



“Digitising Justice” – Technology and Access to Justice

Improving access to justice for persons with disabilities through the use of technology

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Presentation overview



- Introduction: Enable Ireland
- What is Digital Assistive Technology?
- Digital AT Landscape: Nationally and internationally
- Role of Digital Assistive Technology in accessing justice
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities
- National Disability Authority Research/Recommendations
- G3ICT Research/Recommendations
- Digital AT in practice
- Summary
- Information Resources

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Improving access to justice for persons with disabilities through the use of technology

- My role: Manager, National Assistive Technology Service, Enable Ireland
- Mission: enabling those who use our services to achieve maximum **independence, choice** and **inclusion** in their communities
- Support over 13,000 children and adults with multiple disabilities nationally

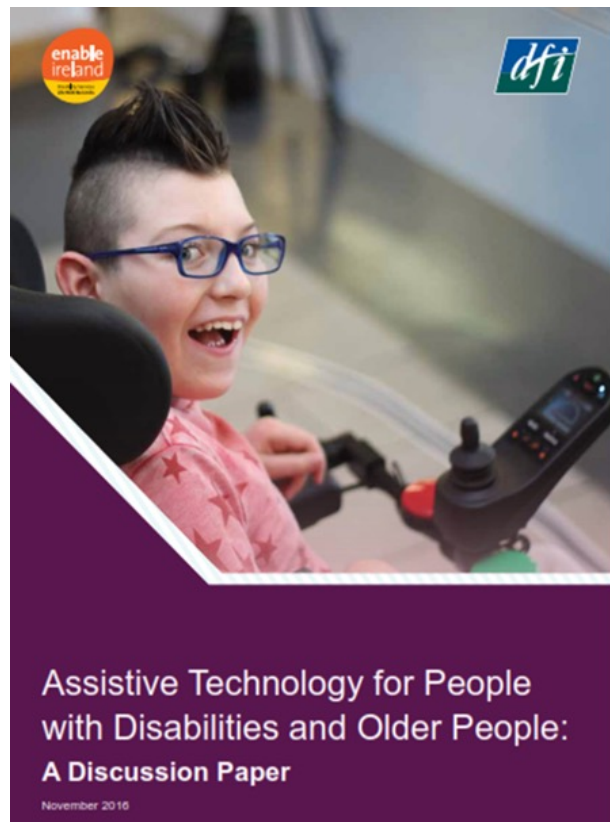


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Assistive Technology for People with Disabilities and Older People: A Discussion Paper



[Download Paper here](#)

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What is Digital Assistive Technology?

The *systems* and *services* that maintain or improve an individual's functioning and independence, thereby promoting their well-being.

Examples of Digital AT (or DAT):

Voice output communication aids, screen reading software, speech recognition software, eye gaze technologies, alternative keyboards and mice, apps for memory, cognition, personal organisation, etc.

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What does AT mean to people in their daily lives?



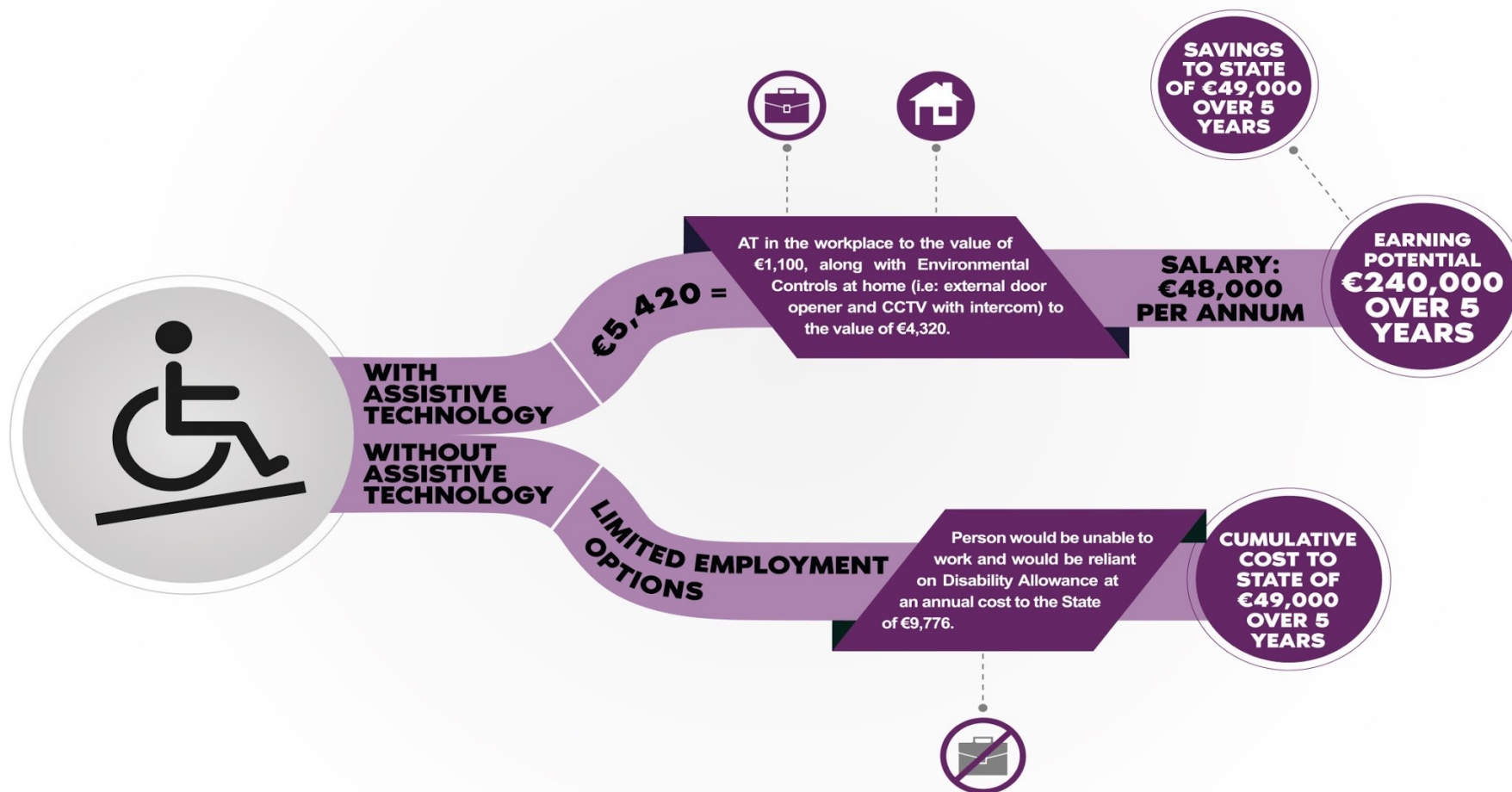
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EMPLOYMENT



Assistive Technology Landscape

Globally:

- More than 2.5 billion people need one or more products



Ireland:

- Less than 10% of those who need AT have access to it
- Negatively impacts access to education, employment and independent living

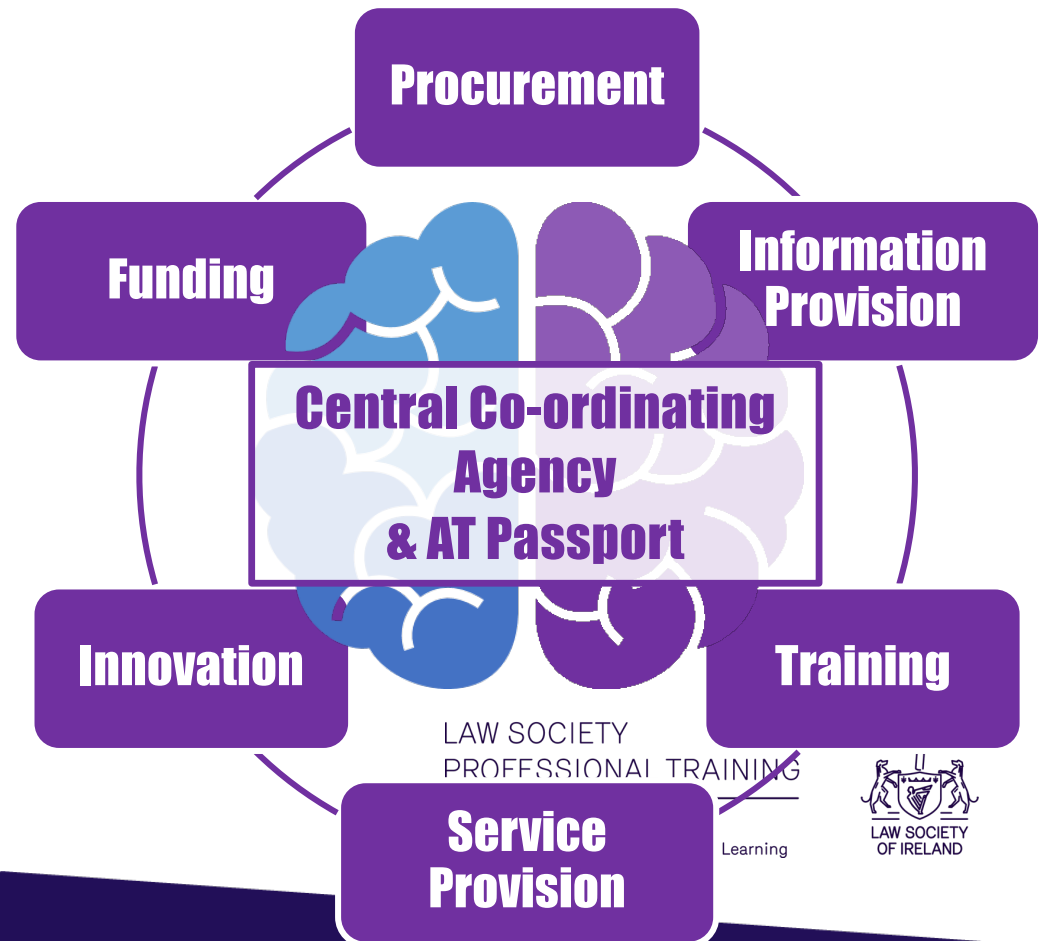
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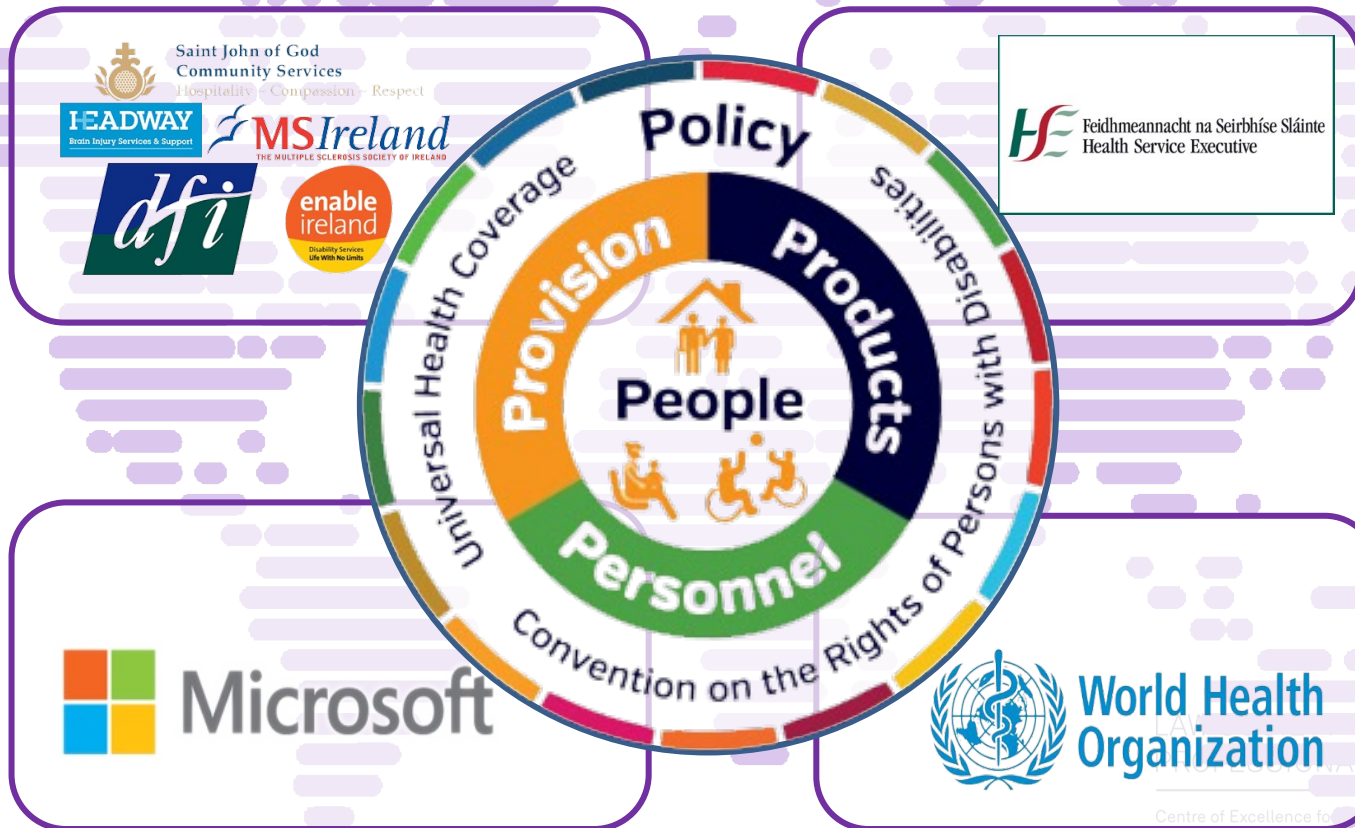


AT Ecosystem

- 650,000 Irish people: 13.5% have a disability
- 1 billion people globally: 15%
- 78% Unemployment rate: Ireland
- Effective **AT Ecosystem** essential to embed AT use across lifespan
- **Assistive Technology Passport** foundation stone of AT Ecosystem



AT Passport : Global Impact



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Who can benefit from Digital AT?

- People with disabilities
- Older people
- People with noncommunicable diseases such as diabetes and stroke
- People with mental health conditions including dementia and autism
- People with gradual functional decline
- Potentially: everyone

World Health Organisation

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Access to justice:

Digital Assistive Technology can benefit individuals, systems and processes

Personal

- Plaintiffs/Defendants
- Legal professionals

Courts system accommodations

- Audio/visual systems
- Remote access
- Digitisation of processes
- Additional time

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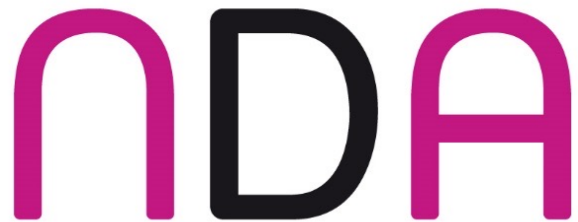
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Overview of UNCRPD Article 13 in Ireland

Access to Justice

October 2022



Údarás Náisiúnta Míchumais
National Disability Authority

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Overview of UNCRPD Article 13 in Ireland

Principles

- Persons with disabilities have the right to appropriate procedural accommodations.
- Persons with disabilities have the right to access legal notices and information in a timely and accessible manner on an equal basis with others.

Issues

- The absence of accessible measures of communication such as sign language, Braille or easy read documents
- Physical and information barriers for persons with disabilities in prisons do not receive much attention



Údarás Náisiúnta Míchumais
National Disability Authority

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How to make accessible documents



National Disability Authority's Centre of Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD)

- Use heading styles
- Font type and size
- Colour contrast
- Table of contents
- Alt tag all images
- Accessibility checker in Word
- Save to PDF (not print to PDF)

Applies to digital and web-based communications and services



[View accessibility toolkit here](#)

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Access to Justice - Resources

- DisAbility Legal Network
- Customer Communication Toolkit for the Public Service: Plain English
- EU Web Accessibility Directive
 - Issues identified:
 - The Garda Síochana – 45%
 - Courts Service – 27%
 - Department of Justice – 7%
 - Workplace Relations Commission – 30%



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Digitisation processes which benefit everyone:

- E-filing and document systems
- Digital case management systems
- Remote collaboration tools
- Digital payment systems
- Video conferencing & virtual presence

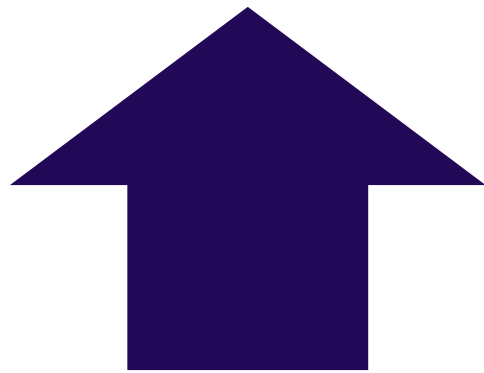
Digital accessibility directly impacts on access to justice

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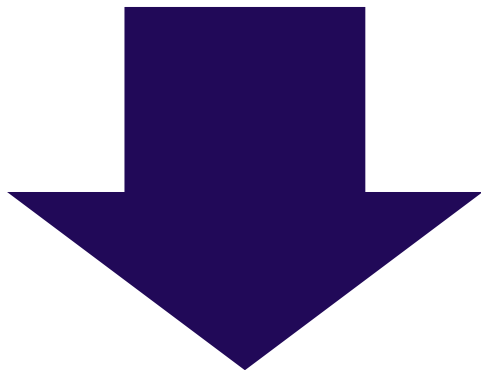
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International Association of Courts Administrators (IACA) 2019



16% of court professionals rated the accessibility of court technology deployments as high or very high.



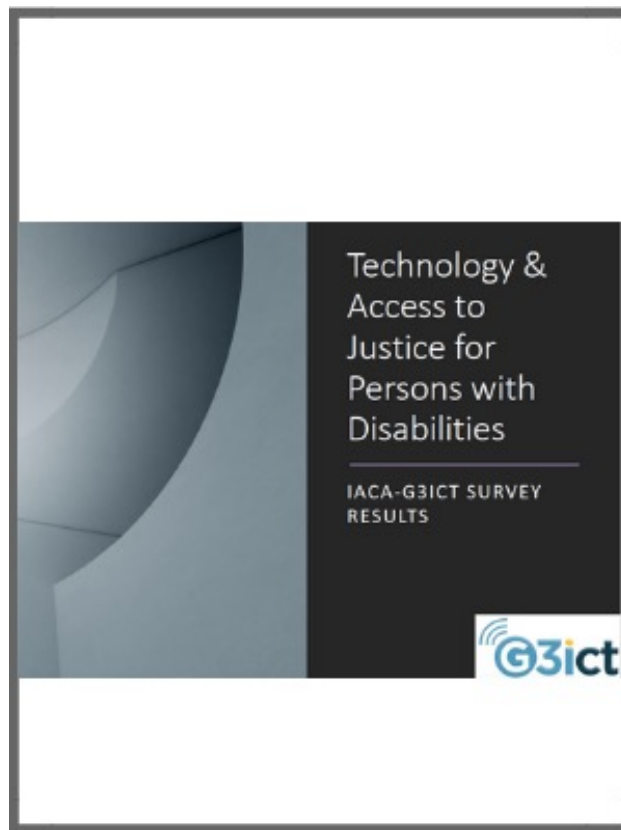
38.36% rated them as low or very low.

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G3ICT-IACA Survey 2020: 29 countries responded. No Irish response.



[View survey results here](#)

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United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

Article 9

Accessibility of ICT recognized as a human right and an *enabler* of other human rights

Article 13

Ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others



[Read about the UNCRPD here](#)

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G3ICT Inclusive Courts Checklist

- Create a **Digital Inclusion Strategy**
- **Leadership:**
 - Commitment to digital inclusion
 - Engagement with disabled and older people's organisations
- **Budget:** track accessibility and inclusion, ROI
- **Procurement:** vendor conformance with ICT accessibility standards
- **Technology development and deployment:** inclusive, used by all
- **Global standards:** maintain up to date knowledge of emerging solutions



[View Inclusive Courts Checklist](#)

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Digital accessibility in practice: some examples

- Accessible documents:
 - Digital accessibility: eg: how to report a crime, procedural overviews,
 - Braille, Audio and Easy read alternative formats
 - Video guides to processes
- Principle of orality: Accommodation of AT users:
 - Highlight option to submit advance notification of reasonable accommodation
 - Voice output communication devices
 - Time allowance for constructing responses
 - Loop systems
 - Sign Language Interpretation – in person/remote

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Digital AT interfacing with justice system

- **Computers/Smart Phones/Tablets**
- **Literacy/Productivity support**
- **Communication devices/systems**



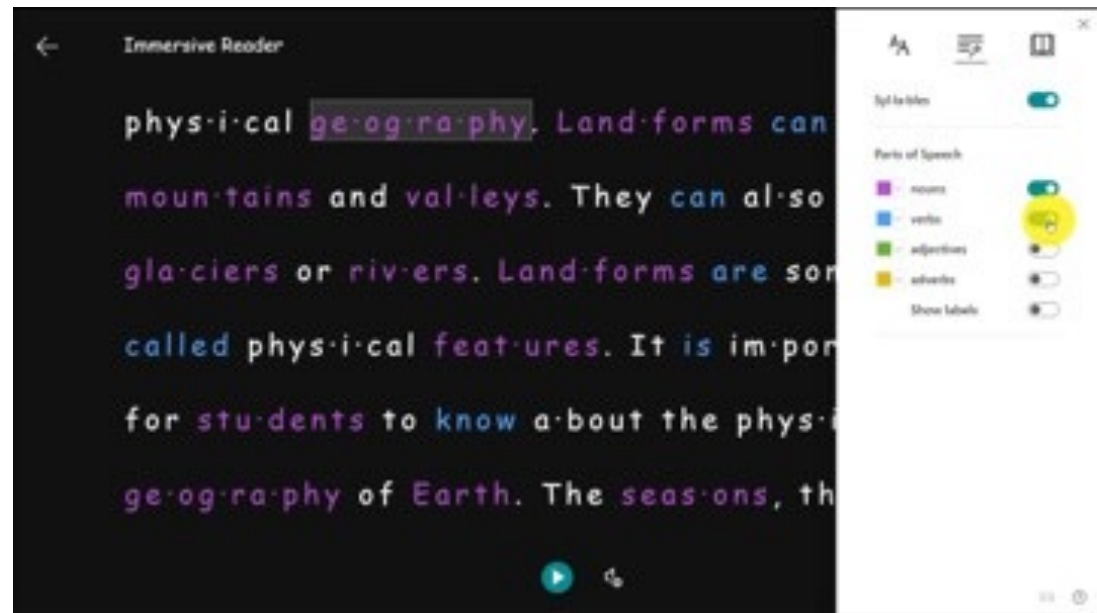
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Windows: free, built-in accessibility tools

- Narrator
- Magnifier
- Colour and contrast
- Keyboard
- Mouse
- Closed captions
- Live transcriptions
- Immersive Reader

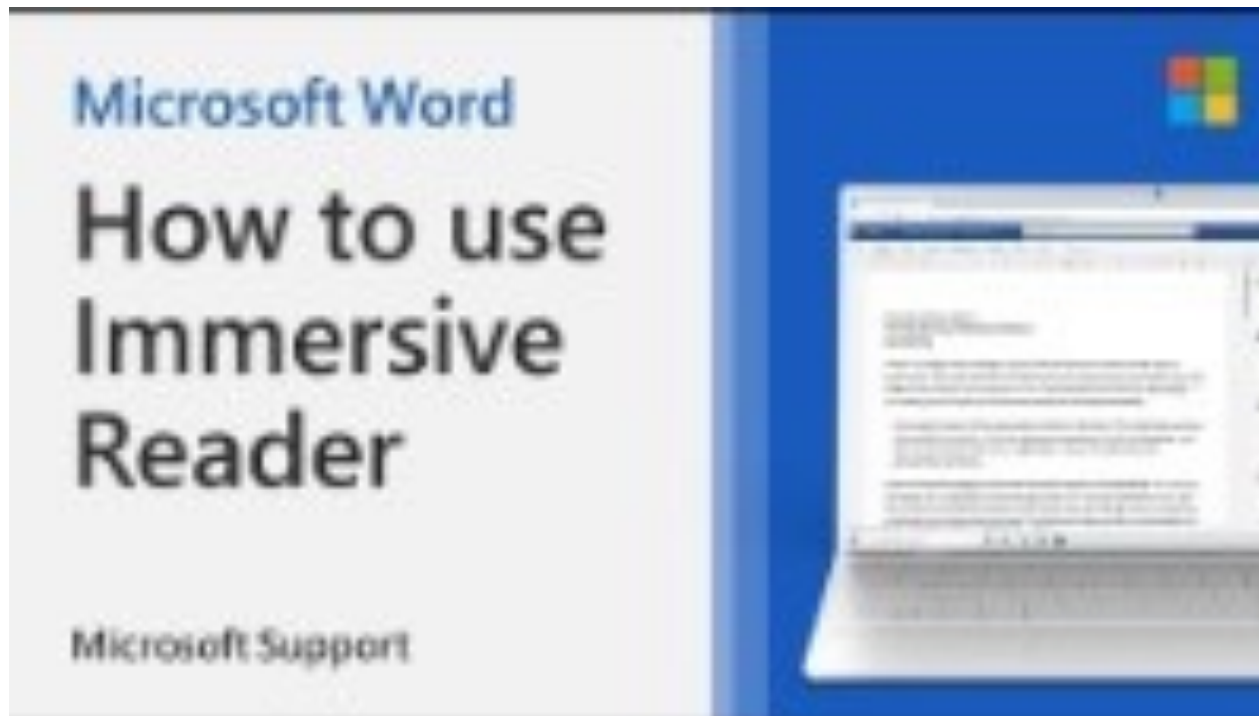


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Immersive Reader in Word



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Literacy/Productivity Support

Pen Scanner



Speech Recognition Software



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Communication devices

- Alternative and augmentative communication (AAC)
- Digital speech output
- Text or symbol based



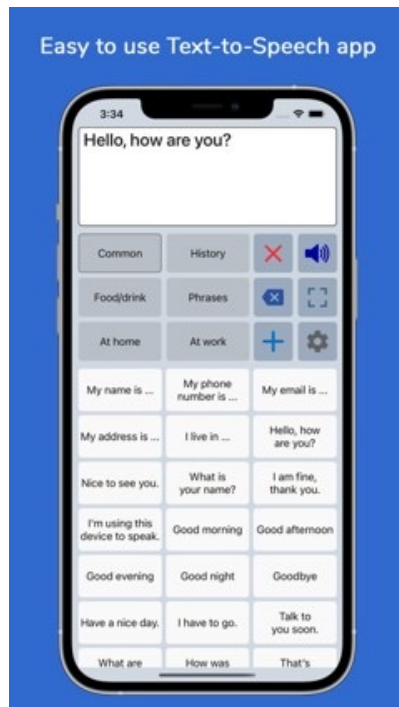
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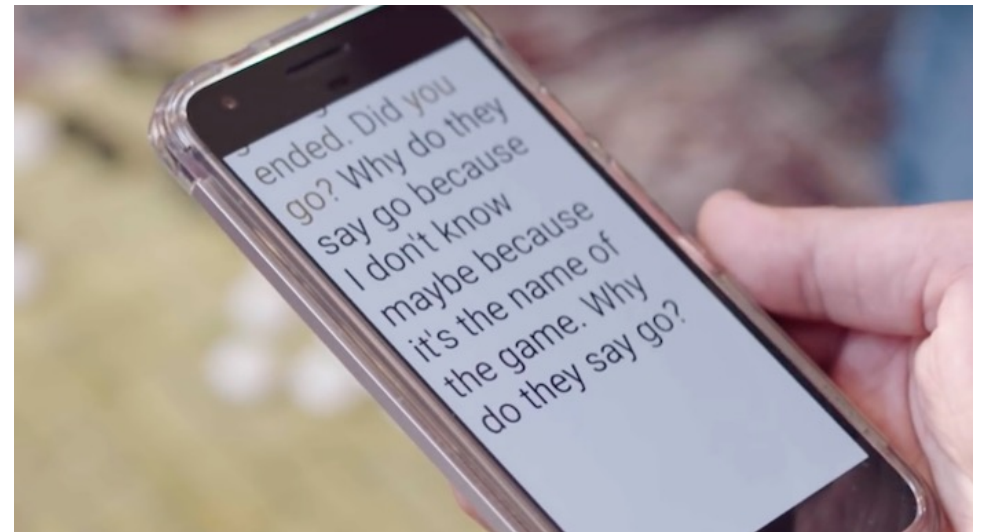


AAC Apps

Text to Speech (TTS)



Speech to Text



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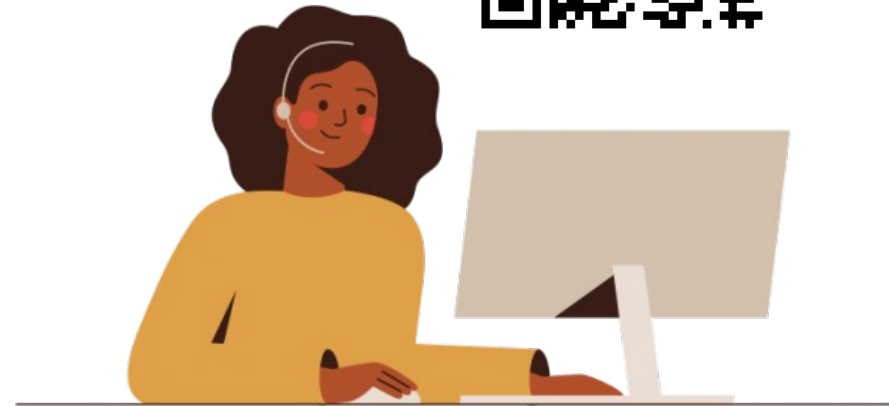


Funding supports

Workplace Equipment Adaptation Grant



- Private sector only
- Maximum grant: €6350



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Summary

Many people with disabilities and older people use digital assistive technologies

Justice system should accommodate them throughout the legal process

Strategic approach to digital accessibility will transform access to justice for all

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Further information resources

Social



[Enableireland.ie/at](https://enableireland.ie/at)

[Freedomtech.ie](https://freedomtech.ie)



[Atandme.com](https://atandme.com)



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E learning



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