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Full title of degree: MSc in Management of Information Systems

Title of dissertation: Web Accessibility of Irish Government Mobile Applications.

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Year: 2017

## **Abstract**

Web Accessibility is important to all citizens but in particular to citizens with disabilities as well as older people, it is the duty of Government to ensure that online services are available to use for all regardless of age, size and ability. Alongside Web Accessibility, Mobile accessibility which refers to making websites and applications more accessible to people with disabilities when they are using mobile phones and other devices, is becoming increasingly important. All citizens benefit from applications which are developed with accessibility in mind not just people with recognised disabilities. Government and public bodies must develop applications which encourage full use by all citizens. The increased use of mobile devices by citizens presents both a challenge and an opportunity to Government bodies. The challenge is ensuring applications work across differing device platforms. The opportunity is increased online access and use balanced against cost savings of manual efforts.

This research aims to evaluate the web accessibility of Government mobile applications and, where appropriate suggest solutions to enhance their accessibility and for further development. Solutions to make the mobile applications compliant will be in line with the National Disability Authority guidelines and web accessibility guidelines but will be tailored for mobile applications. At present no guidelines exist for mobile applications.

The research explored alternative accessibility evaluation tools to test five Government departments and Government public bodies mobile applications on android and IOS platforms. The mobile applications tested were:

1. Revenue Commissioners, RevApp
2. Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Mobile site
3. Department of Foreign Affairs, TravelWise App
4. Failte Ireland, DublinTrails App
5. Transport Ireland, RealTime App

The testing was comprehensive and went beyond the home pages of these applications and included manual testing which is necessary for complete accessibility evaluation.

Although Government bodies have signed up to the National Disability Authorities protocol on inclusive design all the mobile applications tested were found to be not accessible. There is a need for established guidelines and a testing framework to ensure eGovernment mobile applications are accessible to all.