

Accessibility as a Human Right

an analysis of tourism
possibilities in Weimar

the analysis was conducted in June 2024



INTRODUCTION

The concept of an **accessible city** is multifaceted and goes beyond simply removing physical barriers. It encompasses a holistic approach that considers the **diverse needs** of individuals with disabilities, including those who use wheelchairs.

In the context of Weimar's tourist attractions, accessibility means ensuring that wheelchair users can not only physically access the sites but also fully experience and enjoy them . It includes providing information in accessible formats, offering guided tours that cater to wheelchair users, and ensuring that facilities such as restrooms and cafes are wheelchair-friendly. In Germany, accessibility is defined by DIN 18040, a standard outlining the requirements for barrier-free construction to ensure that buildings and public spaces are usable by people with disabilities .

The motivation behind this project is to investigate how accessible Weimar is for tourists who use wheelchairs. The class, "What do cities have to do with human rights?" explores the connection between urban environments and the fundamental rights of individuals. Moreover **our project** aims to assess whether Weimar is accessible for all, including those with disabilities and we are focuses on the experiences of wheelchair users to identify barriers to accessibility and potential solutions in order to contribute to a more accessible and equitable urban environment in Weimar.

Criteria

Physical Accessibility for Wheelchair Users in Weimar's Tourist

To assess the physical accessibility of tourist attractions in Weimar's old town for wheelchair users, the following criteria were used:

RAMPS AND SLOPES: Availability and adherence to accessibility standards for ramps as alternatives to stairs. Assessment of slope gradients in pathways and entrances.

ELEVATORS AND LIFTS: Presence and functionality of elevators in multi-story buildings. Availability of lifts for smaller height differences.

ACCESSIBLE RESTROOMS: Adequate space, grab bars, lowered sinks, and accessible toilets in restrooms.

CLEAR PATHWAYS: Sufficient width, absence of obstacles, smooth surfaces, and adequate turning space in pathways.

DOORWAY WIDTHS: Adequate width for comfortable wheelchair passage. Presence of automatic doors or lever handles.

Method






Observations and photography were used to evaluate the physical accessibility of Weimar's old town main tourist attractions for wheelchair users. It would involve on-site visits to assess the presence and condition of the above criteria. Our goal of the methods was to determine the ease with which wheelchair users can access these attractions and identify areas for improvement. This method will give us a full picture of wheelchair access in Weimar's old town. It will help the city be more inclusive for all visitors.

Rating Scale

GREEN: fully accessible for wheelchair users
meets all criteria with no significant barriers

YELLOW: partially accessible
meets some criteria, but certain barriers may challenge wheelchair users

RED: not accessible
significant barriers prevent wheelchair access

-  accessible
-  accessible with help
-  not accessible
-  tourist places
-  reference places in map





HAUPTBAHNHOF

The station is currently undergoing renovation and is therefore not accessible from the main entrance. However, there is a sign for the alternative accessible entrance, although this is not visible from a distance.



DB

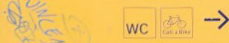
Weimar

Bahnhofshalle



Osttunnel

entrance east-tunnel / east-entrance



Bus





NEUES MUSEUM WEIMAR

The museum has several signs that lead visitors from the main entrance to an accessible entrance.





BAUHAUS-MUSEUM WEIMAR

The edifice and surrounding plaza are entirely accessible, allowing for unobstructed and unrestricted movement.

useum bauhaus museum bauhaus museum bauhaus museum





CONGRESS CENTRUM NEUE WEIMARHALLE

The entrance to the convention center, which is situated in proximity to the Bauhaus Museum plaza, is not fully accessible. While ramps for individuals with disabilities are provided, the lack of contrasting visual elements on the central steps may prove confusing for visually impaired individuals or cause discomfort for those who are distracted.

congress centrum veimahaalle





STADTSCHLOSS WEIMAR

The castle, which is currently undergoing renovation, features an entrance path with uneven paving that presents a challenge for visitors to traverse.





BASTILLE

The Bastille is entirely inaccessible due to the staircase at the entrance, which could present a challenge even for visitors of a certain age.





STUDIENZENTRUM DER HERZOGIN ANNA AMALIA BIBLIOTHEK

The newly constructed library building is equipped with an automated opening system and an entranceway with simple, accessible paving.





DUCHESS ANNA AMALIA LIBRARY

The historic entrance to the library is inaccessible due to the presence of large steps. Nevertheless, the administration has devised an efficacious system that permits patrons to request assistance from staff in order to gain access to a secondary entrance.





GOETHES WOHNHAUS

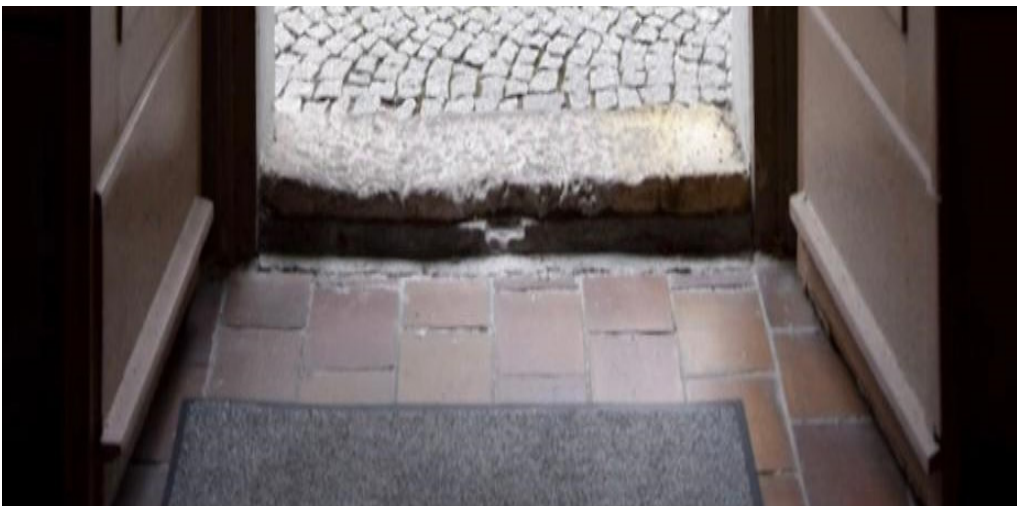
The edifice is inaccessible due to the presence of uneven and discontinuous flooring.





SCHILLER MUSEUM

Although the museum's exterior appears to be accessible, the entrance presents a significant obstacle in the form of a high step. This step makes it challenging for individuals with mobility disabilities to enter the museum. Museum staff have observed that individuals with mobility disabilities are rarely present within the museum.





DEUTSCHES NATIONALTHEATER

The main entrance appears to have two side ramps leading to the door, but when viewed from the side, additional steps are noticeable, without any indication of an accessible entrance.





THALIA - MÜLLER



THINK! - ARKO

During our walk, we considered the role of stores and restaurants. We observed that chains have succeeded in making the entrance to the buildings accessible, while small stores have not adopted any solution that takes into account the historicity of the buildings.



In recent times, the city of Weimar has initiated a programme of resurfacing work on a section of the street that connects the park to the marketplatz. This work will enhance accessibility for all citizens.



CONCLUSIONS

The historic centre of Weimar is not easily accessible for wheelchair users. Modern areas such as shops and the New Museum are still accessible, with ramps and elevators. Upgraded squares can also be beneficial. However, older areas such as markets and car streets are difficult to navigate, often lacking ramp sand having narrow paths. There is also limited accessible public transport.

To improve accessibility, it is agreed that Weimar needs to make older buildings accessible, fix pathways, and ensure all toilets are usable. Furthermore, the implementation of more accessible public transport would be beneficial. Weimar has the potential to become an inclusive city, yet it must prioritize the needs of all tourists, who are of significant importance to the city's economy.

In order to achieve this, We suggest Weimar should launch a campaign for accessibility, providing financial assistance to facilitate the city's transformation into a more welcoming environment. This should include the assurance that all buildings, including small businesses, are accessible, and that museums have step-free routes. These changes would benefit not only people with disabilities but also the wider population.

References

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