

The Common Principles of Universal Design

The City of Oslo

The common principles of universal design cover three main areas:

- Transport and communication
- Planning of construction, property and outdoor areas
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The common principles of universal design of the City of Oslo are based on the Government's vision that universal design is to be implemented in Norway by 2025. The principles will be revised each fourth year and/or if there is need for revisions.

The academic definition of universal design is that everyone should have access to, or as extensively as possible, be able to use public services by designing products, programs and services without special adjustments and specialised design solutions.

The Discrimination and Accessibility Act was adopted in June 2008 and came into effect on 1st January 2009. The purpose of the Act is to provide people with disabilities protection against discrimination.

The intention of the Discrimination and Accessibility Act is defined in the Statement of legislative purpose, section 1 and section 9, the duty to accommodate people with disabilities:

Section 1, The purpose of the Act is to ensure equality and promote equal opportunities for social participation for all persons regardless of disabilities and to prevent discrimination. The act aims to reduce barriers created by the society and prevent future barriers.

Section 9, Public municipal agencies will make active and targeted efforts to promote universal design across the agencies.

The purpose of universal design is to ensure access to public services and information and communication technology (ICT) for as many people as possible.

The public and private sectors have an obligation to oversee that universal design is an integrated part of their business operations, as long as the efforts do not result in an extensive, disproportionate burden for the agency. In assessing whether the individual service or adjustment thereof will lead to a disproportionate burden or not, it is necessary to emphasise the effects of incorporating universal design that reduces barriers for

people with disabilities. Furthermore, it must be taken into consideration if the general purpose of the service provided is of a public nature, the necessary costs of facilitation, available resources of the agency, security issues and the impact on buildings worthy of preservation.

Vision and Main Goals

Vision

The city of Oslo aims to be universally designed by 2025.

Main Goals

All municipal agencies and companies will implement universal design requirements within their field of responsibilities by the end of 2025.

The requirements for universal design of existing ICT solutions, in accordance with the regulation of Universal Design for ICT, will be implemented by 1 January, 2021.

New ICT solutions must be universally designed within 12 months after the regulation is adopted on 1 July, 2013. All Departments of the City Government must ensure that municipal agencies actively promote and implement the principles of universal design.

Strategic plan and Reporting

Universal design is required to be a part of the regular agency governance, and included in the governance dialogue between the City Government Departments and the municipal agencies. The requirements of universal design must be integrated in further guidelines for plans, strategies, and directives. The agencies are to develop sectorial and agency specific action plans for universal design. The action plans will contain specific objectives and measures to be taken. The measures will be developed and evaluated according to needs and cost estimations. The requirements of action plans, measures and reporting regarding universal design is to be incorporated into notifications of allocation of funds and responsibilities, budget proposals and annual reports.

Competence of Universal Design

The City of Oslo will continually work on maintaining high standards of competence on universal design in order to guarantee quality standards. The agencies will collaborate with relevant target user groups, non-governmental organizations and relevant academic stakeholders.

The City of Oslo also aims to systematically familiarise the agencies about the given set of rules and directions for universal design, and oversee that the agencies will follow the directions. All new construction projects must incorporate universal design and accessibility.

Digital Information

The City of Oslo will supply digital information about accessibility of public services, buildings, and outdoor areas.

Transportation and Communication

The transport network chain will provide overall accessibility throughout the entire public transportation system in Oslo.

The public transport network provides information on travel alternatives, return travel and possible stopovers on stations and platforms. In addition, access to the actual means of transportation is crucial. In the event of a breakdown of the transportation network or parts thereof, an assessment will be made as to determine the accessibility of the service. When one stage of a trip is inaccessible, the whole trip may appear inaccessible. The public transport network consists of many stages, many stakeholders and dispersed distribution of responsibility. In order to ensure that the entire transport network is accessible, all stakeholder efforts must be coordinated.

Objective 1 Cyclists and Pedestrians

Pavements for cyclists and pedestrians will be universally designed.

Target Objective 1.1

The surface of pavements for general passage purposes will be accessible for free movement and optimal lightning will be provided. There will not be any forms of physical barriers for pedestrians utilising the pavements.

Target objective 1.2

Pedestrian crossings will be universally designed.

Target objective 1.3

Outdoor furniture and advertising devices on pavements and streets will be placed and designed within the parameters of universal design.

Target objective 1.4

In the event of construction work or repairs on municipal roads and streets, viable travel options must be provided.

Target objective 1.5

There will be a sufficient number of parking places for people with disabilities with as close as possible proximity between the parking place and destination.

Objective 2 – Public Transportation

Public transportation will be universally designed.

Target objective 2.1

The platform stations/stops will be universally designed.

Target objective 2.2

The lay-out of the mode of transportation is to be universally designed, entrances are to not have stairs or steps and there will be use of colors of contrast, et cetera.

Target objective 2.3

Information regarding travel services will be provided at stops and within the modes of transportation in an accessible format for all users. Auditory information on upcoming travel options should ideally be provided through the use of self-service buttons at stops and platforms.

Target objective 2.4

It should be easy for everyone to plan public travels including when there are multiple travel operators involved.

Target objective 2.5

Ticket purchase will be accessible for all.

Target objective 2.6

Taxi stands and access to all station platforms will be universally designed.

Objective 3 Information

Appropriate information concerning street plans and city infrastructure will be accessible to everyone.

Target objective 3.1

Information about accessibility and mobility will be updated and easily understood by the users.

Target objective 3.2

The City of Oslo aims to systematically work on ensuring that the regulations and guidelines on universal design are well known and implemented. When subletting outdoor areas of the city, accessibility will be a requirement, any advertising and signposting will be controlled and required to follow overall directives, as well as provide information on where and how to dig and ensure compliance.

Planning for Buildings, Property, and Outdoor Areas

The municipal agencies will ensure the incorporation of universal design through structured processes and user participation, so as to make the municipal buildings, properties and outdoor areas accessible to all.

Outdoor areas, either for public use or for the purpose of transportation, will be planned ensuring accessibility for as many people as possible and provide opportunities for activities within universally designed areas.

Existing municipal buildings, owned by The City of Oslo, will be upgraded to conform to the agencies' plans of action. The necessary measures and upgrades in order to conform to universal design will continue until requirements are met and at the latest by the end of 2025.

Objective 4 Planning and Property Development

Universal design will be guiding and central in the planning and execution of project development. In all planning and property development projects universal design is to be an integral part and current requirements and regulations to be followed at all times. The municipal agencies and city districts will actively ensure implementation of universal design through structured processes and user participation, in order to make municipal buildings, sites and outdoor areas accessible for all.

Target objective 4.1

Universal design will be taken into account in spatial planning.

Target objective 4.2

In terms of choosing areas for the development of municipal housing, accessible outdoor areas with good potential for universal design will be emphasized.

Target objective 4.3

The current number of available housing units will be reviewed and evaluated and all plans aim to increase the number of available units.

Target objective 4.4

Universally designed recreation areas will be planned.

Objective 5 Building and Property

The buildings and properties of the City of Oslo, including all rented facilities for municipal use will be universally designed. Existing buildings and properties owned by the city of Oslo will be upgraded according to the action plans of the agencies. New buildings and properties will be universally designed. Access to buildings and areas, parking and outdoor areas are to be included as part of the building/area.

Target objective 5.1

When purchasing new municipal housing with 2 floors, the presence of elevators will be emphasized.

Target objective 5.2

A sufficient proportion of new housing built or rented by the municipality, where there is no requirement for elevators according to the relevant laws and regulations will have all main services and functions of the housing unit at entrance level so as to ensure accessibility.

Target objective 5.3

In the case of refurbishing and rehabilitation of municipal housing, the degree of accessibility in the housing units is to be increased.

Target objective 5.4

Preservation-worthy buildings and properties providing public services will be universally designed within the framework of the architectural and structural elements of the building.

Objective 6 Outdoor areas

Municipal outdoors areas, for public recreational and transportation purposes, will be planned so as to enable access for as many as possible and opportunities for activities within universally designed areas. The areas and their inherent services will be easy to access and use. Transitions between areas must be clear and easy to understand and facilitate easy access for all. In terms of vegetation, plants and trees that may provoke allergies are to be avoided.

Target objective 6.1

Appointed parts of the recreational areas in the forests surrounding Oslo will be universally designed. Access to those areas must be seen in conjunction with the local community.

Target objective 6.2

Developed outdoor areas for public use including parks, quay promenades and cemeteries will inasmuch as possible be developed in accordance with the principles of universal design. Community squares, meeting places, district centres, and parts of downtown parks will be upgraded successively to comply with the requirements of universal design. The design will maintain the identity and specific qualities of the areas in question.

Target objective 6.3

In the case of refurbishment or significant maintenance of outdoor areas for public use, accessibility for all will be ensured.

Target objective 6.4

The respective agencies must include universal design in the administration plans (maintenance plans) where it is needed.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The users of municipal services and employees of the City of Oslo must have equal opportunities to fully participate in an information society. Accessibility and user-friendliness are to be the guiding principles for the ICT solutions of the City of Oslo. Digital channels will be available for all, regardless of functional abilities. By incorporating universal design in ICT solutions, information from the City of Oslo will be accessible for all.

The City of Oslo will promote access for the users of municipal services and simplify its ICT solutions. Agencies with obligations according to the ICT regulation issued on 21st June 2013 need to make sure that new ICT solutions are universally designed by 30th June, 2014 and ensure that current ICT solutions are universally designed by 1st January, 2021.

Objective 7 Information and services for public use

New electronic services will be adapted to the principles of universal design in accordance with the updated and current laws and regulations.

Target objective 7.1

The agencies must determine and remove barriers that complicate the accessibility to current electronic services.

Target objective 7.2

The City of Oslo will apply information and communication technology that promotes accessibility for everyone.

Target objective 7.3

Digital services will be adapted to the needs of the users and facilitate simple, understandable and efficient use of municipal services.

Objective 8 The City of Oslo's Intranet services

All agencies must provide universally designed ICT solutions reinforcing regular operation of the agencies, and ensure that the universally adapted solutions are a part of the central operating ICT solutions.

Target objective 8.1

The internal sectorial-specific systems are to be available for all employees.

Target objective 8.2

A detailed statement of the requirements of universal design is to be included in the procurement process of new electronic support systems, be they administrative or sectorial.

Target objective 8.3

The Intranet must be accessible for all employees of the city of Oslo.

Target objective 8.4

The electronic and digital services of the City of Oslo will apply universal design principles in accordance with laws and regulations that are currently in effect.

Links to a few key websites on universal design in Norway:

- Ministry of Climate and Environment [http, //www.universell-utforming.miljo.no/](http://www.universell-utforming.miljo.no/)
- Norwegian Building Authority, <http://www.dibk.no/>
- Norwegian State Housing Bank, <http://www.husbanken.no/>
- The Delta Centre, <http://www.shdir.no/deltasenteret>
- Equality and Anti-Discrimination Embed, <http://www.dok.no>
- Standards Norway,
<http://www.standard.no/no/Fagomrader/Universell--UTforming/>
- Reisekjeden.no, <http://www.reisekjeden.no/>
- The Agency for Public Management and eGovernment,
<http://www.difi.no/digital-forvaltning/universell-utforming>
- The Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted,
<http://www.blindeforbundet.no/>
- The Norwegian Association of Disabled, <http://www.nhf.no/>

The City of Oslo's common principles of universal design was developed in collaboration with the agencies: Municipal Undertaking for Social Housing, Cultural Heritage Management Office, Vestre Aker district, Agency for Urban Environment, Department of Finance, The Central Council for the Elderly in Oslo, Cemeteries and Burials Agency, Agency for Health, Agency for Cultural Affairs, Municipal Undertaking for Social Service Buildings, Port of Oslo, Agency for Planning and Building Services, Ruter AS (the public transport company in Oslo and Akershus counties), Advisory Council for Disabled Persons, Municipal Undertaking for Educational Buildings and Property, Agency for Improvement and Development and Agency for Social and Welfare Services.