

Governmental programme



Accessibility **Plus**

2018-2025



THE MINISTRY OF INVESTMENT
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Governmental programme

Accessibility Plus

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Prepared by:

the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

ul. Wspólna 2/4, 00-926 Warsaw

www.mii.gov.pl

Department of the European Social Fund

phone: 22 273 80 50

fax: 22 273 89 08

e-mail: dostepnosc.plus@mii.gov.pl, sekretariatDZF@mii.gov.pl

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UN	– the United Nations
PFRON	– State Fund of Rehabilitation of Handicapped People
PSL	– Polish Sign Language
PKP	– Polish National Railways
PLK	– Polish Railway Lines
MCL	– Manually-coded Language
SRD	– Strategy for Responsible Development
TSI PRM	– Commission Regulation no. 1300/2014/UE on the technical specifications for interoperability relating to accessibility of the Union’s rail system for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility
WCAG 2.0	– Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
WHO	– World Health Organization

INTRODUCTION

Miarą dojrzałości państwa jest to, jak traktuje i opiekuje się swoimi słabszymi obywatelami. Naszym wielkim zadaniem będzie stworzenie Polski prawdziwie przyjaznej dla osób starszych i niepełnosprawnych.

Expose Prezesa Rady Ministrów Mateusza Morawieckiego, 12 grudnia 2017 roku.

Safety, health, freedom or more generally – good quality of life are values which we all aim at and the foundation for prosperity of modern society. One of the aspects of life is free access to goods, products, services and the opportunity to participate in the public and social life. This access is not always equal for everyone – because people at various stages of life have different needs and different opportunities.

No country develops in a sustainable manner if there are large social disparities in it. For all of us it means equal opportunities in achieving a social position, material goods or fulfilling the needs and achieving ambitions. An accessible and friendly public space is vital to succeed. Therefore, in order to improve the cohesion in the society, the state must take legal, organizational, institutional or financial actions which will foster equal opportunities for everyone.

In order to provide friendly living conditions in Poland a comprehensive programme providing multifaceted, systemic and coordinated activities is necessary. These activities aim at improving quality and providing the independence of life for people with special needs, including the elderly and persons with permanent or temporary difficulties in mobility or perception. That will be achieved through the large-scale improvement in public space accessibility, including architecture, transport, products and services.

All these activities were incorporated into the governmental Programme Accessibility Plus.

It is a new initiative, the purpose of which is to make a breakthrough in the civilization development and the quality of life of all our country's inhabitants. The programme deals with spheres of social life which so far have not been sufficiently present in the public debate, have not created a unified whole. It addresses solidarity towards the weakest as well as the understanding and the provision of equal opportunities for all people with special needs on an equal basis with others. Hence, the adopted approach of the Programme Accessibility Plus is different from standard strategies and programmes. The assumption was made that the Programme which was created as part of the response to the needs of people with disabilities and in cooperation with non-governmental organizations must be simple and understandable for all. It related to its content as well.

The Programme is based on three main premises. First of all, it is rooted in the principle of the state's subsidiarity towards all social groups. Among us there are many people with

various kinds of disabilities, seniors, people experiencing a temporary health detriment or physical fitness. For all of them – but also for ourselves in the future – we have to build the accessible and friendly public space and good living conditions.

Secondly, the Programme is a consequence of the sustainable development policy. This policy indicates that social development is a key factor of support for the economic progress. It generates innovations and resources for its creation.

Thirdly, the programme results from the assessment of social and physical reality. People with disabilities and seniors constitute a significant part of our society, they live in families and local communities next to us, every day they use the same services and products. This is why the public space requires a substantial conversion in order to equally serve all its users. The idea is to take actions today with an eye towards the future with a better quality of life for everyone.

Such a change is achievable on condition of the implementation of the Programme in which not only the government will be involved, but also local governments, entrepreneurs, social partners and inhabitants. Each of the space users should be its co-designer because it is he who will live in it and benefit from it in the future. Together we can do more for all citizens.

The Programme is ambitious but it takes into consideration the financial reality and this is why it was planned for the next few years. It aims at implementing the Strategy for Responsible Development (SRD) which foresees public finance stability. Therefore, although the scale of investments is large – this will not cause a significant burden on the budget of the country or local governments. The fiscal impulse which Poland benefits from as part of European cohesion policy is an excellent opportunity to design a better and more friendly environment for us all. Each of us at various stages of life experience barriers and struggles even with simple tasks. Now we have a chance to create better reality for those who experience it more often and even for their whole life. The country which cares about its future cares about all citizens. Let's use this opportunity together and create better and more friendly Poland.

The Programme Accessibility Plus is a governmental programme adopted by the Resolution of the Council of Ministers. Due to its intentionally general provisions, the form of which is friendly for every citizen it does not contain many detailed, implementation solutions. They will be developed and incorporated into a separate document that will be used for the practical Programme implementation. It will consist of the synthesis of the interim Activity Implementation Plans prepared by coordinators of particular Activities in the Programme.

ACCESSIBILITY – FOR WHAT, HOW AND FOR WHOM?

WHY DOES POLAND NEED THE IMPROVEMENT IN ACCESSABILITY?

WHAT IS ACCESSIBILITY?

Accessibility is an environmental characteristic (physical space, digital reality, information and communication systems, products, services) which allows persons with functional difficulties (physical, cognitive) to benefit from it on equal basis with others. For many people accessibility is a condition of leading independent life and participation in the social and economic life of the country, local community, school or workplace.

Accessibility may be provided mainly thanks to the application of universal design for new investments, the aim of which is to facilitate life for all society members, including people with disabilities. Accessibility also means the elimination of existing barriers through rational improvements, including compensatory and assistive technologies. Providing accessibility – or making available – guarantees reaching a wider group of recipients, opening to new users, customers, guests, increased recognisability and activity in the consumer market. The majority of technological or architectural solutions, which nowadays are willingly used by all of us, originally were created with an eye towards persons with special needs, e.g. low-floor buses, spacious toilets, driveways, no thresholds, adjustable furniture, non-slip surfaces, voice announcement.

WHO IS AFFECTED BY ACCESSIBILITY?

Accessibility affects all of us but in everyday life its lack is recognised mainly by people with special needs, including individual needs, arising from disability. Accessibility concerns in particular:

- persons in wheelchairs, on crutches, with reduced mobility;
- blind and partially sighted people;
- deaf and hard of hearing people;
- deafblind persons;
- people with mental and intellectual disabilities;
- elderly persons and those weakened by diseases;
- pregnant women;
- people with small children, including those with prams;

- people having difficulties in communicating with the environment (also in understanding written or oral language);
- people with uncommon height (including children);
- people with heavy or bulky luggage, goods.

The proposed definition applies both to temporary and permanent needs.

From the point of view of public space accessibility, the Programme beneficiaries who will use the accessible environment will not only include the elderly or persons with disabilities. It is assessed that even 30% of the society suffer from permanent or temporary limitations in mobility or perception. They include people moving by means of assistance equipment (crutches, canes, walking frames, artificial limbs, wheelchairs), with hearing, vision impairments, with manual and cognitive difficulties (e.g. after a stroke, suffering from Alzheimer's disease), pregnant women, people with prams or heavy luggage as well as those physically weaker and encountering difficulties in moving (e.g. as a result of an injury or a disease). Many of these persons do not have disability status.

HOW DOES ACCESSIBILITY INFLUENCE THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?

Accessibility affects many areas of life of all citizens without exception, determining their individual social and economic situation and conditioning the quality of life. For a healthy and strong adult who does not need any support in moving and experiencing reality, accessibility is the most often unnoticed. However, for many people, temporarily or permanently affected by difficulties, accessibility is a condition of the self-reliant, independent functioning and participation in various spheres of life. In everyday life accessibility of the place of residence, school, store, means of transport, workplace or offices is one of the fundamental elements of the functioning of the society based on principles of equality and solidarity. The state of development of social bonds much needed nowadays – built e.g. through the intergenerational integration depends on the accessibility condition.

Over the last few years Poland, in comparison to other countries of the European Union, has economically developed in a relatively fast pace. However, the sustainable development should not include only economic issues. It must equally focus on the dimension of cohesion or social solidarity measured by the improvement in the life quality of all inhabitants and in particular people with special needs or those threatened by a social exclusion. To meet the expectations of people with disabilities, their families and carers it is also necessary to increase the access to social services, in particular those allowing for rebuilding an ability to independently function in the social sphere such as assistance services. Experience of local governments and non-governmental organizations which implement such kind of services confirm the necessity of the response to the needs of people with disabilities to actively participate in social life, develop and sustain activity. The need of sustaining or learning independence to the best of every disabled person's ability as well as relieving the burden on carers are very important reasons for which one should look for modern solutions of support.

The first decade of the 21st century, next to significant global changes, brought important changes in the age structure of the population and the increase in the share of persons with special needs, requiring the creation of barrier-free space, products and services. Nowadays Poland is the fastest ageing country in the European Union. The population of people aged 65 or more constitutes 16% of Poland's inhabitants. In 2025 it will reach 22% of the population, while in 2050 – 33%. According to the forecasts, seniors will constitute a larger and larger social group – healthier and longer active (also professionally) than nowadays, but its considerable part requires care and support in independent functioning (in particular in the case of the elderly aged 80 or more, the number of whom will be about 2.2 million in 2030). Along with the increasing life expectancy, the increase in the number of people with disabilities arising from the sight, hearing and motor organ impairment, among others, is noticeable. The independent life does not mean only the everyday, basic self-service but also the possibility of running the household and going out – for example to do shopping, go to the doctor, visit friends or family. In particular, in the case of people living alone the inability to perform these activities limits independence and leads to exclusion from social life. The increasing population of elderly people will constitute more and more important segment of consumers of goods and services which creates opportunities for the development of the silver economy (senior economy).

The social exclusion risk concerns not only elderly people. According to the census data, about 4.7 million disabled people living in Poland – i.e. about 12.2% of our society is equally exposed to it. Depending on the adopted definition of disability, this group may include from 4.9 million to even 7.7 million people although there are no adequate statistics. International organizations, inter alia, *the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People* point out that the Polish statistics are underestimated and do not convey the real representation of the society. It is not exactly known what is the percentage of people with physical disabilities. It is assumed that they constitute about 10% of the total number. Approximately 1.8 million people with visual disabilities, including, as it is estimated by non-governmental organizations, about 5 thousand completely blind people live in Poland. The majority of them were not born blind but they went blind throughout their life due to various reasons. In case of hearing-impaired persons the data is even more difficult to obtain. It is estimated that it is about a million deaf or hard of hearing people. Furthermore, every four person aged 65 or more has hearing problems. The disability also means intellectual limitations, mental diseases or multiply disabilities (two or more kinds of limitations). Over million people receive treatment in mental health outpatient clinics. It is conservatively estimated that these problems, to a varying degree of severity and frequency, indirectly or directly, affect approximately 5-8 million Poles (even almost every fourth person). This also includes situations of temporary disability, for example in persons after accidents, injuries, surgeries, severe diseases who, having been treated and rehabilitated, completely recovered or at least their condition improved. Nevertheless, they also need special solutions. Furthermore, it is estimated that due to the intensive development of civilisation and industrialisation and the resulting increase in the level of social threats – the intensified risk of the worsening of the society's psychical state is foreseen.

Due to various reasons, activity and independence of people with disabilities is hampered. The development of new technologies as well as products from the area of compensatory technologies allows for the equalisation of opportunities but often high prices or the fact

that they cannot be applied in individual cases remain a barrier. Therefore, it is important to not only compensate the disability effects on an individual level but, most of all, to create conditions for the building of the environment which will be friendly and based on universal principles.

HOW WILL THE PROGRAMME CONTRIBUTE TO THE IMPROVEMENT IN ACCESSABILITY?

The Programme Accessibility Plus foresees a twin-track impact on the condition of accessibility in Poland.

The first strategic dimension is **the permanent inclusion of the accessibility issue into all public policies, to the planning practice, implementation and state's functioning assessment.**

This will be achieved through:

- Firstly – introduction of legal provisions (accessibility standards) which will guarantee accessibility in carrying out construction investments, the purchase of properly prepared modes of transport, marking routes and public space, services or the implementation of tasks with the use of public funds (e.g. available Internet websites, printed matters, forms). This requires coordinated approach in various sectors and looking at the problem to get “a bird's-eye view”. The coordinated accessibility provision policy must be of participatory nature – including all entities and environments into the preparation, supplying and verifying products and universal services. As a result of these activities, the issue of accessibility will become an integral, permanent and significant element of various public policies. This means that every new activity, every newly purchased mode of transport or every new public building and multi-family residential house put into use will meet the requirements of accessibility and serve all users.
- Secondly, investments in knowledge, competences and skills in terms of accessibility for the creators of social reality. This concerns in particular architects, urban planners, engineers, programmers, construction supervision employees, designers and representatives of many other professions which will create and modernise our surrounding for the next decades.
- Thirdly, the creation of better opportunities for the development of new assistive and compensatory technologies or the development of products and services based on the universal design principle. As a consequence, this will lead to the development of business models based on the competitive advantage which is the provision of accessibility and the enlarged group of customers or users of a given product or service.

The second dimension of activities planned in the Programme includes investments (construction, transport, technological) in the existing public utility buildings and multi-family housing stock, space, modes of transport, Internet websites or universal services. Schools, main stations, stops, libraries, outpatient clinics and hospitals, among others, will be more accessible in the form of competition for subsidizing the elimination of barriers.

The presence of development resources from European funds is an additional facilitation and the source of financing for many other new investments and modernisations.

Obviously, nowadays the reconstruction of the whole existing infrastructure in the spirit of accessibility is impossible. No country has ever achieved fully accessible public space – it would not be all the more possible in a short period of the implementation of the Programme Accessibility Plus. However, we wish the activities taken to be catalytic and to rapidly improve accessibility in our country, setting the standards and inspiring further activities in this area.

One should also look at this process in the perspective of short- and long-term changes. Some solutions (legislative ones) will be possible for implementation already in the years 2018-2019 – although their effects will not always be immediately visible. They will often be delayed in time, for example the rolling stock procured in accordance with accessible standards will be delivered by producers in a few years. The effects of the educational programme directed to engineers and architects will result in new, more accessible construction designs after they complete their education and start their professional careers.

Nevertheless, the part of investments and changes are of direct nature and their effects will be visible quite fast, significantly improving the inhabitants' quality of life. This concerns for example the introduction of improvements in communication with offices (providing a sign language interpreter, clear markings of rooms, a reception desk, customer service points, providing materials in the form of the text that is easy to read and understand), improving the public space functionality (the assembly of benches, landings, rails or driveways) or the user and passenger safety and comfort (contrasting marking of stairs, trainings for the personnel and transport staff, more services available on-line).

Furthermore, the activities strengthening producers of adaptation and compensatory technologies will be taken. This will contribute to their dissemination and, as a result, to improved affordability and better quality.

WHO WILL IMPLEMENT THIS PROGRAMME?

The idea of accessibility is universal and should be disseminated among all entities involved in the creation and implementation of social reality. The Programme Accessibility Plus is a governmental initiative, the implementation of which rests mainly on the shoulders of the entire Council of Ministers. It will be coordinated by the competent minister in charge of investments and economic development but many activities depend on the activity and involvement of particular resorts responsible for specified public policies.

Due to the fact that changes in accessibility are necessary in the spheres of everyday life of every citizen, the improvement in the quality of infrastructure, communication or transport will be possible most of all thanks to the engagement of specific local governments, city and town authorities or entrepreneurs responsible for rendering a specific kind of public or universal services. Furthermore, entrepreneurs as actual providers of specific products or services cannot remain indifferent to accessibility issues and addressing their offer to as large group of customers, potential recipients as possible.

At the same time the accessibility improvement cannot take place without the voice of the most interested persons – beneficiaries of the Programme. It is the experience, knowledge and competences of individual persons and their representatives – associations, unions or foundations acting for people with disabilities or seniors that will constitute a significant resource for the Programme implementation. All Activities planned in the programme should be implemented with the participation of or with the engagement and cooperation with non-governmental organizations – also through commissioning them specific tasks for the implementation in the competition procedure.

WHICH EFFECTS WERE PLANNED?

As a result of the Programme implementation until 2025:

The space will be accessible for everyone

- **About 1 000 places and public utility buildings in which architectural, technical and communication barriers were eliminated;**
- **Regular improvement in the existing infrastructure and surrounding (main stations, stops, parks, sidewalks);**
- **Newly constructed public utility buildings and multifamily housing buildings are accessible;**
- **Newly purchased buses and trams are accessible**
- **100 municipalities in which the quality of public space (elimination of barriers) was improved**
- **Accessible Internet websites of all offices and institutions;**
- **At least half of air time in TV accessible for everyone.**

IMPROVEMENT IN ACCESSIBILITY OF PUBLIC SPACE, PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

AREAS OF SUPPORT:

ARCHITECTURE

TRANSPORT

EDUCATION

HEALTHCARE

DIGITALISATION

SERVICES

INVESTMENTS

- **ACTIVITY:**
- 1 - Buildings without barriers
- 2 - 100 municipalities without barriers
- 4 - Accessible rail transport
- 5 - Renovation and reconstruction of 200 passenger stations
- 6 - Accessible public transport
- 8 - Transport mobile application
- 9 - 200 schools without barriers
- 10 - Assistant of the pupil with special educational needs
- 11 - Support for inclusive education
- 12 - Studies without barriers
- 13 - Accessibility in curricula
- 15 - 100 healthcare facilities without barriers
- 16 - Accessible medical services
- 17 - Accessible Internet websites and mobile applications
- 18 - Accessible multimedia contents
- 19 - Friendly office
- 21 - Number 112 for everyone
- 22 - Mobility
- 23 - Accessible social services
- 24 - Personal assistant of a disabled person
- 25 - Culture without barriers
- 26 - Sport, tourism and recreation without barriers
- 27 - Employment in administration

COMPETITIVENESS

- **ACTIVITY:**
- 20 - Accessible universal services, e-commerce
- 28- Programme of research on accessibility - things are for people
- 29 - Social innovations as an accessibility "training ground"
- 30 - "Good idea"
- 31 - Knowledge hubs of universal design
- 32 - Accessibility fairs
- 33 - Brand "Accessibility"

COORDINATION

- **ACTIVITY:**
- 3 - Architectural and construction staff sensitive to accessibility
- 7 - Training for transport sector employees
- 14 - Staff for inclusive education
- 34 - Polish Access Board
- 35 - Law for accessibility
- 36 - Polish Accessibility Standards
- 37 - Procedures without barriers
- 38 - Cooperation for accessibility
- 39 - Public procurement and Investments
- 40 - Certification of accessibility
- 41 - Monitoring of public policies
- 42 - Potential of non-governmental organizations
- 43 - Cohesive social policy for accessibility
- 44 - Social awareness of accessibility

INFORMATION AND PROMOTION MEASURES, AWARENESS BUILDING

DIAGNOSIS

WHAT IS A CURRENT VIEW of ACCESSIBILITY IN POLAND?

The most important challenges in the accessibility area:

- ambiguous and insufficient legal provisions on construction, architecture and public space, line infrastructure, lack of cohesive accessible standards applicable in the whole country;
- the majority of the existing buildings of multi-family housing unadapted to various needs of inhabitants;
- lack of effective control mechanisms, lack of sanctions regime, low awareness of requirements related to accessibility;
- lack of the sufficient number of public transport vehicles for the service of people with disabilities and systemic solutions for the individual mobility of people with disabilities;
- facilities and devices unadapted to the needs of public transport (railway main stations, ticket offices, ticket machines);
- lack of the integrated transport management system in the service of people with special needs;
- schools and universities (infrastructure, equipment, markings, lacks in qualification of employees, security matters) unadapted to the needs of pupils, students and staff with disabilities;
- dominant segregationist education which causes the decrease in social skills and results in the failure of acquiring qualifications which are sufficient for undertaking more ambitious employment;
- limited access to high quality social services;
- low level of accessibility to websites and Internet applications as well as multimedia materials (films, audio recordings);
- little use of new communication technologies to solve problems of people with disabilities;
- lack or insufficient number of healthcare facilities which are physically and communicationally accessible;

- small amount of airtime in television dedicated to people with disabilities containing, inter alia, audiodescription, subtitles for the deaf, live subtitles, Polish sign language interpreter, unattractive broadcasting times;
- inaccessibility of recreation and leisure areas, e.g. parks, beaches, bathing waters, tourist routes;
- low accessibility of cultural institutions, cultural events and lack of staff preparation;
- difficulty in gaining access to the information on physical space accessibility, digital reality, information and communication systems, products and services;
- lack or limited possibility of official communication in the alternative form (including printed matters, leaflets, templates of letters, forms, applications).

ARCHITECTURE

The real image of accessibility of space and urbanised environment is reflected by the random research conducted by state institutions and social organisations. The scope of accessibility of public utility facilities is shown e.g. by the research carried out by the Mazovian Centre of Social Policy. The analysis conducted in poviats of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship revealed that only 9% of public utility facilities are fully accessible to people with disabilities. Furthermore, controls of the Supreme Chamber of Control conducted in 2012 in the Podlaskie Voivodeship identified the lack of accessibility. 121 public utility facilities put in use in the years 2009-2011 and in the first half of 2012 were examined in terms of accessibility. Among them as many as 110 (91%) is not accessible to people with disabilities. There is still a shortage of studies and analyses presenting the scale of the problem in small towns and in the country where the level of accessibility is significantly lower.

The fundamental problem is the fact that there are no detailed standards which would be compliant with principles of universal design and no efficient mechanisms guaranteeing the implementation of accessibility in new facilities and spaces. Poland as one of four European countries does not have legally adopted accessibility standards. Accessibility standards are introduced locally (in selected cities). Although they are a significant step forward, they are often inconsistent, hinder orientation of people with disabilities and they do not provide the predictability of solutions. Legislation is limited to the elimination of barriers in the access to the space and buildings through its introduction in the Act Construction Law which requires that *necessary conditions for use of the public utility facilities and housing multifamily buildings by disabled persons* be ensured. The interpretation of this provision often refers only to providing physical access without providing equal access. Investors of inaccessible facilities frequently believe that providing third parties' assistance in managing for example threshold or a few entrance stairs eliminates the problem of people with disabilities and make the facility friendly for this group of users. But an accessible facility is one that allows for the independent use (e.g. entering and evacuation form) for all, including people with various kinds of disabilities and does not require an above-standard effort or help of assisting people.

For the majority of people the freedom of movement on foot in the public space (not only in facilities) is a key element of accessibility in the public space. It is the most natural, the cheapest and accessible mobility mode for the widest group of users. For the majority of people with special needs it is basic and sometimes the only possible one. However, in the entire country the quality of infrastructure for pedestrians is very low. Sidewalks are in bad technical condition, they are narrow, occupied by poles and parked cars, traversed by curbs. In many places they are not continuous. Such barriers prevent people with special needs from exercising their right to move. At the same time funding of infrastructure for pedestrians and cycling infrastructure is at the low level – for example in Warsaw it is only 2% of all expenditures on transport, while the United Nations Environment Programme recommends the level of 20%. The provision of the pedestrian accessibility taking into consideration the line infrastructure is a condition of comfortable and safe mobility for all users. Architectural accessibility concerns not only public space but to an even larger extent, a flat in which the first barriers making the independent life impossible may exist. Families with people with disabilities have greater difficulties in satisfying housing needs than other households without such people. It is related to the necessity of providing care. Low incomes cause the problem of buying or renting a flat on market conditions.

In 2015 over 36 thous. people with certificate of disability applied for a subsidy to the elimination of architectural barriers in communication and technical ones from the funds of the State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons – the certificate is a condition of granting the subsidy. Over 17 thous. obtained the support. This shows how large the scale of needs is, which due to the ageing population will be still increasing.

Public authorities should provide the preferential treatment of families with children with disabilities through the easier access to council flats, flats in the Communal Building Societies as well as flats and forms of support provided for in the National Housing Programme.

TRANSPORT

Public transport is a more efficient and cheaper mode of transport. Rail, bus transport or – in some larger cities – trams play a special role in it. However, the fundamental problem is the accessibility of public transport – understood as the possibility to easily reach the stop but also as the use of the same mode of public transport without barriers. Nowadays there are 2.7 thous. main stations open for the passenger traffic in total (managed by PLK as platforms with accessways), from which 1.7 thous. is accessible for people with reduced mobility. Non-governmental organizations estimate that about 80% of main stations, passenger stations are not adapted to the needs of passengers with disabilities, seniors, parents with prams and all those who have different needs. There are no Braille inscriptions, voice announcements, slipways, elevators and ramps. However, the problem is not only their absence but also their low effectiveness and poor reliability. As tests of elevators and lifts in Warsaw as well as those conducted along railway lines have shown, the significant percentage of these devices regularly do not work. This points to the need to apply in the first place failure-free slipways. Only in three out of ten cities with poviats status controlled by the Supreme Chamber of Control all city transport lines were serviced by low-floor and low-entrance vehicles. The reservations concern the lack or inappropriate use of the facilities for persons with disabilities at stops.

Furthermore, there are no detailed provisions obliging public carriers to purchase and use fully accessible fleet. Public transport organisers are responsible for creating transport plans taking into consideration the needs of passengers with disabilities. This process is ongoing and it is not known when fully positive results will be achieved. For example, until 2023 PKP Intercity plans to increase the amount of the rolling stock accessible for passengers with reduced mobility by 70 railway cars and 12 electric traction units (in 2016 the company had 107 railway cars and 74 electric traction units with wheelchair space). There is a significant disproportion between regions in Poland. As it was shown in the Analysis of the Office for Railway Transport in the Dolnośląskie Voivodeship 24% of the rolling stock is accessible for persons with disabilities, whereas in the Podlaskie Voivodeship it is as many as 93%. The majority of carriers, in particular the out-of-town bus transport do not have an accessible fleet and do not suffer any consequences due to this fact. Furthermore, in the city and regional bus transport there is no control institution similar to the Office for Railway Transport. Although the transport in many Polish cities better and better responds to the needs of persons with special needs it still faces a lot of challenges such as low awareness of the accessibility in these areas.

The accessibility of transport is not only the collective public transport but also specialised, individual and private transport. In the case of the first one, in many cities there are organised carriages of persons with disabilities. Such a solution is particularly useful for people in wheelchairs. Unfortunately, due to the increasing demand for such kind of services related to the growing number of dependants in the society, the supply of special transport services is insufficient. There are not systemic solutions, uniform for the whole country. The same situation is in the case of the private transport accessibility although, as studies show, in the case of the elderly and persons with disabilities the car is the best mode of transport giving opportunities for independence. It is necessary to initiate undertakings and projects systemically solving the problems related to mobility of people with disabilities.

EDUCATION

Poland by ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has recognised the right of persons with disabilities to education and undertaken to provide the system enabling the inclusion at all levels of education, without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. Conditions of education of pupils and students with disabilities are changing for the better. However, their pace is regarded as insufficient. The situation is particularly difficult in smaller towns and in rural areas where expenditures on the education of children with disabilities are lower. The results of the control carried out by the Supreme Chamber of Control of 2018 revealed that in the half of the widely accessible education system units educating pupils with disabilities the proper conditions for satisfying their needs were not provided. The attention was paid, inter alia, to the lack of support from additional persons (44%), too numerous groups (44%), the absence of qualified specialists (44%), architectural barriers and lack of appropriate facilities (31%). There are also other aspects and dimensions of accessibility which are more difficult to measure, e.g. the accessibility of education process at schools. The state educational policy should implement the provisions of *the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of 13 December 2006*, under which there is an obligation to provide the inclusive education for people with disabilities at all levels of education.

In the case of academic education – as the Commissioner for Human Rights points out – students with disabilities are educated by the same lecturers, at the same universities and in the same groups as their peers without disabilities. Despite of the positive changes the percentage of students with disabilities is marginal (1.8%). In 2017/2018 over 27 thous. students with disabilities studied on Polish universities. In order to maintain the positive trend and create truly equal opportunities for students with disabilities it is necessary to create architectural and communication conditions as well as to overcome mental barriers of the academic community.

The majority of scientific institutions are not prepared for the implementation of research programmes related to the development of products and services for users with various needs. The activities of national, self-governmental, business and educational entities should focus on the introduction of universal design principles as the element of improving the quality of functioning of people with mobility and perception restrictions. Thinking in line with the universal design – regardless of the fact which aspect of reality it concerns – should be included into the canon of curricula in the fields of study of – inter alia, architecture, engineering, information technology as well as humanities – journalism and communication, Polish Studies, pedagogy, law and administration as well as linguistic fields of study specializing in translation.

Nowadays in the educational law there is no position of the assistant of the pupil with special educational needs. However, the provisions apply to the employment of persons who support teachers in the organisation of education of pupils with disabilities in the education system units. The need to provide care by the pupil's assistant may result from the problems in independent and safe moving around the kindergarten or school, performing self-service activities or functioning in the group due to the manifestation of difficult behaviours. The above-mentioned difficulties in functioning may arise from both disability and developmental disorder or be of an adaptive nature, related to experiencing a traumatic situation by the pupil. This is why the need of providing the pupil's assistant should result from the evaluation of his functioning in a particular kindergarten or school environment.

In mainstream kindergartens and schools it is necessary to provide well-qualified staff implementing caring tasks and supporting activities of teachers and specialists running classes with pupils with special educational needs – the so-called pupil's assistants. As far as teachers are concerned, they should have a free access to necessary facilities in the form of supporting centres. In order to support teachers and management in recognising the developmental and educational needs of pupils as well as adjusting the school system to the needs of pupils, the pilot solutions providing supporting activities at the premises of the kindergarten or mainstream school are planned to be carried out.

DIGITALIZATION

Accessibility is also the digital space which is increasingly present around us. Nowadays on the market there are less and less services free from modern technologies which aim at improving our everyday life and even automatically perform the part of the duties, such as for example a banking service – direct debit. Advantages related to the development of modern technologies are undeniable. If products and services are not designed in accordance with accessibility principles they cause the increase in the level of digital

exclusion of recipients, preventing or hampering communication. People aged 65 or more use a computer definitely less frequently than the general population. Regarding the question “How often do you use a computer?” in 2017 only 13% of seniors responded “every day or almost every day” (for comparison, this percentage amounted to 60% in the case of the total number of people aged 16 or more). As many as 2/3 of people aged 65 or more do not use the Internet at all. This fact may be influenced by the lack of accessibility and usability of Internet websites and sometimes even no need to use a computer and new technologies. Furthermore, no opportunity to access the Internet is often an obstacle, caused by either a physical lack of the broadband infrastructure enabling the use of the services or the economic barrier making the purchase of such services impossible. As far as people with disabilities are concerned, they have the same needs in the digital communication area as people without disabilities. They want to function as everyone and be participants of social life.

The digital space is the area which as one of the few has specified and unified accessibility standard (WCAG 2.0, which nowadays is upgraded to 2.1 version and will be ultimately developed to 3.0 version). The requirement of providing compliance with WCAG 2.0 at the AA level was incorporated into the Regulation of the Council of Ministers on National Interoperability Frameworks. Not all institutions manage to fulfil this task. In 2017 the level of accessibility of the public administration websites examined by non-governmental organizations rose to 47.8% and this is a great progress in relation to 2015 (only 13%). In 2018, six years have passed since the entry into force of the above-mentioned regulation and three years from the introduction of the obligation to adapt existing ITC systems and provide accessibility for new ones. Therefore, it seems that the pace of changes in e-administration is too slow. Furthermore, it should be remembered about the still valid need of the work on materials placed on the Internet websites. Similarly as in the case of the architectural and transport accessibility – the legislator did not introduce financial penalties or other sanctions for an infringement of the law. The obligation of using WCAG 2.0 at the AA level was also imposed on telecommunications operators with a transitional period of two years. In this sphere changes in accessibility of websites are too slow as well. According to the data of the Office of Electronic Communications, only 30% of the Internet websites of the largest telecommunication entrepreneurs partly fulfil the WCAG requirements.

HEALTH

In healthcare the low level of accessibility of medical facilities in terms of architecture and medical procedures has been maintained for many years. The staff is insufficiently prepared for the admission of patients with special needs. People with disabilities entering the treatment or test often has to seek help of assisting persons (friends, family) what deprives them of the possibility of benefiting from healthcare services on their own. The World Health Organisation estimates that people with disabilities suffer 2 times more frequently due to the inappropriate preparation of medical facilities and healthcare professionals, they are exposed 3 times more frequently to the refusal of medical care and they suffer 4 times more frequently due to an inadequate approach of healthcare towards people who do not experience such barriers. 50% of people with disabilities cannot afford the medical care and the probability of very high costs of treatment in the case of this group is higher by 50%.

In the Ordinance of the Minister of Health on detailed requirements to be fulfilled by facilities and devices of the healthcare provider, the activities aimed at providing the equality of opportunities of people with disabilities in using facilities or the improvement in the comfort of stay and treatment were indicated. These are for example: the obligation of installing an elevator, a lift, an accessibility ramp, bathrooms for people with disabilities, widening of door openings in order to improve the movement of beds and wheelchairs, providing the access to beds from three sides. In accordance with the provisions, the deadline for adapting healthcare facilities lapsed at the end of 2017 – however, many of them (in particular small facilities) were not appropriately adopted.

Article 68 of the Constitution indicates that special health care for persons of advanced age and persons with disabilities, among others, is ensured because in Poland these social groups are threatened by the risk of exclusion from healthcare. However, patients with disabilities, aware of their rights, more and more frequently lodge complaints on healthcare services. They concern the most frequently: registration complications – the obligation of the delivery of the referral to the facility in person; rendering services in architecturally inaccessible structures; failure to adapt diagnostic equipment to people with disabilities; lack of preparation of medical facilities, mainly hospitals, for the presence of people with disabilities – the absence of height adjustable beds, lack of lifts, too narrow doors to toilets or difficulties in servicing of the deaf as well as persons with speech disorders – no interpreters. The particularly difficult situation in the access to healthcare concerns women with disabilities – e.g. lack of accessible gynaecological offices; maternity care and care during childbirth. Furthermore, providing patients with the access to the Polish sign language/manually-coded language in healthcare facilities is the priority.

According to the report of the Healthcare Information Systems Centre of November 2017, the access to computers for all employees is provided only in 55% of hospitals. In the process of increasing the accessibility of medical facilities their digital maturity is also of key importance. Equipping facilities with computers and other IT devices is a condition of maintaining electronic medical records and rendering health services in the telemedical form which allows for receiving medical assistance without leaving home or constant monitoring of health parameters

Furthermore, the level of adapting health resort facilities to the needs of persons with disabilities is differentiated. Health resort hospitals are the best adopted – 93% have an elevator, accessible rooms and bathrooms, 85% have a slipway, driveway or platform and 58% declare the presence of the automatically opening doors. In the case of sanatoriums – 88% have elevators, adopted rooms and bathrooms and 84% – declare the presence of slipways and platforms. Improvements for the blind were reported by 9% of hospitals and 15% of sanatoriums. The majority of health resort outpatient clinics (80%) declare the presence of anti-slippery floors, 73% – driveways and platforms, 67% indicated the appropriate bathroom and room fittings. Almost all natural therapy centres (94%) proved the presence of platforms and slipways and 83% have elevators and anti-slippery floors. All facilities, regardless of their kind, declared relatively few improvements for the blind. Activities for the dissemination and monitoring of the accessibility improvement process of healthcare facilities and services for patients with different needs are necessary.

CULTURE

According to the data of the Central Statistical Office of 2016 concerning cultural activity (centres, houses, facilities and care centres), facilities adapted for people with disabilities constituted 56% of all 4.2 thous. centres. The largest number of accessible cultural facilities was in the Śląskie Voivodeship – 225, in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship – 215 and in the Małopolskie Voivodeship – 207. Looking at the ratio of the number of facilities which were adopted for people with disabilities to the number of the total number of such facilities, the Mazowieckie Voivodeship (74%) achieved the best results, whereas the worst situation was observed in the Opolskie Voivodeship (41%), the Małopolskie Voivodeship (46%) and the Podkarpackie Voivodeship (53%). Additionally, only 40% of public libraries are adapted for people in wheelchairs (about 3 thous. out of 8 thous. Of the existing public libraries and branches). The best adapted facilities are in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship and the Śląskie Voivodeship. The least number of accessible entrances to the public library buildings for people in wheelchairs is in the Podlaskie Voivodeship, the Lubuskie Voivodeship and the Opolskie Voivodeship.

Public statistics related to the accessibility of culture are incomplete and fragmented. For example, according to the statistics of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, accessible cultural events are only a small percentage of all organised events. 72% out of 880 exhibitions held in 2014 were partly adapted for persons with disabilities but only 6% provided audiodescription, 2% had inscriptions in Braille format and in the case 2% the guide knowing the sign language was provided. Adapting the building and exhibition goes beyond bridging the architectural barriers for people with reduced mobility – this is also the accessibility of the building and exhibition for the needs of persons with sensory disabilities and the offer adjustment is not only the provision of alternative communication forms. The event organisers often do not realise that taking care of fundamental elements of the cultural event, such as for example the properly arranged space, placing inscriptions and items on an appropriate heights, typhlographic boards, the possibility of touching, listening to the audiodescription and well-qualified staff increase chances to reach a wider group of recipients.

COMPETITIVENESS

Demographic changes and ageing population are phenomena, the effects of which are recognised in a wider and wider perspective. Over the last few years the awareness of ongoing changes and the view on this issue has been significantly changed. Originally, the phenomenon was defined mainly in negative categories as the burden for the economy and society, a threat for the stability of pension schemes and challenges for healthcare or social welfare. For some time elderly people have been perceived as potential customers and consumers having stable financial resources, the needs of whom, due to the longer life expectancy and activity, will be growing. It is accompanied by extending the definition of the “customer” from elderly people on those “getting old” as well as on organisations and institutions acting in the sphere of active and healthy ageing. The silver economy is a response to the changes. It consists in offering services and goods by entrepreneurs for elderly people, with various physical condition and cognitive skills (inter alia, in medical and nursing care) which combines ideas of universal design. This is also the whole range of recreational, tourist, sport services, the so-called leisure industry,

access to culture and art or others – related to spending free time by elderly people with differentiated incomes.

Entrepreneurs (e.g. producers of lighting, furniture, handles, sensors, floors, textiles, clothes, consumer electronics, nutrition products) and service providers (tourist operators, owners of leisure and spa facilities, providers of publicly available telephone services, among others) gradually recognise business benefits related to addressing services dedicated to this group of consumers, the volume of which will be systematically growing. The similar situation is in the case of people with disabilities for whom the participation and opportunity of using goods and services depend to a large extent on the elimination of barriers and the opportunity to independently and safely use products, goods and services. Competitiveness will soon be measured by the accessibility for customers with various needs and opportunities and the condition of the universal design will be a challenge for many fields of economy. In the e-commerce services – according to the British survey “*Click Away Pound*” studying experiences of people with disabilities in e-commerce, as many as 71% of people with disabilities who encounter an Internet website difficult to access, left it to look for more friendly one. 82% of respondents confirm their readiness to spend much more money on the websites of e-stores which accessible.

This is why entrepreneurs having such kind of the offer and producers of compensatory technologies need motivation and support to successfully invest in this potentially attractive but still under-explored part of the market. This shall be done by support instruments for enterprises offered both from EU funds and national sources.

COORDINATION

People with disabilities and the elderly are exposed to many barriers. If we look at impediments in public administration, apart from those most common – architectural and communication ones there are also those which the naked eye is unable to see and which have a significant impact on the independence of individuals and their equal participation in social life. These are, inter alia, legal regulations which often do not serve the citizen but they even impede settling basic matters in offices, courts, healthcare facilities. The provisions of the current procedural law disregards or insufficiently treats people with disabilities. Some of these people, due to various kinds of difficulties in mobility or perception, are not able to settle such matters as for example – filing an application for issuing the passport document, picking up the identity card or passport, registration for the examination or visiting medical facilities due to the requirement to appear in person. The above-mentioned discrimination is also visible in the judiciary – the lack of the procedural capacity, exclusions in the possibility to testify as a witness, the limitation of the possibility to use the sign language interpreter. It is one of few examples reflecting the scale of the phenomenon. The lack of alternative procedural path which would include people with disabilities or difficulties in mobility causes the exclusion from social life or the necessity to involve third parties. There is no doubt that procedures should be accessible for people with various kinds of disabilities.

Also in a wider perspective, to-date activities of successive authorities have shown that the idea of the public space accessibility was not internalised both in the awareness dimension and in the sphere of political obligations and real activities. Despite of the fact that the last decade brought the significant increase in the interest in this area, mainly due

to demographic trends and ratifying by Poland *the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* in 2012 which in Article 9 states – accessibility refers to providing persons with disabilities with access, on an equal basis with others, to the participation in every social sphere. To-date political activity may be defined only in two categories. Firstly, the steady maintenance of status quo due to too high political, institutional, financial risk brought by the change. Secondly, the introduction of new systemic solutions, usually intervention and incoherent ones which despite of significant financial outlays (PFRON funds, European funds) do not ultimately bring politically and socially expected effects. For example, one can mention educational activities or those activating people with disabilities, which, among other things, due to limitations arising from the lack of accessibility in the immediate environment, do not bring the expected change. Furthermore, the barriers of urbanised environment increase the scope of support necessary for a given person and result in costs for the state budget. For example, including even larger number of care services and support in the 24 hour care facilities as a last resort. The improvement of social integration and creation of society of equal opportunities depends to a large extent on the implementation of accessibility.

The improved accessibility of surrounding and physical environment, communication or services is still too slow in Poland. This is why the issue of accessibility became a new priority for the government and it was indicated as the cross-sectoral challenge for various public policies in our country. The activities designed in the Programme Accessibility Plus respond to the today's needs and challenges.

I. ARCHITECTURE

ACCESSIBILITY OF BUILDINGS, RESIDENTIAL UNITS AND SPACE

An accessible flat and friendly local space is a condition of self-reliance and independent life of all of us. This is why we want to improve accessibility of residential blocks, flats, public institutions and the space surrounding us listening to the needs of their inhabitants and users. Thanks to the implementation of activities planned in the Programme, all new public utility buildings and multifamily housing buildings – will meet accessibility conditions and they will be designed from the scratch in such a way that everyone could use them. New opportunities to modernise the existing buildings will appear (e.g. the assembly of railings, driveways, elevators, easily opening doors, automatic lighting systems). The scale of the Programme will not allow for complete reconstruction of the existing infrastructure but for gradual, regular activities by the way of carried out renovations and modernisations, improving the quality of the space surrounding us. Thanks to the Programme, active housing cooperatives and municipalities will be able to reach for funds to improve housing conditions for their inhabitants.

Demographic changes and ageing population cause that the number of people with special housing needs grows fast. The “fourth floor” syndrome perfectly demonstrates barriers encountered by people with reduced mobility, in particular seniors. This is a symbol of the insurmountable barrier in the contact with the world. Among people exposed to exclusion there are also those after injuries or weaker and ill persons. Accessibility of common parts of the building and residential units is a necessary condition for the improvement in their quality of life.

The improvement in accessibility of cities and their public space is a long-term process, requiring the reconciliation of many aspects: needs and expectations of inhabitants, investors’ view often conditioned by financial capacity, spatial and environmental aspects. The local government plays a crucial role in shaping the accessible public space. It has instruments in the form of the adoption of land use plans or the control of issuing construction permits. The Programme foresees the support of administrators in identification of sensitive accessibility barriers in the local space (accessibility audits) together with inhabitants and financing the selected solutions which will improve the comfort of using the space by its inhabitants (driveways, benches, clear voice and visual markings). The accessible public space is also an opportunity for using the potential of all inhabitants, intergenerational integration, improved safety and new possibilities of the economic development of the region.

ACTIVITY 1 Buildings without barriers

The Activity aims at improving accessibility of multi-family housing buildings. In the case of newly constructed housing investments, premises will be designed on the principle of universality of technical conditions and they will take into consideration solutions which are easily adaptable to changing needs of various users. Therefore, appropriate changed

in construction law will be introduced – accessibility standards will be determined. Activities related to the design should be performed on several levels:

- a) Universality of solutions (e.g. no stairs, comfortable handrails, non-threshold solutions, appropriate size of rooms, placing switches at a height enabling their use by people in wheelchairs, children, elderly people, application of sensor switches for the automatic service of residential functions). As part of the Programme the model of the accessible flat with the application of universal solutions will be prepared in accordance with the developed standard. The possibility of adapting flats to changing needs of users (e.g. using walls enabling their further disassembling; using videophones with palpable buttons instead of intercoms as well as a visual and only voice information on door opening; application of wider lintels in the bathroom door in order to shift them later).
- b) Depending on the possibilities of the municipality, the selection of location providing an easy access to basic services and the opportunity of social integration (trade, healthcare, city transport, church, green areas).

Furthermore, the Activity aims at launching the programme for local governments, tenants' associations, housing cooperatives and Communal Building Societies which will enable the improvement of architectural and communication accessibility of the common part of the building (e.g. the assembly of the elevator with a sound signalling system with Braille inscriptions, lowering of the first elevator stop to the ground level with the use of unused rooms originally designated for waste collection, the exchange of intercoms into videophones with provided palpable buttons, driveways instead of stairs, sound, visual, tactile information) and elimination of barriers in housing estates.

Furthermore, the Action will cover the subsidy to the elimination of architectural barriers in the existing housing stock (e.g. the construction of a ramp, rail and handles, accessibility of the bathroom and WC as well as kitchen furniture). In the case of architectural barriers, the elimination of which is not justified due to costs or architectural possibilities, there will be an opportunity to exchange the flat into a more accessible one – both in terms of architectural barriers and devices appropriate to the kind of disability. The proper legislative changes will be introduced so that the task can be co-financed from the PFRON funds.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

Partners: PFRON, the National Institute of Architecture and Urban Planning, the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy, local governments, investors, developers, housing cooperatives and tenants' associations, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 2 100 municipalities without barriers

In everyday life accessibility of various places in public space which we use every day – e.g. sidewalks, squares, school, kindergarten, park, underground passage, bus stop – is

one of the fundamental elements of the friendly surrounding. The examples of solutions providing accessibility of space are pedestrian crossings, grooved paving units with truncated domes and lowered curb on the width of the wheelchair or audible signals at traffic lights.

The Activity aims at holding a competition in which selected municipalities will receive counselling on the basis of conducted city space audits or studies and next, individual plans of improving their accessibility will be developed. The Activity will be implemented together with inhabitants to identify barriers and needs as best as possible. Preferences for small towns, communes and rural areas are anticipated. Having prepared plans for 100 municipalities, these barriers can be eliminated on the basis of grant and loan instruments.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

Partners: local governments, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 3 Architectural and construction services sensitive to accessibility

Even the best written legislation will not become the reality if it is not consistently applied. Poor application of provisions, failure to obey them and too free interpretation in the case of accessibility cannot become the established practice. The introduction of control mechanisms guaranteeing accessibility of new structures and space is a condition of their effectiveness. The conduct procedures for services in terms of accessibility verification at the stage of investment planning (creating inscriptions and public procurement requirements), designing, performance and supervision over investments will be developed.

The condition related to efficient application of architectural accessibility standards is the preparation of architectural and construction authorities (spatial planning staff, including employees of municipalities participating in the proceeding related to issuance of decision on building development conditions and land management as well as those developing projects of local spatial management plans, conservation services, employees of architectural and construction authorities, engineers of construction, infrastructure, roadbuilding, designers and architects and in the further alternative managers and administrators of structures) to effectively design, perform and supervise investments, also in terms of their accessibility. To this aim trainings in practical use of universal planning principles related to buildings and their surrounding as well as increasing knowledge and awareness on the needs of elderly people and people with disabilities are anticipated.

In order to make investors aware of accessibility they will be provided with advisory and counselling services launched by construction supervision services.

The conduct procedures for services in the verification of accessibility before (the stage of planning and design approval), during and after completion of the investment (acceptance) be developed. This concerns, for example, taking accessibility into consideration in local spatial management plans, issued construction permits or use of facilities. Furthermore, the manner of proceeding with the investments which fail to meet

accessibility standards will be regulated – for example by way of partial or temporary permits with the obligation to remedy weaknesses.

Implementation period: from 2018

Coordinator: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

Partners: the General Office of Construction Supervision, the National Institute of Architecture and Urban Planning, the poviats construction supervision inspector, local governments, architects and planners, non-governmental organizations.

Intended results:

- Newly constructed public utility buildings and multifamily housing buildings are accessible
- 100 municipalities in which the quality of public space was improved (elimination of barriers)
- 5 000 people trained in the practical application of accessibility rules in public utility buildings and their surroundings
- 900 adapted multi-family buildings

Budget:

- PLN 510 million

II. TRANSPORT

ACCESSIBILITY OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE TRANSPORT

Mobility, transport, the possibility of free movement are, next to architecture, the second most important element of the reality deciding on the quality and independence of life for all of us. Although in the accessibility of means of transport a lot is changing for the better (new means of transport are often by definition equipped with platforms for wheelchairs, sound signalling or the possibility of notifying the driver), still a vast majority of the fleet come from the time when the issue of accessibility was not taken into account at all. There are still many challenges. Thanks to the Programme all newly purchased buses and trams will be the accessible and friendly space for people with special needs (e.g. with crutches, with a pram, with visual or hearing disabilities). Full physical fitness of the passenger cannot be a condition of the journey from one place to another. It concerns not only trams, buses or trains but the whole transport-related infrastructure – renovated and modernised passenger stations, stops, depots and waiting rooms.

Transport services are ones of the most often used universal services. The right of free movement is not only the fundamental right of the human and citizen but it also determines economic, social and educational aspirations of every society. The possibility of using public transport defines the accessibility of other public services – such as health, care, educational services or the access to employment and benefiting from the cultural goods. The efficient and accessible public transport may effectively remove the space differentiation in the access to other services (not in every municipality there is a theatre, swimming pool or the cinema) and thereby it significantly contributes to the sustainable territorial development as well as the space and social cohesion. Due to the universal use of public transport services by the society, the analysis of the needs related to accessibility must include various needs of users, e.g. resulting from the advanced age, travelling with children, travelling with large luggage.

Transport services are rendered the most often by commercial enterprises – private carriers or local government companies or companies with State Treasury participation. However, many obligations related to the public transport lie with its organiser. Hence, in the Programme implementation the intervention instrument in this field will be properly adapted in such a way as best to provide the accessibility of the real transport service for the end user.

ACTIVITY 4 Accessible rail transport

Conditions of rendering the railway transport services were already determined a few years ago by the European Commission in the form of the regulation (TSI PRM) no. 1300/2014/UE. The Regulation provides for how the infrastructure and rolling stock must look like in the countries of the European Union in terms of providing their accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility. The Regulation entered

into force from 1 January 2015 and applies to the new rolling stock and newly emerging infrastructure. It is necessary to develop the National Implementation Plan (NIP) thereof.

The implementation of NIP TSI PRM will allow for obtaining the real improvement with respect to:

- railway stations – at least 46%;
- platforms – at least half (35% of platforms will have tactile markings and guidance paths for the blind);
- rolling stock (the average amount for all kinds of the rolling stock used in carriage of people) – 35%.

It is anticipated that parallel to activities indicated in NIP TSI PRM the following will be developed:

- strategies of the access to the passenger infrastructure for all people with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility, together with operational rules for every passenger station, and implemented through appropriate procedures and staff trainings;
- strategies of railway carriers defining the access to the rolling stock through the whole time of its work and implemented through appropriate procedures and cabin crew trainings;
- principles of creating tactile maps (typhographic plans) of passenger stations for the blind passengers to make their preparation in accordance with one design possible.

Implementation period: from mid-2018

Coordinator: the Ministry of Infrastructure

Partners: the Office of Rail Transport, PKP S.A., PKP PLK, local governments, railway carriers, rolling stock producers and designers, administrators and managers of the transport infrastructure forming the multi-modal interchange together with the railway transport.

ACTIVITY 5 Renovation and reconstruction of 200 passenger stations

The Activity will aim at eliminating architectural barriers of the existing railway infrastructure for which modernisation and renovation works will be taken. All carried out modernisations will result in the adaptation to the accessibility requirements. In the light of TSI PRM requirements, with respect to the subsystem “Infrastructure” the adaptation works related to the accessibility will concern the creation of infrastructure standardisation principles consisting of uniform, comparable, integral and providing safety elements, inter alia: parking lots and public transport stops, obstacle-free access routes, doors and entrances, floors, signalling of transparent obstacles, toilets and baby change facilities, furniture and

stand-alone devices, ticket offices and ticket machines, information points and customer service points, lighting, visual information: uniform and providing safety typhlographic boards and plans for blind and partially sighted people, road signs, pictograms, printed or dynamic information.

According to the data of September 2017 on the Poland's railway network nowadays there are 639 open railway stations, out of which 586 are managed by PKP S.A. The elimination of barriers in the accessibility of the infrastructure of main railway stations, passenger stations and passenger stops will be implemented through the restoration or modernisation of the existing ones as well as the construction of new facilities. The undertaken investment activities in the first place will concern these facilities which are:

- located on railway lines which are part of the trans-European Transport Network TEN-T;
- important interchanges listed in the "Sustainable development plan for public transport in the communication network in intervoivodeship and international passenger carriages in the railway transport";
- listed in the transport plans of marshals of voivodeships carrying out tasks of the public transport in the voivodeship passenger carriages;
- located in tourist and sanatorium and spa destinations reported to the adaptation process by institutions and organisations associating people with disabilities.

Furthermore, it was planned to develop architectural guidelines for the multi-modal interchanges – a joint document for all managers of facilities included in the so-called interchanges. The purpose is to avoid the situation in which the passenger station (platforms, accessways and the main railway station) is accessible for people with special needs but the parking lot, bus stop, accessways to the railway premises remain inaccessible.

Implementation period: from 2018

Coordinator: the Ministry of Infrastructure

Partners: the Office of Rail Transport, PKP S.A., PKP PKP, PLK, local government units, managers of main railway stations, preservation service, architects and planners, administrators and managers of the transport infrastructure forming the multi-modal interchange together with the railway transport , non-governmental organisations.

ACTIVITY 6 Accessible public transport

The Activity aims at improving the accessibility level of passenger fleet in (bus and tram) public transport through the exchange (the purchase) of fully accessible fleet and the modernisation of the fleet currently in use. In the case of the means of city transport (bus, tram, trolleybus), public road transport (minibuses, buses, coaches) under the current state of the law in Poland there are no general technical and organisational standards governing

accessibility. They are partly provided by the standards individually defined by every carrier or local authorities supervising the city public transport. The improvement of the accessibility level of this part of transport service market will be defined in the law at the national legislation level. For this purpose the expertise indicating technical standards for various means of transport will be developed and next these standards will be entered into force as the obligatory legal provisions. This will allow for providing technical accessibility (e.g. low-floor vehicles, voice announcements on the direction of travel and line number, internal announcements with the names of stops, visual signals, doors opened automatically or by the driver, handrails at each door) of all purchased means of transport from the date of entry into force of legal provisions as well as the introduction of the appropriate transitional period for providing accessibility or withdrawal from the service of the fleet currently in use.

According to the *Expertise in accessibility of the railway service facilities for travellers with disabilities and reduced mobility* developed on the commission of the Office of Rail Transport, currently applicable provisions of law significantly restrict the possibilities of construction of the new, integrated interchanges, and such facilities influence the level of transport accessibility for people with disabilities – not only the railway one but also bus (long-distance) transport, transport systems of city public transport or road transport. According to the above-mentioned document, due to the lack of clear legal conditions such investments most of all require a good will of cooperation between the railway, municipalities, poviats, voivodeships, operators and public transport organisers. Elimination of barriers and simplification of construction rules for the integrated interchanges in Poland will be one of the tasks implemented as part of the Programme.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Infrastructure

Partners: local governments, city and intercity carriers, producers and designers of means of transport, the Office of Rail Transport

ACTIVITY 7 Training for transport sector employees

The preparation of the personnel and staff to their use is the condition of the efficient application of accessibility standards in transport. For this purpose it is foreseen to develop and finance the implementation of the uniform training programme in the practical application of accessibility rules towards passengers with special needs, inter alia, for technical staff and train crews, employees of bus carriers, transport companies. Only the presence of another man and personal assistance will frequently enable to fully overcome all existing barriers. It is important that people with special needs did not have to travel with an assistant, but can count on the assistance of employees and personnel of carriers or managers of transport facilities.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Infrastructure

Partners: local governments, city and intercity carriers, non-governmental organizations.

ACTIVITY 8 Transport mobile application

Full information on conditions of providing a transport service is crucial for many people with special needs in making a decision on the selection of the mean of transport or the travelling distance. Nowadays there are no standard of information publication or mobile solution (e-tool) common for all railway or bus entities which would allow people with disabilities to report the assistance related to the current support in the process of the entire journey. Furthermore, it is necessary to implement mobile services and tools which will constitute the support for people with disabilities in the process of planning, travelling and aftersales services. Hence, the interactive, free mobile application will be prepared in the Activity. It will allow for becoming acquainted with the opinions and information of other users on passenger transfer points, main stations and stops. The application will contain a detailed description of accessibility of buildings, platforms, means of transport or transport procedures and timetables. It will be created in the cooperation of railway carriers and its users allowing for entering up-to-date information, including various needs of users, e.g. blind, deaf people, persons in wheelchairs. The application will be developed in accordance with the WCAG 2.0 standard and should cooperate with assistive technologies (e.g. sound systems of the phone/tablet, image zooming).

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

Partners: the Ministry of Digitalisation, local governments, city and intercity carriers, non-governmental organizations, travellers

Intended results:

- Renovation and reconstruction of 200 passenger stations
- Increase in accessible rolling stock by 20%
- Increase in accessible city transport by 20%
- Transport mobile application

Budget:

- PLN 20 million

III. EDUCATION

ACCESSIBILITY OF EDUCATION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

School is a place where the child not only gains knowledge, but also socialises, learns basics and social competence, establishes relations with peers. This is why the educational process cannot take place in isolation. We must seek to provide conditions for all at schools and universities so that pupils and students with special educational needs could fully participate in social life of these institutions, use their resources, prepare to independence in the adult life and nurture their talents. We understand accessibility of education as the state in which children and youth with special educational needs, including disabilities, can, as far as it is necessary, benefit from the support provided by pupil's assistants, learn and play together with their peers without disabilities. Accessibility of education is inclusive education, open, avoiding stigmatisation. Through the range of investment and organisational Activities in the Programme, equipping facilities, better marking of rooms, training of teachers and future professionals we want schools and universities to become friendly places for all, regardless of the level of mobility. Furthermore, our mission is to change the attitude of teachers and specialists to inclusive education.

Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities provides for the right of people with disabilities to education without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity on all levels of education. The basic assumptions of the Polish education system also guarantee the possibility of obtaining education in every school type and care adapted to the needs of a child or a pupil. However, the opinion that creating a common education system for all is a complicated challenge and considered as high risk for children, parents, teachers and administrators dominates too often. Improvements on various levels of education are implemented too slow – inter alia, due to the fact that there are no people benefiting from these entitlements in educational establishments and universities. This is a vicious circle of (in)accessibility.

In the access to education it is not only the matter of architectural accessibility of the building. Accessibility means also the provision of equipment, transport, handbooks, contents and educational materials accessible for pupils and students. It also requires the adaptation of work methods in differentiated groups, for example, through the adaptation of the manner of conveying information by the teacher, various forms of presenting knowledge and skills by pupils taking into consideration their individual needs and possibilities. Sometimes it requires the change in the manner of management and organisation of the establishment – e.g. accessibility of the school secretariat or university dean's office, *on-line* lectures, IT systems. Universal, equal accessibility to education is not only accessibility in the building of the educational establishment or classroom teaching but also the access at any time to multimedia tools and educational content – corresponding to those traditional, analogue ones – through the Internet platforms which will be provided in the currently implemented Poland-wide Education Network. Thus, it is

necessary to establish that all information technology solutions applied in education will be accessible, i.e. compliant with the functional needs of people with reduced perception.

Accessible education is also the introduction of the idea of accessibility to the content of teaching (curricula, programmes of studies). The future engineer, designer, urban planner or technologist should learn about the needs of various users and be able to respond to them.

Teachers are a key element in creating inclusive education. Therefore, it is necessary to adequately prepare teachers and management as well as other employees of schools or universities as well as create the system of their support responding to the needs of inclusive education to enable effective education for everyone.

ACTIVITY 9 200 schools without barriers

The Activity aims at eliminating barriers in the broadly understood accessibility of schools, following the accessibility principles and – in the case of substantially modernised facilities – the concept of universal design. The Activity will consist in organising a competition for interested bodies running educational facilities. They will be subject to comprehensive accessibility audits in architectural, communication and information, organisational and procedural dimensions. On the basis of specified criteria 200 schools will be selected in which plans of improving their accessibility will be developed after the analysis of conditions and needs. Next, thanks to the support of the EU funds, the improvement of staff will be provided as well as investments and purchases will be carried out. This will bring an improvement in accessibility of buildings, transport, equipment and didactic aids as well as education and therapeutic offer in formats adapted to individual needs and the work organisation directed towards the needs of all pupils.

Implementation period: from 2018

Coordinator: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

Partners: the Ministry of National Education, local governments, schools, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 10 Assistant of the pupil with special educational needs

The Activity aims at developing, testing and next implementing the (financial and organisational) model of individual support for pupils with special educational needs, including disabilities, who, while attending kindergartens and mainstream schools, encounter difficulties in functioning which limit their opportunities to actively participate in the life of the educational establishment. It requires creating legal grounds and providing source of financing for the service of pupil's assistant as well as preparing persons for serving as the assistant. This kind of service will be dedicated to the pupil with special educational needs and its main task will consist in enabling every child to participate in educational activities on an equal basis with other children and supporting pupils' functioning in the school environment on as high level as he can achieve.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of National Education

Partners: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development, local governments, kindergartens and schools, psychological and pedagogical counselling centres, non-governmental organizations.

ACTIVITY 11 Support for inclusive education

The Activity aims at creating the system of ongoing, specialised support for teachers of kindergartens and mainstream schools attended by children and youth with special educational needs to provide high quality education for every child and pupil. In order to support teachers and management in recognising the developmental and educational needs of pupils as well as adjusting the school system to their needs it is assumed to carry out the pilot solutions providing supporting activities at the premises of the kindergarten or school. Furthermore, it is planned to use human resources as well as to provide specialised equipment and adapted educational materials in existing special facilities (special purpose school and education centres, youth educational centres, youth sociotherapy centres). The tasks of these facilities already include the support for kindergartens and mainstream schools attended by children and youth with disabilities, socially maladjusted or threatened by social maladjustment. However, there are no detailed regulations in this regard so these tasks are often not performed. The centres should work closely with the environment of the local community acting for children and youth with special educational needs.

Furthermore, the pilot will include educational needs resulting from various kinds of disabilities (e.g. children with simultaneous hearing and visual impairments, deaf, blind and partially sighted children, those with physical disabilities, autism).

As part of the Activity initiatives for bilingual education will be undertaken (as one of the possible solutions in the education of deaf children) as well as in the dissemination of access to early childhood development centres for children with disabilities. These initiatives will be carried out with the broad involvement of partners.

Implementation period: from 2018

Coordinator: the Ministry of National Education

Partners: the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, local governments, kindergartens and mainstream schools, special centres (special purpose school and education centres, youth educational centres, youth sociotherapy centres), psychological and pedagogical counselling centres, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 12 Studies without barriers

Higher education is a level of education at which inclusive education model was implemented to some extent. However, opportunities to study for people with special educational needs do not exist everywhere. This is why it is planned to conduct audits of selected universities including the evaluation of architectural, communication

accessibility of the administered Internet websites, it tools and education procedures in terms of their accessibility. This Activity will consist in holding a competition in which 100 universities will be selected. They will obtain funds for elimination of barriers in the access to education. Additionally, they will be able to introduce equalizing opportunities for students with disabilities to their curricula (e.g. exams or on-line lectures; possibility of settling student matters via Internet; possibility of completing driving lessons by a student with disability).

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Science and Higher Education

Partners: the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, universities, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 13 Accessibility in curricula

The Activity aims at raising the awareness of students, including those of technical, pedagogic and artistic fields of study related to various needs of people in the society through incorporating accessibility into curricula. For this purpose in the fields of study such as architecture, interior decoration, construction, urban planning, information technology, programming, industrial design, civil engineering, design, model manufacture the development and implementation of model curricula in universal design is envisaged. Students will have a chance to meet various needs of users in mobility and perception as well as principles of universal design of products and services in practice. Furthermore, the issue of special educational needs in educational programmes of all teachers was planned to be permanently incorporated (e.g. In the preparation of simple educational materials by teachers, lecturers or trainers). It is anticipated to review curricula of pre-school education, general education and vocational training in terms of incorporating issues related to universal design. It is important for the teacher to include needs of children and youth with special educational needs in developed curricula at every stage of education.

Implementation period: from mid-2018

Coordinator: the Ministry of Science and Higher Education

Partners: the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, universities, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 14 Staff for inclusive education

The increase in competences, skills and the change in attitudes towards pupils and students with special educational needs is a necessary condition for the development and dissemination of inclusive forms of education. This concerns both personnel, staff of schools and universities as well as their managing bodies and other employees of educational establishments, pedagogical supervision employees and university employees. Furthermore, the Activity anticipates the development of programmes and organisation of the cycle of high quality trainings to raise awareness about the to-date manner of perceiving various needs, including those related to disability, mastering

the process of recognising the needs of learners as well as the education strategy in differentiated groups and cooperation with other entities in creating more accessible educational conditions.

Implementation period: from mid-2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Science and Higher Education

Partners: the Centre for Education Development, the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, teacher training establishments, universities, non-governmental organizations

Intended results:

- 200 schools for children and pupils with special educational needs, including disabilities
- 15 centres supporting inclusive education
- 100 universities open for students and lecturers with disabilities
- 10 model curricula incorporating accessibility

Budget:

- PLN 900 million

IV. HEALTH CARE

ACCESSIBILITY IN HEALTH PROTECTION

Health and physical condition are priceless values appreciated in particular by people with mobility or perception restrictions. It also concerns seniors. Health deteriorates with age and this aspect of life becomes more and more important. At the same time for many people visiting doctor or participating in tests and medical surgeries on their own is impossible, due to the limitations in possibilities of getting to the place or benefiting from medical procedures. Sometimes it arises from the state of health, sometimes from the general physical condition. This is why the Programme implementation effects will include changes in selected healthcare facilities consisting in improving the provision of equipment facilitating communication (with a deaf person, a person with speech disorders), mobility (markings, driveways, elevators) and the change in procedures allowing for assisting a person with disabilities by the staff of the facility. Additionally, the investments in the telemedicine will be an element of the Programme – thanks to which new technologies and devices will allow for a better monitoring of health of seniors or people with disabilities in further years. Furthermore, providing patients with the access to the Polish sign language/manually-coded language in healthcare facilities is a priority.

The accessibility of healthcare facilities, i.e., inter alia, outpatient clinics and hospitals is a condition necessary to provide every citizen with exercising their right to equal treatment. In general, new or renovated buildings of hospitals and outpatient clinics meet the architectural accessibility criteria. In the case of older buildings additional improvements are necessary, thanks to which people with special needs will be able to move around healthcare facility without any difficulties.

However, the scope of the problem related to accessibility of healthcare facilities is wider. People with disabilities are not only people in wheelchairs but also those with intellectual disabilities, with crutches, blind, partially sighted and deaf persons for whom proper markings ensuring safe movement in space, possibility of using alternative communication forms (e.g. multi-sensory take-a-number system in the waiting room) are necessary. Activities improving accessibility of doctor's offices through the change in the manner of arranging rooms, the purchase of diagnostic equipment enabling their use for people with disabilities will be vital in the barrier elimination process. Furthermore, the information on the adaptation of a given facility to the needs of these people is important.

Furthermore, the appropriate organisation of work and medical procedures must be provided. They will take into account differentiated needs of patients, including people with intellectual disabilities (e.g. personnel assistance as the assistant of blind person or explaining the medical procedure to the patient using a simple language prior to his consent for surgery). In the process of increasing the accessibility of medical facilities their digital maturity is also of key importance. Equipping facilities with computers and

other it devices in a proper way is a condition of maintaining electronic medical records and rendering health services in the telemedical form which allows for receiving medical assistance without leaving home or constant monitoring of health parameters.

ACTIVITY 15 100 healthcare facilities without barriers

The Activity will aim at improving architectural, digital, communication and organisational accessibility in healthcare entities selected through competition. It is planned to carry out accessibility audits in 100 facilities in terms of barrier existence, including in particular the evaluation of opportunities and the quality of service for people with disabilities. Adaptation works concerning accessibility will be related to e.g. providing driveways for people in wheelchairs, adjusting sanitary facilities and space alternative marking, including doctor's offices. In the barrier elimination process activities for improving accessibility to offices will be carried out, including accessibility to assistive devices, appropriate service of people with disabilities provided by properly trained health care employees, financing alternative manners of communication with and in the facility as well as providing the standardisation of the work and procedure organisation. Technological barriers will be removed through equipping healthcare facilities with computers and other it devices, including those needed to render services in a telemedical model and the improved accessibility of Internet websites. Furthermore, the Activity foresees the development and dissemination of information materials in various formats, from which people with disabilities, also intellectual ones, will be able to find out about preventative healthcare.

Implementation period: from 2019 (audit in 2018)

Coordinator: the Ministry of Health

Partners: local governments, healthcare providers, organizations of patients, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 16. Accessible medical services

Medical services which are the subject of public funding not always fulfil the requirements of accessibility on the basis of the equal access. The Activity aims at developing recommendations subjecting contracting of healthcare services to provide people with special needs with accessibility facilities and medical services. Fulfilling the defined higher criteria in this regard by healthcare providers should result in the creation of more favourable conditions in the process of contracting of healthcare services.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Health

Partners: the National Health Fund, healthcare providers, organizations of patients, non-governmental organizations

Intended results:

- 100 healthcare facilities friendly for patients with special needs

Budget:

- PLN 300 million

V. DIGITALIZATION

DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY

Digital accessibility is not only the right of every human being to the access to information and communication but also the opportunity to make choices in everyday life. The accessible Internet website allows various groups of users (e.g. the elderly, visually impaired persons, people with tired eyes, people with disabilities) for full and self-reliant access to its content and functionality. For example, the website of the social welfare centre meeting the accessibility criteria is a greater chance that the information on the support offer will be delivered to the most deprived. The development of virtual reality also means the barrier-free access to entertainment for a larger number of users affected by digital exclusion. In their case the impossibility of using the Internet or multimedia does not arise from their choice but from access barriers. It must not be the case that in Poland one must see, hear and must not have any moving difficulties in order to fully benefit from the technological progress. This is the purpose of our activities. This is why thanks to the Programme, all Internet portals of public administration will become universally accessible because every citizen has a right to public information and should also have a choice regarding the manner of settling an administrative matter. The Programme will also regulate the obligation of television broadcasters to provide accessibility for people with various kinds of disabilities as well as the obligation of distributing accessible films. For this to really happen, it is necessary to oblige the providers of these services to maintain technical parameters at least at the level of accessibility which is offered by the service broadcaster!

Digital accessibility specifically concerns public administration which regularly increases the share of e-services and Internet websites for citizens. This means that in the process of designing devices, Internet websites, e-books or production of audio-video materials one must remember about the needs of various users. The awareness concerning the existence of provisions on the application of accessible ITC systems increased, but insufficiently. Entities willing to make changes in the accessibility area do not have a sufficient potential. The correct formulation of tender specifications and the evaluation of accessibility of the procured ITC system are particularly difficult. All information resources, including multimedia created in public administration must meet accessibility standards. Inventory and evaluation of the real accessibility level of IT systems will allow for the implementation of necessary citizen-friendly improvements. In order to achieve it, trainings for public administration employees in creating and publishing accessible public documents and electronic information are planned.

ACTIVITY 17 Accessible Internet websites and mobile applications

The Activity aims at providing accessibility of public portals and websites, with special reference to those which are used for the contact with citizens. Websites will become more accessible. This will be achieved through the implementation of new provisions and updating of existing ones. Every website will contain accessibility declarations in order

to help in orientating how it works as well as how to use elements consciously remained as inaccessible. There will be the alternative access to information to every inaccessible element – in electronic form or via phone. Furthermore, the citizens will be provided with the opportunity to report remarks and complaints on accessibility of the portal, website or application in order to convert the elements unconsciously made inaccessible into accessible ones.

Additionally, as part of the Activity tools for creating model portals and materials facilitating the creation of accessible websites and documents, including guidelines for content management systems applied in the administration, will be developed. The accessible free templates of the Public Information Bulletins (compliant with the recommendations of the WCAG standard) will be made available for all public institutions.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Digitalisation

Partners: public institutions, public service providers, designers and website creators, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 18 Accessible multimedia contents

In order to exercise the right of access of people with disabilities to multimedia content the following were planned:

- improvement in accessibility of multimedia services by way of amendment of the Broadcasting Act and obliging broadcasters to provide 50% of broadcast programmes with audiodescription and live subtitles;
- obliging producers of films co-financed from public funds to provide audiodescription, subtitles for the deaf or a PSL interpreter;
- introducing solutions (standards, certificates) for film producers or distributors placing foreign films on the Polish market allowing people with disabilities, including persons with visual impairment (e.g. audiodescription, voice-over version) or hearing impairment (e.g. subtitles for the deaf, a PSL interpreter) to access their distributed content.
- making available the educational content (e.g. e-handbooks, guides, atlases with maps, magazines), inter alia, through the content digitalisation process based on uniform rules enabling people with various disabilities to use it (including, for example, financing the digitalisation of resources for portals offering them for free).

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage

Partners: the Ministry of National Education, PFRON, the National Broadcasting Council, the Polish Film Institute, the National Library, broadcasters, producers, distributors, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 19 Friendly office

The provision of public administration employees with competences in digital accessibility related to creating and making available electronic content and creating documents in simple language, friendly for the citizen in a condition of improving accessibility of entities rendering public services. To this aim trainings in practical creation of electronic documents, multimedia and websites in accordance with WCAG standards for employees responsible for the creation of information, functioning of the exchange information system and Internet portals are anticipated. Furthermore, training in using simple accessible language in communication with customers of offices will be held. Trainings – also with the use of EU funds – will be organised both for government administration (coordination – the Head of the Civil Service with the support of KPRM) and local government staff (coordination – the Ministry of the Interior and Administration).

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Chancellery of the Prime Minister

Partners: the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, government and local government administration, non-governmental organizations

Intended results:

- 100 public Internet portals meeting accessibility requirements
- 50% of airtime accessible for everyone
- public administration resources accessible for all citizens

Budget:

- PLN 300 million

VI. SERVICES

UNIVERSAL SERVICES, E-COMMERCE, MOBILITY, ACTIVITY, COMMUNICATION

Good quality of life is not only an accessible flat, work and public space. It is a combination of several actions, thanks to which each of us can satisfy their needs on an equal basis with others. The sense of maintaining our own independence, individuality, influence and security needs are necessary for everyone, regardless of age and level of mobility. For those in need the provision of common access to social services of general interest, the obtaining of which will improve the comfort of life and allow to actively include into the life of the community is crucial. Elderly people, just as younger generations, have plans and encounter barriers in their implementation in everyday life. For them reaching the office, filling in the form in the bank or in the post office may be an insurmountable obstacle. This is why our actions aim at providing every citizen with the opportunity to use universal services and purchase products via Internet on their own also without leaving home. Accessibility is also security – the launch of the emergency number 112 for people with disabilities is our priority. We want people with special needs to participate in cultural life, recreation and leisure to a greater extent. This means a wider access to television programmes with the highest viewing figures in accordance with interests and preferences. We aim at improving the quality of life of seniors and people with disabilities through a series of actions in the Programme increasing the access to the active open-air leisure, contact with culture and social relations. A completely new phenomenon on a national level consists in the support for individual mobility of people with disabilities, the significant part of whom may be drivers, and others may use private transport in the family. Motorisation of this customers segment may become crucial for reversing adverse trends in unsuccessful social and professional activation of people with disabilities. Finally, decent and independent life of people with disabilities is not possible without the access to assistance services which the environment of people with disabilities urgently needs.

The activity consists in the introduction instruments for making customers available with at least three communication forms – voice call, text call and video call for universal service providers. The launch of the application enables people with disabilities to effectively communicate with the operators of the emergency number 112 in order to provide them with necessary assistance. As far as the area of mobility is concerned, although in many cities there are services of specialised carriage, due to the increasing participation of people with special needs in social and professional life, the access to them is more and more limited. The Activity will aim at increasing the mobility of this group, including also the individual mobility and, as a result, commencing or returning to social and professional activity. The improved accessibility of cultural resources and national heritage as the element of exercising the right of every citizen to knowledge is planned. Thanks to the increase in the access to social services of general interest as well as rendering them in the form incorporating the individual needs in the local community,

the inclusion of people threatened by a social exclusion in the spheres of life so far inaccessible for them will be possible. Furthermore, the introduction of solutions supporting the activity of the elderly and people with disabilities in sports events and in tourist activity is necessary.

In 2017 the share of the disabled among the total number of the employed members of the Civil Service Corps amounted only to 3.9%, including 2.5% in ministries, 2.2% in central offices. Only in ministries and voivodeship offices the positive change in the growth dynamics of this indicator was noted. In the remaining office types of the Civil Service Corps – the level of employment decreased or remained unchanged. The public administration plays an important role in changing attitudes and shaping solutions supporting the employment of people with disabilities. Unfortunately, there is no data on the percentage of the disabled employed in total in the public administration (taking into consideration the local government administration).

So far the employment rate of the disabled has not reached the statutory threshold of 6% in any ministry.

ACTIVITY 20 Accessible universal services, e-commerce

The activity provides for changes in provisions of law and the launch of preferential financial instruments for operators to improve accessibility and qualities of services offered (e.g. bank, telecommunication, postal, courier and trade services). The activity will include not only the improvement of architectural accessibility in customer service facilities, such as lowered boxes and counter windows or bells to call staff but also the launch of alternative communication forms with the operator (e.g. the use of the application recognising and interpreting into sign language; technology enabling speech transcription).

The Activity will also include the improvement in accessibility of commercial facilities (centres) through the development and dissemination of guidelines for accessibility of facilities (buildings) in which these centres are located.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

Partners: the Ministry of Digitalisation, the Office of Electronic Communication, the Office of Competition and Customer Protection, universal service providers, entrepreneurs, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 21 Number 112 for everyone

The Activity aims at providing an effective communication form of people with disabilities (in particular the deaf, hard of hearing persons and people with speech problems) with the operators of emergency number 112 in order to provide them with necessary assistance in the situation threatening life and health. This concerns in particular the situation when the reporting person is not able to make a voice call due to various reasons. The mobile application will allow for the registration of the user, identification of his location in order to inform appropriate rescue services relevant due to the place and type of event as well

as real-time communication with the emergency number operator with the use of short text messages (SMS, chat).

Implementation period: from 2018

Coordinator: the Ministry of the Interior and Administration

Partners: the Ministry of Digitalisation, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 22 Mobility

In order to implement the improvement in mobility of elderly people and persons with disabilities it was planned:

- to create the cooperation system of various entities in order to obtain a driving licence and adapt cars for the needs of people with disabilities;
- to implement accessibility standards for petrol stations, taking into consideration mobile POS terminals, staff call system, the possibility of payment via mobile application, on-line sign language interpreting system.
- to provide individual “door to door” transport service for people with reduced mobility on the area of at least of 1/3 of municipalities in Poland;
- to create a mechanism of co-funding individual means of transport for people with disabilities in the purchase and adaptation of the vehicle;
- to create the network of professional rentals offering the purchase or fitting of assistive, rehabilitation, care equipment on a commercial basis;
- to create the foundations of the guide dog accessibility system for the blind, including the development of dog training standards.

Implementation period: from 2018

Coordinator: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

Partners: the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy, PFRON, the Ministry of Infrastructure, local governments, entrepreneurs, carriers, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 23 Accessible social services

The Activity aims at increasing accessibility of social services of general interest and increasing the sense of identity of elderly people and persons with disabilities. Thanks to it, each of them will have – in the manner selected on their own – the possibility of full participation in social life.

Apart from people with disabilities, we deal with larger and larger number of dependant people living alone, in particular elderly people. Often these are ill persons with reduced mobility who have difficulties in leaving home. In order to increase their activity and comfort of life the level of accessibility needs will be extended to favourable social services.

Furthermore, it is important to support entities with implementing the services which focus on employment and involvement of people exposed to social exclusion and their families (e.g. social enterprises) which are at the same time deeply rooted in their local communities. This gives them better recognition of problems affecting e.g. people with disabilities or the elderly. They often operate in the areas regarded as ineffective in terms of commercial activities so their development will provide the increase in accessibility to services in these areas.

For this purpose it was planned:

- to increase accessibility of deficit social services for people threatened by a social exclusion and, as a consequence, to improve the comfort of life of these people and their families;
- to create model solutions in comprehensive rendering social services by entities of social and solidarity economy;
- to support professionalisation, increasing quality and standards of rendering social services, including also strengthening the potential of social economy entities to provide comprehensive services, in particular for the disabled and dependants as well as their families;
- to introduce a new statutory regulation determining the mode of cooperation between local government units and entities of social and solidarity economy in particular in contracting social services in local communities in the manner allowing for achieving additional (reintegration) social objectives.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy

Partners: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development, local governments, entities of social and solidarity economy

ACTIVITY 24 Personal assistant of a disabled person

The Activity aims at developing, testing and next implementing the (financial and organisational) model of providing individual support by means of personal assistant service for people with disabilities. Nowadays as part outsourced activities local governments may use PFRON co-financing for the contracted service of personal assistance but this solution is not common. The Activity foresees the preparation of appropriate legal solutions (change or simplification of provisions) and creation of the system on sustainable basis stemming from the diversification of financing sources for this service. Assistance services should be local (e.g. through the network of acting

municipal and poviats institutions) with the possibility of their long-term contracting at non-governmental organizations. At first, the Activity will be financed from the cohesion policy funds in the project formula (as a pilot).

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy

Partners: PFRON , local governments, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 25 Culture without barriers

In order to provide people with various kinds of disabilities with the opportunity to actively participate in cultural life and get to know cultural goods on a basis of equality with others, it was planned:

- to modernise and extend the infrastructure of cultural institutions (inter alia: theatres, museums, cultural centres, libraries) based on accessibility standards;
- to provide accessibility in cultural activities financed from the state budget funds;
- to improve accessibility of cultural facilities, including historic ones, through the combination of individual architectural solutions (after consultation with the conservator of monuments) with the use of modern technological solutions as well as information standards and appropriate service procedures;
- to purchase equipment and facilities giving people with special needs the access to cultural resources (e.g. lifts, inductive loops, audiodescription devices);
- to digitalise various types of cultural resources taking into consideration the accessibility aspect;
- to construct information system on cultural facilities friendly for people with special needs;
- to develop information standards (on accessibility of the building, service, event) which should be applied on the information sites and leaflets dealing with making cultural and environmental goods available)
- to prepare staff of culture, education and cultural and social information in using new tools and technologies in the access to culture;
- to support the participation of elderly people and persons with disabilities in cultural and recreational events, including in particular in facilities accessible for persons with disabilities.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage

Partners: local governments together with organisational units, museums, cultural and sport institutions, conservation service, churches and religious associations, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 26 Sport, tourism and recreation without barriers

In order to provide people with various kinds of disabilities with the opportunity to participate in recreation and leisure on an equal basis with others, it was planned:

- to improve accessibility of sport venues including, inter alia, through developing and disseminating guidelines specific for the function of a given facility (stadiums, sports halls, swimming pools) so that people with disabilities can use it on an equal basis with others;
- to improve accessibility of recreational space: e.g. beaches and waterside areas, green areas – parks and gardens, outdoor gyms and integrated playgrounds, forest parking lots, tourist attractions located within them and in their surroundings, etc.;
- to provide dedicated financing programmes of social tourism for people with special functional needs on the basis of existing financing sources of sport and tourism, inter alia, the adaptation-related activities of the tourist infrastructure (accommodation establishments, trails, rental of specialised equipment for people with disabilities); to improve accessibility of tourist facilities and services (including inter alia: hostels, health resorts and sanatoriums, educational establishments of the State Forests or national parks, educational paths, tourist trails) – providing accessibility of entrances, free and independent movement inside the facilities and shaping the functional surrounding of the facility or place;
- to animate and promote physical culture and active tourism of people with disabilities.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Sport and Tourism

Partners: local governments, owners of sports, spa, tourist facilities, non-governmental organizations, the State Forests National Forest Holding, National Parks, the Polish Tourist and Sightseeing Society

ACTIVITY 27 Employment in administration

The Activity consists in increasing efforts taken in the PFRON programme “*Stable employment – the disabled in administration and public service*”. It will be directed to public administration entities and the State Treasury companies. It will consist in elimination of barriers in the access of people with disabilities to stable employment. As part of it, funding of workplace equipment, adaptation of rooms or purchase of devices facilitating the work performance or functioning in the working establishment will be implemented. Furthermore, the use of the service in the form of job coach is planned on the basis of statutory solutions.

The changes will be made in the preparation of job advertisements for the needs of people with disabilities (information on possible improvements which already appear in job vacancies in public service but are not common, preferences for the employment of people with disabilities in the case of people with equal qualifications). The Activity also anticipates the opportunity of apprenticeship or training period in order to enable acquiring practical competences and meeting formal criteria necessary for later employment for people with disabilities.

Implementation period: from 2018

Coordinator: the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy

Partners: the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, PFRON, ministries, State Treasury companies, local governments, non-governmental organizations

Intended results:

- 100 universal services without barriers
- 100 cultural facilities without barriers
- Emergency notification system 112 accessible for people with disabilities
- At least 100 tourist trails available for people with disabilities
- At least 10 mountain hostels accessible for people with disabilities
- Creating individual mobility improvement system for people with disabilities
- 6% of public administration employees are the disabled

Budget:

- PLN 900 million

VII. COMPETITIVENESS

INNOVATIONS AND SUPPORT OF ENTERPRISES

Different needs of the changing society cause that the demand for universal products and services is increasing. 'Universal' means that they are useful and friendly for everyone. Hence, trends in interior design, interior fittings, clothes or other elements of everyday use must include needs of various people, in particular more vulnerable social groups. For example, elderly people the most often buy clothes which ensure warmth and comfort and are made from soft fabrics. When purchasing a book, the size of the font becomes important with age, while the bags on wheels are ideal for everyday shopping. Many products and services designed with an eye towards people with special needs become universal over time and, as a result, they are accessible for everyone. Who among us will not appreciate an easily opening package with a toothbrush or larger font of a shelf life. This is why the Programme provides for financing of building of research base for various branches of industries. It aims at looking for the most functional and ergonomic solutions. Furthermore, we will support enterprises in placing products which will create completely new opportunities and possibilities of independent functioning for people with disabilities and elderly people on the market.

The course of action aims at developing innovation in creating products and services based on the intelligent quality through showing that the universal design of the product has an impact on its competitiveness and enlarges the group of potential recipients. Nowadays young companies encounter difficulties in implementing new products on the market due to the related costs. It is planned to establish testing centres in which companies could test ideas of the products and product presentation centres for the potential buyers, investors and customers. The specialisation in the area of assistive or compensatory technologies may be both a competitive advantage of the enterprise and it will allow for prioritising the company by the public sector in the access to the capital and support services due to the importance of this issue for the policy of the state.

ACTIVITY 28 Programme of research on accessibility – things are for people

The Activity foresees the establishment of the national programme for financing of the research on the application of universal design in various areas (e.g. construction, digitalisation, education, mobility, transport).

Furthermore, the Programme will support studies on designing particular products for special needs of their users (inter alia: elements of flats, home appliances, furniture, clothes, utensils).

As part of the programme the studies on the application of new technologies will be carried out (computer applications for people with disabilities to learn programming, for alternative communication, for geolocation of accessible places, routes or means of transport – e.g. “ktoredydojade”, “dostepnyparking”).

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the National Centre for Research and Development

Partners: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development, the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, entrepreneurs, universities, research institutes, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 29 Social innovations as an accessibility “training ground”

There are activation or social solutions which may be used for the support of people with various disabilities. Their effectiveness is not always high and often it depends on the nuances in the manner of their use. A number of gaps which require to take a fresh look and create solutions supporting more self-reliant and independent functioning of people with difficulties is identified. The Activity will aim at looking for innovations (e.g. organisational, legal, not technological ones). As part of the social accessibility incubator – financed from the EU funds – the projects for informal groups, non-governmental organizations or other institutionalised entities which have an idea how to enhance activities or give them a whole new dimension will be implemented. Next, these organisations will receive support in the preparation of the solution, a financial subsidy and leading to the wider application of the best solutions. This is an element of activities financed from the funds of the European Social Fund.

Implementation period: from 2018

Coordinator: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

Partners: local governments, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 30 “Good idea”

The purpose of the Activity is to support enterprises both at early stages of the idea development and take activities leading to the creation of final products and services aimed at making use of the growing purchasing power of elderly people, dependants and persons with disabilities as well as to satisfy their consumption and economic needs. The dedicated support will be launched in the form of financial vouchers for companies, including start-ups, which have interesting ideas or which work on universally designed innovative products and services (or adapt the existing ones to the changing needs of users) or dedicated as compensatory technologies.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

Partners: the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology, the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development, the National Centre for Research and Development, producers of assistive and compensatory technologies

ACTIVITY 31 KNOWLEDGE HUBS OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Many companies, in particular from the SME sector, do not have sufficient knowledge in universal design. Lack of popular knowledge how the introduction of technical changes conditioning accessibility of products and services for people with special needs in particular industries look like significantly limits the number of products adjusted to different needs on the market. The Activity foresees the possibility to develop the knowledge necessary for the adaptation of products or services to expectations of recipients with various needs by scientific units in cooperation with entrepreneurs. This Activity will be carried out in five industries which are key for the functioning of people with disabilities.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

Partners: the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, universities, research institutes, designers, entrepreneurs, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 32 Accessibility fairs

The Activity aims at creating the opportunity for the Polish entrepreneurs to promote products which concern the most functional technological solutions compliant with the universal design principle responding to the needs of people with various needs in mobility and perception through their presentation. It is planned to launch the exhibition and presentation centre (for example, in the form of fairs or other regularly organized events) for the Polish entrepreneurs in which products and services dedicated to the promotion of the most functional technological solutions for people with special needs will be presented.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology

Partners: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development, the National Centre for Research and Development, universities, research institutes, entrepreneurs, non-governmental organizations acting for accessibility

ACTIVITY 33 Brand “Accessibility”

The Activity foresees the creation of the brand “Accessibility” as a mark promoting Polish producers of high quality products and services based on the idea of universal design as well as their marketing support. The Activity will be implemented in the mode of annual competition under the auspices of the government.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology

Partners: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development, the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development, entrepreneurs, non-governmental organizations

Intended results:

- National research programme on accessibility
- Support programme for enterprises in manufacturing accessible products
- 20 social innovations in accessibility
- 5 knowledge hubs of universal design
- 5 editions of the competition Brand Accessibility

Budget:

- PLN 200 million

VIII. COORDINATION

COORDINATION OF PUBLIC POLICIES FOR ACCESSIBILITY

In order to provide the improvement in public space accessibility for all citizens it is necessary to recognise it as a key element of various public policies. Due to this fact, accessibility cannot be closed within any of the existing government administration domains because it is of the cross-sectional nature in relation to such issues as education, law, construction, housing, transport, culture, sport, digitalisation and others. We need the cross-sectoral effort going beyond legal frames, the proper identification of social needs and the building of the platform of dialogue between various stakeholders. Regardless of changes in the national law, the change in the mindset, broad-based social education raising awareness, the education of various professional groups in the practical application of universal design are necessary. In all those aspects the activity of social partners is invaluable. They know the needs of people with various disabilities and as a guardian of social interest they consequently change the reality which surrounds us. The Programme Accessibility Plus creates an opportunity for even wider materialisation of these requirements.

ACTIVITY 34 Polish Access Board

The Activity will include the appointment of the competent minister in charge of regional development as an institution responsible for the coordination of accessibility as part of various sectoral public policies, i.e. the so-called *Access Board* along the lines of similar institutions functioning in other countries. At the same time it is necessary to provide the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development with competence instruments enabling to perform properly the function entrusted to it. This will be implemented by means of appropriate provisions in *the Act on accessibility* to be adopted. Furthermore, the Activity will include a certain reinforcement of the staff (at least a few new permanent jobs) in supporting the appropriate *know-how* for this new structure.

The delegation of coordination functions to the competent minister in charge of regional development is motivated by the fact that issues related to accessibility are not included in the system of any government administration domain. Due to this fact the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development as the coordinator of the investment process in the country, managing EU funds (the main source of financing the investment) as well as having competences in the area of construction, spatial planning and housing within its scope of activities, may provide the effective coordination of activities for accessibility.

Implementation period: from 2018

Coordinator: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

Partners: ministries, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 35 Law for accessibility

The absence of effective control mechanisms guaranteeing the implementation of accessibility for new structures and spaces as fully accessible for people with various disabilities is the weakness of the current legal provisions governing accessibility. The Polish legislation do not use the concept of universal planning and Poland, what was indicated in the diagnosis, as one of four European countries does not have legally adopted accessibility standards for public space.

On this stage the shape of the target accessibility implementation model which will be developed as a result of the Programme implementation is not determined. The separate, horizontal act on accessibility is the desired direction of changes allowing for the multi-dimensional approach to accessibility going beyond the disability dimension. It will aim at creating the legal grounds for the effective implementation of architectural, transport, information and communication accessibility in Poland. The act would impose obligations of using accessibility rules, inter alia, on:

- entities providing public services, including central and local government administration, agencies and funds, budgetary units, the State Treasury foundations and those with the State Treasury participation;
- entities which were entrusted with implementation of public services, including enterprises and non-governmental organizations;
- enterprises providing universal services;
- kindergartens, schools, universities.

The act will be a key instrument for the implementation of Article 9 of *the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* in Poland. The Activity provides for taking the accessibility aspect into account in legal acts governing areas of citizens' life set out in detail (e.g. the amendment of the Broadcasting Act; the Act on public transport; the Regulation on defining the kinds of poviat's tasks which may be financed by the State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons; the Regulation on technical condition of public roads; establishing provisions related to evacuation of people with disabilities in the life-threatening situation; harmonising the legal provisions on parking the car by the disabled; introducing the obligation of conducting the investment accessibility audit). Furthermore, under the Act the establishment of the national accessibility fund is planned. The resources gathered as part of the fund will be used for the improvement in accessibility. Furthermore, it is necessary to monitor the quality of normative actions in terms of creating provisions aiming at providing accessibility on a regular basis. The strengthening of the process of public consultations in order to increase the social participation of citizens with reduced mobility and perception in the law-making process.

Other aspect of the Activity will focus on the inclusion of accessibility theme in decision-making and legislative processes taken in public administration. It is about the development of impact assessment mechanisms in relation to the impact of draft legal acts in the selected areas on the improvement of the accessibility level in Poland.

Implementation period: from 2018

Coordinator: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

Partners: the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, ministries, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 36 Polish Accessibility Standards

The development of Accessibility Standards based on the universal design principles is the key element of the Activity. The national standards will concern inter alia: construction, transport, digitalisation, comprehensive typhographic solutions for public space (including infrastructure for pedestrians) and organisational solutions, for example the quality of services in healthcare, culture or education. Their will aim at ensuring the application of solutions which are uniform, comparable and providing safety of users. The example here may be the system of typhloplans (typhlomap) which should create friendly and useful tactile space, the coherent passenger voice announcement system or solutions providing the priority role of pedestrian traffic in the city transport system. The adoption of appropriate provisions by the legislator or executive authority will allow for common application of guidelines in order to make the environment available for people with various opportunities in mobility and perception.

Furthermore, this Activity provides for the completion of works on accessibility standards for cohesion policy projects.

Implementation period: from 2018

Coordinator: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

Partners: ministries, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 37 Procedures without barriers

Providing the efficient and effective improvement in accessibility in Poland requires not only elimination of architectural barriers but also procedural barriers to the same extent. They hinder or prohibit people with disabilities to use the state resources on the basis of equal access. As a result, people with disabilities are often exposed to unreasonable costs (for example, the necessity to appoint a proxy, issue authorisations for other persons due to the lack of possibility to appear in person). Hence, the Activity aims at carrying out the mapping of existing procedures in various areas and competences of various institutions.

This will be the basis for the review and evaluation of procedures in terms of their optimisation. Conclusions and recommendations of the review will be implemented in the form of the adaptation of procedures to the needs of people with disabilities.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

Partners: ministries, local governments, central offices, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 38 Cooperation for accessibility

The success of public institution activities in providing accessibility is conditioned by the involvement of social and economic communities concerned. Such an involvement must be provided at all stages of the implementation of activities for accessibility, i.e. from the stage of their design, budgeting to monitoring and evaluation of the effects achieved. To this aim, the Accessibility Council will be established. It will be a consultative and advisory body for the Minister of Investment and Economic Development. The Council will include, inter alia, representatives of: public administration, local government units, non-governmental organizations acting for accessibility and rights of people with disabilities, senior organisations, universities, research institutes, professional associations of architects and urban planners as well as economic representatives acting in the areas which are the most affected by the accessibility problems, for example transport or construction. The Council will initiate activities for the improvement in accessibility and formulation of opinions and initiatives of public authorities in terms of accessibility.

Additionally, as part of the Activity the development of the mechanism of the functioning of accessibility coordinators in public administration units is planned. Accessibility coordinators are employees nominated to ensure that all activities of the office are compatible with the idea of accessibility (e.g. providing alternative communication opportunities, friendly templates of documents, organisational solutions, architectural accessibility).

Implementation period: from 2018

Coordinator: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

Partners: the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, ministries, local governments, entrepreneurs, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 39 Public procurement and investments

In order to provide the permanent presence of accessibility in the everyday practical activities of the public administration authorities the creation of mechanisms and procedures of incorporating these issues into the standard processes implemented by offices and their employees is necessary. Furthermore, one must provide the sufficient competence in these authorities for creating, accepting and evaluating works in terms of accessibility.

As part of the Activity it is anticipated that issues related to accessibility will be introduced to the public tendering procedures through the identification of typical orders in which this subject may be used. On the basis of received results, the model templates of documents will be prepared (for example, tender specifications and descriptions of investment accessibility, examples of social clauses, checking and control lists) taking into consideration the requirements of people with special needs (e.g. the construction of a stop, road, underground passage). The templates will constitute specific tools helpful

for all entities which publicly procure already at the stage of preparing the assumptions for a public procurement procedure.

This Activity anticipates trainings for representatives procuring in the incorporation of accessibility into public procurement procedures.

Another aspect of the Activity includes the review of the most important strategic investments for the country and inclusion the procedures providing the incorporation of accessibility into mechanisms of their implementation. The analysis of the selected strategic projects from the Strategy for Responsible Development and the development of individual recommendations in accessibility with respect to each of them will be the starting point for this Activity.

Implementation period: from 2018

Coordinator: the Public Procurement Office

Partners: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development, ministries, local governments, entrepreneurs, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 40 Certification of accessibility

Certification of accessibility is the process of confirming accessibility of a given facility/ service for the needs of various people, including, inter alia, elderly people, people with disabilities. Positive accessibility audit on the basis of precisely specified criteria should be the condition of obtaining the certificate. The Activity aims at creating the system of certification of people, institutions conducting accessibility trainings and audits for people with disabilities. Additionally, it is planned to develop the description of qualifications required for the profession of auditor and register them in the Integrated Qualifications Register.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

Partners: the Ministry of Infrastructure, local governments, non-governmental organizations

ACTIVITY 41 Monitoring of public policies

The improvement in accessibility of universal spaces and services requires the specific determination of the baseline as well as the quantification of scale and scope of the desired changes. The Activity anticipates the construction of the accessibility data collection system in the official statistics which will allow for the determination the current situation and clear identification of target values. The scope of collected data will include the main aspects of accessibility (inter alia construction, transport, culture, digitalisation) and their spatial differentiation in the territorial division. The issue related to the identification of barriers encountered by people with disabilities as well as the evaluation of accessibility in various dimensions should be included also as an element

of comprehensive social activities diagnosing the conditions and quality of life of Poles (e.g. the Social Diagnosis, the Labour Force Survey).

As part of the Activity the development and application of tools for quantitative analysis and evaluation of data on accessibility in order to provide all stakeholders, and in particular policymakers, with the full range of information on challenges and desired activities related to accessibility. Recommendations resulting from the quantitative and qualitative data analysis will help, inter alia, to evaluate the progress of the implementation and achieved results of the Programme Accessibility Plus.

Furthermore, the Activity provides for the review of public policies in terms of the evaluation to what extent they currently take into account the subject of accessibility and the identification of the desired changes in this area.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Central Statistical Office

Partners: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development, ministries

ACTIVITY 42 Potential of non-governmental organizations

Many non-governmental organizations acting in Poland for people with disabilities bring together experts dealing with accessibility of space, products or services. Nevertheless, the level of incongruity of the urbanised environment and the opportunity related to the programme Accessibility Plus creates the need of strengthening the competence potential of non-governmental organizations. These facilities could audit accessibility, disseminate the best solutions, give advice on accessibility problem solving and have competence in the sphere of alternative communication methods. The Activity aims at creating the network of non-governmental organizations dealing with accessibility through their support in the form of financial grants dedicated to competence building for carrying out audits, advisory activities, trainings and rendering services in accessibility (e.g. of alternative communication – creating live subtitles or providing audiodescription, developing accessible materials, etc.).

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Chancellery of the Prime Minister

Partners: non-governmental organisations;

ACTIVITY 43 Cohesive social policy for accessibility

Entities of social and solidarity economy as entities characterised by the primacy of social objectives over commercial activity already are social service providers. They render them on the basis of local resources, incorporate and adapt them to the needs of people threatened by a social exclusion. However, due to the increase in the number of people living alone and dependants, the scale of this phenomenon is insufficient. In many local communities there are problems with the access to high quality services characterised by

the individual approach to recipients. Without taking definite actions and strengthening the potential of entities not motivated by profit this situation will be more and more difficult.

Thus, it is necessary to provide cohesion in management and programming of the policy for poverty reduction and social exclusion as well as the adoption of the cohesion and comprehensive statutory regulation. Furthermore, the Act will include, inter alia, the concept of the new manner of planning activities in the active social policy area at the local level.

This is why the Act governing the sphere of social and solidarity economy will be developed. The Act will regulate, inter alia:

- preferences in the implementation of social services by social enterprises in local communities;
- local social development programmes replacing and integrating the existing strategies and local programmes in the area of social matters,
- Requirements and preferences for entities of social and solidarity economy.

Introduction of new legislative solutions will be preceded by testing many solutions, inter alia:

- building, implementation and making available the activity models for entities providing complex social services for persons threatened by a social exclusion,
- basing programming and implementation of social services on the local potential,
- supporting non-commercial entities acting in the family policy – not only as entities of a care and educational nature but also integrating the local community.

Implementation period: from 2019

Coordinator: the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy

Partners: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development, local governments, entities of social and solidarity economy

ACTIVITY 44 Social awareness of accessibility

Increasing accessibility of public space requires the social awareness building on the differentiation of needs and equality of rights of all inhabitants. Shaping and changing attitudes is a long-term process requiring a constant strengthening and preservation. In order to effectively implement the idea of friendly Poland the extensive social education raising awareness of different needs and accessibility for various social groups abolishing stereotypes both among policymakers taking a decision in shaping various areas of public space, designers, urban planners, public administration and business industries as well as general public – space users in the scope of their rights is necessary.

The public administration may play a special role. This is why raising awareness and competences of officials related to accessibility is important.

The Activity provides for the implementation of information and educational campaigns, mainly on the Internet, including social media dedicated to accessibility, needs and functioning of people with special needs (inter alia promoting a positive image of seniors and people with disabilities; promoting the idea of social inclusion; right to inclusive education also directed to children and parents at every education level; promoting mobility, paying attention to safe behaviours, for example during fire hazards directed to people with disabilities and elderly people). In order to raise social awareness social campaigns (press, radio, public television) will be used to provoke reflection, interest in difficult problems, to make aware but also to shape specific socially desired behavioural patterns, changes in attitudes, to create social relation and friendly attitudes. The integral element of activities include the exchange of experience and good practices between all communities dealing with accessibility (non-governmental organizations, business, administration, local government units) through the organisation of conferences, meetings, groups, competitions of good practices.

Implementation period: from 2018

Coordinator: the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development

Partners: the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, public administration, non-governmental organizations

Intended results:

- Polish Access Board
- Coordinators of accessibility in offices
- Horizontal act on accessibility
- The act on social and solidarity economy improving the access to social services
- 6 accessibility standards for cohesion policy
- Applicable accessibility standards in the national law
- At least 20 active organizations acting in the accessibility area
- 20% of SRD strategic projects in which the accessibility component is being implemented

Budget:

- PLN 120 million

IMPLEMENTATION SYSTEM

The Ministry of Investment and Economic Development is the entity responsible for the coordination of the entire Programme. The delegation of coordination functions to the Ministry is motivated by the fact that issues related to accessibility are not incorporated into the silo system of any government administration department. Due to this fact, the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development as the coordinator of the policy of development and investments in the country, and at the same time managing EU funds (the main source of financing the investment) as well as having competences in the area of construction, spatial planning and housing within its scope of activities, may provide the effective coordination of activities for accessibility.

The Ministry of Investment and Economic Development will be directly responsible for the preparation, adoption and creation of organisational and financial frameworks for the implementation of the Programme. It will coordinate the implementation of Activities planned in the programme which will be entrusted to competent resorts, central offices, local governments and private entities. The Programme Objectives will be implemented in cooperation with non-governmental organizations and representatives of entrepreneurs.

The coordination of the Programme implementation will be provided in the close cooperation with the Government Plenipotentiary for the Disabled in the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy. The role of the Plenipotentiary will be to ensure that the Activities taken in the Programme respond to postulates of the environment of people with disabilities, including those incorporated in international commitments such as *the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. At the same time the Plenipotentiary coordinates works on the preparation of *the Strategy for the disabled* incorporated in SRD, the scope of which is broader than accessibility issues because it includes wide social issues such as social or professional rehabilitation. The cooperation with the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development and the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy will provide the full cohesion of activities foreseen for the implementation in both documents.

Tasks related to the coordination of the Programme include: programming, i.e. the determination of support areas and principles of granting the support, carrying out the review of the Programme, organisation of the cooperation with particular resorts, local government units, non-governmental organizations and representative of entrepreneurs as well as monitoring of the Programme implementation.

The development of tools and mechanisms for the implementation of the above-mentioned tasks constitutes an integral element of the Programme implementation (Coordination) and at the same time it conditions its success. Hence, at the stage of programming the determination of detailed competences of particular entities or cooperation instruments between them is not relevant. These issues will be specified as a result of analyses conducted at the first stage of the Programme implementation as well as in implementation documents and legislation.

The Activities contributing to its implementation in various areas, taking into account accessibility were detailed in the Programme. **The implementation of these Activities**

will take place on the basis of regularly updated *Activity Implementation Plans* developed by institutions responsible for the coordination of particular Activities in the Programme.

Activity Implementation Plans will determine, inter alia, time frames, stages of implementation, entities responsible for their performance and indicators for the measurement of the implementation level of a given Activity as well as the required budget and its sources of financing.

Institutions involved in the Programme implementation are inter alia:

- Chancellery of the Prime Minister;
- Selected ministries (the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, the Ministry of the Family, Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Digitalisation, the Ministry of Infrastructure, the Ministry of Investment and Economic Development, the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology, the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, the Ministry of Sport and Tourism) and subsidiaries;
- Local government units of all levels;
- The State Fund of Rehabilitation of Handicapped People;
- The Office for Railway Transport;
- The Office of Electronic Communications;
- The Public Procurement Office;
- The Central Statistical Office;
- The Polish Agency for Enterprise Development;
- The National Broadcasting Council;
- National operators of universal services (e.g. banking, insurance, postal, transport, audio-visual ones);
- Universities and research institutions;
- Entrepreneurs;
- Non-Governmental Organisations.

Due to the fact that the Programme will be financed from various sources (depending on the kind of the activity and area of support) and both EU funds and state budget will be

involved in its implementation, the principles of implementation of particular undertakings will take into consideration conditions and procedures applicable in the use of a given financial measure.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring of the Programme implementation allows for the reliable evaluation of the progress in its implementation as well as the management of Activities planned in it. The Programme monitoring system is based on the regular reporting concerning the achieved results indicated in the document.

The Ministry of Investment and Economic Development is responsible for the Programme monitoring system, while all institutions implementing Activities specified in the Programme participate in the process.

The competent minister in charge of regional development develops annual reports on the Programme implementation on the basis of the data provided by institutions implementing particular Activities. Reports are transmitted for information to the Council of Ministers. The report contains the basic information on the progress in its implementation of particular Activities as well as the data concerning values of achieved indicators and effects. Furthermore, reports will also indicate the possible difficulties in the implementation of the planned undertakings and necessary changes resulting therefrom. The information on problems will be used for the current management of the Programme. The competent minister in charge of regional development is responsible for the development of the scope, manner and frequency of providing reporting data.

Not earlier than after 2 years of the Programme implementation and after its completion the Programme evaluation will be carried out. The first evaluation aims at identifying the needs of possible corrections on the Programme implementation, while ex-post evaluation (after the end of the Programme) aims at showing the impact of the Programme implementation on the improvement in accessibility in Poland. The evaluation will show what has been achieved thanks to the Programme implementation and what requires further improvements.

The indicator system used in the Programme is based on the management system by results. For each Activity the entity responsible for its coordination will prepare indicators of the Activity implementation incorporated in the Activity Implementation Plan. In this way the direct results of objectives indicated in the Programme and planned undertakings will be shown.

The Programme results will be systematically monitored, thanks to which one can observe the progress in its implementation and react on problems as they arise. The achieved results will be made publicly available and consulted with all stakeholders.

FUNDING

The Programme projects the amount of about PLN 23.2 billion to be used for the implementation of objectives specified in the Programme in the years 2018–2025. The basic sources of the Programme funding include:

Foreign public funding (PLN 19.6 billion which constitutes approximately 84% of the Programme budget), among which one should mention:

- EU funds, i.e. the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund. The funds' resources will be spent through the implementation of particular operational programmes. The significant part of the Programme "Accessibility Plus" corresponds to the objectives of the currently implemented operational programmes, while in the remaining part changes in the Partnership Arrangements and selected operational programmes will be necessary in order to introduce activities resulting from the Programme Accessibility Plus into them. Activities which so far has not been planned in operational programmes will be introduced only at the level of national operational programmes (Knowledge Education Development, Intelligent Development, Digital Poland). Changes in regional operational programmes are not envisaged, whereas part of expenditure incurred as part thereof (investments in space and public buildings, city transport, purchase and modernisation of the rolling stock) will be covered by accessibility rules which allows for their inclusion into the budget of the Programme Accessibility Plus.
- The Norwegian Financial Mechanism and the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism (i.e. the so-called Norway Grants and EEA Grants) which are the form of non-returnable foreign aid.

National public funding (PLN 2.3 billion which constitutes approximately 10% of the Programme budget), which include:

- the State budget, also in terms of the national contribution necessary for co-financing activities of European funds (PLN 344 million, i.e. over 1% of Programme budget),
- resources of local government units in a significant part constituting a national contribution necessary for co-financing activities from EU funds (PLN 1.19 billion, i.e. about 5% of the Programme budget),
- earmarked funds: the State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons (PFRON) (PLN 800 million, i.e. 3% of the Programme budget).

Private funds (PLN 1.3 million which constitutes almost 6% of the Programme budget).

The table below presents the estimated breakdown of the Programme budget into the above-mentioned sources.

The total budget of the Programme constitutes approximately 1% of development investments of the Strategy for Responsible Development. As a rule, the implementation of proposed activities should not involve additional financial resources (apart from values indicated in the second column of the table below) and will be covered by financial frames specified in SRD. Apart from the above-mentioned cases tasks implemented as part of the Programme will be financed within the limit of expenditure of particular administrators without the necessity of applying for additional funds from the state budget.

The majority of planned activities (almost 90%), also financial outlays result from tasks which are currently implemented or planned in programmes and budgets of particular government and local government institutions, for example the modernisation of the network and railway infrastructure or local government investments. Thus, the implementation of these tasks will not be related to the necessity of increasing the expenditures of the sector of government and local government institutions and only to ensure that the planned expenditures are implemented in accordance with accessibility rules. The budget of the Programme Accessibility Plus covers these financial resources ensuring at the same time that these expenditures incurred as part of them will be compliant with the Programme objectives and they will contribute to the improvement of accessibility depending on the type of a given investment.

According to studies and international statistics (WHO), the cost of providing investment accessibility or the mean of transport at the stage of their planning or planning the purchase amounts to about 1–2% of the original value. There are also instances in which the accessibility analysis at the stage of designing an investment as well as the application of universal design influenced the reduction of its originally planned cost. As far as the modernisation cost of the investment or rolling stock in relation to providing accessibility of that already put in use is concerned, it is 10–15% of the original investment value. Hence, it is essential that expenditures planned in budgets of particular institutions (regardless of the implementation of the Programme Accessibility Plus) take into consideration the accessibility specification as early as possible.

The table below presents the division into sources, taking into account amounts currently planned and additional ones which require financial involvement.

Source	The total budget of the Programme (PLN)	Additional resources to be involved (included in the total budget of the Programme)
UE and EEA funds	19.6 billion	1.6 billion
Resources of local government units	1.19 billion	0.15 billion
State budget	0.34 billion	0.23 billion
Earmarked funds (PFRON)	0.8 billion	0.12 billion
Private funds	1.3 billion	0.29 billion
TOTAL	23.2 billion	2.4 billion

Entities responsible for the Programme funding

The provision of financial resources for the implementation of Programme Activities belongs to the institutions responsible for the coordination of a given Activity. These institutions are obliged to plan the budget for a given Activity taking into consideration of resources currently allocated to the implementation of specified undertakings and resources requiring an additional involvement. The implementation of particular Activities will take place within limits of expenditures specified for budgetary parts of competent administrators without the need to increase them. Budgets of given Activities will be presented in the Activity Implementation Plan. The budgetary planning will be carried out in accordance with the adopted principles for particular financing sources of public expenditures.



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