



ICD
INSTITUTE FOR
COMMUNICATION & DIGNITY

Communication is Dignity.

23 September – Accessibility Day

When we hear the German term *Barrierefreiheit* — literally, “freedom from barriers” — many of us first think of ramps, elevators, lowered curbs, or screen readers. But barriers begin much earlier.

They arise wherever people struggle to find their way, cannot understand information, procedures become unnecessarily complicated, or communication creates additional cognitive strain.

Perhaps this is why the English word *accessibility* describes the actual goal more clearly: being able to access and engage — or, taken one step further: participation. Because disability does not arise solely from an individual characteristic. It also arises when an environment, a procedure, or a system prevents a person from participating in society on equal terms. This changes the perspective. Accessibility is not a special task for people with disabilities. It concerns all of us.

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People are individuals. They have different abilities, experiences, and opportunities. What is naturally accessible to one person may become a barrier to another.

This applies to buildings just as much as it does to language, public administration, healthcare, education, and increasingly to digital systems.

Digitalization can remove barriers. But it can also create new ones — especially when processes work technically but are not designed with people in mind.

And perhaps we should take this one step further:

If everyone naturally belongs to society, we do not need to debate whether they should be included.

Instead, the question becomes:

Which barriers prevent their equal participation — and how do we remove them?

Accessibility therefore does not begin with the individual. It begins with how we design our environment, our communication, and our systems.

**Fewer barriers.
More possibilities.
For everyone.**

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***Communication is Dignity.
Dignity begins where nobody owns the conversation***



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non-profit and independent

Communication is Dignity.
Dignity begins with words.

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