level speaker

- **Victor Calise,** Director of the Global Accessibility Center of Excellence, Walmart

10:15 – 10:45 | B2B CORNER_ AccessibleEU: Four Years of Achievements

- **Jesús Hernández Galán,** Director European Accessibility Resource Centre (AccessibleEU)
- **András Zsigmond**, Deputy Head of Unit European Commission Directorate-General Justice and Consumers

10:45 – 11:15 | Short Break

11:15 – 12:30 | High-Level CORNER 1_ Accessible Transport & Built Environment

These talks will explore how innovation is transforming accessibility in mobility and the built environment. Discussions will focus on advances in air and rail transport, enhancing passenger autonomy and safety, and addressing regulatory and standardisation challenges. The session will also examine the role of universal design in architecture and urban planning, the creation of accessible public spaces and housing, and successful examples from across Europe that demonstrate the impact of inclusive and accessible solutions on people's everyday lives.

- **Xavier Mascarell**, Customer Accessibility Strategy Manager for British Airways (part of AIG)
- **Mark De Laurentiis**, Director of the Italian Civil Aviation Authority's (ENAC) Protection of Passenger Rights Department
- **Karen Peters,** Head of Sustainability & ESG Management Toyota
- **Teresa Taboas**, Secretary General of the International Union of Architects (UIA)
- **Gautier Brodeo**, President of International Association of Public Transport (UITP)
- **Dominik Piotrowski**, Acting Head of Unit MOVE.B.5, Social Aspects, Passenger Rights and Equality
- **M. Carmen Millán,** Executive Director
  Personal Autonomy, Technology and Accessibility Department
  and the Centre for Typhlotechnology and Innovation (CTI)

12:30 – 13:15 | EXPERIENCE CORNER 1_ ACCESSIBLE EU ADVISORY BOARD

Members of Accessible EU´s Advisory Board sharing their experiences and how Accessible EU has impacted in their fields.

- **Pete Kercher,** founder-member of European Institute for Design and Disability (EIDD)

- **Vanessa Pérez**, CX & Accessibility Senior Advisor Passenger Department Unión Internacional de Ferrocarriles (UIC)
- **Luis Fernández Sanz,** Full Professor at Universidad de Alcala de Henares (UAH)
- **Sebastien de Brower**, Deputy CEO and Chief Policy Officer European Banking Federation (EBF)
- **José Martínez-Usero.** Director for Projects DIGITALEUROPE

13:15 – 14:00 | EXPERIENCE CORNER 1_ EC Access City Award

This panel will bring together representatives from award-winning cities to share their experiences, challenges, and achievements in advancing accessibility. The discussion will explore how the Access City Award has supported the development and implementation of inclusive policies, accessible environments, and innovative solutions, contributing to a better quality of life and equal participation for all citizens.

Moderated by**:** **András Zsigmond**, Deputy Head of Unit European Commission Directorate-General Justice and Consumers

- **Laura Rosillo Beneyto**, European Commission
- **Representative City of Zaragoza**
- **Representative City of Viena**
- **Representative City of Gothenburg**
- **Magnus Nilsson, City of Skellefteå**
- **Lisa Batelier, City of Rennes**

14:00 – 15:30 Lunch Time

15:30 – 17:00 Networking activities (held exclusively in person)

DAY 2, November 25th 2026

08:30 – 09:00 | Registration and Welcome Coffee

General Assembly of the EVIA Platform

09:00 – 09:15 |Teresa Riesgo, Secretary General for Innovation at Ministry of Science and Innovation of Spain

09:15 – 10:15 | High-Level CORNER 2_ Digital Accessibility and Technology

This panel will examine how digital transformation and artificial intelligence are reshaping accessibility and inclusion across Europe. Discussions will focus on the opportunities and challenges of accessibility in the age of AI, the accessibility of digital services and public sector platforms, and the role of innovation in creating more inclusive environments. Through practical examples and emerging trends, the session will highlight how technology can empower persons with disabilities and ensure equal participation in the digital society.

Moderated by: **TBC**

- **Nuria Oliver**, Co-Founder and Scientific Director of the ELLIS Alicante Foundation
- **Christopher Patnoe,** Head of Accessibility Programs at Google
- **Sachin Pavithran,** Executive Director, US Access Board
- **María Abascal,** Director General, Spanish Banking Association (AEB)
- Representative of AWS Spain
- Representative of Samsung

10:15 – 10:30 INSPIRING CORNER 2

- **Evelien Witlox,** Director for the Digital Euro, European Central Bank (ECB)

10:30 – 11:00 | Short Break

11:00 – 12:00 | High-Level CORNER 3_ Public Policies and Standardisation

This panel will explore the policy, regulatory and market frameworks that drive accessibility across Europe and beyond. Discussions will focus on international standards, the rights of persons with disabilities, and the role of EU cooperation in advancing accessibility. The session will also examine accessibility requirements in public procurement and the impact of accessibility on innovation and market development. Through success stories and lessons learned, participants will discuss both the opportunities and challenges involved in building a more inclusive and accessible society.

Moderated by: **Javier Güemes,** Director of International Relations, ONCE Social Group

- **Javier García,** Director General at UNE & ISO Vice President Technical Management
- **Alejandro Moledo,** European Dissability Forum
- **Jesús Martin Blanco**, Director of the Spanish National Disability Council
- **Andréa Khoshkhou**, Interministerial delegation for accessibility, Government of France
- **Carol Staunton**, Counsellor for Political and Economic Affairs, Embassy of Ireland in Spain

12:00 – 12:45 | INSPIRING CORNER 3 AI Accessibility and Efficiency

Moderated by: **Jesús Hernández,** Director of Accessibility and Innovation at Fundación ONCE and Director of the European Accessibility Resource Centre (AccessibleEU).

- **Alberto Durán López,** First Vice-President for Institutional Coordination, Solidarity and External Relations of ONCE General Council
- **Francisco Salcedo,** President of Microsoft Spain
- **Francisco Hortiguela,** President of Multisectoral Association of Information Technology, Communications and Electronics Companies (AMETIC)

12:45 – 13:45 | EXPERIENCE CORNER 3_ ACCESSIBLE EU & CITIZENS

Moderated by: **Lourdes Gonzalez Perea,** Head of the Technological Accessibility Department, Fundación ONCE

- **Ivor Ambrose,** Senior Expert of AccessibleEU
- **Ann Frye,** Senior Expert of AccessibleEU
- **Fernando Machicado,** Senior Expert of AccessibleEU
- **Klaus Miesenberger,** Senior Expert of AccessibleEU
- **Thomas Bignal,** Senior Expert of AccessibleEU
- **Heidrun Mollenkopf**, President of AGE Platform Europe (AGE)

13:45 – 14:00 INSPIRING CORNER 3_ Closing Remarks

- **Inmaculada Placencia,** Expert of the CRPD Committee

14:00 – 15:30 Lunch Time

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