

A Unified Web Evaluation Methodology to evaluate web accessibility - first draft released by 24 European organisations

October 18, 2005.

Accessibility checks can be carried out in different ways even if the checks are based on the same guidelines. The Unified Web Evaluation Methodology (UWEM) is based on the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0 (WCAG 1.0) from the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI), and is developed to support a unified way to assess Web accessibility throughout Europe.

24 organisations collaborating in three European research (FP6 IST) projects in the area of e-Inclusion have developed this first draft of the UWEM. The projects are grouped under the EU Web Accessibility Benchmarking Cluster - WAB Cluster -. They aim to establish UWEM as the basis for web accessibility evaluation and certification in Europe.

The UWEM development is financially supported by the European Commission DG Information Society and Media.

The methodology should ensure that large scale monitoring and local evaluation are compatible and coherent among themselves and with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines from W3C/WAI. The methodology will be synchronised with the foreseen migration from WCAG 1.0 to WCAG 2.0 in the near future. Thus, UWEM will sharpen the support for evaluating, certifying, and benchmarking web content.

The **UWEM version 0.5** was released for comments on **October 14**, as a draft version.

Learn more about the methodology and download the full document at <http://www.wabcluster.org/uwem05>.

To participate in this exciting development to measure and shape the information society you are welcome to comment on the document. A feedback and information channel will be available from the website shortly.

The three projects developing UWEM are

The **EIAO** project will establish the measurement machinery for a prototype European Internet Accessibility Observatory. Frequently updated measurements will be available online from a data warehouse to enable large scale benchmarking, and provide a basis for policy-making, research and actions to improve the accessibility to Internet content.

<http://eiaonet.net>

Support-EAM aims to propose a strategy for creating a Web Accessibility Quality Mark for Web services by the end of 2005, as part of the Action Plan eEurope 2005: An information society for all. It refers to the Council Resolution on "eAccessibility" - improving the access of people with disabilities to the Knowledge Based Society (doc. 5165/03), inviting the Commission and the member states "to consider the provision of an "eAccessibility mark" for goods and services which comply with relevant standards for eAccessibility". The project will explore the possibility to use the UWEM as a framework for a unified inspection process as part of a European certification scheme for Web accessibility.

<http://www.support-eam.org>

BenToWeb is a research project aimed to support the European public and private sector by providing new software modules and methodologies for Web Accessibility, which are not analysed by existing tools due to their inherent complexity. Among them, we can highlight issues like colour-contrast, low-vision, colour-deficiency, consistency of navigation elements and language simplicity.

<http://bentoweb.org/>