Annex 7 – Practical Examples The Netherlands

Guideline Accessible Construction

The Guideline Accessible Construction was developed by Ieder(in) and Cliëntenbelang Amsterdam in collaboration with a focus group of stakeholders from the construction sector and representatives of people with disabilities and older adults. This guideline provides a number of practical steps for building accessibly, consisting of:

The Three Principles of Accessible Construction

- Universal Design: Designing buildings so that they are suitable for everyone, without the need for separate adaptations for people who differ from the average user.
- Application of Accessibility Standards, Lived Experience, and Accessibility Expertise: The new NEN standard 'Accessibility of Buildings' should serve as the basis for integrated building design. In addition, input from people with lived experience is essential to address specific needs within a building. Finally, an accessibility consultant should assess the design to ensure all norms and regulations are incorporated.
- Everyone in the Construction Chain is Needed: In addition to the above, all parties in the construction chain must contribute to embedding accessible construction—clients, municipalities, housing associations, care housing providers, developers, architects, and contractors.

The Inclusive Design Process

Accessible construction means designing and developing a building in collaboration with people with lived experience (the "end users") and an accessibility expert. This is called an inclusive design process. Universal Design describes the result of design: a residential building suitable for as many people as possible (with diverse bodies and abilities).
The inclusive design process describes the method: a collaborative process with accessibility consultants and people with lived experience. An inclusive design process—combined with adherence to standards—results in a building that meets the principles of Universal Design.

Collaboration with people with lived experience and accessbility consultants

It is important that people with lived experience and accessibility consultants are involved in the building process. Key points to consider in this collaboration include:

- Recruitment of Experts by Experience and Accessibility Consultants: These individuals can be found through local representative organizations (such as disability platforms), housing advisory committees, and resident groups.
- Accessible Communication: Offer multiple contact options (letter, phone, WhatsApp, SMS, email) and use plain language.
- Accessible Locations, Materials, and Methods: Ensure physical, social, and digital accessibility in all aspects of participation.

More information: https://toegankelijkbouwen.nl/

MuZIEum

MuZIEum is a museum where visitors experience what it is like to be blind or visually impaired. In complete darkness, you rely on your guide with lived experience and discover what is possible when you cannot see. It is an experiential museum where seeing and not seeing come together. Through exhibitions and activity programs, MuZIEum gives visitors a practical perspective on how to contribute to a society where everyone can participate. At the same time, it provides employment opportunities for blind and visually impaired people.

More information: https://muzieum.nl/

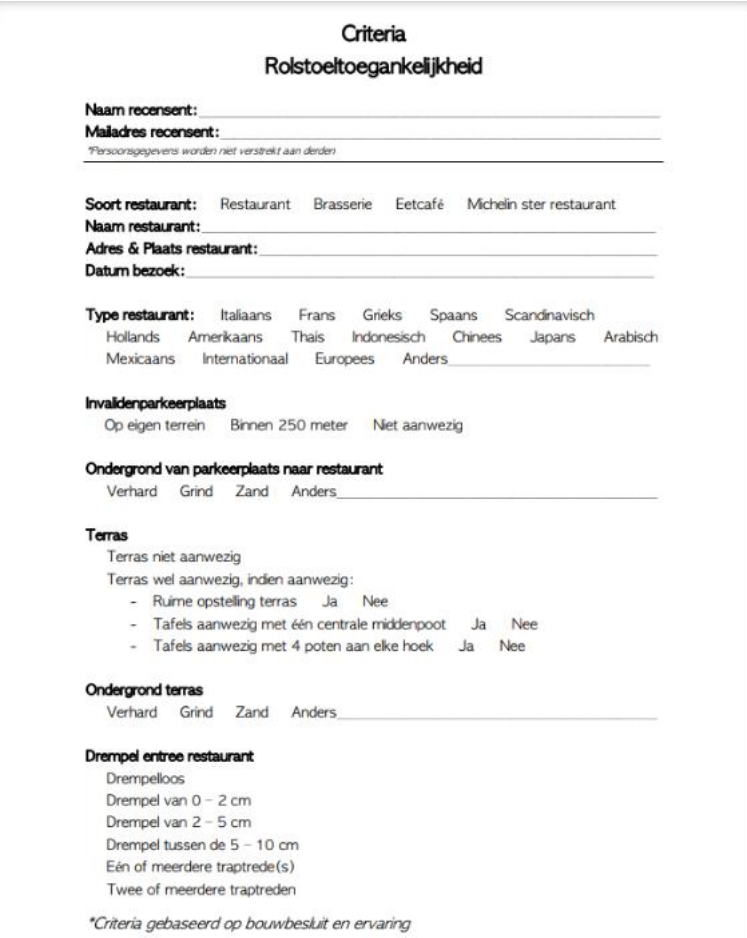
Stichting Accessibility

Stichting Accessibility assesses the physical accessibility of buildings through a technical scan or a user study. A technical scan evaluates how accessible a location is for people with disabilities, based on established standards and legislation. This helps identify what is needed to make a location or service accessible to all users. In a user study, people with lived experience assess the accessibility of a location along the customer journey and report barriers they encounter. Their feedback provides insights for improving physical accessibility.

More information: https://www.accessibility.nl/

Foundation ‘Toegankelijk Uit Eten’

The “Toegankelijk Uit Eten” Foundation tests restaurants for accessibility and publishes reviews on Toegankelijkuiteten.nl. This creates a nationwide overview of wheelchair-accessible restaurants. A specific checklist is used for evaluation, and individuals perform these tests independently (there is no central test team).



Criteria
Rolstoeltoegankelijkheid

Naam recensent: _____
Mailadres recensent: _____
**Persoonsgegevens worden niet verstrekt aan derden*

Soort restaurant: Restaurant Brasserie Eetcafé Michelin ster restaurant
Naam restaurant: _____
Adres & Plaats restaurant: _____
Datum bezoek: _____

Type restaurant: Italiaans Frans Grieks Spaans Scandinavisch
Hollands Amerikaans Thais Indonesisch Chinees Japans Arabisch
Mexicaans Internationaal Europees Anders_____

Invalidenparkeerplaats
Op eigen terrein Binnen 250 meter Niet aanwezig

Ondergrond van parkeerplaats naar restaurant
Verhard Grind Zand Anders_____

Terras
Terras niet aanwezig
Terras wel aanwezig, indien aanwezig:
- Ruime opstelling terras Ja Nee
- Tafels aanwezig met één centrale middenpoot Ja Nee
- Tafels aanwezig met 4 poten aan elke hoek Ja Nee

Ondergrond terras
Verhard Grind Zand Anders_____

Drempel entree restaurant
Drempelloos
Drempel van 0 – 2 cm
Drempel van 2 – 5 cm
Drempel tussen de 5 – 10 cm
Eén of meerdere traptrede(s)
Twee of meerdere traptreden

**Criteria gebaseerd op bouwbesluit en ervaring*

Ongehinderd.nl

Ongehinderd provides an app and website that allow people with disabilities to check the accessibility of public locations anytime and anywhere. Locations are assessed by inspection teams on behalf of municipalities and businesses, and Ongehinderd is also responsible for the Dutch Accessibility Quality Mark.

The app and website—used by over 320,000 users—feature reviews and accessibility data.

A Accessibility Assessment examines how accessible a location is for people with hearing, visual, physical, or intellectual disabilities, as well as users of guide or assistance dogs. The evaluation is carried out by a trained Accessibility Inspector, and the results are published on the Ongehinderd platform, focusing on positive aspects so that users know exactly which facilities are available.

Examples of Municipal Physical Accessibility

Below are practical examples of how Dutch municipalities assess and improve physical accessibility for people with disabilities.

1. Amstelveen Opens Accessibility Hotline
Amstelveen recently launched a reporting point where residents with disabilities can share barriers they encounter in public spaces. This initiative emerged from accessibility inspections in several neighborhoods.

2. Zoetermeer's Accessibility Council
Zoetermeer also has a hotline, but goes further: the Accessibility Council provides advice to the municipal executive and organizes activities. The city also features underground waste containers with audio-enabled control panels for blind and visually impaired residents.

3. Utrecht Offers Online Sign Language Interpreter
Residents of Utrecht can now connect via live video with a sign language interpreter through the city's website, making communication easier for deaf and hard-of-hearing people. Similar systems exist in Ede and Leusden.

4. Haarlem's Accessibility Ambassadors
In 2018, Haarlem declared the Year of Accessibility. One initiative was appointing accessibility ambassadors representing different disability groups to advise organizations and events, focusing on both physical and social accessibility.

5. Breda Audits Local Businesses
Breda won the European Access City Award, recognizing cities that make life easier for disabled and older residents. The city performed quick accessibility scans at over 800 restaurants and 200 public buildings, emphasizing collaboration on accessibility.

6. Hardenberg Prioritizes Inclusion
Named "Most Accessible Municipality in the Netherlands", Hardenberg was praised for its "just do it" approach—treating inclusion as a priority, not a side issue. Accessibility costs are

integrated into regular budgets, and each municipal department has a policy officer responsible for promoting accessibility.

7. Zwolle Employs a City Ergonomist

Zwolle, another top-ranked city in the accessibility awards, employs a city ergonomist whose task is to improve accessibility for all residents and visitors. The city also works closely with advocacy organizations.