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Ease of access – ease of success



EMECA – History and aims

In January 1992, thirteen centres created EMECA, the European Major Exhibition Centres Association. Each of today's 19 members, being a leading international exhibition venue, is dedicated to the task of providing a professional service for exhibition organisers, exhibitors, visitors and buyers at national, European and international levels.

EMECA aims to bring together European major exhibition centres with a strong investment profile and an international dimension. EMECA strives to improve the quality and availability of technical and commercial information on fairs and exhibitions in Europe and also promotes the exchange of ideas and experience in managing exhibition centres and researches the scope for harmonising technical regulations on a consistent European basis.

Authoritative views on the exhibition industry will therefore be presented to the European Commission and intergovernmental organisations interested in international trade and commerce development.

Guidelines for accessible exhibition centres

Outside access

- Easy accessibility from public transport stations to the fair venues
- Overall accessibility to public transport from stations and airports to the exhibition centre (or, alternatively, availability of public shuttle busses for disabled and vulnerable users on request)

Inside access

- Signals for reserved accesses and shortcuts leading to disabled-friendly services
- Complimentary wheelchairs available at the fairs' reception (both for manual and electrical operation)
- Accessible and guarded wardrobes and luggage deposits, both at the entrance of the fair and at individual halls
- Use of European key for access to the handicapped restrooms and its distribution at the entrance when buying the ticket (upon request)
- Accessibility and suitable provision (frequency and location) of furniture (in particular seating, tables, drinking fountains, snack vending machines, information panels) at the distribution points, in the halls and in individual booths
- Accessibility of all accessory services in the fairgrounds (bars, restaurants, conference rooms, business rooms, secretarial offices, ATMs, etc., and – obviously – restrooms)
- Avoidance of architectural micro-barriers installed during set-up (floor cables, packaging material, installation equipment)

Online information

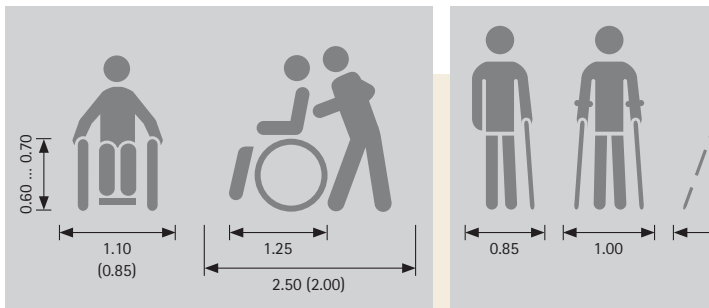
- Dedicated website designed for disabled and vulnerable users
- Barrier-free access to the website (graphics, colours, and sound)
- Availability of printed material (leaflets, maps, etc.) including specific information for vulnerable users

Aiming at the weakest - to help all

With regard to the design of fairgrounds, the visitors' point of view is crucial to EMECA. Trade shows and congresses, events and conventions all need more than mere exhibition space to become places of joint use where people come together and exchange experience and information.

All furnishing, all actions taken must therefore focus on the most handicapped and weakest visitor. Only in following this dictum we will maximise the chance for everyone to enjoy a hassle-free, satisfactory and successful exhibition.

By enabling disabled people to visit exhibition centres and to enjoy their stay in the best possible way, exhibition companies will enhance environment and infrastructure for all partners, exhibitors and visitors alike: Ease of access means ease of success!



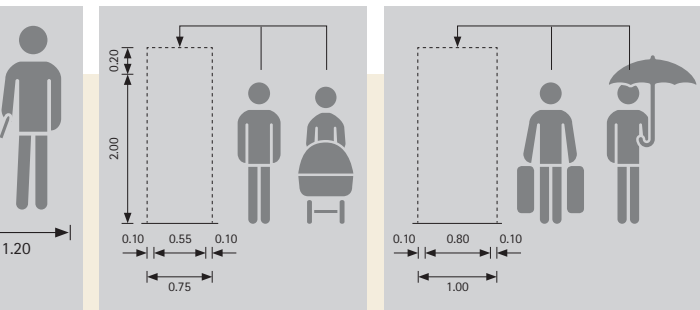
Vulnerable road users encumbrance measurements

Accessibility – the study

In view of the "European Year of Equal Opportunities for All" in 2007, EMECA has commissioned an infrastructure study on accessibility at big European exhibition venues.

The study has been prepared by the Technical University of Milan and the University of Brescia, renowned in engineering, urban planning, architecture, and design. It sheds light on the following research goals:

- Guaranteeing access to vulnerable users, thereby improving accessibility for all users
- Pursuing and enhancing the autonomy of individual users in visiting fairs
- Improving visitors' reception, comfort and safety
- Enhancing the continuity in the connection between the fair's collective space and the public spaces in the urban fabric
- Allowing for good access to fairs from urban public and international transport systems (stations and airports)





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