

Unofficial translation.  
Legally binding only in Finnish and Swedish

## **Government Decree**

### **on Accessibility of Buildings**

By decision of the Government, the following is enacted under section 117e, subsection 2 of the Land Use and Building Act (132/1999), as amended by Act 958/2012:

#### Section 1

##### *Scope of application*

This Decree applies to the construction of a new administrative, service, office, business, warehouse, production and residential building subject to permit under section 125 of the Land Use and Building Act (132/1999). However, only sections 2–4 apply to the construction of a detached and semi-detached house and only sections 2–5, 8, 10 and 11 apply to the construction of a warehouse and production building.

This Decree also applies to the repair and alteration work of an administrative, service, office, business, warehouse and production building and common spaces of a multi-storey residential building, extension or increasing the gross floor area of such a building, and alteration of the intended use of a building for administrative, service, office, business or residential use subject to permit under section 125 of the Land Use and Building Act, to the extent that improving accessibility is appropriate considering the attributes of the building as well as the type and scope of the measure. However, only sections 2–5, 8, 10 and 11 apply to the measures referred to above carried out in a warehouse and production building.

The provisions of this Decree concerning buildings intended for a specific use also apply to a space intended for a similar use in another building.

#### Section 2

##### *Passageway leading to a building*

There shall be an easily noticeable passageway with a width of at least 1,200 millimetres and a smooth, hard and non-slippery surface that leads to the building from the boundary of the plot or building site and from the space and area that serve the use of the building. The gradient of the passageway located in an outdoor space may not exceed five per cent. If there are steps on the passageway, there shall also be a ramp or a permanently installed device intended for lifting persons that is suitable for a user of a wheelchair and walking frame with wheels. The provisions of this subsection do not apply to a detached house, semi-detached house or townhouse if providing an accessible passageway would be impossible considering the site and elevation differences.

The ramp referred to in subsection 1 above shall be easily noticeable and straight with a smooth, hard and non-slippery surface, width of at least 900 millimetres and, if the ramp is not connected to a fixed structure, a protective edge of at least 50 millimetres in height. There shall be a horizontal landing with a length of at least 1,500 millimetres at the lower and upper end of the ramp. The gradient of the ramp may not exceed five per cent. However, if the elevation

difference is no more than 1,000 millimetres, the ramp may not have a gradient of more than eight per cent. In that case, the elevation difference of a continuous ramp may not be more than 500 millimetres, after which there shall be a horizontal intermediate landing with a length of at least 2,000 millimetres. However, in an outdoor area the ramp may have a gradient of more than five per cent only if it can be kept in a condition comparable with that of an indoor ramp. Provisions on railings, handrails and other arrangements intended to prevent falling down and misstepping are laid down by decree issued under section 117d, subsection 2 of the Land Use and Building Act.

If parking spaces are provided for a building, an adequate number of them, but at least one, shall be intended for the use of a person with mobility and functional impairment. Such a parking space shall have a width of at least 3,600 millimetres and a length of at least 5,000 millimetres and be marked with the International Symbol of Access. The provisions of this subsection do not apply to a detached house, semi-detached house or townhouse.

### Section 3

#### *Entrance to a building*

The distance of the opening side of the outside door of a building from the inside corner of the wall or other fixed obstacle outside the door shall be at least 400 millimetres.

The landing in front of the outside door shall be at least 1,500 millimetres wide and at least 1,500 millimetres long.

### Section 4

#### *Doors*

The clear width of the door and opening in a passageway inside a building, the door leading from the staircase to a dwelling and the door of the space referred to in section 9, subsection 2 and section 10 shall be at least 850 millimetres. Provisions on the dimensions of the outside door of a building and the doors of other exit routes are laid down by decree issued under section 117b, subsection 3 of the Land Use and Building Act.

The clear width of the door and opening leading to room spaces of a non-residential building as well as to residential rooms of a residential building, necessary spaces serving residence and spaces serving the use of the building shall be at least 800 millimetres.

In connection with the door there may not be any level difference or threshold, unless this is necessary on account of noise or humidity or other similar circumstances. In that case the threshold or level difference may not be higher than 20 millimetres and the threshold shall be designed so that it can be easily crossed with a wheelchair or walking frame with wheels. In connection with the door of an outside space of an individual dwelling the level difference outside the door may be more than 20 millimetres if the level difference can, with reasonable effort, be eliminated with equipment in the outdoor space. In a detached and semi-detached house the provisions in subsections 2 and 3 above only apply to the entrance floor.

The outside door of a building and the door of a space serving the use of the building shall function so that it is easy to open by a person with mobility and functional impairment.

## Section 5

### *Passageway inside a building*

Passageway inside a non-residential building and common spaces of a residential building shall be easily noticeable and have a smooth and non-slippery surface.

If the passageway referred to in subsection 1 has a width of less than 1,500 millimetres, the passageway shall have a turning space with a diameter of at least 1,500 millimetres at least every 15 metres.

## Section 6

### *Other spaces in a building*

Spaces of a non-residential building and common spaces of a residential building as well as the fixtures, fittings and fixed equipment in them shall be suitable for persons with mobility and functional impairment.

A residential building that under section 7 shall in addition to stairs be equipped with a lift shall have a turning space with a diameter of at least 1,300 millimetres in the hallway and kitchen of the dwelling.

A dwelling that is intended for service housing or supported housing of a person with mobility and functional impairment shall, irrespective of the number of storeys in the building, have a turning space with a diameter of at least 1,500 millimetres in the hallway and kitchen. The dimensions of the dwelling shall also in other respects be such that they enable the use of assistive devices and the provision of assistance.

## Section 7

### *Connection between different levels in a residential building*

In addition to stairs, a residential building shall also be equipped with a lift if entry to a dwelling in the building is on the third floor or higher, the entrance floor level included. If the entrance to the building is between floor levels, the lower of them is considered the entrance floor level.

The lift shall provide access to the entrance level and each level with entry to a dwelling or a space serving the use of the building.

The cabin of the lift referred to in subsection 1 above shall be at least 1,100 millimetres wide on its door side, and at least 1,400 millimetres deep. The dimensioning of the cabin of a retrofit lift installed in an existing residential building may differ from the provisions in this subsection if this is essential for preserving the essential attributes of the building.

## Section 8

### *Connection between different levels in a non-residential building*

If the level difference in a non-residential building is lower than the storey height of the building, connection between the levels shall in addition to stairs be provided either with a ramp specified in section 2, subsection 2 or a lift specified in section 7 subsection 3, or with other fixed device installed and intended for lifting persons which is suitable for a user of a wheelchair

and walking frame with wheels. If the level difference is equal to the storey height or higher, the connection between the levels shall be provided by means of a lift specified in section 7, subsection 3.

## Section 9

### *Toilet and washing facility in a residential building*

A residential building that under section 7 shall in addition to stairs have a lift shall have at least one toilet and washing facility in each dwelling which has a free space with a diameter of at least 1,300 millimetres. The fixtures and fittings shall be placed with respect to the free space so that a person with mobility impairment can use them. The toilet and washing facility shall be such that it can be equipped to be suitable for use by a person with mobility impairment.

A dwelling that is intended for sheltered housing or supported housing of a person with mobility or functional impairment shall have at least one toilet and washing facility which has a free space with a diameter of at least 1,500 millimetres. The fixtures and fittings shall be placed with respect to the free space so that a person with mobility impairment can use them. In addition, on one side of the toilet seat there shall be a free space of at least 800 millimetres. The toilet and washing facility shall be such that it can be equipped to be suitable for use by a person with mobility impairment.

The provisions in subsection 1 above do not apply to a building that only has dwellings intended for persons participating in education and training entitling them to student financial aid under the Act on Student Financial Aid (65/1994) or that only have dwellings intended for persons aged between 18 and 29. In such a building at least five per cent of the dwellings, but at least one, shall have a toilet and washing facility specified in subsection 2. In addition, common spaces of such a building shall have a toilet facility specified in section 10 which is accessible from the passageway inside the building.

In a residential building the sauna, washing and changing facility common to all residents shall be suitable for persons with mobility and functional impairment. The toilet and washing facility adjacent to the facility shall meet the requirements in subsection 2.

## Section 10

### *Toilet facility in a non-residential building*

A non-residential building shall, considering the intended use and functional units of the building and distances in the building, have an adequate number of appropriately located toilet facilities which are suitable for users of wheelchairs and walking frames with wheels. The toilet facilities referred to above shall be located so that they are gender-neutral with respect to the users and their assistants and they shall be marked with International Symbol of Access.

A toilet facility referred to in subsection 1 above shall have a free space with a diameter of at least 1,500 millimetres. The fixtures and fittings shall be placed with respect to the free space so that a person with mobility impairment can use them. In addition, on both sides of the toilet seat there shall be a free space of at least 800 millimetres. Alternatively, two toilet facilities can be placed close to each other, one of them with a free space of at least 800 millimetres on the left side of the toilet seat and the other on the right side of the toilet seat. The toilet seat shall be placed between 200 and 300 millimetres from the rear wall.

The toilet facility shall be equipped to be suitable for use by a person with mobility impairment. If the building has a control system, the toilet facility shall have a security alarm connection to the control.

## Section 11

### *Other sanitary facility in a non-residential building*

A certain proportion of the changing rooms, washing facilities, saunas and swimming pools in a non-residential building shall be suitable for a person with mobility and functional impairment. The facilities suitable for persons with mobility and functional impairment shall be marked with the International Symbol of Access. If the building has a control system, the facilities suitable for persons with mobility and functional impairment shall have a security alarm connection to the control.

In addition to the provisions in subsection 1, at least one changing room and washing facility located in a building housing an indoor swimming pool, a spa, a service centre or an education institution or in a similar building shall be suitable for use by persons with mobility and functional impairment and their assistants, irrespective of their gender.

The access of a person with mobility impairment to a swimming pool in a building referred to in subsection 2 shall be arranged by means of a device intended for lifting persons which can be used without assistance.

## Section 12

### *Assembly facilities*

Any sound system in an auditorium, a restaurant, a conference facility, a facility for festive occasions, a teaching facility or other similar assembly facility or a public service facility shall have an induction loop or a similar sound transmission system.

If a facility referred to in subsection 1 has fixed seats, accessible entry routes shall lead to more than one row of seats and they shall have an adequate number of spaces for wheelchair users.

## Section 13

### *Accommodation facilities*

In a hotel building and other similar accommodation building, at least five per cent of the accommodation rooms, but at least one accommodation room, shall be suitable for persons with mobility and functional impairment and their assistants. Such an accommodation room shall be equipped with a toilet and washing facility specified in section 9, subsection 2. At least half of these toilet and washing facilities, but at least one, shall be equipped to be suitable for use by persons with mobility impairment and the other ones such that they can be equipped as such if necessary.

Section 14

*Entry into force*

This Decree enters into force on 1 January 2018.

This Decree repeals section 53 of the Land Use and Building Decree (895/1999).

The provisions in force at the time of entry into force of this Decree apply to building permit applications pending at the time of entry into force of this Decree.

Porvoo, 4 May 2017

Kimmo Tiilikainen, Minister for Housing, Energy and the Environment

Meri Pensamo, Senior Officer for Legal Affairs