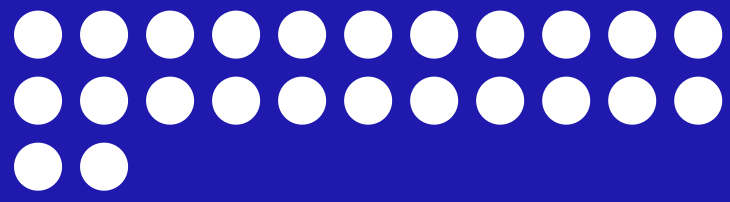
CORPOWID RESEARCH REPORT

France E-commerce Sector Digital Accessibility Report

24 e-commerce website homepages · WCAG 2.2 · October 2026

Accessibility barriers were detected on **all 24** e-commerce websites.



● Site with barriers detected ○ Site with no barriers detected

Data is based on site homepages only · Scan date: 24 October 2026

02

What is digital accessibility?

Digital accessibility means websites, mobile apps and digital documents can be used by everyone, including people with visual, hearing, motor or cognitive differences.

According to the World Health Organization, 16% of the world's population, about 1.3 billion people, experience significant disability. Add age-related vision and mobility limits, and temporary situations such as a broken arm or a screen unreadable in sunlight, and accessibility becomes a matter for a large share of customers, not a minority.

The common yardstick is the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), published by the W3C. The current version, WCAG 2.2, groups its success criteria into three levels: A, AA and AAA. Most regulations require A and AA.

In France, the European Accessibility Act has applied to e-commerce services since 28 June 2025 through the Consumer Code. Larger companies were already covered by the 2005 disability law and the national RGAA framework, and in 2026 French courts began ordering retailers to make their sites fully accessible.

Vision	Hearing	Motor	Cognitive
Screen readers, magnification, high contrast	Captions, text alternatives	Keyboard, voice control, large touch areas	Plain language, consistent navigation, clear errors

Source: WHO, Disability and health, March 2023

In this report

- Executive summary 03
- Methodology 04
- Overall results 05
- Findings by topic 06
- Distribution across sites 07
- Quick wins and their value beyond compliance 08
- Regulatory context 09
- Implications for executives 10
- Appendix 11

Executive summary

HOMEPAGE ONLY

Every one of the 24 e-commerce homepages has at least one accessibility barrier. The most common problem is buttons and links that screen readers cannot name: the very controls shoppers use to browse and buy.

24/24
sites with at least one A/AA barrier

1,037
automatically detected barriers

25
median barriers per site

22/24
sites with screen reader barriers

1 **No site is free of barriers.**

All 24 homepages have at least one A/AA barrier; the median site has 25, spread across 4 WCAG criteria.

2 **Screen reader users get stuck on 22 of 24 sites.**

Unnamed buttons and links and nested interactive controls account for 485 barriers, 47% of the total.

3 **85% of barriers are Level A.**

883 of 1,037 barriers fail the most basic level of WCAG, the level every accessibility framework builds on.

4 **92% of barriers are the same error repeated.**

Fixing a handful of shared components would remove most barriers on most sites.

5 **One site holds a third of all barriers.**

331 barriers sit on a single homepage; even without it, the median site still has 23.

SCOPE NOTE

The accessibility data in this report is calculated from the homepage of each company operating in the sector only. Pages behind login, subpages, mobile apps and documents are out of scope; results do not represent a company's digital channels as a whole.

04

Methodology

1

Select

24 e-commerce sites operating in France, across grocery, fashion, home, beauty and electronics.

2

Scan

Each homepage was scanned automatically against WCAG 2.2 on 24 October 2026, with the same tool version.

3

Classify

Each barrier was tagged by criterion, principle and level; error density was calculated.

4

Analyse

Barriers were grouped by topic and sector. No company is named.

SCOPE NOTE

The accessibility data in this report is calculated from the homepage of each company operating in the sector only. Pages behind login, subpages, mobile apps and documents are out of scope; results do not represent a company's digital channels as a whole.

What we measured

- Text alternatives for images
- Coded page structure
- Colour contrast
- Touch target size
- Names of buttons and links
- Page language and title

Not measured in this report

- Pages behind login (internet banking)
- Subpages, mobile apps and PDF documents
- Keyboard navigation and screen reader behaviour
- Clarity of content (requires manual review)

Independence and transparency

Independent
Prepared on our own initiative; no organisation requests, pays for or approves it.

Anonymous
No organisation, brand, domain or sample list is published.

Point in time
Results reflect each homepage at the time of scanning.

Repeatable
Same period, same page type, same tool version.

Conflict of interest
Corpowid provides accessibility solutions; the report contains no product promotion.

Scanned by
Corpowid's digital resources and scanning infrastructure.

STANDARD DISCLOSURE

Automated testing in this study detects only a subset of WCAG 2.2 failures. A clean automated result does not mean a site is accessible or conformant. Barriers under the Understandable principle, such as unclear instructions or unhelpful error messages, and the real behaviour of interactive components can only be assessed through manual review, which is outside the scope of this report. Findings describe detectable barriers, not legal compliance.

05

Overall results

Barriers were detected on all 24 sites. A typical e-commerce homepage has 25 barriers across 4 WCAG criteria; 85% of all barriers are Level A.

24/24
sites with at least one barrier

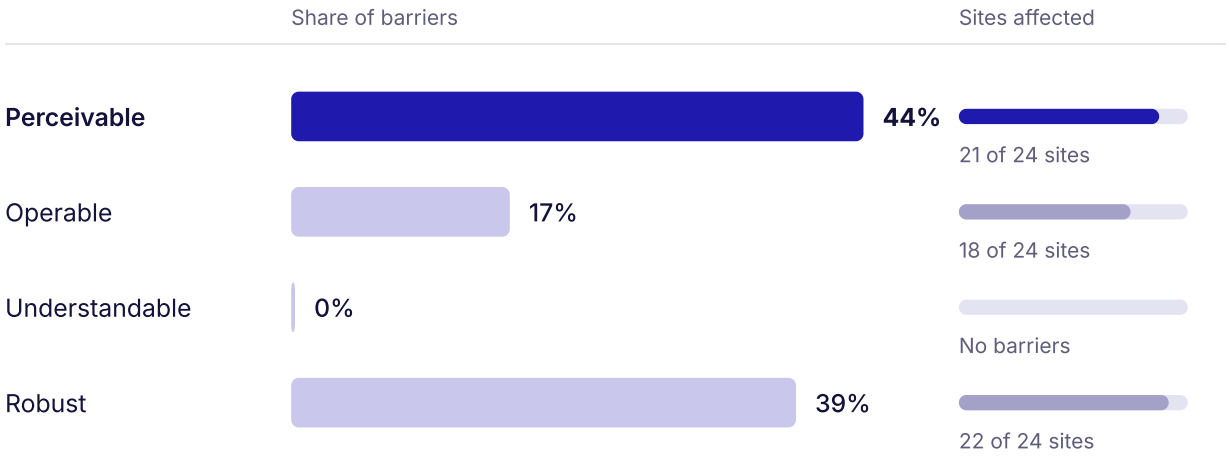
1,037
barriers in total

25
median barriers per site

4
median criteria per site

Perceivable and Robust account for 83% of barriers

Distribution of 1,037 barriers across principles, and number of sites affected



85% of barriers are Level A



Level A · 883 AA · 154

883 of 1,037 barriers sit at the most basic level. Of the 154 AA barriers, 87 are contrast and 66 touch targets.

One site holds a third of all barriers

331 of 1,037

Most of them are list structure, alt text and accessible names. Without this site, the sector total is 706 and the median site still has 23 barriers.

Finding no Understandable barriers reflects the limits of automated testing; this principle largely requires manual review.

06

Findings by topic

9 in 10 e-commerce sites have screen reader barriers

Sites failing the criterion, rounded to a 10-site unit

Topic · WCAG	How many in 10	Exact count
Name, role, value (screen reader) 4.1.2	**9/10**	22 / 24
Page structure 1.3.1	**7/10**	16 / 24
Contrast 1.4.3	**6/10**	14 / 24
Unnamed link 2.4.4	**5/10**	12 / 24
Alt text 1.1.1	**4/10**	10 / 24
Touch targets 2.5.8	**4/10**	9 / 24
Bypass blocks 2.4.1	**2/10**	4 / 24
Use of colour 1.4.1	**1/10**	2 / 24
Non-text contrast 1.4.11	**0/10**	1 / 24

Screen reader

485 barriers on 22 sites: unnamed buttons and links, and controls nested in other buttons, announced only as "button" or "link".

Page structure

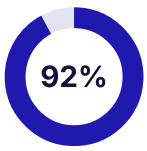
203 structure barriers on 16 sites; 120 of them are list items placed outside a proper list.

Images

158 barriers on 10 sites: images without a text description, and unnamed image links.

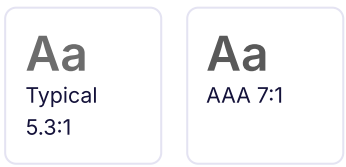
Depth: how close are the fixes?

Repetition effect



92% of barriers repeat an error already on the same site. On 9 sites, one error type is half or more.

AAA contrast



19 sites have text that passes AA but falls short of the AAA 7:1 threshold; the median example is 5.3:1.

Touch target



Of 66 targets failing AA, 40 are wide enough but under 24 px tall; the other 26 are tiny controls such as 8×8 px.

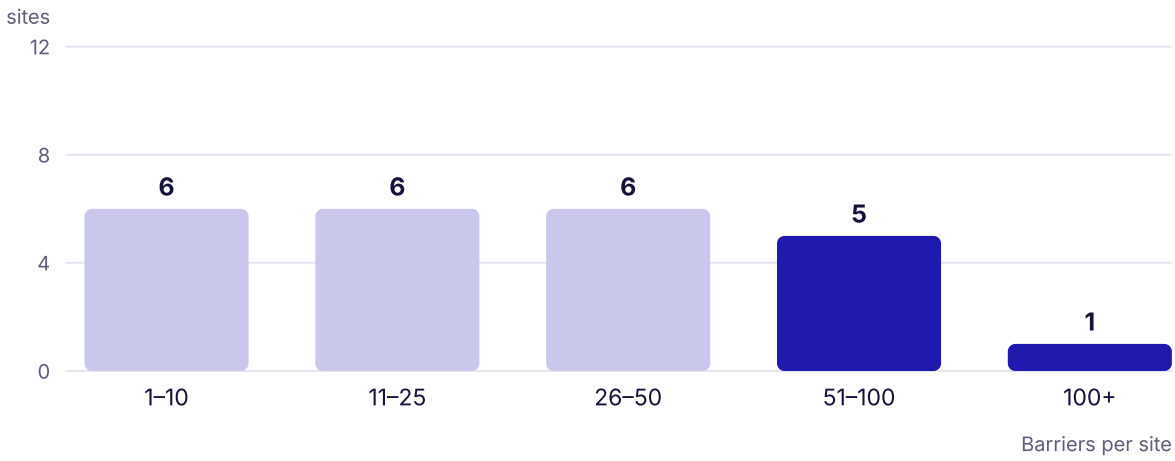
07

Distribution across sites

A sector average alone misleads: one site carries a third of all barriers, while the median site has 25.

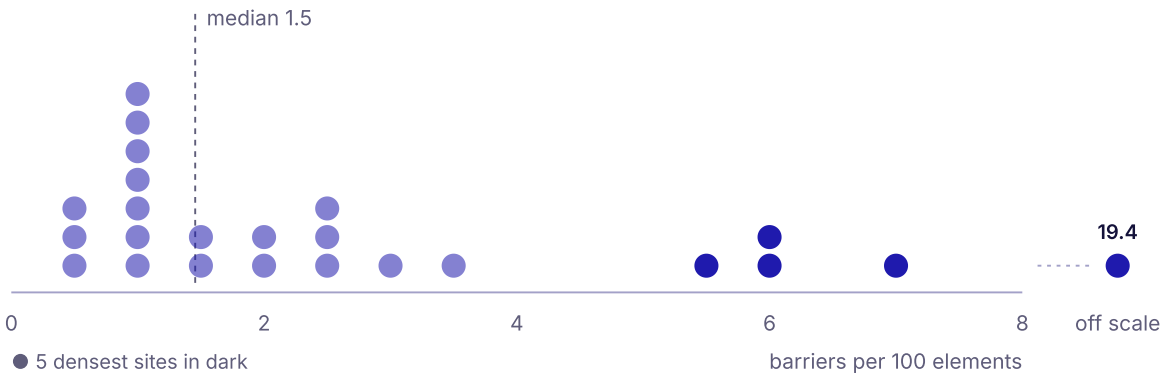
Every site has barriers; a quarter have more than 50

Sites by number of A + AA barriers detected per site



Barrier density ranges from 0.1 to 19.4 per 100 elements

A + AA barriers per 100 elements examined, in steps of 0.5; each dot is an anonymous e-commerce site



The median e-commerce homepage has 1.5 barriers per 100 elements across 4 WCAG criteria. Most sites sit below 3; five exceed 5, and one reaches 19.4.

08

Quick wins and their value beyond compliance

Five targeted fixes cover 999 of the 1,037 detected barriers. The same fixes also pay off in search visibility and user experience.

	Fix	Why first	Who benefits	Beyond compliance
1	**Give buttons and links an accessible name** WCAG 4.1.2 · 2.4.4	485 barriers, 22 sites; most common	Screen reader users	Meaningful names help software tools interpret the page correctly.
2	**Code lists and page structure correctly** WCAG 1.3.1	203 barriers, 16 sites; 120 from list markup	Screen reader users	Heading and list structure helps search engines parse the page; skimming users find things faster.
3	**Add text alternatives to images** WCAG 1.1.1	158 barriers, 10 sites	Blind users	Google also understands images from alt text; product images become easier to find.
4	**Fix weak contrast** WCAG 1.4.3	87 barriers, 14 sites	Low vision, older users	No SEO effect; readability improves for everyone in sunlight and at low brightness.
5	**Make touch targets at least 24 px** WCAG 2.5.8	66 targets, 9 sites; 40 fail on height only	Mobile, motor impaired	Not a direct ranking signal; it improves mobile page quality and cuts mis-taps and abandoned baskets.

Situational barriers

Accessibility is not only for permanent disabilities. Every customer using a phone one-handed on a crowded bus, without their glasses, or watching video on mute benefits from the same fixes.

Source: Google Search Central, SEO Starter Guide. Search effects are directional, not measured traffic impact.

Advanced level: AAA

AAA is not required by most regulations, so it is kept out of the main figures. It does answer whether a site that passes AA is truly comfortable to use.

24/24
sites have touch targets below 44×44 px (AAA 2.5.5); 1,434 targets in total.

19
sites have text that passes AA but not AAA contrast (7:1).

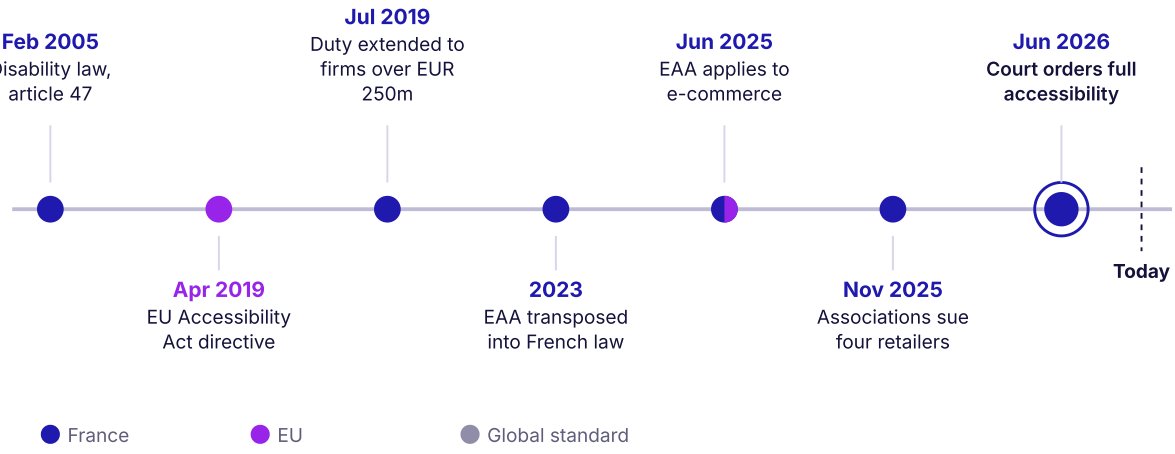
20
sites have links that open a new tab without warning (AAA 3.2.5).

09

Regulatory context

In France, the accessibility of online shops has moved from a regulatory principle to a court-enforced obligation. Since the EAA began to apply in June 2025, associations have taken major retailers to court, and the first ruling demands full accessibility, not most of it.

From principle to court order



Consumer Code, art. L412-13

Applies since 28 June 2025

Transposes the EAA: e-commerce services offered to consumers must be accessible; micro-enterprises are exempt. Firms with turnover above EUR 250 million were already bound by the 2005 disability law and the RGAA.

The courts

Caen, 4 June 2026 · Lille, May 2026

Associations of visually impaired people sued four grocery retailers in November 2025. Caen ordered one to make its site and app fully accessible within six months, under a EUR 500 daily penalty. Lille dismissed a parallel case, now on appeal.

Technical framework

RGAA · EN 301 549

France assesses conformity against the RGAA, its WCAG-based framework. EN 301 549 v4.1.1 (September 2026) moved to WCAG 2.2; v3.2.1 applies until cited in the EU Official Journal.

HOW THIS REPORT CONNECTS

In Caen, the court rejected the argument that a declared compliance rate of 71% was enough: a site must be fully accessible. Against that bar, every homepage in this report has automatically detected barriers at Levels A and AA. This is not a compliance judgement, but it shows how far the sector is from the standard the court set.

Sources: Ecommerce Mag, 12 Nov 2025; Faire Face, 7 May and 11 June 2026; Handicap.fr, 15 June 2026; Village de la Justice (Lille ruling); AccessibleEU, 7 Sep 2026.

10

Implications for executives

Accessibility is a management decision, not an IT task. The data points to five areas for decision.

1 **Measure the whole purchase journey**

Courts now assess full accessibility of sites and apps, not a percentage. Measure search, product pages, basket and checkout, not only the homepage, and document a remediation plan.

2 **Name a single owner**

Barriers are spread across design, content and engineering. Without an executive owner and a quarterly target, fixes lose out to the campaign calendar.

3 **Fix shared components first**

92% of barriers are the same error repeated. Buttons, links and lists in shared components carry most of them; fixing those carries into every page.

4 **Put WCAG 2.2 AA in supplier contracts**

Campaign agencies and third-party components (chat, cookie banner, calculators) are a major source of barriers.

5 **Make measurement continuous**

Automated scans on every release and at least one expert audit a year. Two board-level indicators are enough: error density and the completion rate of critical tasks.

The first 90 days

Days 0–30

Measure and own

Independent scan, owner named, priority list

Days 31–60

Fix the templates

Menu, icon button and touch target components

Days 61–90

Verify and embed

Expert test, contract clauses, board indicator

Three questions for the board

1. When did we last measure the accessibility of our digital channels independently?
2. Who owns accessibility, and what is the target?
3. Can a new digital product go live without passing an accessibility test?

Appendix

A · Metric definitions

Barrier	An automatically detected finding that fails a WCAG 2.2 A or AA criterion.
Error density	Barriers ÷ elements examined × 100.
Repetition rate	Barriers from repeats of the same error type on a site ÷ all barriers.
Warning	AAA checks and possible barriers needing review; not in the main figures.
Share of sites affected	Sites with at least one barrier on the criterion ÷ 24.
Criteria breadth	Number of distinct WCAG criteria a site fails.
Concentration	Share of all barriers held by the sites with the most.
Median	The middle value when sites are sorted; unaffected by outliers.

B · WCAG criteria reviewed

Criterion	Name	Level	Principle	Sites	Barriers
1.1.1	Non-text content	A	Perceivable	10 / 24	158
1.3.1	Info and relationships	A	Perceivable	16 / 24	203
1.4.1	Use of colour	A	Perceivable	2 / 24	9
1.4.3	Contrast (minimum)	AA	Perceivable	14 / 24	87
1.4.11	Non-text contrast	AA	Perceivable	1 / 24	1
2.4.1	Bypass blocks	A	Operable	4 / 24	28
2.4.4	Link purpose	A	Operable	12 / 24	81
2.5.8	Target size (minimum)	AA	Operable	9 / 24	66
4.1.2	Name, role, value	A	Robust	22 / 24	404
	Total				**1037**

C · Scan parameters

Scan date	24 October 2026
Page type	Homepage (landing page after redirect)
Sample	24 e-commerce sites operating in France
Tool	Corpowid scanning infrastructure, version 2.0.2
Level	Barriers: A and AA · warnings: incl. AAA
Language	French

D · Glossary

Screen reader	Software that reads screen content aloud or sends it to a Braille display.
Touch target	The area of a button or link pressed with a finger.
Assistive technology	Tools such as screen readers, magnifiers and voice control.
Alt text	The text equivalent of an image for users who cannot see it.
Contrast ratio	Luminance difference between text and background; AA needs at least 4.5:1 for normal text.
Component / template	A piece of interface reused across many pages.



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