

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## FROM ESN TO EU POLICY MAKERS

### Recommendation 1: Common understanding

As the definition of "disability" is different in each European Nation, the creation of a **European-wide database of definitions** which qualifies a student as a **"student with disabilities"** in each European Nation is strongly needed. This database should include information about the services and support students with disabilities are entitled to. The direct benefits would be:

- > The student with disabilities would know in advance about the **level of support** in each mapped country.
- > Both the host and home institutions, in accordance with the student's will, could **adapt their services** to provide high quality support to the student.

### Recommendation 2: Required factors for an inclusive environment

Consistent efforts should be made to make sure the **EU regulations on accessibility** are **implemented and respected** (services provided, University buildings and its surrounding area).

All **stakeholders should be trained** to deal with students with disabilities: from the Higher Education Professionals to Non-Governmental Organisations and Students' Associations.

Professors should be trained to **teach in an inclusive way**, making their learning materials accessible. A standardised training system to support educators should be implemented to meet the student's needs.

### Recommendation 3: Coordination of cross-sectoral communication

There is a **lack of communication** about the social model of disability and a general **lack of information** flow. In order to better support the exchange of information on all levels, ESN members would like to address both National stakeholders (because of country specific legislation, policies and partners) and European stakeholders:

- > At the National level, the creation of a **centralised platform** where students can find **information** about opportunities of **exchange programmes, supplementary grants** and **top-ups** as well as **practical information** in an easy and accessible way (voice recordings, subtitled videos, positive testimonials of other students with disabilities, ...)
- > At the European level, the **recognition** of projects fostering inclusion, the **empowerment** of National stakeholders to support local initiatives and **coordination and monitoring** of National strategies

### Recommendation 4: European-wide mapping of cities' accessibility

Because students are not only going from home to their University and from their University back home, **mapping the accessibility of the whole cities** is a great necessity. Shops, banks, administrations, sport centers, museums, parks, pubs and so forth.

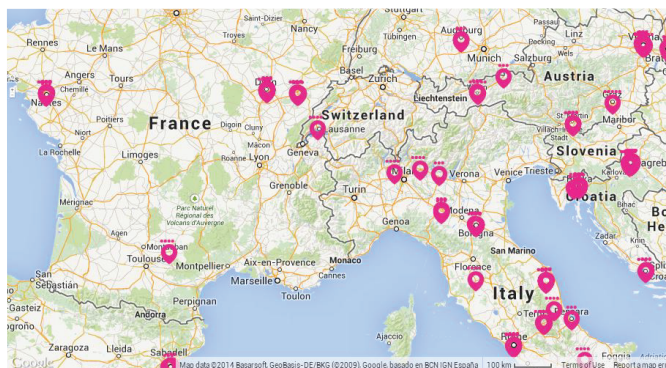
The Erasmus Student Network welcomes the existing initiatives such as Wheelmap.org or JACCEDE.com that already have ongoing mapping processes of public areas around the world. Those initiatives should be broadly promoted and supported.

# MAP

## YOUR map for accessibility: MapAbility

The MapAbility Map is a web-based tool, a platform where students with disabilities can easily check which European Higher Education Institution are accessible. The map is available at:

<http://exchangeability.eu/mapability-map>



**Strengthening the accessibility of  
Higher Education Institutions to  
students with special needs**

## INTRODUCTION

**MapAbility** is a sub-project of the ExchangeAbility project. It aims at **investigating** the accessibility level of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Europe, and creating an online map that provides the right information to students with disabilities on which European Universities are accessible.

Following the aims of the ExchangeAbility project, the final scope is to increase the participation of students with disabilities in mobility programmes.

Since September 2013, an **International Team of students from across Europe** has been conducting a project to map the Higher Education Area, investigating the accessibility level of its buildings and gathering information about the services offered by HEIs to students with disabilities. At the moment of this publication, **169 HEIs** have been mapped for a total of **549 buildings**.

The mapping project is an ongoing, long-term process. More information can be found on the ExchangeAbility project website: [www.exchangeability.eu](http://www.exchangeability.eu)

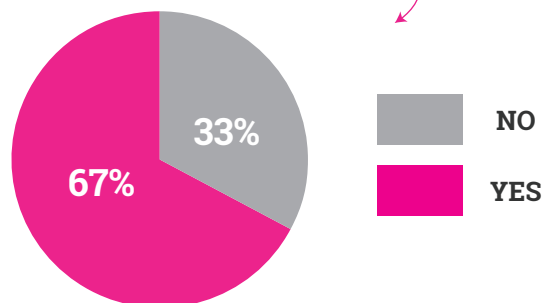
### This booklet contains:

- > Some **key results** extracted from the questionnaire used by the students while conducting the mapping
- > The **recommendations** formulated by 40 volunteers from the Erasmus Student Network during a 3-day training on accessibility and inclusion. These recommendations were presented during the MapAbility conference which took place on the 2nd of June 2014 in Brussels
- > A schematic of the **Map** created by the Erasmus Student Network to better inform students with disabilities about the specific condition of a HEI in terms of accessibility and encourage them to study abroad

## KEY RESULTS

### Is there a Disability Unit in your University?

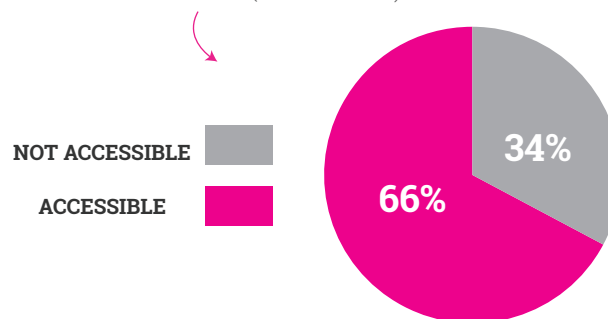
(169 answers)



33% of the Higher Education Institution surveyed have no Disability Unit, Disability Office or Disability responsible

### Accessible Websites

(168 answers)

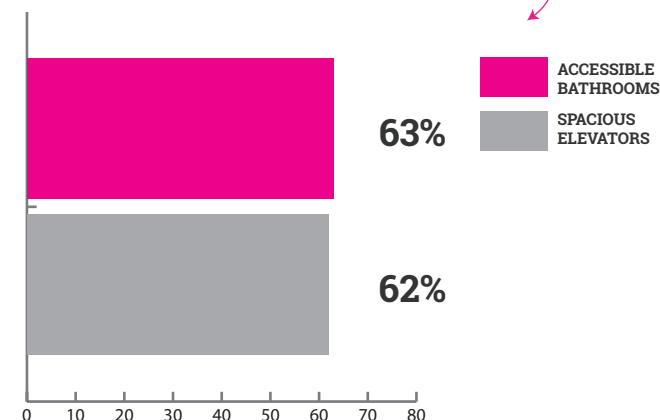


66% of websites of the Higher Education Institutions surveyed were found to be accessible\*

\*The website accessibility has been defined following the criteria recommended by the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) of the W3C. More information can be found on their website <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>

### Is the building accessible for wheelchair users?

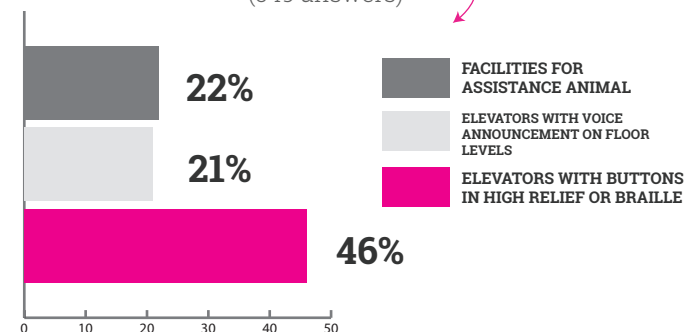
(549 answers)



Almost 2/3 of the buildings surveyed across Europe are accessible wheelchair accessible. 63% have accessible bathrooms and 62% have spacious elevators.

### Is the building accessible for students with visual impairment?

(549 answers)



The accessibility of University buildings across Europe for students with visual impairment is far from being satisfactory. Only 22% of the buildings surveyed allow animals to enter the building. When the buildings have elevators, only 46% of them have buttons in high relief or Braille whereas only 21% have registered voice announcing of floors.