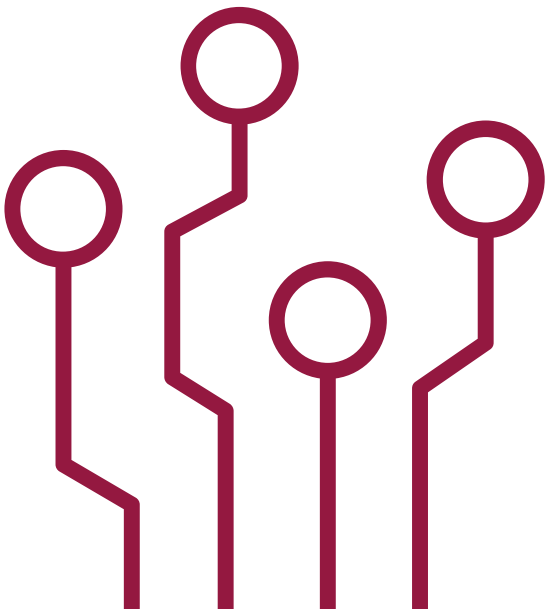# Irish Digital Employment Audit 2022

INTRODUCTION

Searching for work can be a daunting experience, and even more so for people with disabilities. As part of this report, nine of Ireland's leading employment websites were audited to review their accessibility credentials. The websites chosen are:

- **Public Jobs**
- **Monster**
- **Indeed**
- **ActiveLink***
- **Irish Jobs**
- **Jobs**
- **Abadoo**
- **Jobs Ireland**
- **Recruit Ireland**

Two of these websites are run by the Public Appointments Service and the Department of Social Protection, respectively. This means their digital content must meet specific accessibility standards under the Web Accessibility Directive laid down by the European Commission which was transposed into Irish law in 2020.

The others are private sector companies; but, since they provide a service to the public, it would be preferable if they could meet current web accessibility standards in advance of forthcoming legislation. The European Accessibility Act (EEA) will require private sector providers to make their websites and mobile devices digitally accessible. EU members must ensure the implementation of the accessibility measures by June 2025.

*Since this research was conducted, ActiveLink have taken steps to improve the accessibility of their website, and are due to release a new website by the end of 2022, which will be fully accessible .

ACCESSIBILITY REVIEW: PASS OR FAIL

Of the nine websites, only one, Indeed, passed IA Labs' audit using the WCAG2.1 AA (Web Accessibility Directive) standard.

Indeed had 12 accessibility issues; some interactive elements didn't have adequately descriptive labels, but, overall, it could be used.

The other 11 websites had an average of 50 issues each.

These included:

- Inaccessible navigation menus
- Incorrect reading order
- Interactive elements unlabelled
- Invisible elements
- Inaccessible tables
- Focus issues
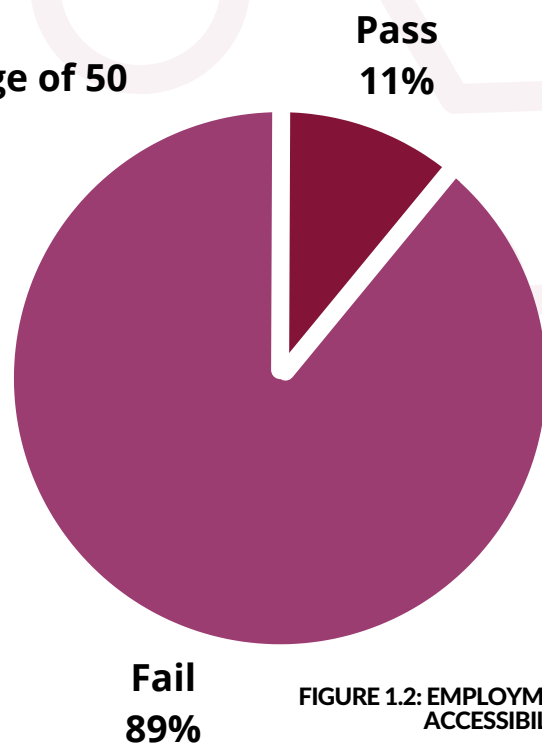- Low colour-contrast ratio
- Images without alt text

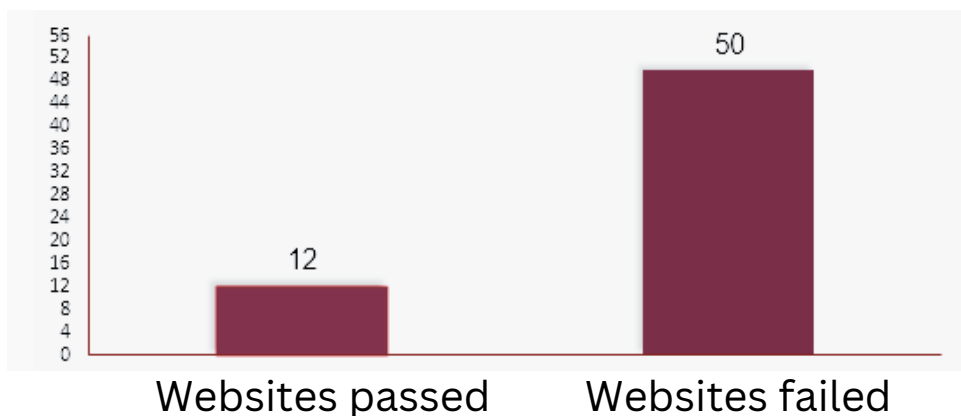**FIGURE 1.2: EMPLOYMENT WEBSITES' ACCESSIBILITY**

FIGURE 1.3: EMPLOYMENT WEBSITES AVERAGE ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES COMPARISON

ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT: PASS OR FAIL

An Accessibility Statement provides users with information about the accessibility of the website, and is a requirement under the EU Web Accessibility Directive.

Of the nine recruitment websites, only three had an accessibility statement, of which two referenced the required standard.

- **Six (67%)** of the websites audited did not include or make any reference to an accessibility statement
- **One (11%)** had an accessibility statement but did not reference the correct standard (Monster)
- **Two (22%)** had a statement and referenced the correct standard (Public Jobs, Indeed)
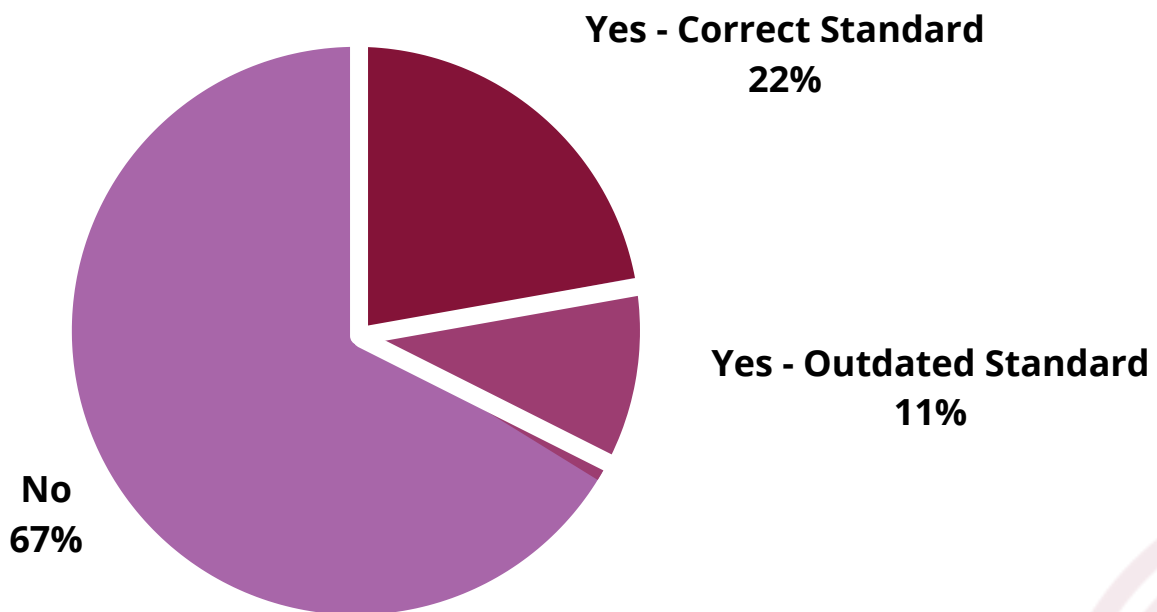

FIGURE 1: EMPLOYMENT WEBSITES ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENTS

GOOGLE LIGHTHOUSE VS IA LABS

Google Lighthouse Accessibility Tool found an average of 20 issues per website. When a member of IA Labs completed a manual audit, an average of 45 issues were found. **This is an increase of 125% in the number of issues found, proving the IA Labs Digital Audit process to be more comprehensive than standard industry technology.**
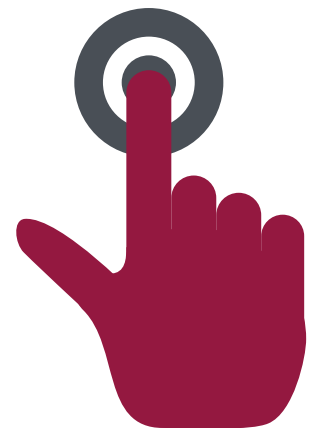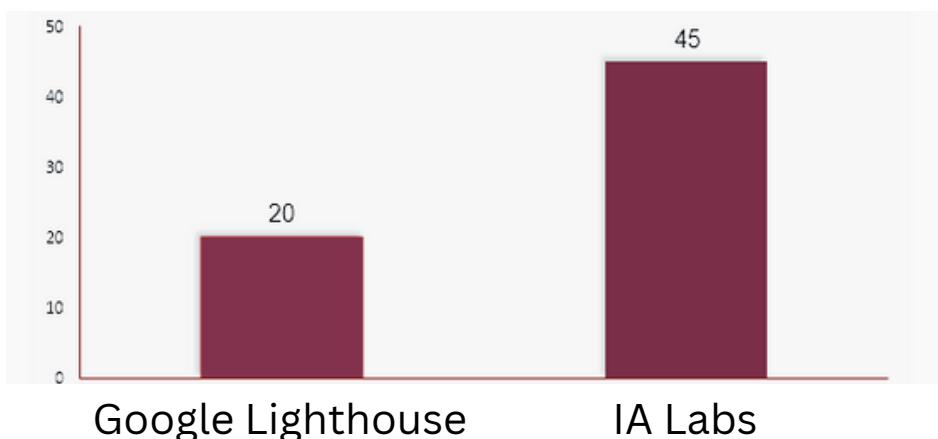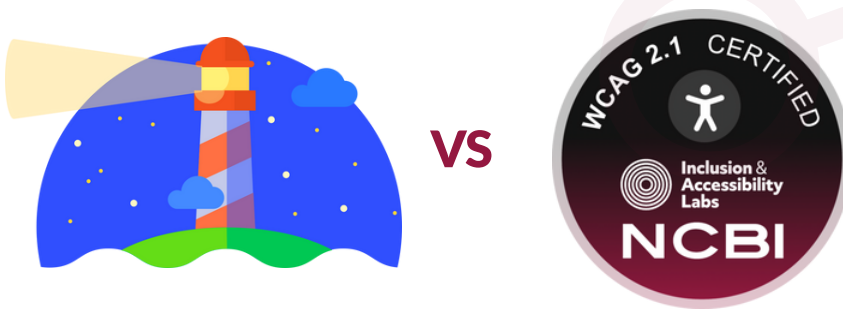

FIGURE 1.4: EMPLOYMENT AVERAGE ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES COMPARISON

SUMMARY

Due to the number and severity of issues, **eight out of the nine job websites** make it extremely difficult or impossible to apply for any jobs that are listed.

CONCLUSIONS

The *Digital Employment Audit* seeks to raise awareness of the everyday difficulties that people with disabilities face when searching for jobs and employment opportunities online.
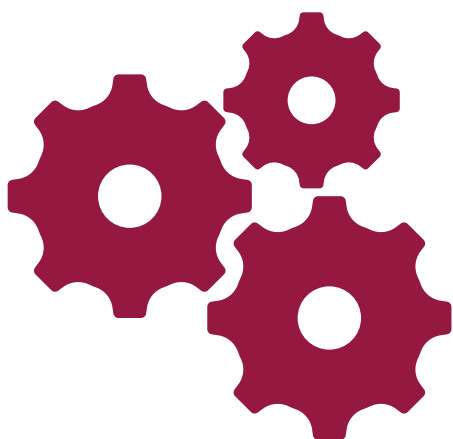
One in eight Irish people live with a disability.

In this report, IA Labs looked at nine of Ireland's leading and more popular employment websites. **Eight out of these nine websites failed the IA Labs digital accessibility tests** - meaning that a person with a disability would be unable to engage with the most basic functions of the website.

If an employer refused to a hire a person because of their disability, it would be illegal, a violation of Irish law. But, what if this person could not even apply for a job in the first place, because their disability prevents them from using a mouse to click on the job application link? Simple design changes - such as allowing links to be clicked by pressing a key on the keyboard - can open up several opportunities for a person with a disability.

Organisations must continue to take concrete steps to make their technology and websites more accessible. IA Labs is committed to publishing regular reports to assess this progress. **Awareness is the first step and implementation the second, on the pathway to building what can be a truly inclusive future for all in Ireland.**

Irish Digital Employment
Audit 2022