



# Accessible Tourism Destination Handbook

by



ENAT a.s.b.l. 2017

## **Accessible Tourism Destination Handbook**

English Version, 2017.

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## PREFACE

In September 2016 Turismo de Portugal launched the "All for All - Portuguese tourism" 2-year programme aimed at all tourism enterprises, with a view to a concerted effort to make the national tourism offer accessible. Together we want to make Portugal a tourist destination for everyone.



With this Handbook, Turismo de Portugal seeks to prepare Portuguese tourism destination managers to introduce accessibility and inclusion into their work and their destinations, adding a new competitive dimension to their offerings. The Handbook provides concrete guidance on why and how managers can focus their efforts on creating destinations that are open to people with the widest range of access needs.

The focus on accessibility is directly linked to our aim to offer all tourists a "Warm Welcome". When we build an accessible tourist destination for all, we are responding to the needs of each visitor, providing a better service and enhancing the attractiveness and sustainability of our destinations for more tourists.

It is not a question of responding to a "niche" market, but rather preparing ourselves to be among those destinations chosen by tourists with various specific access needs, which are estimated to represent 862 million trips in Europe in 2020. The United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy and Spain are major markets for Portugal, and each of these has over 10 million people with access needs. The number of Portuguese visitors with access requirements, estimated at 634,400, is no less important, as this market shows a high tendency to take day trips and short breaks as well as longer holidays.

By raising the competences and skills of destination managers in this area of growing importance, we believe that this will not only benefit visitors but also bring competitive advantages to individual businesses and to Portugal.



**Figure 0-1** New signage at Parques de Sintra

## INTRODUCTION

This Handbook is intended for the use of tourism professionals in Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) that develop and market Portugal's regions, cities and other tourist locations. It is addressed to **you** as the DMO team holds a key position in the accessible tourism supply chain, having the ability to foster an inclusive approach to tourism among all stakeholders and partners.

**Accessible Tourism** refers to a way of thinking, planning and managing a destination or venue. It has been defined in many ways; here we give one definition by Professor Simon Darcy, which is widely cited:

“Accessible tourism enables people with access requirements, including mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimensions of access, to function independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universally designed tourism products, services and environments. This definition is inclusive of all people including those travelling with children in prams, people with disabilities and seniors.”

(Darcy & Dickson, 2009, p. 34).

**The goal of this Handbook is, ultimately, that any and every visitor should be able to enjoy the unique experiences your destination has to offer. For this to happen, DMOs must extend a warm welcome to all customers, paying attention to visitors' various access needs and providing experiences that can be enjoyed by everyone.**

An accessible destination, in the broadest sense, is one that enables all the visitors to use and enjoy its facilities and services, in an equitable (non-discriminatory) way.

The emphasis we place on **accessibility** throughout this Handbook comes from the observation that the built environment and many tourism services in destinations today are still not accessible to many citizens and visitors. There are many barriers that need to be overcome.

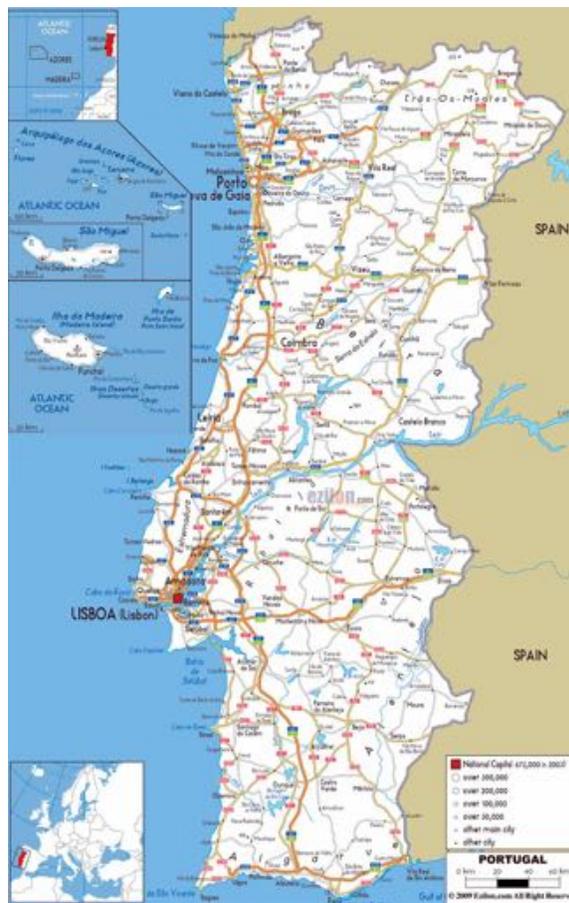
One reason for this is the common mistake of designing tourism services only for the “average user”. This stems from a lack of understanding about the wide diversity of peoples’ abilities and access requirements which, in turn, can give rise to many access difficulties in buildings, customer services, transport systems and tourism information.

Despite considerable progress in improving general accessibility in European countries, many politicians and other decision makers have only recently begun to understand that this market is not only about the “disabled people”, but in fact is made up of everyone who faces - or might face – accessibility problems. In terms of a destination, what we call “universal access” is not available to all visitors, due to many weaknesses or failures in the way environments and services are designed and managed.

Thus, there is still a tendency in some circles to “misread” **accessible tourism** as being about tourism, which is only designed, or intended for **people with disabilities**. Yes, accessibility is certainly about the needs of people with disabilities but is not exclusively about “them”. In fact it is about all of us, as we all have different abilities and requirements and we need to be **included**, having good

and equitable access, safety and comfort – **that is accessible tourism.**

**Portugal's tourism regions** – Porto and the North, Central Portugal, Alentejo, Lisbon Region, Algarve, The Azores and Madeira represent a wide variety of landscapes, cities, towns and villages, each with their own particular heritage and attractions, bound together by the common Portuguese language and culture.



**With the right know-how and careful planning, all Portuguese destinations can attract and cater for visitors who require good access.**

Creating an **accessible tourism destination** does not mean diluting or homogenising the unique characteristics of a place. Improving accessibility is a journey towards a warmer welcome and better customer service, while retaining the attractive qualities of the destination. It involves removing barriers and also requires innovation, opening up new business opportunities with products, services and experiences that are more suited to the visitors of today and tomorrow.

As this Handbook shows, **Accessible Tourism contributes to the social, environmental and economic sustainability of the destination**, having a positive impact on the local community. Where there is public access to facilities and services, better access conditions for visitors will lead to better access for residents – and vice versa.

**Accessible Tourism** is not intended to be a separate kind of tourism with its own types of venues and attractions; rather, it should be **part of every tourism destination**, so that cultural venues, leisure and sport, shopping, and other tourist activities are accessible for all visitors. Accessible tourism is, indeed, the pre-condition for any kind of tourism, since better access improves the quality of tourism for all visitors.

Accessible tourism also contributes to sustainable development, since accessible environments and services respond to actual and potential requirements of all visitors and local citizens, through a “life-time” approach to destination planning.

With the rapidly ageing population, an increasing proportion of older visitors will favour tourist destinations that have accessible facilities and services. Elderly

persons make up a growing proportion of the overnight stays in developed markets such as UK, USA and Australia where accessible provisions for them are steadily improving.

Improving the accessibility of the built environment in a destination can give direct benefits for its citizens, including people with disabilities and older citizens, as well as for businesses and public enterprises. However, infrastructure changes alone are not enough: destinations must also be actively developed and promoted for their all-round accessibility, so that increased numbers of visitors can visit and stay longer in the region, enjoying the cultural venues and giving higher turnover for shops, tourism venues and public services.

**By following the guidance in this Handbook, DMO teams will:**

- Gain an understanding of access and inclusion – knowing what actions are needed, and why;
- Be able to create an access policy reflecting the goals and the assets of the destination;
- Understand the access needs of customers and how appropriate management and training can help to meet these demands and raise satisfaction levels by delivering outstanding customer service;
- Identify the accessibility gaps that must be addressed, set priorities and make plans to adapt products and offers in the short, medium and longer term;
- Reach out to the accessible tourism market at home and abroad, attracting more visitors and enhancing your reputation as an Accessible Tourism Destination.

## 1. HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

This Handbook can be read from cover to cover, like any other book. We recommend that you read the **Introduction** and this section. More likely, you will find it easier and more useful to read the Sections one by one, taking time to digest the information and guidance on each subject.

Where appropriate, examples of good practice are shown, illustrating certain key points and demonstrating how DMOs and businesses can work, in practical ways, to improve their accessibility management skills.

If you are reading the Handbook on a Tablet or PC, you may follow the suggested hyperlinks to digital resources, such as websites or short videos marked like this:

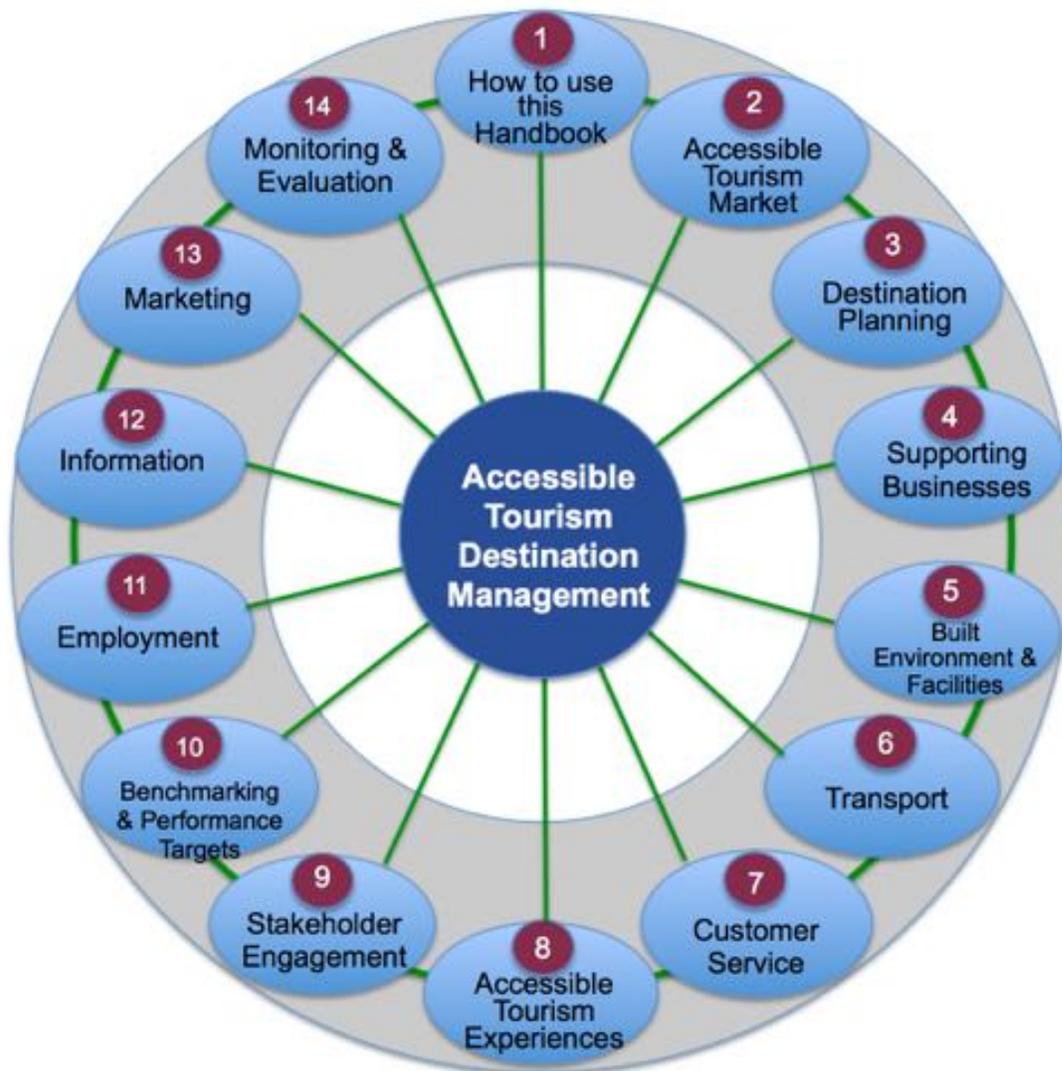
- [ENAT - Mind the Accessibility Gap \(Video EN\)](#).

The initials **EN** and **PT** indicate an English or Portuguese language source, accordingly. Some of the links are also shown in full in the **References section – [Online Resources](#)**.

The Handbook is arranged in fourteen Sections covering the themes presented in Figure 1 – 1, below. Every Section is important for reaching the goal. In general, the Sections are designed to give answers to the following questions:

1. **What** is the issue that needs to be addressed?
2. **Why** is this issue important and relevant to creating an accessible destination?
3. **How** to develop the process?
4. **Who** should be involved?

**Figure 1-1. Overview of the Handbook's main sections**



Here follows a short description of each section, as a general guide to their contents:

**1. How to use this Handbook**

- A short user guide (- this section)

**2. Accessible Tourism Market**

- Presents the policy background, market trends and business case for Accessible Tourism.
- The diversity of visitor requirements

- The context of Portugal
- The approach to various Accessible Tourism Markets

### **3. Destination Planning**

- Introduces the overall approach to planning the Accessible Tourism Destination.
- Formulating your Policy and Strategy
- Organisational structure
- Awareness-raising and dissemination
- Training and skills requirements
- Outlines the need for an “Access Champion” and describes how to develop a suitable access policy and strategy, and where to seek support funding.

### **4. Supporting Businesses**

- Examines how to reach out to businesses in the Accessible Tourism supply chain, and engage them in the accessible destination development strategy.
- Incentives and support actions for businesses.

### **5. Built Environment and Facilities**

- Explains the importance of following Universal Design principles in physical planning and building design;
- Carrying out accessibility audits;
- Access standards and guidelines for built environment;
- Public procurement of accessibility

### **6. Transport**

- Presents an overview of considerations regarding accessible transportation planning at the destination.

### **7. Customer Service**

- Describes the main principles and need for training in disability awareness, customer services and accessibility, for all managers and front-line staff.

- Examples of good practice.

## **8. Accessible Tourism Experiences**

- Explains the need for destinations to develop accessible, inclusive experiences for visitors with access needs. This entails a holistic approach to designing appropriate services and, possibly, adapting or upgrading some facilities.

## **9. Stakeholder Engagement**

- Guidance on how to engage local tourism businesses in accessibility improvements and monitoring schemes,
- Involving NGOs and other stakeholders in the development process.
- Involvement and commitment of Architects, Designers and Physical Planners

## **10. Benchmarking and Performance Targets**

- Describes quality, standards and requirements of “good practice”.
- Examples of accessible tourist destinations
- Practical steps to reach a high level of performance in accessibility.

## **11. Employment**

- Explains the direct and indirect advantages of employing persons with disabilities in the tourism sector.
- Describes the role of Social Responsibility in the reputation of destinations and businesses.

## **12. Information**

- Delivery of accurate and reliable information on the accessibility of transport, venues and services.
- Customer engagement – training tools
- Information formats for Web, print formats and alternative formats.

### **13. Marketing**

- Presents an overview of how to organise accessible tourism marketing, indicating channels, branding and promotion.
- Using social media and other techniques for reaching customers in domestic and international markets.

### **14. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Describes how monitoring and evaluation of accessible services and facilities can enhance the quality and performance of the accessible tourist destination over time by providing feedback from customers and providers.

## 2. ACCESSIBLE TOURISM MARKET

The accessible tourism market presents a new and exciting opportunity for destinations to review, revise and refresh their tourism products and services. Improving offers and services for the growing number of tourists with access needs is becoming profitable and desirable, not only for individual businesses but also for the destination as a whole.

The hospitality sector is generally quick to respond to visitors' preferences and requirements, finding appropriate solutions and re-designing products to meet changing tastes and trends in visitors' travel behaviour.

However, when it comes to addressing the needs of tourists who may have a disability or specific access needs, the majority of tourism businesses are not well prepared. There is partly due to widespread uncertainty about how to cater for tourists who may have access requirements. Often, a fear of the unknown or "doing the wrong thing" leads managers to avoid this market, rather than exploring how to tackle the perceived challenges.

The business benefits of the accessible tourism market are also widely unknown and, indeed, the value of the market is underestimated. There is a general assumption in many countries that providing access means high cost and low returns. In addition, providing access may be associated with legal requirements, which are seen by some managers as a regulatory imposition, only grudgingly accepted as "the cost of doing business".

From practical experience and research-based evidence, it has now been well proven that there is a strong business case for accessible tourism. Public and private enterprises can create viable services that attract more customers and generate higher turnover and more income, as long as the necessary skills and knowledge are acquired.

- Enterprises and destinations which embrace the accessible tourism market as “innovators” and “first movers” are achieving business success, as the accessible tourism market is relatively underserved in most countries and regions of Europe, giving competitive advantages to those who move into this market space.
- Legal requirements for access, centred on non-discrimination of customers with disabilities, have been introduced in the Member States of the European Union over the past two decades and will continue to shape the way businesses operate, based on the principal of ensuring equal access to goods and services for everyone. Customers in many market sectors, including tourism, increasingly place value on the ethical and responsible behaviour of businesses. Accessible tourism offers opportunities to demonstrate an ethical approach, thus helping to differentiate destinations and offers from the crowd. Enterprises that wish to show their corporate social responsibility are adopting accessible tourism policies and practices, with positive results for their reputation and their financial bottom line. European cities, regions and destinations are a highly attractive to European and international

tourists and despite economic trends they have enjoyed increased average growth rates, measured by numbers of hotel bed-nights, in recent years. A European tourism survey in 2011 showed that the main attractions for tourists were: the environment (32%), cultural heritage (27%), and entertainment (14%).<sup>1</sup>

As the number of travellers increases year by year, governments and municipalities are becoming aware of the need to integrate tourism within their national and regional development strategies, as the visitor economy is an important driver of economic growth, employment and sustainable development.

From a DMO's perspective, the provision of accessible environments and services is gaining more importance due to the growing access needs of a steadily ageing population. One in five Europeans is over the age of 60, added to which there are about 80 million people in Europe with a disability. Like everyone, many seniors wish to travel. They have more free time and discretionary income to spend on holidays and leisure than other age groups. Due to the inevitable rise in age-related impairments, these groups are adding to the demands for an accessible environment, transport and services.

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<sup>1</sup> Flash EUROBAROMETER 334. "Attitudes of Europeans Towards Tourism".

Making destinations accessible to citizens and visitors is a great advantage to cultural operators and the wider range of attractions, both for old and young. Improving access contributes to the long-term sustainability of the city's tourism-related businesses, as increased visitor numbers have a ripple effect through the tourism economy.

Portuguese destinations should address accessibility as a competitive advantage, seeking to build and retain their reputation for those who need good access.

## 2.1. THE DIVERSITY OF VISITOR REQUIREMENTS

In the [Introduction](#) to this Handbook, **Darcy and Dickson's definition of Accessible Tourism** points to the wide range of visitors who make up the accessible tourism market. It should be emphasised that the label of "accessible tourism" can apply to tourists of all ages and all abilities, and people who travel for any purpose and using a wide variety of means.

Accessible tourism is sometimes referred to as "inclusive tourism" or "tourism for all" precisely because the tourism services on offer must be designed to cater for **all people**, in particular concerning their specific access needs but also regarding other factors that may inhibit a person's ability to travel.



**Figure 2-1. Tourists come in all shapes and sizes (OSSATE, 2005)**

Some of the “target groups” of the accessible tourism market are suggested in the graphic shown in Figure 2–1, above, showing a parent with a pushchair, a family group with a pregnant woman, wheelchair user, people of different ages and sizes, someone carrying large items of luggage and a blind person at a road crossing. These are customers who typically encounter access barriers in the physical environment and in transport but may also be subject to other barriers, including lack of information and, possibly, negative attitudes of tourism managers or staff.

It should also be noted that these images do not convey all types of access needs, as around 70% of disabilities are “invisible”. A large group of travellers with access requirements is made up of **people who have a long-term health condition**. Older persons, in particular, may need assistance or particular services to help them manage their health, when travelling, for example they may need to keep medicines in a refrigerator or they may require a special diet.

An indicative list of **Target groups who need good access when travelling** includes people who may have one or more of the following conditions:

- ✓ Mobility impairments
- ✓ Visual impairments
- ✓ Hearing impairments
- ✓ Learning Difficulties (intellectual impairments)
- ✓ Very large or very small stature
- ✓ An accompanying service animal
- ✓ Asthma or allergy
- ✓ Long-term illness
- ✓ Temporary impairment
- ✓ Pregnant women
- ✓ Tiredness, stress
- ✓ Unable to understanding the local language.

This list is not exhaustive and it should be noted that the general distribution of most of these conditions is not limited to people of a certain age, social or economic status. For this reason, many of the typical demographic variables that are used to segment the tourism market are of no value in identifying the range of customers with the broad range of access-related needs.

## 2.2. ACCESSIBILITY, INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

The subjects of accessibility and the integration of people

with disabilities in society have gained increasing importance in policy-making and legal practice over the past three decades. Accordingly, access requirements and measures to enhance inclusion of customers with disabilities are increasingly influencing developments in the tourism sector.

The goal of achieving accessibility to the built environment was recognised by governments, internationally, in 1993 in [The United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Disabled Persons \(EN/PT\)](#). Despite the fact that almost every country in the world has signed up to the Standard Rules, the issue of access remains a major technical and societal problem.

The [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(2006\) \(EN\) / \(ES\)](#) requires equal access to leisure, sport and tourism (article 30). But besides meeting their legal obligations and recognising the equal rights for persons with disabilities, tourist providers need to be aware of the demographic ageing of society which is enlarging the market of people with access needs. As of December 2016, 160 countries had signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including the European Union, and 92 have ratified the Convention.

Today, all European Union (EU) Member States have different forms of legislation which require specific measures for people with disabilities, for example access to the built environment, to Information and Communication Technologies, education, employment



and in different types of transportation. However, the European Union as a whole does not have a single set of agreed standards for disabled access nor are there common standards for accessibility in relation to *tourism venues* or *tourism services*, in particular.

Moreover, in the few EU Member States and neighbouring European countries which do have technical standards or guidelines for disabled access in tourism, these standards are not harmonised with each other.

In its Communication on the European Disability Strategy, adopted on November 15<sup>th</sup> 2010<sup>2</sup>, the European Commission proposed to use legislative instruments to optimise accessibility for people with disabilities and elderly. The Commission proposed the adoption of a European Accessibility Act (EAA) in December 2015. This proposal is scheduled to be discussed by the European Parliament in 2017, where its scope, areas of application and possible amendments will be debated.

The European Accessibility Act is expected to set out a general accessibility framework in relation to goods and services, including public services.

The European Commission argues for such an Act, noting:

- 80 million people in the EU or one sixth of the population have disabilities.

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<sup>2</sup> Ref. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0636:FIN:EN:PDF>

- People with disabilities face social exclusion and often have difficulties to integrate in society
- In 2010, poverty was 70% more likely for persons with disabilities than for those with low education and employment levels.
- Increasing accessibility is a moral imperative for all levels of governance
- With population ageing, the number of people directly concerned by Introduction of accessibility is bound to increase. Addressing accessibility for people with disabilities means preparing for the future
- It is expected that 20% of the EU population would benefit from improvements in accessibility of goods and services.
- It also makes sense to build on growing commercial interest in accessible goods and services.
- Persons with disabilities represent a sizeable and growing market with various needs to be met...
- Greater accessibility also benefits non-disabled people and consumers.
- In 2010, the annual value of the EU market for assistive devices alone was an estimated €30 billion.
- *Universal design / Design for All* is a fundamental demand for creating new products and services.
- *Mainstreaming disability requirements* in all sectors and markets will be required in the proposed Act.

In some EU Member States such as UK and France, accessibility legislation already obliges service providers to comply with access standards (by 1st January 2015 in France). This is seen by many providers as an additional burden but in fact, over the long term, it serves the broad interests both of the industry, customers and the local citizens as it helps to create a “market value” for accessibility and stimulates innovation and technological development.

**Accessibility** is not only a technical approach or tool, it is more than that. It is a cultural attribute which supports and enriches all aspects of customer care, making every visitor a valued guest and contributing added benefits to every tourism business.

### 2.3. ACCESSIBLE TOURISM BUSINESS CASE

One of the main barriers to the development of accessible tourism offers has been identified as the “lack of a convincing business case”. For many years this message has been spread and repeated by many tourism professionals and political observers, although there is growing evidence that this is, indeed, a profitable market.

DMOs and businesses that have engaged in developing accessible tourism can often show very favourable results, although some may be hesitant to reveal statistical data for commercial reasons.

Examples of access investments showing good returns (ROI) are becoming more common and the rewards are also shown in higher reputational value, as well as on the

business “bottom line”.

See the YouTube video, [“Mind the accessibility gap” \(EN, with sub-titles, 8 minutes\)](#) to learn the views of tourism professionals in Europe on the subject of the accessible tourism market.

The speakers interviewed for this video say, for example:

- *Investments in Design for All pay back between one and half years and three years (- ProA Solutions, Spain)*
- *Investments in training hotel staff in accessibility and customer service in fifteen hotels paid back just in the first year (SCANDIC Hotels, Sweden)*
- *There is a high level of loyalty, so clients with limitations are coming back again and recommending ... (PERFIL, Portugal)*
- *Working with a tour operator in Italy, we grew the business from 700,000 EURO to 4.2 Million EURO in only two years (Village 4 All, Italy).*

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### 2.3.1. DEMAND AND VALUE OF THE ACCESSIBLE TOURISM MARKET

Findings from an [EU Study: Economic Impact and Travel Patterns of Accessible Tourism in Europe \(EN\)](#) conducted for the European Commission in 2013-14, show that accessible tourism is already a major source of income for destinations and businesses and a large contributor to jobs in Europe. The accessible tourism market is growing with the ageing of the populations in Europe and among inbound tourism markets and it cannot be considered a “niche”.

The EU study showed that:

- The European tourism sector is missing out on up to €142 billion every year due to poor infrastructure, services and attitudes towards travellers with special access needs, which can be due either to age or disability.
- People with specific access requirements include older people, people with disabilities including so-called “invisible disabilities” and people with long-term health conditions.
- These groups make up over 130 million people – over 25% of the EU population. Half of these are active travellers.
- Added to these are families with small children and any group of travellers that includes a person with a disability, as these also require good access.
- In 2012, visitors with access needs undertook 783 million trips, contributing €394 billion to European GDP and providing 8.7 million jobs.
- In 2012 people with disabilities took on average, 6.7 daily trips, plus a further 6.7 overnight trips during the period, mostly within Europe.
- In the same period, older people took 6.9 day-trips and 5.5 overnight trips per person. They travelled slightly more widely than individuals with disabilities
- Among all EU member states, France, the UK and Germany are the top source markets for accessible tourism, taking both domestic and intra-EU travel into account.
- The demand for EU’s accessible tourism by (inbound) visitors with special access needs was 17.6 million trips in 2012, of which 7.2 million was

taken by people with disabilities and 10.4 million by the elderly population.

- Among the 11 key inbound markets to EU , the USA, Switzerland and Russia are the biggest source countries.
- Market growth forecast: Based on the forecasted growth of the elderly population and the growth of individuals with disabilities, and assuming stable travel propensity and frequency of these people, a baseline forecast for future accessible tourism demand was obtained.
- The study suggested that by 2020 the demand for EU's accessible tourism by people within the EU will continue to grow to about 862 million trips per year (+7.1%), and the demand by the key international inbound markets will reach 21 million trips per year. (+25%)

### 2.3.2. UK ACCESSIBLE TOURISM MARKET DATA

At the national level, few DMOs or tourism authorities are currently gathering statistics showing the travel behaviour, value and market demand of the accessible tourism market.

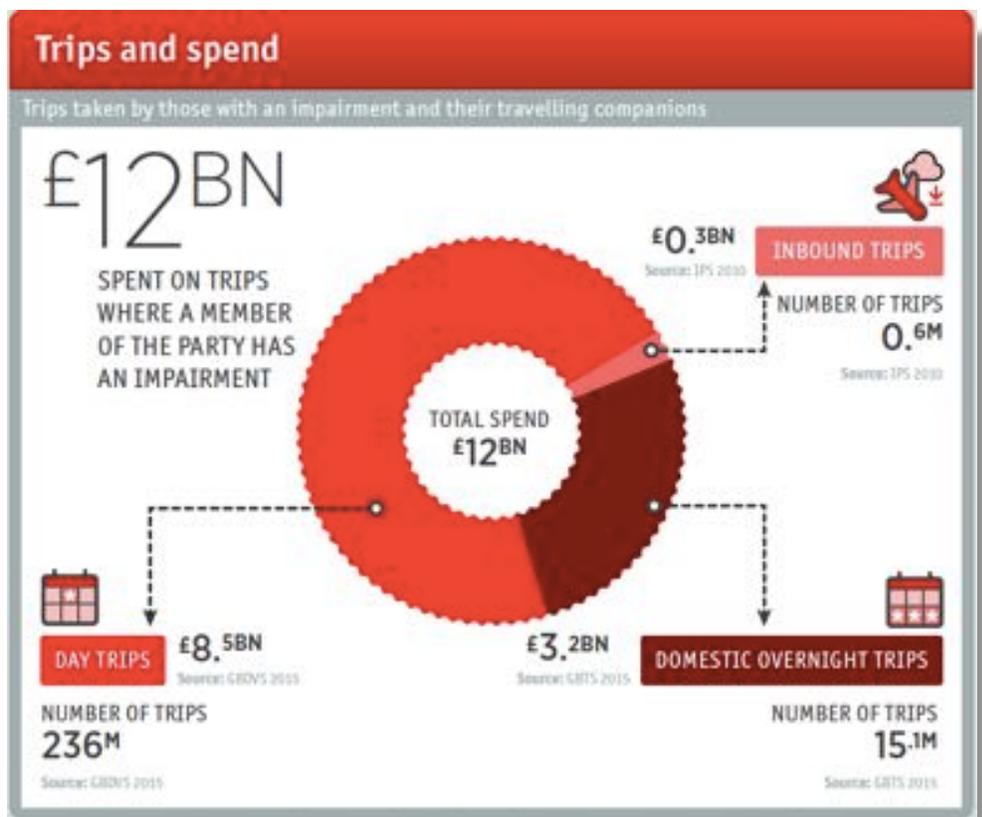
In England and Scotland, where visitor data has been gathered in recent years, market figures show that accessible tourism is playing an increasingly important role in the national tourism economy.

In order to capture relevant data, VisitEngland asked overnight visitors and those taking day trips **whether a member of the party they are travelling with has an impairment**. From the questions relating to their travel behaviour, spending and types of impairments the



following figures were obtained:

- Total trips in 2015 where a member of the party has an impairment: 251.7 Million
- Total value of trips in 2015 where a member of the party has an impairment: 12 Billion pounds
- Day trips, 2015: 236 Million visitors, who spent £Billion 8.5
- Domestic overnight trips: 15.1 Million visitors spent £Billion 3.2)



- Inbound trips, 2010: 0.6 Million visitors spent £Billion 0.3
- Total trips in 2013 - (285.6 Million)

- Total spend in 2013 (£Billion 12.4)

Length of stay and average spend is also greater for groups where a visitor has an impairment:

- Average length of stay: 3.3 nights against 2.9 for All
- Average spend: £191 against £184 for All.



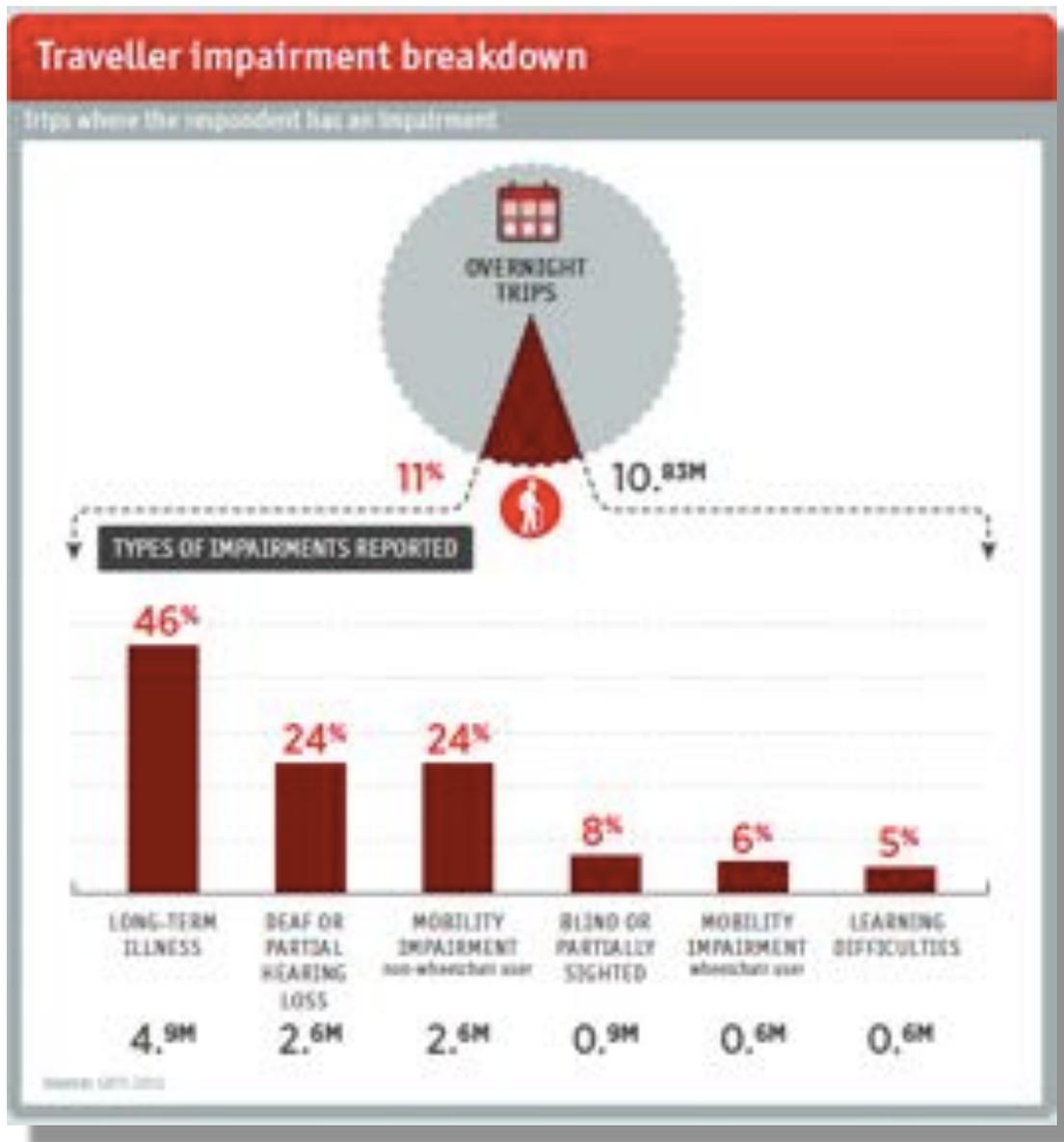
The figures also show some very positive overall trends among visitors with impairments:

- Increase in visitor numbers since 2009 (+19%)
- Increase in value since 2009 (+33%).

It is worth noting the types of impairments that visitors

declared in the VisitEngland surveys and their relative proportions. 10% of all overnight visitors or 9.8 million visitors disclosed their type of impairment.

The breakdown of types of impairments was as follows:



- Long-term illness: 4.6 million or 47%
- Mobility impairment (not wheelchair user): 2.42

million or 25%

- Deaf or partial hearing loss: 2.3 million or 24%
- Learning difficulties: 0.9% or 0.9 million
- Blind or partially-sighted: 0.75 million or 8%
- Mobility impaired (wheelchair user): 0.55 or 6%

VisitEngland's findings come as a surprise to many people, who assume that wheelchair users make up the largest number of visitors with access needs. From the [VisitEngland surveys \(EN\)](#) we see that, in this survey, wheelchair users are, in fact, the smallest proportion of visitors with access needs.

Visitor surveys have also been carried out using the same methodology in Scotland, where very similar trends are found.

At present there are no comparable surveys or statistics in most European countries, including Portugal.

## **Conclusion**

In keeping with these findings, there is increasing evidence that improvements to accessibility can increase sales, encourage repeat visits and bring higher average spend, also at the level of individual tourism businesses.

Tourist incomes, directly and indirectly, can provide finance for conservation and urban regeneration. Local businesses that make their facilities and offers accessible can increase their market share and also extend the traditional holiday seasons, as older visitors in particular tend to travel off-season and many travellers favour repeat visits to accessible destinations where they have

felt comfortable and secure. In addition, better access contributes to an improved quality of life for residents and tourists alike. Indeed, accessible tourism has the potential to benefit everyone.

## 2.4. MANAGEMENT OF TOURISM IN PORTUGAL

The National Tourism Policy is pursued by a coherent set of principles and rules governing tourism activities, organization, attributions and competences of public entities, as well as the exercise of professions which, for reasons of consumer safety and quality of service, require specific legal protection.

According to art. 17 of the Law of Establishment, are public agents of tourism, all the central, regional and local public entities with attributions in the planning, development and concretization of the policies of tourism, namely:

- a) The member of the Government responsible for the area of tourism;
- b) The national tourism authority;
- c) Regional tourism entities;
- d) The regional economic directorates;
- e) Regional coordination and development committees;
- f) The Institute for Nature Conservation and Biodiversity, I. P. (ICNB, IP);
- g) the autonomous regions;
- h) Local and Inter-municipal Authorities.

**Tourism Law, Decree-Law no. 191/2009, of 17 August**

The Law on the Portuguese Tourism Institute, I.P. DI 129/2012, of June 22, establishes the **Turismo de Portugal** as National Authority for Tourism, under the tutelage of the Ministry of Economy. It is a central body with jurisdiction over the whole national territory, whose mission is to support the investment of the tourism sector, the qualification and development of tourism infrastructures, the coordination and internal and external promotion of Portugal as a tourist destination and the development of training of human resources of the sector, having for this purpose schools of hotel and tourism that are territorially distributed services. Turismo de Portugal is also responsible for the regulation and supervision of games of chance (lottery/betting).

Regarding the management of the tourist activity in the Autonomous Regions of Madeira and the Azores, this is defined according to its own regulations.

Regarding Madeira: The Law on the Regional Secretariat for the Economy, Tourism and Culture of Madeira - Regional Regulatory Decree no. 4/2015 / M, of June 18, approves the organization of the Regional Secretariat for Economy, Tourism and Culture, which is responsible for defining, coordinating, implementing and evaluating regional policy in the sectors of economy and business, tourism, culture, commerce, industry and services, inspection of economic activities, transport, accessibility and mobility, energy, quality, entrepreneurship, innovation and support (...) to promote and develop, within the framework of the strategic guidelines applicable to the tourism sector and the respective action plans, measures favourable to the competitiveness of the regional tourist supply, at national and international level;

Regarding the Azores: the Law on the Regional Government of the Azores (where the Regional Secretariat is located) through Regional Regulatory Decree No. 9/2016 / A establishes the competences of the Regional Energy, Environment and Tourism Secretary.

As for the Continent: Law 33/2013 of 16 May establishes five regional tourism areas in mainland Portugal, which reflect the areas covered by the territorial units used for statistical purposes NUTS II - North, Center, Lisbon and Tagus Valley, Alentejo And Algarve.

This Law defines the legal regime for the organization and operation of regional tourism entities, which are responsible for enhancing and developing tourism potential and managing destinations in an integrated manner within the framework of regional tourism development in each of the corresponding areas, in accordance with the guidelines and tourism policy guidelines defined by the Government.

The management model encourages the involvement of private agents in the action of these entities. According to their respective statutes, regional tourism entities have the following names:

- Turismo do Porto and Northern Portugal, with headquarters based in Viana do Castelo;
- Turismo do Centro of Portugal, with headquarters based in Aveiro;
- Regional Entity of Tourism of the Lisbon Region, based in Lisbon;
- Tourism of the Alentejo, based in Beja;
- Algarve Tourist Region, based in Faro.

## Regional Tourism Promotion Agencies

For the external regional promotion, 7 Regional Tourism Promotion Agencies (ARPTs) are designated, which coordinate with each other and Turismo de Portugal, the execution of the National Plan for External Promotion.

There are 7 ARPTs that are responsible for the preparation, presentation and execution of the respective Regional Tourism Promotion Plans, which are part of a sub-plan of commercialization and sales of the companies. Correspond to the Promotional Areas of Porto and North, Center of Portugal, Lisbon, Alentejo, Algarve, Madeira and Azores.

Its activity is part of the External Tourism Promotion and Marketing model, defined for the period 2016-2018, which has the following main responsibilities:

- Tourism strategic sector of the economy,
- Intensification of direct partnerships with tourism companies.

The objectives of this model are:

- More effective promotion through greater cooperation between the public sector and the private sector;
- Increased integration between image promotion, commercial promotion and product;
- More coherence and more synergies;
- Strengthening the means, particularly financial means, at the disposal of promotion.

In this specific case, no legal document was issued for this purpose, resulting in the respective contractualisation

of the Protocols of Collaboration between Turismo de Portugal and the seven Agencies:

- Porto Tourism Association and Northern Portugal
- Central Portugal Tourism Association
- Lisbon Tourism Association
- Alentejo Tourism Association
- Algarve Tourism Association
- APM - Association of Promotion of the Autonomous Region of Madeira
- ATA - Azores Tourism Association.

## **2.5. ACCESSIBLE TOURISM IN PORTUGAL**

The National Tourism Strategy establishes an Action Plan to make Portugal a destination accessible to all.

Strategic guidelines have been developed to foster the creation of conditions to receive tourists with special access needs in tourist services, including accommodation, tourist entertainment, restaurants, etc.

### **2.5.1. PORTUGAL'S ALL FOR ALL PROGRAMME**

During the past three years the national tourism authority, Turismo de Portugal, has promoted a number of focused initiatives to stimulate and support destinations and tourism providers in their efforts to create and enhance services for this market.

Portugal's new [\*\*All for All Programmme \(PT\)\*\*](#) of Turismo de Portugal, launched in 2016, foresees the implementation of integrated actions for accessible tourist destinations, including cultural and leisure facilities,

beaches, transport, public areas; develop training and awareness-raising actions among tourist and public agents and entities; include accessibility information about venues and services in the promotional communications of the destinations.

As such, the All for All programme sets out the plans and gathers together the key guidance and planning tools for Portuguese DMOs and tourism enterprises in the field of accessible tourism.

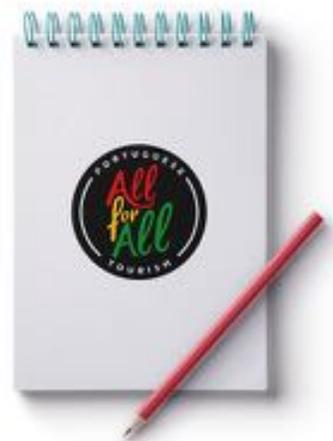
**The “All for All” 2016-18 Programme** initiated by Turismo de Portugal gives an important signal to destinations and businesses in Portugal that improved accessibility can play a key role in the future tourism strategy of the country. Moreover, the national tourist authority has announced a financial support programme for businesses, making available 5 million Euros in grants.

### **Accessible Tourism Support Line:**

5 Million Euros for private and public projects

The line of support for the financing of projects of companies (tourism enterprises, restaurants, tourist animation, travel agencies) and of public entities (municipalities, regional tourism entities, museum managers and monuments) is open for physical and service adaptations, So as to make tourism available to all. The financial support is 90% of the investment up to the limit of 200 thousand euros per project.

Consult the Information Sheet of the Accessible Tourism Helpline.



See also: the Regulatory Order No. 11/2016, of October 28, which regulates the Accessible Tourism Support Line (References in Portuguese).

See: [All for All Programme website \(PT\)](#)

Turismo de Portugal has already carried out a number of actions to develop the knowledge base and practical expertise in accessible tourism delivery. Guides for specific types of facilities and other resources are available from the All for All website and also at the [Accessible Tourism section in the Turismo de Portugal Website \(PT\)](#).

## 3. DESTINATION PLANNING

### 3.1. DEVELOPING A POLICY FRAMEWORK

**The foundation of any accessible tourism policy is to take the political decision to create an accessible, inclusive tourist destination for all visitors.** This decision must be followed up by concrete objectives, plans and actions to establish an appropriate strategy and guide future development.

Policies at destination level are inevitably influenced by national and regional policies, not only in the field of tourism but in many other related sectors, such as physical planning and development, transportation, cultural heritage and others.

Accessibility is widely recognised as a “horizontal” policy theme which requires the engagement of **all sectors** if the needs of people with disabilities and others with specific access requirements are to be respected.

The decision to improve access in a destination is not only a technical matter. Being able to cater for the accessible tourism market requires a strategic approach, where many factors must be examined and existing practices in management and service delivery must be aligned with the new policy approach. Essentially, many actors and stakeholders must work together in new ways to reach the goal of an accessible, inclusive, sustainable destination, and to market accessible tourism effectively.

### 3.1.1. ACCESSIBLE TOURISM BUILDING BLOCKS

In order to develop an accessible tourism destination a DMO will depend on several sources of information and support. The main “building blocks” are shown in the following diagram.

**Figure 3-1. Building Blocks for Accessible Tourism Destinations**



These building blocks include a range of important factors for fostering an accessible destination. Here some key references for Portuguese DMOs, linking to the above building blocks, are indicated:

**Block 1. A National Strategy on Accessible Tourism with a clearly elaborated vision and aims.**

The [“All for All” Programme \(PT\)](#) developed by Turismo de Portugal serves as the main source of guidance and as a support structure for developing accessible destinations in Portugal.

**Block 2. Government legislation and national Standards** play a crucial role in setting a fair and equal framework within which all operators must work .

According to the National Policy for Rehabilitation, accessibility is strategically considered a prerequisite for the full exercise of the rights of persons with disabilities and of all persons experiencing a situation of functional limitation throughout their lives.

Accessibility covers a wide range of issues from support products to access to buildings and various forms of transportation.

Since accessibility is crucial to enable an autonomous life and the use of generally available goods and services, legislation and action plans have been adopted in Portugal requiring public and private entities to ensure accessibility in public spaces, collective and public facilities and buildings, transports, and information and communication, including new information technologies.

Since 1977, Portugal has established as a top priority the aim to combat physical, architectural and communication barriers, through a consolidated law on accessibility (**Decree-Law 163/2006**, of 8 August, which replaced Decree-Law 123/97 of 22 May).

With respect to tourism, a national Standard NP 4523/2014 **Accessible Tourism in Hotel Establishments** was published, as a result of the work developed by Technical Commission 144 - Tourism

Services, within the scope of the Subcommittee 8 - Accessible Tourism, providing the national norms with a quality benchmark which allows these tourism enterprises to stand out for the provision of a service, which provides tourism, effectively, for all.

The edition of NP 4523/2014, now implemented, allows the certification process to be started by companies that - voluntarily - implement it in their services.

The intention is to make available to the tourism sector an instrument to facilitate the meeting between the "supply" and the "demand" that provides all potential customers with a reliable indication that conditions are guaranteed to receive them and that clear and objective information is made available at the level of infrastructure and service

This Standard can be purchased by contacting the [Portuguese Quality Institute](#).

### **Block 3. Research and Education and the Business Case**

The third “building block” signals the importance of research and educational institutes in the production of knowledge and the development of training and education in support of tourism accessibility. Portuguese academic institutions and training bodies have been active in this field over the past decade, with publications, conferences, workshops and projects contributing to the fund of knowledge and information at national and regional levels.

The Estoril Higher Institute for Tourism and Hotel Studies, and Instituto Politécnico de Leiria have held seminars and

conferences for national and international participants during recent years where new research findings and case studies have been presented.

There is a clear need for further Portuguese examples that can show a profitable “business case” in the accessible tourism market. DMOs should make themselves aware of tourism research institutes and networks that are contributing to the development of accessible tourism expertise in the country.

It is highly beneficial to develop a structure for **Introductory Workshops for Destination Managers** to be delivered at the local level, introducing them to the principles of Accessible Destinations, how to develop them and the benefits to be gained.

DMOs should also participate in online forums and it could be of great benefit to establish a national **Online Forum for Destination Managers, Planners and Businesses on Accessible Tourism** to ask questions, exchange information, share best practice and experiences, case studies, and so on.

#### **Block 4. Destination Management – Delivering Accessible Tourism**

This “building block” refers to all the managerial and practical elements that are described in this Handbook. This includes the development of organisational structures within DMOs and local networks to foster accessible tourism, through self-support and collaboration with stakeholders.

Managers in DMOs need to develop a clear strategy that sets out actions, responsibilities, and timelines relating to

the messages, training and tools needed to support everyone involved.

Good communication, both internally with all staff, partners and stakeholders will be key to success in developing Accessible Tourism. It is important that both internal and external actors understand why you are looking to develop and improve inclusion in the destination, what their role will be and the role they will play.

The later Sections of this handbook explain how this is done in practice.

As you start the process of making your destination fully inclusive and welcome to all you will need to ensure:

- That everyone in your organisation understands the principles of Accessible or Inclusive Destinations, who the beneficiaries are and how they benefit.
- Each member of staff understands the role that they will play in this development and identify any training needs they may have.
- You have an understanding, through using this Handbook and other resources, of how you can develop accessibility in partnership with key stakeholders. (See [Section 9 Stakeholder Engagement](#))

Your recognised Champion and those of your stakeholder partners have an important role to play at this stage, as they need to communicate to their staff and others the commitment that is being made to this development (see: [Section 9. The Need for Access Champions](#) ).

The definition of accessible tourism was given in the [Introduction](#) section of this Handbook. Essentially, the goal of accessible tourism policies is to widen the availability and accessibility of tourism offers to all customers, regardless of their age or abilities. To achieve this, every DMO needs a policy framework to address:

1. the identification of access barriers
2. the removal or reduction of access barriers to the greatest extent possible,
3. the development of inclusive, accessible services and offers
4. marketing and promotion of the accessible destination, its businesses and tourism products.

Beyond these objectives, the policy framework should support a continuous process of learning and improvement among public officials and stimulate private tourism businesses to adopt principles and methods in support of inclusion and access, so as to ensure that all future development actions and initiatives will be in line with the overall goal of Accessible Tourism for All.

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### 3.1.2. OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO ACCESS AND INCLUSION

Three key barriers prevent businesses from becoming increasingly accessible:

- infrastructure and physical barriers,
- financial barriers and
- knowledge and information barriers.

All European Member States have legislation in place, which addresses **physical accessibility of the built environment**. These include general building regulations and laws and, in many cases, there is specific access legislation for parts of the tourism sector (e.g. hotels). However, regulatory provisions on accessibility tend to be applied mainly when new buildings are being planned and conformity assessment procedures can be weak. Historical buildings and environments, in particular, can present access challenges but there is an increasing body of knowledge and expertise which is helping to overcome these difficulties in sensitive and creative ways.

- DMOs need to be in the forefront of efforts to improve accessibility of the physical infrastructure, both in the public realm and in visitor attractions.  
See: [Section 5. Built Environment and Facilities](#).

With respect to **financial barriers**, businesses are largely unaware or cautious of the market potential and the business case for investing in the accessible tourism market.

- DMOs need to be made aware of the sound business case for Accessible Tourism and shown how policies and practices which prioritise accessibility and inclusion can lead to good returns on investment. Access should be seen as a “horizontal” theme which must be part of every initiative.  
See: [Section 2. Accessible Tourism Market](#) for background information.

Business Case Studies on accessible tourism destinations are still sporadic, especially at local level,

being limited to relatively few countries and locations and, as yet, there is no systematic data collection across Europe or agreed indicators that can be used to guide businesses and public sector actors.

**Knowledge and information barriers** should be addressed by using case studies and best practices of successful destinations and businesses to explore the mechanisms that lead to success in this market sector.

**Case studies conducted for the European Commission in 2013-14** show that successful accessible destinations are emerging across Europe through development initiatives conducted by public-private partnerships, often coupled with know-how provided by third sector associations including, for example, disability and consumer NGOs, chambers of tourism enterprises and stakeholder networks at regional, national and European levels. However, despite an emerging awareness of accessibility, this market is still largely considered a niche market.



### Figure 3-2. Boarding ramp, Barcelona Cruise Port

From the evidence of [15 case studies of accessible destinations \(EN\)](#) prepared by ENAT for the European Commission, it is observed that:

- Destinations that are attracting and benefitting from the accessible tourism market have clearly articulated policies and a strategy approach addressing accessibility
- Support for local tourism providers with awareness-raising and incentive schemes plays a key role in developing suitable products and services suited to the diverse needs of customers.
- The marketing approach taken by a destination or business should be differentiated, so as to attract customers to the specific offers that are relevant to them.

## 3.2. DEVELOPING THE DESTINATION STRATEGY: PLANNING CHECKLIST

From experiences in regions and cities across Europe, it is evident that, in order to create a destination with accessible and inclusive experiences for all, it is necessary to develop an Accessibility Action Plan, involving political decision-makers, city planners and technical managers, as well as businesses and citizens.

To bring tourism and tourism offers more strongly into focus, it is recommended that every destination (that is, municipality, city, locality) should work closely with the Regional Destination Management Organisation (DMO). The DMO has the responsibility to liaise with all relevant actors and stakeholders, including public authorities and

agencies, business chambers, non-profit and non-governmental associations, cultural operators and educational institutions to harness the creativity and energy which is needed to develop a coordinated and forceful plan of action to enhance tourism offers.

As part of its responsibilities the DMO would maintain a single official web portal which signposts all tourism information and offers in the destination. The portal should be an accessible website and would clearly mark accessible tourism information and offers on the Home Page.

**Accessibility should become a key feature of the destination's "brand".**

To achieve this goal the following management actions are recommended :

1. Establish a responsible office at local/destination level to cooperate with the regional Tourism Destination Management Organisation (DMO). (It is likely that this office already exists but if not, it should be created).
2. Establish an Accessibility Management Team and Technical Working Group to develop an Accessibility Action Plan, involving stakeholder organisations, to implement and maintain the accessibility of infrastructure and accessible tourism offers of the destination.
3. Train technical personnel in the destination to increase their knowledge and competences in planning and implementing accessibility measures.
4. Implement accessibility in renovations and new constructions in the city in a consistent and correct

way, according to Portuguese Accessibility Guidelines giving the same high standard, impression and message to citizens and tourists. [See Reference List in Annex.](#)

5. Renovate and upgrade, as necessary the accessibility of infrastructure in transportation ensuring that there is equitable and independent access for passengers with disabilities.
6. Prioritise the purchase of accessible public transport vehicles and ensure the provision of wheelchair accessible taxis for private hire.
7. Establish a Tourism Information Office (if not already in place) in a central location which is accessible and equipped to inform visitors and users of its website about accessibility of facilities, transport and services.
8. Maintain a single official web portal which signposts all tourism information and offers in the destination. The portal should be an accessible website and should clearly mark accessible tourism information, clearly indicated from the Home Page.
9. Create accessible, cultural pedestrian routes, based on the principles, methods and proposals developed through a targeted project with technical specialists and user representatives. [See Section 5 of this Handbook.](#)
10. Cooperate with private and public sector to make accessibility audits of all major tourist Points of Interest, and plans for improvement where necessary. See [Section 9 Stakeholder Engagement](#)

11. Establish awareness-raising, incentives and support actions to encourage businesses and stakeholders (shops, small business owners, hotel owners, churches, tourism businesses and attractions, event organisers, NGOs, etc.) to improve and promote their accessibility, e.g. establish an annual access award for businesses and publicity/marketing scheme for all accessible businesses in the destination.
12. Engage NGOs and other stakeholders in the development and publication of on-line **Access information** describing, for example, the accessibility of pedestrian routes and Points of Interest, hotels, restaurants, cafés, shops, transport facilities and other parts of the tourism supply chain, making it easier for citizens and tourists to find, plan and book accessible experiences in the destination. Information can be delivered through the mobile App, TUR4ALL, currently under development. See **Section 13: [Accessible websites and Apps](#)**
13. Create an Accessible Shopping Guide with a catalogue of accessible shops and businesses (as one of the incentives to businesses to make their premises accessible). See also **Section 13: [Accessible websites and Apps](#)**
14. Establish training programmes for managers and personnel in the tourism, hospitality and transport sectors in disability awareness and customer care in order to create a better welcome for all visitors
15. Work with voluntary and advocacy organisations (including disabled people's associations) to provide volunteer assistance for people with disabilities who

are attending, for example, festivals, religious tourism or other events.

16. Utilise the Accessible Tourism funding programme of Turismo de Portugal, “All for All” and, where possible, European Union funding Programmes to develop accessible infrastructure, transport, venues and destinations and cooperate with other destinations in Portugal and with other countries.
17. Join ENAT and/or national or regional accessible tourism networks, to access resources and learn about good practices for inspiration and to disseminate the results of your efforts to peers.

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### 3.2.1. ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION SCHEMES

NTOs and destinations increasingly partner with national or regional Accessibility Information Schemes (AIS) that are combined with other information channels, marketing tools and technologies such as mobile apps to create greater visibility for their offers.

A Portuguese AIS, Associação Salvador, was active for several years at the Website: [www.Portugalaccessivel.com](http://www.Portugalaccessivel.com) but the site is now closed.

In 2017 a new national AIS is planned to start, serving Portuguese tourism destinations and businesses under the title of “TUR4ALL”. The NGO, Accessible Portugal is developing this service in collaboration with Turismo de Portugal, and Vodafone Portugal and PREDIF, a Spanish NGO of people with disabilities, and it is anticipated that this AIS will be of particular value to DMOs and

accessible tourism enterprises. ([See Section 13: Marketing and Promotion](#)).

At international level the accessible tourism market has lacked visibility and coherence, partly because marketing takes place via many small, local channels, with few internationally oriented channels. Accessibility Information Schemes are often run purely with an information focus by NGOs, rather than with a commercial focus by actual businesses and they therefore remain underused as a marketing tool.

An EU Study in 2014 has shown that while more than half of providers that specialise in accessible services are affiliated with an AIS, only 26% of *mainstream* providers are affiliated with an accessible scheme, showing that there may be some hesitation to be seen as part of the “accessibility market”. This, of course, reduces the visibility of accessible offers in the mainstream supply, which in turn may lead to lower uptake of these services.

Another barrier for the tourism industry to improve its accessible offer relates to staff knowledge and information. There is confusion among industry players around what accessibility means, how it is defined, what needs to be done to comply with legislation and what can be done to tap into the market. This must be addressed by having a clearly training policy in place, to give destination managers and providers knowledge of accessibility and customer care. The DMO should also collaborate, for example with professional training organisations, accessible tourism networks, business chambers and NGOs to develop training offers for tourism providers in destinations through dedicated Continuing

Professional Development, workshops and other forms of formal and informal learning.

See also [Section 11. Training](#)

### 3.2.2. ACCESSIBLE TOURISM NETWORKS

Having access to knowledge, best practices and practical support gives a DMO useful tools for devising its policy and strategy for accessible tourism development. It is important to learn the concepts, the vocabulary and the methods that relate to access and inclusion and, essentially, to avoid making mistakes, including the age-old error of “re-inventing the wheel”.

One way to become conversant with the issues and become aware of best practices in accessible tourism is to join a peer network of DMOs and other tourism providers or professionals who are working in this field.

**[ENAT – The European Network for Accessible Tourism \(EN, PT and other languages\)](#)** is a non-profit association based in Brussels, with a wide and varied group of members, including several organisations and tourism businesses in Portugal.

Members can access a large amount of information via the ENAT website and can participate in conferences, seminars and meetings where accessible tourism is discussed. The website includes an Events Calendar, descriptions of projects and Best Practices and up-to-date News on major issues.

ENAT also offers its members the possibility to sign up to the **[ENAT Code of Good Conduct \(EN\)](#)** which is a label



and certificate showing a high commitment to service in accessible tourism. About 90 organisations have signed up to the Code.

Accessible tourism destinations and services are also actively promoted by ENAT through the dedicated [European Accessible Tourism Directory, Pantou \(EN\)](#), an online database supported by the European Union. Pantou serves DMOs and Accessibility Information Schemes by publicising accessible venues and services.



An example of an active network in Portugal is the [BRENDAIT Accessible Destinations Network \(PT\)](#) established by Turismo do Centro and partners, aiming at “Building a Regional Network for the Development of Accessible and Inclusive Tourism”.



The BRENDAIT Project is the conception and application of a pilot methodology to dynamise the transformation of a territory into an accessible and inclusive tourist destination. The project is based on the development of a regional partnership in Central Portugal involving several public and private agents of the tourist value chain (hotels, restaurants, tourist animation companies, museums, monuments, transportation, tourist information points, etc.) as well as the Social sector.

Over the 18 month project period, BRENDAIT partners have helped to qualify the process of introducing the concepts of accessible tourism to destination managers and service providers, with the following results:

1. Training providers to diagnose the service - taught to do own self-assessments of accessibility
2. Giving front desk professionals the skills to welcome and cater for persons with disabilities
3. Training session on accessibility marketing and sales, with management of the tourism companies and those who have marketing responsibilities
4. Created new, accessible touristic products and packages based on several hotels
5. Individual support and consultancy to the network members
6. Inclusive citizenship: involving the wider value chain with municipalities, engaging with locals and involving the social institutions to keep initiatives going
7. Creation of real products and tourism packages - showing that the providers are reaching the end result e.g. new offers for people with visual impairments.

The BRENDAIT project period ends in 2017, after which the partners are expected to maintain the regional network. Read more about the project on-line:

[BRENDAIT project description by PERFIL \(EN\)](#)

BRENDAIT Project website (PT):

### 3.3. POLICY RESOURCES

Development of an accessible tourism policy for a destination is an iterative process requiring the involvement of internal and external partners.

Consulting existing resources in accessibility and tourism policy is an important step in establishing a DMO's own priorities and positioning one's destination at the forefront of developments. Policies need to consider short, medium and long-term goals and should be attuned to general developments in EU and national tourism policy as well as local interests and priorities .

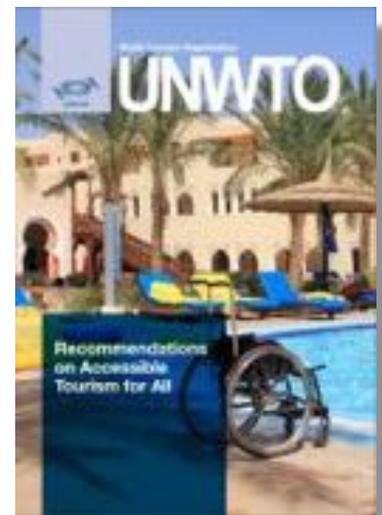
The next sections show some key examples of accessible tourism policy resources are shown.

### 3.3.1. UNWTO RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANUAL ON ACCESSIBLE TOURISM FOR ALL

The UN World Tourism Organisation first issued its **Recommendations on Accessible Tourism for All** in 2005, with an updated version in 2013. This short document contains an overview of recommended policies and actions that national tourism authorities and destinations should consider when addressing issue of inclusion and access in the tourism sector.

The Recommendations are meant to be used as a general, basic mainstreaming framework for ensuring that people with disabilities have access to the physical environment, the transportation system, information and communications channels, as well as to a wide range of public facilities and services.

The Recommendations incorporate the most relevant aspects of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities of 2006 and the principles of Universal Design.



The **UNWTO Manual on Accessible Tourism for All** is a useful resource for planning tourist destinations, with examples of Principles, Tools and Good Practices in Accessible Tourism. It is a series of five publications available free of charge from the UNWTO website. The UNWTO manuals on Accessible Tourism are all available in Spanish and some have been translated to English.

Source:

[UNWTO downloads \(EN, ES\)](#)



### 3.3.2. DECLARATION FROM THE WORLD SUMMIT ON DESTINATIONS FOR ALL

The key messages emanating from the 1<sup>st</sup> World Summit on Destinations for All, held in Montreal in October 2014 targets the actions of different stakeholders in an effort to promote accessible tourism under the heading, “A World for Everyone”. The main points of the Declaration follow the UNWTO Recommendations (referred to above), and are summarised as follows:

a). For Tourism, travel and transportation operators and intermediaries:

- Seize the business opportunity to widen the market base by applying the principles of Universal Design to the design of visitor information, tourism websites, transportation, facilities and services. Invest in capacity building, focusing on accessibility and disability awareness and the formation of accessible tourism supply chains.



b). For local authorities:

- Ensure that the principles of Universal Design and sustainable development are applied in new construction or renovation of buildings, public spaces and in public services, including transportation. Establish a Destination Management function to foster accessible and inclusive tourism, in cooperation with businesses, public sector and third sector stakeholders.

c). For governments and national authorities:

- Prioritise accessible tourism policies in public agencies, including National Tourist Boards, educational and training institutions, and enterprises providing public goods or services. Apply accessibility standards and guidelines. Promote employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for persons with disabilities in the tourism sector.

d). For International stakeholders:

Urge regional and international organizations to observe the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and to mainstream accessibility standards in all tourism products and services, working with all tourism industry stakeholders.

The full text of the Montreal Declaration can be consulted at the following links:

- [Portuguese text \(PDF document\)](#)
- [Portuguese text \(WORD document\)](#)
- [English \(and other languages\) text](#)

### 3.4. The Need for Access Champions

Many successful DMOs have recognised the value of an “Access Champion” as a person who provides a focal point and a public relations boost to the access policies and efforts of a destination. Access Champions can add value in many aspects of process and at many levels, from seeking support funding for projects and programmes to raising awareness in the local community, engaging stakeholders and winning political support.

DMOs may seek out an access champion:

- within industry representative organisations
- within individual businesses
- from the world of sport, entertainment or other cultural activity with a high degree of local exposure and support.

Access Champions can:

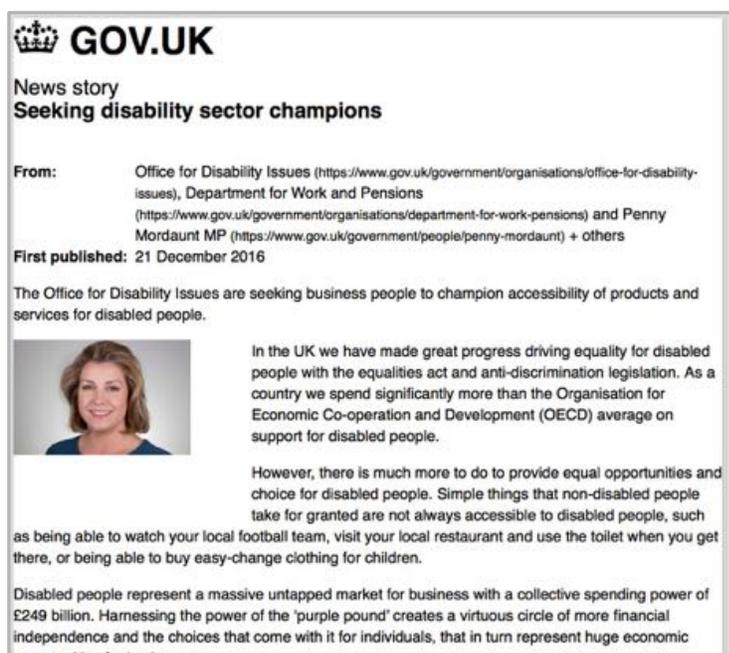
- reinforce the engagement of businesses and intermediaries who can influence and support SMEs; e.g. chambers of commerce, banks, associations etc.
- spearhead campaigns, events and projects
- represent the destination in wider fora.

In addition to the Access Champion, wherever possible, DMOs should involve local organisations of people with disabilities, older citizens, families and other target market groups, both to learn from them and to engage them in public relations and awareness activities.

### 3.4.1. UK GOVERNMENT SEEKS DISABILITY SECTOR CHAMPIONS

An example of how Access Champions are viewed in public policy is the UK Government’s **Call for Access Champions for the Disability Sector**, issued as an open online invitation in December 2016.

Part of the government’s call text is shown below.



**Figure 3-3. UK Government issues open call for "Access Champions" in Tourism and other sectors, December 2016.**

Tourism is one of the business areas where a national Access Champion is called for. Headlined by the government minister for the Office of Disability Issues, the call seeks “...*business people to become sector champions who will become a catalyst for change by championing accessibility of products and services for disabled people and unlocking [their] spending power of 249 Billion pounds [289 Billion EURO].*”

### 3.5. STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS AND WORKSHOPS

Work with partners in the destination to understand their needs and the contribution they can make to the plan. This can be done by conducting a **survey** to find out their existing levels of knowledge, expertise and any best practices that may be present in the destination relating to Accessible Tourism.

You may identify some who people have some knowledge and understanding of this area of tourism development and they could be a useful resource to help you move forward. The survey should help you understand the level of training that will be required and the tools which your businesses will require to help them make changes with confidence.

Success is likely to be achieved where there is strong 'buy-in' for this development from your staff and other stakeholders. A sense of ownership is also important. Businesses need to understand the benefits of accessibility for themselves, their customers and the destination and work towards a common strategy and action plan towards becoming a more inclusive destination.

Consider creating a small team internally from across all departments in the management team that comes together to act as internal 'Champions' to help develop accessibility by sharing information and ensuring that any strategic actions are being delivered.

A good starting point is to hold **internal workshops** to introduce all staff to the concept of Accessible Tourism.

- The workshop is an opportunity to explain what Accessible Tourism is, and why you are producing a strategy to develop this in your destination.
- It should seek to help each member of staff to understand their role in this development and what new skills they may have to acquire with further training.
- A Workshop may include:
  - The size and value of the market.
  - Identify the beneficiaries of Accessible Tourism.
  - Understand the benefits to businesses and the destination.
  - Understand the market, the range of access requirements and how these can be met by the destination and local businesses. Ensure that representatives of local access / disability groups are involved in this.
  - Present a draft strategy and proposed key actions, seek comments from staff
  - Understand how marketing and information provision will need to reflect a change in approach e.g. development of accessible website and alternative formats offered when providing information. Content changes to reflect more information provided about accessibility of the destination and the businesses.

Further workshops with Stakeholders should be held to present similar content as above, in addition it should include:

- Introduction to any network and resources you may provide to support them (see [Section 9 Stakeholder Engagement](#) )

To ensure the initial workshops forge the development of an active group:

- Develop an **online forum** where businesses can ask questions, share information and good practice to learn from each other, for example understanding which are the good suppliers of accessibility aids and equipment.
- Facilitate businesses coming together, via the forum and any other communication channels, to help create **self-support groups** that can work closely together, and where appropriate, share development costs. For example smaller accommodation providers may collectively purchase appropriate equipment for someone who is deaf and share this resource.

### 3.5.1. CONDUCT A VISITOR SURVEY

Carrying out a Visitor Survey at your destination, with a focus on accessibility and visitors' experiences and requirements can help identify trends in customer travel behaviour and reveal weak spots in the facilities and services on offer.

VisitScotland has made a [Visitor Survey Toolkit \(EN\) PDF document](#) which gives destinations a useful guide to gathering information. The Toolkit explains what to consider when commissioning an outside contractor to do



the work and also gives guidance when making an in-house visitor survey for a local area.

### 3.5.2. STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS

As the DMO or lead organisation, you will have a lead responsibility on engaging with the local stakeholders. You should work closely with Stakeholders to identify levels of knowledge about Accessible Tourism and assess training needs and identify suitable tools and resources, suited to the local context.

Actions include:

- Developing a structure for introductory workshops for Destination Managers to be delivered at the local level, introducing them to the principles of Accessible Destinations, how to develop them and the benefits to be gained.
- Providing an online forum for Destination Managers, Planners, businesses etc. to ask questions, exchange information, share best practice and experiences, case studies
- Working with local tourism organisations and professionals such as tourist guides and tour operators.

From these workshops, participants can be encouraged to develop their role to enable self-support within these groups. Questions which the DMO might consider include:

- Who needs to be involved?
- How to establish local structural committee/working group, partnerships?

- How should it be managed?
- Who should be responsible for managing the outputs?
- Why is this important, who needs to be involved?
- How does our work relate to national policies for tourism development?
- Local priorities
- Assets
- Gaps
- Setting targets
- Policy Roadmap

## 4. SUPPORTING BUSINESSES

This Section examines how DMOs can reach out to businesses in the Accessible Tourism supply chain, and engage them in the accessible destination development strategy.

### 4.1. ENCOURAGING BUSINESSES TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY

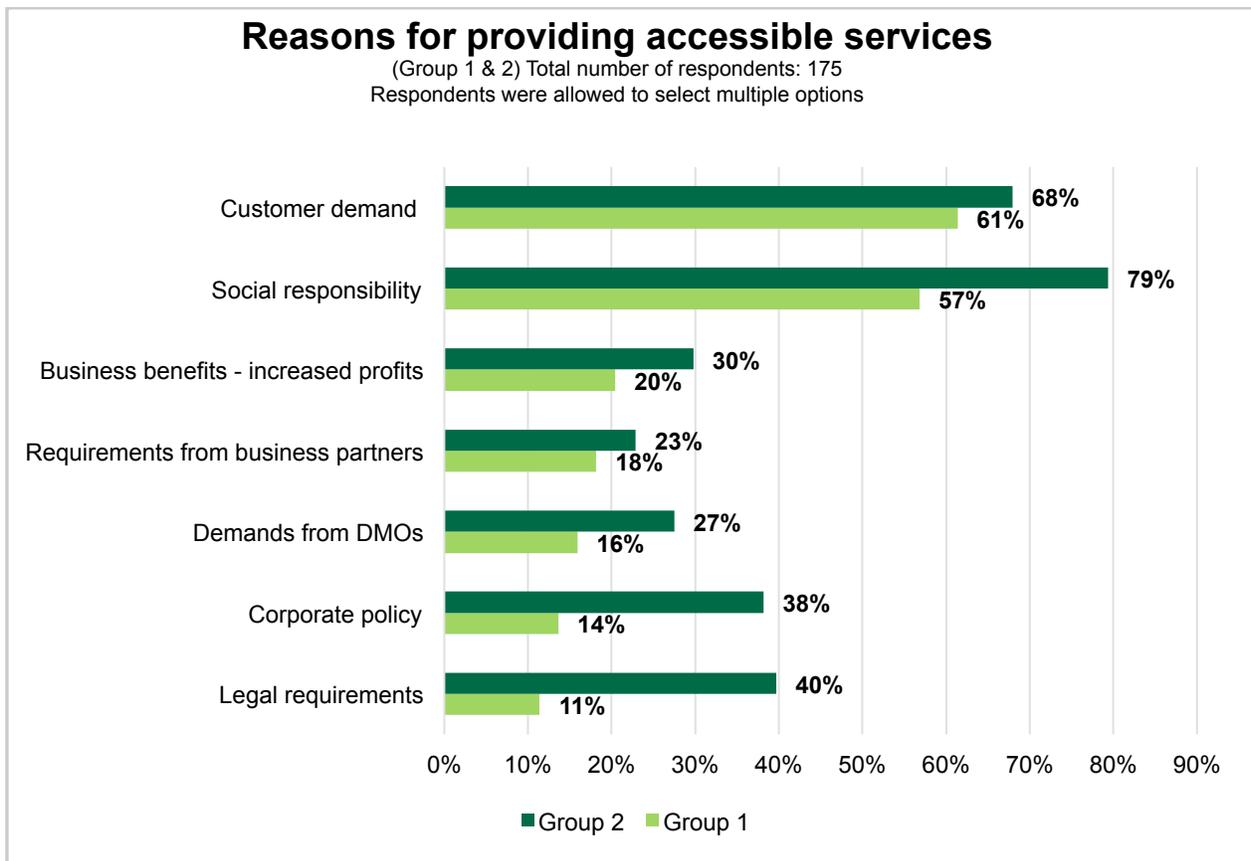
National and Regional as well as City/Municipal DMOs have key roles to play in encouraging and supporting businesses in their efforts to improve accessibility. DMOs must consider various factors when establishing a policy and strategy, not only in terms of which supports can be developed but also how to reach and engage with businesses that may be hesitant or sceptical about addressing the accessible tourism market.

Every tourism business occupies a unique space in the tourism supply chain, with its own particular set of business relationships, its customer base and the human, physical and economic resources it can apply to any future development plan. There is no simple formula that motivates all businesses to move in the direction of establishing an accessible tourism strategy but it may be seen that business owners and managers are motivated by a mixture of factors that influence their decisions.

A good starting point for DMOs is to encourage an open dialogue with local tourism enterprises, laying out the possibilities (using best practice examples and case studies) and exploring, with businesses, what holds them

back and what might lead them to adopt new ideas and new ways of delivering tourism – for all.

The [EU Study on Supply of Accessible Tourism Services in Europe \(EN\) 2014](#) examined, among other things, why tourism businesses provide accessible tourism services. The following figure shows some of the answers among a sample of 175 enterprises in Europe.



**Figure 4-1. Reasons for tourism businesses to provide accessible services**

In the figure, the dark green bars represent businesses that already provide some accessible services while the

light green bars show those that do not consider their services to be accessible.

The graph clearly shows that **customer demand** is a high priority for both groups, but those businesses that have engaged already in this market are more inclined to cite “social responsibility” as the main reason.

Emphasising the **business benefits** of engaging with the accessible tourism market is likely to win over many managers whose first priority is to maintain market share or grow their business. Showing examples of successful businesses demonstrates the value of the market and the strategic importance of adapting products and services.

It should be recognised, however, that some small businesses in the tourism sector, for example a family-run bed and breakfast establishment, may not want to grow their business, as they have limited resources and no ambition to take on more work. For these businesses, their motivation may be to **improve the quality and desirability of their offer**. For these business owners it is important to show how focusing on accessibility can increase comfort, safety and well-being of guests, for example by offering more personalised services and an adapted environment.

SMEs typically need time to prepare and they will also benefit from support by the DMO when implementing changes in their business practices. At local level, small businesses are unlikely to “go it alone” and will mainly prefer to act in a collaborative way with those businesses and public sector partners they already know and trust.

DMOs can assist the process of change by creating an organisational framework for cooperation, which builds on

existing relationships and supports joint actions. This is especially important for developing an accessible tourism destination, as service providers will invariably need to work with other businesses to create “joined-up” accessible products and offers for the clientele of visitors with access requirements. For establishing and implementing an accessibility strategy the DMO needs to focus on:

- Developing partnerships to deliver strategy and development plans
- Assisting businesses in developing their individual access plan
- Ensuring access is mainstreamed and covered in all policy and strategy development, in particular where the public sector is concerned
- Working with intermediaries, such as Chambers of Hotels or professional associations,
- Providing practical information and resources that can be adapted and used locally for presentations, training sessions, etc. for example:
  - PowerPoint presentations
  - Leaflets
  - Brochures
  - Fact sheets
  - Checklists.
  - Case Studies.

## 4.2. INCENTIVES AND SUPPORT ACTIONS

Specific incentives and support actions may be offered by National or Regional Tourism Organisations and DMOs to encourage uptake of new “accessible” practices among

tourism businesses. Some examples of different incentives from regions and countries in Europe are given below:

- **Turisme de Catalunya** offered free accessibility audits to businesses throughout the territory at the start of their accessible tourism initiative, thus generating a database of access information covering 6,315 tourism providers. The database has become a resource for tourism marketing campaigns in more than 20 destinations, directed towards visitors with access needs. It also provides the basic information for a dedicated website for the Region of Catalunya, where tourists are able to search for accessible venues and activities that suit them.
- For several years, **Tourism Flanders** (VisitFlanders) has offered free access audits to its tourism SMEs, provided by trained staff. Information gathered by the auditors is used to design an access plan. Where grants are given for improvements to tourism infrastructure, business owners must implement the necessary accessibility improvements to bring their property up to the new norms.
- VisitScotland made an **Accessible and Inclusive Events Guide** in 2016, aimed towards event organisers and tourism businesses. The guide (described in [Section 8.2 “Organising Inclusive Events”](#)) gives advice on how to ensure that all aspects of an event are inclusive and accessible, from publicity and ticketing to planning the facilities and providing any support services that may be required. After producing the guide, VisitScotland

decided that approval of applications for public grants in support of events should, in future, only be given to applicants who respect the inclusive event guidelines. By making public support conditional on meeting access requirements, events in Scotland will be accessible for more visitors. At the same time, using the guideline in this way creates equal conditions for all event organisers, based on clear access requirements.

Where DMOs can take the lead in local tourism development, providing coordination and support, then incentives for businesses are more likely to prove useful and effective, both for the individual businesses themselves and for the destination as a whole.

In Portugal, the Municipality of Lousã provided a framework for an accessible destination development project designed to encourage local businesses to develop offers for the accessible tourism market.

#### 4.2.1. EXAMPLE: LOUSA ACCESSIBLE TOURISM DESTINATION

Lousã is a medium size village in the central region of Portugal with a strong connection to the Lousã Mountain that inspires most of the life in Lousã, including tourism.

Although the task presented itself difficult – particularly in the mountain areas - with the guidance and the direction of the City Hall in collaboration with the economical and civil society, most of the touristic products and destinations at Lousã today have a high level of accessibility.



This is mostly due to a project named “**Lousã, Accessible Tourist Destination**” between 2008 and 2011, that enhanced the accessibility to public and private buildings and locations while helping to bring awareness to the subject of multiple forms of accessibility.

Lousã’s civil society has, from some time now, been open to the subject of accessibility and inclusion. This is due to the influence of ARCIL (a local organization dedicated to the rehabilitation and inclusion of citizens with disabilities in Lousã) and to the projects sponsored by the City Hall.

Most employers at Lousã – big and small – understood that it was important to have good accessibility conditions both for their clients (a market to cater for) and for their employees, to assure that the working conditions were suitable for those with access requirements.

As an incentive for businesses to participate in the project and market the destination the City Hall, issued an accreditation in the form of a label, the “Accessible Stamp”, that recognized the businesses that achieved a desired level of accessibility. This was and is particularly important in the tourist business. Over 130 local businesses achieved the label.

**Read more** about the Lousã accessible tourism project in the European Commission Case Study, downloadable as a PDF document:

See: [European Commission Case Study: Lousã Accessible Tourism Destination \(EN\)](#)



**Figure 4-2. Assistance on the trail in Lousã**

## 5. BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND FACILITIES

In tourism, as in 'everyday life', visitors and citizens make use of both public and private buildings, wherever their interests and requirements take them. The lack of accessibility makes people with disabilities wary of travelling to unknown places due to the difficulties they may encounter. Inaccessible infrastructure and facilities abound in hotels, restaurants, transport terminals, tourist attractions, and other venues, where the needs of people with disabilities have been given little or no consideration.

The built environment today is still not accessible to many people. There are many physical barriers that need to be removed and which create problems, not allowing all people to visit, to participate and to enjoy in full what a destination may offer. We continue to design, build and create buildings and public spaces that are not accessible for All, not responding to all people's needs. It is rather obvious that this is the main reason for disabling and excluding people with various access requirements from living in a place from visiting a place with safety and comfort, rather than people's specific requirements.

**Good design enables, bad design disables!**

Visitors must be able to enjoy the places they visit with comfort and dignity and this includes having a predictable and satisfactory level of access.

Venues and destinations with good access for all will potentially attract a greater number of visitors, thus directly increasing revenues in the tourism sector.

Improving accessibility of the built environment of a destination can give direct benefits not only for visitors, but also for its citizens, as well as for businesses and public enterprises.

### 5.1. UNIVERSAL DESIGN – A FUNDAMENTAL REQUIREMENT FOR ACCESSIBLE TOURISM

**Universal Design** (also referred to as UD) is the key to ensuring good access for everyone.

‘Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. The intent of the universal design concept is to simplify life for everyone by making products, communications, and the built environment more usable by more people at little or no extra cost. The universal design concept targets all people of all ages, sizes and abilities’.

*(Center for Universal Design, Raleigh, NC, USA)*

In Europe a similar development to Universal Design has taken place, referred to as “**Design for All**”, which means designing, developing and marketing mainstream products, services, systems and environments to be accessible and usable by as broad a range of users as possible.

[The Universal Design approach](#) goes beyond traditional design, which tends to focus on the “average” user. Universal Design is a design approach, reflecting a way of understanding the diversity of people’s needs and the way to reach the solution, contributing to social inclusion. [The Seven Principles and Seven Goals of Universal Design](#) are based on the observation that human beings occur with a range of abilities. These abilities also change over time in individuals.

See (in Portuguese) [Desenho Universal PDF](#), Turismo de Portugal.

Applying UD leads to solutions with higher quality, greater comfort, health and safety and contributes to social inclusion.

UD supports **Economic, Environmental and Social sustainability** and provides a pathway for **Growth**, by addressing the diversity of visitors, and creating solutions for a wider tourism market, over the long-term, creating new jobs and new tourism products.

Universal design cannot be achieved without having a deep understanding of the basic requirements of people with disabilities and of others with specific access requirements and how to address these in the design solutions.

**Architects, planners and designers do not receive education in UD and this is one of the main reasons that the environment today is still not accessible to many people.** Training and education on UD concept and principles is fundamental for developing a background understanding and for creating accessible environments and destinations.

Not only designers and planners but also tourism sector managers need to understand the concepts and principles of UD and apply them in practice when creating accessible services and catering for customers with access specific requirements.

The creation of an accessible destination is, ideally, a win-win situation for everybody to enjoy.

- The accessibility of public spaces should be a key element of a destination's access plan.
- Accessibility standards are used to guide planners and tourism providers when developing their tourism products and services. The Portuguese Portugal accessibility standard is one such document: **Norma Portuguesa NP 4523/2014 Turismo Acessível em Estabelecimentos Hoteleiros.**  
**For more information, please contact:**  
[Portuguese Standards Institute](#)
- International access standards should be an integral part of destination management practices.
- DMOs can follow [best practice examples in Universal Design of tourism services at the ENAT website.](#)

Some examples of the Universal Design approach in public environments and the tourism sector are shown in the following examples.

### 5.1.1. MILLENNIUM BRIDGE, UK



**Figure 5-1. The Millennium Bridge, London, UK**

The Millennium Bridge in London is designed as a ramp with a gentle slope which is wheelchair friendly and takes the visitor across the Thames with some great views.

A gentle two stage ramp takes pedestrians down on to the South bank. It is a good example of Universal Design, providing comfortable and easy access to all visitors and citizens.

### 5.1.2. ACCESSIBLE STREETS – VILAMOURA, PORTUGAL



**Figure 5-2. Accessible streets, Vilamoura, Portugal**

The urban environment of Vilamoura, on the Algarve, has been upgraded with level pavements, cycling routes and vehicular traffic lanes in a well-integrated scheme, allowing easy movement for all visitors and citizens.

People using wheelchairs, mobility scooters, as well as parents with pushchairs and people pulling shopping trolleys all benefit from these solutions, making the town an attractive and inclusive place to live and to visit.

### 5.1.3. LOW COUNTER AT CAFÉ, MAIN RAILWAY STATION, VIENNA, AUSTRIA



**Figure 5-3. Low counter at café, Vienna, Austria**

A low counter at the self-service café benefits wheelchair users who are able to see the food, make a choice and take their purchases without problems. The same applies to small children or people of small stature.

#### 5.1.4.A TABLET STATION IN ROME AIRPORT, USABLE BY EVERYONE



**Figure 5-4. Tablet station with two heights, Rome airport, Italy**

Waiting at the airport, playing electronic games at the free tablet station. The lower part of the counter gives children the possibility to play and enjoy themselves together with adults. A wheelchair user may also use the lower counter as there is free space underneath to allow easy frontal access. Making waiting time more enjoyable...

### 5.1.5. ACCESSIBLE HOTEL ROOM, NOVOTEL, LISBOA



**Figure 5-5. Hotel room wardrobe with pull-down hanging rail**

A practical design detail in hotel guest rooms. Here the hanging rail can be pulled down to enable shorter people or wheelchair users to hang their clothes easily and with little effort. A range of low-cost equipment and small adaptations can add comfort and style to guest rooms.

Having made the effort to improve access for guests, hoteliers and marketers should publicise the available access features on the hotel website.

## 5.2. PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

Destination Managers should realise the importance of Public Procurement as a key-tool for achieving and ensuring accessibility of public spaces and public use buildings and facilities.

Public Procurement transactions account for approximately 14% of the European Union's GDP. It is quite clear that Public Procurement regulations have a direct impact on the daily lives of European citizens.

In January 2008, the European Commission issued the Standardization Mandate M/420 'Mandate to CEN, CENELEC and ETSI *in support of European accessibility requirements for public procurement in the built environment*' in order to move forward with deliverables that can contribute to accomplish the EU policy objectives in relation to accessibility to the built environment.

The M/420 Phase I Joint Report recommended that a European Standard (EN) is needed to define the accessible built environment in order to assist public procurers in their work. This report is available at: <ftp://ftp.cen.eu/CEN/Sectors/Accessibility/ReportAccessibilityBuiltEnvironment%20Final.pdf>

The second phase of the is currently ongoing, to produce:

1. A **European Standard** at the level of common functional requirements that contains a set of functional European accessibility requirements.
2. A **Technical Report** that will describe the technical performance criteria to be able to fulfil the

above mentioned functional accessibility requirements.

3. A **Technical Report 2** which will contain reference documents needed to assess conformity, whether declared or certified (referenced documentation following Conformity Assessment Standards).

It is proposed that a Universal Design/Design for All approach should be adopted in the preparation of calls for tender for public works. Accessibility should be a requirement for all public procurement of buildings, infrastructure works, facilities and services, in order to promote social inclusion, contribute to full employment, save public money and ultimately foster economic growth

**Accessibility should be included in:**

- Project objectives and requirements, award criteria
- The design phase
- The follow-up during the construction throughout the whole project
- Conformity assessment –upon the delivery of the project-check the compliance with the procurement accessibility requirements and the design.
- Experts on accessibility should be involved in the whole process.

A procedure for requiring accessibility in public procurement was already laid out in the “Build-for-All” Handbook and Toolkit, which was developed in an EU-funded project in 2007.

**The Handbook** provides background information for raising the awareness of decision makers and public servants about the importance of accessibility in the built environment for all citizens and the supporting role that Public Procurement can play in achieving this.

**The Toolkit** gives a practical approach for contracting authorities to include certain procedures and technical requirements in procurement, so as to ensure that accessibility criteria are met in design and construction work. The Build-for-All project produced advice in three main areas:

1. Providing public authorities with guidance on the establishment of essential accessibility criteria and a methodology for step-by-step implementation of accessibility as provided for by the Public Procurement Directives of the EU.
2. The need to inform the private sector and professional stakeholders about how to meet the demands of accessibility criteria in public tenders
3. The need to bring together the representatives of disability organisations and older people's organisations at European, national and local levels with their counterparts from the other professional and stakeholder groups - the local and regional authorities, the construction industry, lift manufacturers and architects to promote and create lasting and constructive dialogue.

**Reference:** [Build for All Handbook and Toolkit \(English, Italian and Spanish versions\)](#).

### 5.3. DEVELOPMENT OF ACCESSIBLE ROUTES

It is very important for the destination to make a strategic plan in order to extend and improve accessibility in the city. One such approach is to begin with accessible routes, joining key Points of Interest (POIs) and the major transportation hubs:

- By giving priority to pedestrians and reducing motor traffic: the city environment will be better for everyone, and will create a magnet for tourists and citizens alike.
- By making Accessibility Audits of streets and POIs in order to describe the accessibility of an establishment and provide the relevant information to visitors.
- By creating accessible routes and accessible cultural routes, joining POIs with cultural or historical value.

As part of an accessible tourism development initiative, the DMO or municipality may establish an initial, clearly defined project to connect some of the most significant Points of Interest for tourists based on the current level of accessibility of pavements, streets and public spaces.

This could offer the possibility of making access improvements in urban spaces and buildings and the possibility for demonstrating good practice examples, based on defined standards. Focusing on a limited number of routes and POIs can help promote the awareness and training of all the public bodies and individuals involved.

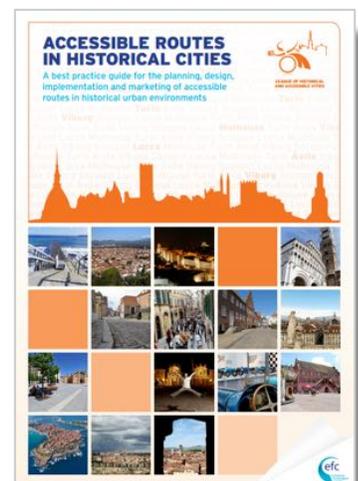
Typically the DMO would aim to make an accessible pedestrian route, by joining together some of the main cultural or historical attractions or tourist sites.

- The route has a defined **beginning** and **end point**, passing through a wider historical-cultural environment.
- The route may be followed in whole or in part, according to the visitor's interests, abilities and the time available for the visit.
- It must provide comfortable and equitable access for all visitors, including persons with various disabilities and specific access requirements. The route should be designed to enable persons with motor and/or sensory impairments to **orientate** themselves, **move easily** and **navigate** the route.
- The path itself must have a continuous **clear width** and **free height**, and a **smooth surface** which has **no major obstacles** and **no steep gradients**, allowing easy access for people who use wheelchairs or other walking aids (e.g. rollators-walkers, walking sticks). The route will thus be easy to access for parents with small children and babies in push-chairs or prams.

The path must have suitable **guidance on the route itself**, making it easy for visitors to find the way. This can be achieved with distinctive signage, local area maps, plaques.

- Smart technologies can also be considered for information and guidance, including audio guides, QR Codes and mobile applications for smart phones and tablets.

- ‘Accessibility’ applies not only to the physical access of the route. Certain **points of interest** along the route should be identified and an explanation of the historical and cultural significance of these should be available in **accessible formats**. Alternative ways of experiencing the buildings or environment may be offered through recorded (spoken) information, text displays, tactile information and models, digital simulations, etc.
- Where the points of interest are **buildings open to the public**, these should also be accessible, allowing all visitors to enter at least part of the building.
- **Basic information** about the route and the points of interest should be available from a **Tourist Information Office and Website**. Information should be produced **in printed form, in Braille and in digital formats** (including video with audio description where possible). This will enable visitors to discover the route and plan their itinerary before arriving in the city. It also allows them to review the route and points of interest after a visit and “re-live” the experience with their friends and family.
- While the main purpose of the accessible route is to provide an interesting cultural experience for visitors, additional considerations can help to make the visit comfortable and pleasant, including accessible toilets, parking and other public use facilities.



**Reference:** [LHAC Guidelines \(EN\)](#) on Accessible Routes in historical cities.

## 5.4. ACCESSIBILITY AUDITING PROCEDURE AND METHODS

The access auditing procedure, used in connection with all accessibility rehabilitation works, consists of describing, measuring and analysing the physical and environmental characteristics of buildings, routes and Points of Interest. The main objective of an accessibility audit is **to check the accessibility in terms of approaching, entering and using the environment or the facility for its intended purpose**. Some useful information for the visitor is also collected from the venues and other sources, including site personnel and websites.

The data collection tool is a set of questions/checklists covering the main objectives of the audit. An experienced architect or engineer with expertise in accessibility issues, as well as the Portuguese building regulations, accessibility legislation and accessibility standards and guidelines should train and oversee the team that carries out the audit.

For each element in the checklist, the access auditor is required to measure the corresponding part of the building or facility and fill in the values which apply.

Key aspects of the physical environment and the visitor's interaction with the surroundings are analysed in order to identify a continuous free passageway and possible barriers along the route to overcome. Ideally the accessible route should be a "step-free" pathway with

minimal or no obstacles in the form of kerbs or steps. Slopes and ramps must be within certain defined limits regarding length, angle of slope and the provision of landings for resting.

The access audit should examine the facilities, objects and services which may exist – or be required – to guarantee the experience of enjoying an accessible destination and Points of Interest.

- 1) Visitors' requirements for moving in outdoor and indoor environments
- 2) Visitors' requirements for location and orientation in outdoor and indoor environments
- 3) Visitor's requirements for grasping and manipulating objects in buildings, environments and transport facilities include
- 4) Visitors' requirements for communication processes between themselves and their surroundings

As mentioned above, it is recommended that access audits should be carried out by experts on accessibility or trained technical staff.

For the private sector, where businesses often need to be encouraged to examine the accessibility of their facilities, prior to making changes to their facilities, there are self-assessment tools to help them and introduce them to accessibility concepts.

An example of a self-assessed access auditing tool which is widely used in Europe is the [Pantou Access Statement \(EN\)](#). This WORD template is available free of charge and is designed to produce a marketing document suitable for visitors who need information about the accessibility of a venue or service.

Understanding the physical accessibility characteristics of your destination is a key step towards defining a programme of improvements. It is essential to consider how well the destination meets the physical access requirements of visitors and citizens in relation to tourism product development, hosting events or developing new marketing initiatives and promotions.

The well-known tool known as [SWOT analysis \(EN\)](#) can help you define the destination's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, in general terms. Using this analytical technique with professionals and users, the physical access of the whole destination can be broken down into more easily manageable items for further investigation.

The SWOT labels can provide a useful way of communicating ideas and concepts about how well the destination supports accessibility. The technique is especially helpful as an initial tool for supporting group engagement and decision-making processes. With a skilled facilitator, access "gaps", problems and possibilities can be discussed and areas for more detailed investigation can be identified.

## 5.5. TRAINING SUPPORT ACTIONS

Awareness and Training is necessary for managers and staff who are engaged in accessible tourism development projects. DMOs should:

- Establish an Accessibility Management Team and Technical Working Group to develop an Accessibility Action Plan, involving stakeholder

organisations, to implement and maintain the accessibility of infrastructure and accessible tourism offers of the destination.

- Train technical personnel in the destination to increase their knowledge and competences in planning, Universal Design and implementing accessibility measures.
- Establish training programmes for volunteers who may support experts, for example in destination access auditing.
- To involve users with specific access requirements in audits and/or to test the improvements and solutions given.

## 5.6. EXAMPLE PROJECTS

### 5.6.1. GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE TO ACCESSIBLE TOURISM BUSINESSES

This guide, in Portuguese, describes the main accessibility characteristics of hotel services and facilities, covering Policies and Strategies, Types of Disabilities, Check-in Procedures, Interior and Exterior Access, including dimensional and design specifications, Recommendations, Annexes, Glossary and Bibliography.

The Guide is available as an online publication in “Flipbook” format.

See: [Guia de Boas Práticas de Acessibilidade de Hotelaria \(PT\)](#) published by Turismo de Portugal



### 5.6.2. BEST PRACTICE GUIDE IN ACCESSIBLE TOURISM: ACTIVE TOURISM

Showing what kinds of activities are possible for visitors with access needs inspires and encourages people to travel.

One of the initiatives supported by Turismo de Portugal in 2014 was the production of a guide to active, accessible tourism experiences in Portugal.

The guide provides an overview of the many possibilities for active holidays, such as nature tours, golf, water sports and parapente.

It also describes several types of specialised equipment that are available to enable people with mobility impairments to enjoy active leisure experiences and gives advice on how to present accessibility information, as well as listing the relevant legislation that is in force.

**See: [Best Practice Guide in Accessible Tourism: Active Tourism \(PT\)](#)**



**Figure 5-6. Active Tourism - Canoeing. Photo Cresaçor (from Best Practice Guide).**

### 5.6.3. ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE PROJECTS DEVELOPED BY THE DGPC

The Direção Geral do Património Cultural (DGPC) [General Directorate for Cultural Heritage] has been developing several projects to allow accessible and inclusive visits for a wide range of persons, regardless of disability or impairment.



One of them is the **Route to the Monasteries classified by UNESCO as World Heritage Monuments**. European Community funding has made possible several improvements, such as ramps as an alternative to steps. The work developed at the Mosteiro da Batalha (Monastery of Batalha) is a good example.

The General Directorate is currently (January 2017) finishing a research project focused on the **Accessibility of the historic buildings under the umbrella of the DGPC**, with a quantitative and qualitative evaluation.

Ten subjects are considered for data collection: 1. Buildings. 2. Orientation and signage. 3. Exhibitions. 4. Communication and Publicity. 5. Security. 6. Consultation. 7. Training. 8. Employment and volunteering. 9. Evaluation. 10. Policy regarding access. At the end of this evaluation, the information is converted into a percentage which reflects the level of compliance with the Portuguese laws and the international good practices.

#### 5.6.4. REAL ABADIA HOTEL & SPA

The architecture, decoration and surroundings of Real Abadia Congress & Spa Hotel, Alcobaça, Portugal, were carefully designed in order to serve the individual needs of those without disabilities but also to ensure adequate solutions for people with reduced mobility.



The hotel has invested in technologies, equipment and strategies that increase the autonomy of guests as well as the service quality improvement. Real Abadia has regular training sessions to extend knowledge of all who are in contact with the guests who need good access, which means - everybody!

These training sessions have allowed the hotel to rectify procedures, improve facilities and services and anticipate expectations and needs.

Being a growing segment in tourism Real Abadia's management has realised that adaptation is a continuous work, each customer is unique, and between smaller and larger investments, it is possible to do a lot when the team is motivated and prepared to deal with these realities.

Due to the work already done the hotel has gained some very positive experiences as well as testimonials on Tripadvisor and Booking.com. The balance is positive and the management believes that the hotel's offer can make a difference in the lives of its customers by imprinting their stays with love, care and good experiences that will last a lifetime.



**Figure 5-7. Guests at Real Abadia Hotel**

[Website of Real Abadia Hotel \(EN, ES, PT\)](#)

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#### 5.6.5. VILLA BATALHA\*\*\*\*

The Villa Batalha Hotel is located at Batalha/Reguengo do Fetal, in the Central region of Portugal. It is a high standard hotel which aims to provide accessible accommodation and services to every guest. This happens to be a work in progress but currently it already



delivers remarkable conditions in terms of mobility access restrictions. Parking space nearby the entrance, automatic entrance doors, lowered counter for check-in, spacious rooms with adapted toilet and roll-in shower, barrier free public areas and table massages adjustable in height in the Spa are some of the characteristics which contribute to classify Villa Batalha as a hotel with accessible tourism practices.

The owner writes:

“This is a modern hotel that started its operation in 2010 and we have been collecting praises ever since and the main purpose is to become as accessible as possible in other areas. This awareness has led to due diligence actions which could point the right direction in terms of facilities and service improvements, including service training.

The result of this attitude has been quite relevant in terms of being recognized as a recommend choice for accessible tourism by guests as well as by other players and official institutions.”

[Website of Hotel Villa Batalha \(EN, ES, PT\)](#)

#### 5.6.6. PARQUES DE SINTRA – MONTE DE LUA ACCESS PROJECT

Parques de Sintra is currently implementing the “Parques de Sintra Welcome Better” project, which seeks to raise the standards of access to the properties under its management and establish them as an example of best practice in accessible tourism and correspondingly



providing equality of opportunity in accessing this natural and built heritage.

The [Accessibility Project of Parques de Sintra](#) involves an overall investment in the region of €2 million, with 25% co-financing from Turismo de Portugal. It took as its point of departure research into the current state of global practices. To this end it draws on various national associations of relevance to this theme, in particular ACAPO (the Portuguese Association of the Blind and the Partially Sighted), APS (the Portuguese Association of the Deaf) and the Salvador Association, with a protocol signed with each entity.

This also led to the recruiting of a grant-holding doctoral degree student to carry out research into best practices, analyse case studies and the different products available in the global marketplace. Hence, this correspondingly defined the best strategy and selected the best options in accordance with the intended impacts and outcomes.

**This project spans three different dimensions to access:**

- Physically, improving the mobility conditions providing an autonomous and safe visit to all with physical adaptations to the outdoor and interior environments and the acquisition of new equipment;
- Information, improving communication and irrespective of visitor characteristics;
- Services, providing more and better services catering to diversified publics including persons with deficiencies and guaranteeing a more effective level of cultural knowledge transmission.

In addition to the partnerships established with the already mentioned Portuguese associations, Parques de Sintra also became a member of the European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT). The main mission of this institution involves rendering European tourism destinations and their respective services accessible to all visitors, making available techniques and sharing information and generally striving towards meeting the commitment towards equality of opportunity in the access to tourism and culture. Parques de Sintra also became a member of the Acesso Cultura Association at the end of 2014.

#### 5.6.7. ACCESSIBLE BEACHES – BEACHES FOR ALL

##### **Praia Acessível - Praia para Todos!**

In 2016, 209 Portuguese beaches, 37 inland bathing areas and 172 coastal beaches were awarded the Beaches for All label, of which 26 are in the autonomous regions of the Azores and Madeira - with the entry of 11 new beaches in the programme.

See [Praia para Todos at Turismo de Portugal website.](#)

More than two-thirds of these beaches already offer equipment that allows access to bathing or to walk on the beach, for the disabled, using wheelchairs and amphibious walking aids. Although this requirement is not mandatory for the award, it is an added value recommended by the programme.

The Accessible Beach Programme - Beach for Everyone! was created in 2004 and has been developed since 2005,



within the framework of an institutional partnership, at the level of the Central State Administration, which brings together the National Institute for Rehabilitation, the Portuguese Environment Agency and Tourism of Portugal.

The mandatory compliance requirements that determine the assignment of the classification of "accessible" to a bathing area, allowing the presentation of the respective award, are the following:

- Easy pedestrian access, free of obstacles, from the surrounding public road, to an accessible entrance to the bathing area.
- Organised parking area with reserved places for vehicles for people with disabilities, as close as possible to the entrance to the beach;
- A network of pedestrian paths accessible on the beach, totally free of obstacles and interruptions, which will include footbridges on the beach, where this exists, and in all other cases a paved, firm and continuous accessible route. In the case of unevenness, the steps must be complemented by gentle ramps and / or mechanical means making the route accessible to persons with disabilities.

This network of accessible routes will necessarily lead to:

- the Sunbathing Area (with sun hats, awnings, tents) and as close to the water as possible;
- adapted sanitary installations;
- an accessible first aid station;
- presence of a Lifeguard;
- information to the public, at the entrance to the beach and on the website of the municipality, about

the accessibility conditions and the support services available.

Other examples of best practices to improve accessibility in beaches include:

- [Access to Praia Formosa at Funchal](#) for people with visual impairments.
- [Beaches of Torres Vedras with "ColorADD" system of beach flags](#)



#### 5.6.8. ACCESSIBLE ROUTES. LONDON, UK

In 2012 the London Boroughs of Southwark and Lambeth, together with the Greater London Authority (GLA), worked in Partnership to improve the accessibility of London's South Bank. Home to major attractions along 3.9km of historic promenade, parts of it were hard to navigate as it was not fully accessible in all locations. Matthew Hill of Southwark Council describes the £4 million project as being 'at its heart an accessibility project, but it was also about improving the public realm for everybody'. Whilst an attraction in itself improvements to the South Bank was seen as a way of easily linking these main attractions.

Initially an Accessibility audit was undertaken which provided detailed recommendations and helped inform design with input from the Greater London Authority's Built Environment Access Panel (BEAP) and local access groups. Improvements were made to: improved cobble surface, pavement layouts, better lighting and signage,

more seating, improved ramp gradients and better handrails.

The response by one local resident and wheelchair user to these improvements was:

*“Finally I am able to independently enjoy a rich and vibrant historic area of London. This project shows that inclusive design can be delivered in historic settings’. The BEAP also found that: ‘The changes have given safe and easy access to both the wide promenades as well as the smaller twisting back streets which are often no-go areas for a wheelchair user’. They also noted that ‘The improvements have been made with thought and care which allows inclusion for all in these vibrant public spaces”.*

#### **Videos from the South Bank, London, UK (EN)**

[\*\*Video of accessibility at London South Bank\*\*](#)

[\*\*Download slideshow of London South Bank presentation in PDF format, \(EN\)\*\*](#)

## 6. TRANSPORT

This Section presents an overview of considerations regarding accessible transportation planning at the destination.

Transport plays a key role for all travellers, everyone wants their journey to be easy and comfortable, but can those with access requirements easily reach your destination and move around it using public transport or a car?

### 6.1. TRAVEL TO AND FROM THE DESTINATION

Travel to and from the destination is a crucial part of any visitor's journey. The more the destination can do to overcome possible difficulties and barriers, the better.



**Figure 6-1. Accessible mobile boarding ramp, Kerry Airport, Ireland**

Attention should be focused on visitor information, key entry points to the destination, and all the transport services and terminals that serve the area.

All in- and outbound passenger service providers need to be involved in planning the accessible destination in order to create a seamless accessible journey for travellers with access requirements.

## **6.2. MOVEMENT AROUND / AT THE DESTINATION**

Transportation is an essential part of the tourism supply chain that must be developed to be accessible and adequate information about accessibility provided for visitors. If disabled people and others perceive that they cannot reach your destination or easily move around when there, the motivation to visit may be lost as this could be seen as a major barrier to travelling for some, so you could be losing potential visitors by not addressing this issue.

Additionally, any businesses in your destination, that you are encouraging to be accessible may well question making any investment if they see that the target market may be excluded by the current lack of accessible public transport. The same applies to car parking facilities for cars used by disabled and older people, if there are no future plans to address this issue in the destination.

A good starting point to address this issue is to identify the key transport components of your destination's "visitor journey" and then determine the responsible delivery bodies.

Three key actions you can take in partnership with them are:

**1. Sharing transport information.** The sharing and promoting of accurate information around the visitor journey is a quick win. Don't be afraid to start small. The most apparently trivial pieces of information or well-placed web links can make a huge difference to visitors researching your destination. Develop a dedicated section on your website providing links to all the relevant transport companies serving your destination (suggested list below) and provide, where possible, information on their accessibility. Where it is not available encourage transport providers to review this policy and provide information so that it can be published on both your website and theirs.

**2. Infrastructure plans.** Be aware of any planned infrastructure changes, with either changes or additions to the transport provision. Where possible influence these to ensure that accessibility is taken into account and Universal Design principles are being applied. Also take into account parking provisions for those disabled people using cars: -Is there adequate provision, are the parking spaces in the right places, is it clear whether there are any charges or not? Are there dropped kerbs at drop off / pick points and where pavements end?

**3. Disability awareness.** Working with the relevant local partners, ensure that all staff are undertaking disability awareness training to ensure the best customer service is offered to everyone. Where it is not offered, encourage the operator to look at any appropriate training that you may have identified and can signpost them to.

## Who are the key players you need to work with?

Below is a list of major providers but you may identify others in your destination not listed here. It is important to consider them all and work closely with them, involving them in your strategy and long term development plans:

- Airports and passenger services companies
- Trains / Stations
- Boats / Ports
- Buses / Coaches /
- Local transport: Buses / taxis / self-drive vehicles for hire
- Cars / Parking / Motorway services

### 6.3. PUBLIC TRANSPORT EXAMPLES

#### 6.3.1. “MY WAY” SPECIAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES AT AIRPORTS

Passengers with reduced mobility can use the **MyWay** assistance service provided in Portuguese airports (Aeroportos de Portugal – ANA). It includes mechanical mobility facilitators, as well as skilled professionals who give full assistance and comfort during passage through the airport. The MyWay service is available for any passenger with disability or reduced mobility departing, in transit or arriving at the airport.

The assistance service includes all mechanical means to facilitate mobility – escalators and travelators, lifts, appropriate signage and guidance – and escorting and



support, provided by specialised and duly identified professionals, during passenger embarking and disembarking.

PRM services at airports also include reserved and marked vehicle parking spaces, accessible toilets, assistance points and reserved seating in waiting areas.

See: [My Way - Web resources for passengers with reduced mobility \(EN, PT\)](#)

### 6.3.2. ACCESSIBLE BUSES

Travelling on public buses can be challenging for passengers who are frail, those who have sensory or mobility impairments or learning difficulties. When boarding the bus, effective communication between the passenger and the bus driver can be crucial to a safe and smooth journey.

Having good local public transport connections is essential to larger destinations. Buses often play a major role in providing transport for local citizens and visitors alike. Initiatives to improve bus and coach transport for people with access needs and communication difficulties are helping to improve the experience of towns, cities and rural areas for visitors.

The Oxford Bus Company in the UK aims to make travel on their buses easier for everyone. They are aware that different passengers have different requirements to make travel easier, be they passengers in wheelchairs or mobility scooters, those who have difficulty walking, the blind, and those who are pregnant or have young children.



Their work to provide easy access has been recognised through regional awards in the United Kingdom for accessibility.

The company has easy access buses across the whole fleet, with changes made to the interior layout of all vehicles to try and accommodate as many different customers' requirements as possible. They have made improvements in conjunction with [OXTRAG \(Oxfordshire Transport and Access Group\)](#). Every driver also takes part in the Oxfordshire County Council approved Disability Awareness Training.

### **Journey Assistance Cards**

As part of their commitment to providing accessible transport for all, Oxford Bus Company offers 'Journey Assistance Cards' free of charge to its passengers. [The Confederation of Passenger Transport \(CPT\)](#) has introduced the scheme to provide a nationally standardised range of cards for passengers with disabilities or impairments that may not be immediately obvious to those around them.

There are 12 variants of the cards, which cover disabilities such as deafness, visual impairment, or simply to advise the driver to allow the passenger to take their seat before pulling away from the stop.

The cards can be requested by telephone, email, through the post, or at one of their travel shops. More details of the Journey Assistance Cards can be found at [Confederation of Passenger Transport](#) .

Source: [Website of Oxford Bus Company \(EN\)](#)



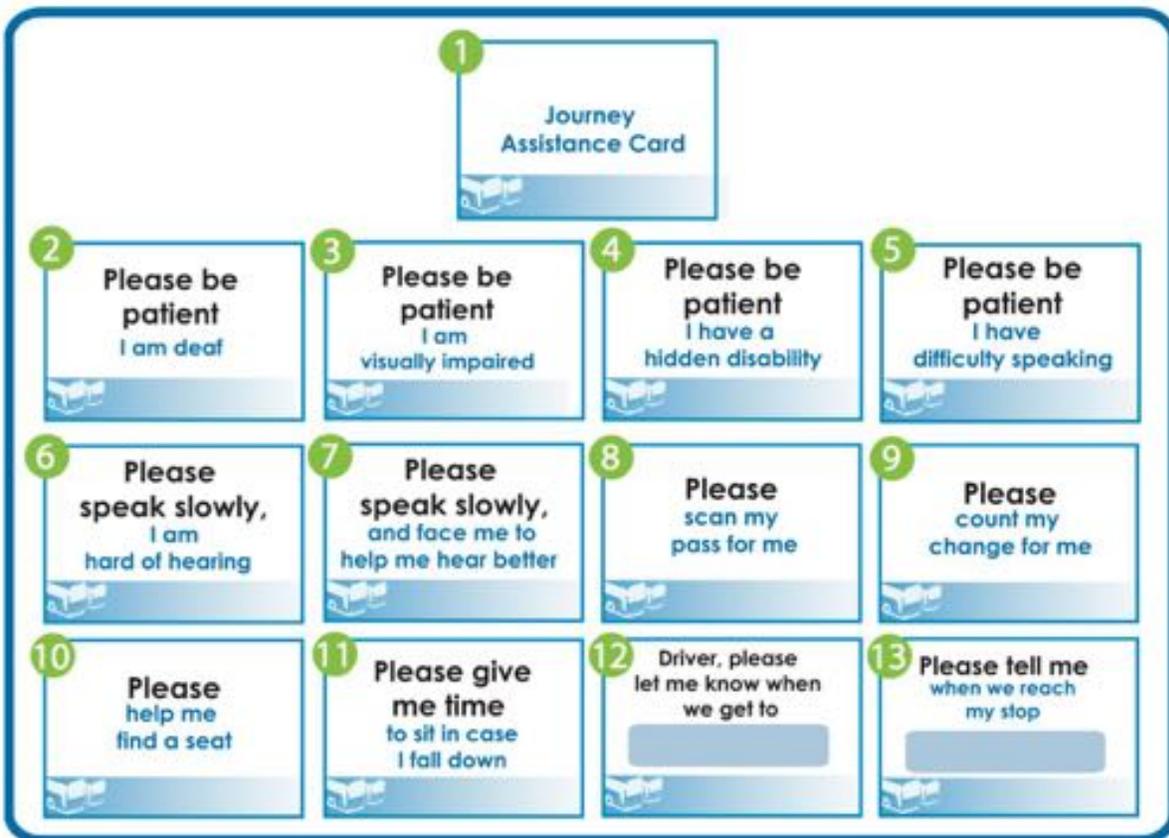


Figure 6-2. Journey assistance cards for passengers with access or communication needs (CPT)

### 6.3.3. GREETER SCHEMES, U.K.

Do you offer meet and greet schemes? In the UK, [VisitBrighton's Greeter scheme](#) provides a free two-hour tour of the city to all visitors and welcomes those with access needs.

Birmingham's Business Improvement District, Southside, offers a **Meet and Greet** scheme from a pre-arranged location – for example a bus stop or the train station to a destination hotel - for disabled visitors.

See also [page 131 Greeters](#).

#### 6.3.4. ACCESSIBLE BIKES

Amsterdam is famous for cycling and **Accessible Travel, Netherlands** aims to give everyone the opportunity to explore the city by bike and move through the city like the locals do. They offer a range of different cycles which can be hired for use while in the city. In addition to regular bikes they also offer tandems and other types of bikes, for example:

- **Fun2Go bike.** This has two seats side-by-side. One person cycles and the other enjoys the ride. This bike allows people with less mobility to see the city from a bike, but is also suitable for people that are blind or have a visual impairment and for people that are deaf or hard of hearing.



Figure 6-3. Fun-2-Go bike available for rent in The Netherlands

- **O-Pair bike – Seat in front.** This is a double bike with a comfortable suspension chair in front of the steering wheel. The front is easily disconnected from the bicycle part, so it can be used as a wheelchair on location.
- **VeloPlus electric bike - wheelchair platform.** A transporter bike is especially suited for wheelchair users who remain seated in their wheelchairs while riding. Convenient tilt ramp allows the user to easily reverse onto the wheelchair bike. A wide variety of wheelchairs fit onto the Velo Plus

**See: [Website of Accessible Travel Netherlands - accessible bikes \(EN\)](#)**

## 7. CUSTOMER SERVICE

Everyone wants a warm welcome when visiting a destination either for the first time or on a repeat visit, it's important to us all. Many businesses will say that the customer is at the heart of their business, however, this cannot be the case where the access requirements of individuals are not taken into account. By thinking more inclusively about the delivery of customer service, it can be improved for everybody.

We know however, that many disabled people feel that they can often feel that they are not welcome through personal customer service experiences. Or it may be a perception as they read reviews or speak with others about their experiences. This, for many can be a main barrier to travelling, they will not have confidence that their requirements will be met and that the business actually wants to serve them.

This may be perceived before they travel also as a result of a lack of information relevant to them to help plan their travel. Or, it may come from a negative response to an email enquiry or phone that is made to seek clarification about services and facilities offered so that there is an assurance it is worth travelling and the business will welcome them. They may be left with a lack of understanding and willingness by the business to listen to them and be flexible in what they can offer so that they adapt their services accordingly, which is what most people expect now, very personal customer service.

## 7.1. WHY IS GOOD CUSTOMER SERVICE IMPORTANT?

Good customer service goes to the heart of tourism and the hospitality industry, it is what helps create memorable experiences, for the right reasons. It ensures that the needs of all visitors are anticipated and staff are on hand with a smile and a willingness to help, which can make a big difference for many people.

As stated in [Section 2. Accessible Tourism Market](#) there is a significant untapped market of disabled people who want to travel with family and friends. The markets are also changing as the ageing population grows. They have money and will be used to travelling and want to continue to travel. However, they will also have access requirements. They may not use a 'disabled' label to describe themselves, but they will require their service to be adjusted to suit their changing needs. To ignore this market is to ignore the opportunity for destinations and businesses to grow their share of the market and to improve overall the quality of experience for ALL visitors. The destination that fails to adapt, will lose to another that recognises all the benefits that can be gained by being more inclusive through customer service being welcoming and flexible.

### 7.1.1. HOW TO DEVELOP A MORE INCLUSIVE CUSTOMER SERVICE

There are some key points, which really are no different to how you or businesses in the destination address customer care already, you just need to think a little differently and recognise that there is no such thing as the

average visitor. Each is an individual and to be able to understand them and respond to what they are looking for there are some key steps you and your businesses can take.

1. Ensure adequate information is provided about the accessibility of service and facilities. This can be achieved through an Accessibility Guide. Ensure that on the website and in any printed literature alternative contact details are given e.g. Phone, text messages, email, Social Media if used. Remember always to present facts rather than assertions. Your customers will assess for themselves whether you are accessible or not.
2. Ensure that all staff are familiar with the services and facilities you are offering. Again the Accessibility guide can help a business in providing this relevant information, not only for visitors but also as a training tool for staff. It would be good if they keep a copy at any enquiry point for reference.
3. Offer any information in alternative formats for visitors e.g. large print, audio file, video, braille, easy read –see [Section 12. Information](#)
4. Engage with customers by seeking feedback about accessibility, to understand ‘how you are doing’ and ‘what can you do better’. This might be through comments cards, or emailed questions after their visit.
5. Encourage staff to pass any relevant feedback to managers so that they are aware of what customers are saying

6. Review social media and other sites to understand what customers are saying about the business and ensure there is always an appropriate response. Key ones to monitor might be Twitter and Facebook, as well as websites where disabled people can give feedback about venues.
7. Ensure all staff, both front of house and back room staff have relevant training about disability awareness. Managers should undertake this also, additionally they also need to have training to understand accessibility and how it applies to their business so that they can plan strategically. Becoming disability aware through training will give businesses skills and knowledge, including an understanding of specific visible and hidden disabilities, appropriate language to use and practical advice on providing an accessible service.
8. Training can be online, where appropriate courses are available such as: [Access Training Website \(EN\)](#) or organised group workshops.
9. Identify or consider what individual support services can be provided.
10. Ensure listings of essential equipment hire can be easily found and are available for customers who may request these

Every member of a business or organisation, from the owner or CEO, the manager or team leader, front of house staff and back office staff, need to understand accessibility and contribute to changing the culture and thinking of the business and the destination.

The commitment to serving everyone to help create an inclusive business is key to success and will only be achieved if there is a real focus by all the staff in a business and all players in the supply chain, including your own organisation and key stakeholders.

## 8. CREATING ACCESSIBLE TOURISM EXPERIENCES

Accessible destinations are those that offer high quality tourism experiences to all visitors, with products that satisfy and even surpass their expectations.

In principle, all tourist venues and activities should be equipped and designed to allow visitors with the widest range of ages and abilities to visit, enter all public areas, and use the available facilities. However, there may be certain activities, such as adventure sports, that may be beyond the capabilities of some guests.

### **Review your facilities and activities**

Each venue requires a thorough review of its facilities and the activities that take place there, in order to identify any gaps or weak spots in provisions for visitors with mobility impairments, sensory (hearing / vision) impairments, cognitive impairments, dietary requirements, allergies and so on. Conducting tours and carrying out activities with groups of individuals with specific and different access requirements can reveal where obstacles are encountered, where possible technical aids may be required and where tourist guides, group leaders or other hospitality staff may need to be aware of any particular issues that may arise.

### **Innovate, adapt, invent**

Attractions and activities may need to be re-designed – starting with examining the perspectives of visitors with

disabilities, who may experience the place in a quite different way from others. By focusing on their *abilities*, rather than their *disabilities* or limitations, experiences can often be opened up for visitors in ways that were not previously anticipated.

This section gives a number of examples of accessible experiences that have been developed in tourist destinations, showing the range of possibilities in *Tourism for All* – when creativity and innovation are allowed to flourish. Examples include projects, guidance documents and tourism enterprises that have produced “accessible experiences” in Portugal and abroad, providing inspiration and practical demonstrations of the “state-of-the-art”.

## 8.1. PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT THROUGH TEST VISITS

Developing tourism products to ensure **satisfying accessible tourism experiences** for visitors with access needs is a key element in an accessible destination or venue. There is really no substitute for involving the target group of visitors in designing and testing the tourism products to ensure that the result will be successful.

For this reason, local NGOs of people with disabilities, older persons, cultural groups and others should be consulted and engaged in testing itineraries, programmes, venues, local transportation and other relevant services.

One good example of how this was done is described in the case of Parques de Sintra, see above in the section: [Parques de Sintra](#).

## 8.2. ORGANISING ACCESSIBLE EVENTS

Organisers of events such as conferences, festivals, trade fairs and cultural programmes may seek help (and possibly funding) from DMOs to support their event.

In an accessible destination, all publicly supported events should be accessible for all visitors.

The DMO should develop its in-house expertise in relation to planning and organising accessible events by gathering knowledge, working with partners (e.g. NGOs of people with disabilities) and access consultants.

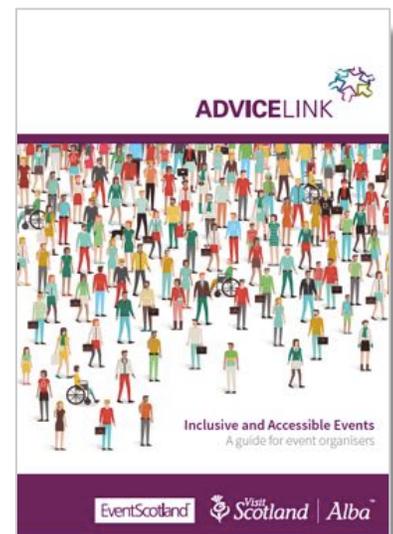
There are a number of online resources that can be consulted to get started.

The Scottish National Tourist Authority, **VisitScotland** has published an [Accessible and Inclusive Events Guide \(EN\) in PDF format 18.6 MB](#)

The Accessible and Inclusive Events Guide can help anyone who is involved in organising events, regardless of the size, nature or location to create a fully accessible event.

The guide offers event organisers practical advice, hints and tips on:

- Key things to consider when planning your event
- Providing advice on getting to the venue



- Parking provision
- Accessibility of the event venue and what things to consider
- How to make sure the event programme is accessible
- Communications - making your marketing and information provision as accessible as possible.

It is also noteworthy that having developed the **Accessible and Inclusive Events Guide**, VisitScotland has decided to require event organisers who apply for government support grants to commit to follow these Guidelines. In this way gaining support funding has become contingent on reaching specified access standards, without using specific access legislation or other means.

Additional resources on planning accessible events are available from the [ENAT Webpage - Guidelines and Resources for Organising Accessible Events \(EN\)](#)

### 8.3. ACCESSIBLE TOURISM INITIATIVES

The following examples show how a number of destinations and tourism providers are developing “accessible experiences” for visitors based on the offers and services in their local communities and regions.

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#### 8.3.1. GREETERS

Many visitors now look for authentic experiences, they want to meet with local people. In many destinations the concept of ‘Greeters’ has grown in popularity. They are

usually volunteers that love where they live so much that they want to show visitors around for free. They are not guides and they do not show people around as a guide, the concept is for them to be more like a newly met friend. Greeters can show visitors special places that have a personal meaning to them, as well as things that might be specifically asked for such as parks, the best shopping spots, architecture marvels or specific hidden treasures.

Encouraging disabled people to become Greeters is a great way to attract visitors who can have a similar disability, as they will be able to show visitors around and also share with them specific information which will be really helpful to them. For example, a wheelchair user might want to know where repairs can be made to their wheelchair, the accessibility of public transport, suggestions for accessible bars, cafes and restaurant. In this way disabled people can get a real insight into what your destination has to offer them.

**See: [Website of Global Greeter Network](#)**



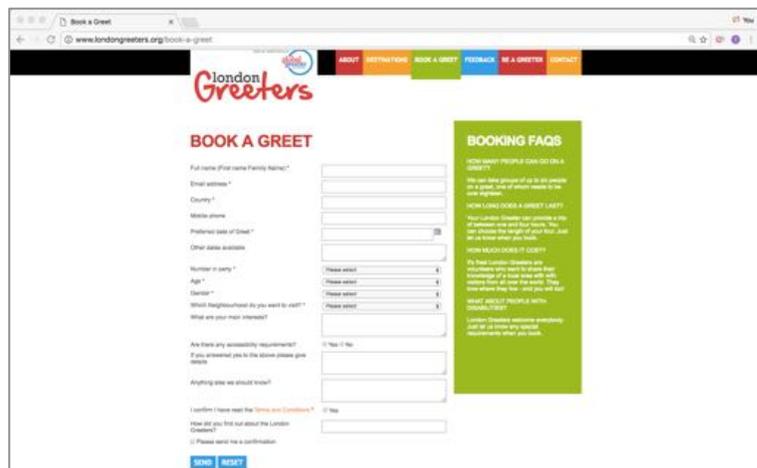
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### 8.3.2. LONDON GREETERS

Greeters work in their local area, taking visitors on short excursions to places of interest, sharing their local knowledge and providing insights into the life of the community. As such, they can play a key part in the tourist experience, interpreting and showing local and authentic events and attractions.. The London Greeters are asked, on signing up, whether they are willing to greet visitors with disabilities and all greeters are given training.

When booking, visitors with disabilities are asked to indicate if they have any special requirements. Greeters provide a complimentary service to professional tourist guides who work at a destination, covering the needs of some visitors who are looking for alternative experiences.

## The Greeters



### See: [Website of London Greeters, UK \(EN\)](http://www.londongreeters.org)

This example highlights the benefits of engaging disabled people as a valuable resource in helping to make the destination accessible and inclusive.

### 8.3.3. ACCESSIBILITY PROMOTION PLAN FOR THE ROMANESQUE ROUTE

#### [Romanesque Route: Heritage for All](#)

In recent years, the Romanesque Route has become a project aimed at affirming and developing a territory - the Sousa, Douro and Tâmega valleys in the North of Portugal - based on the promotion of the Romanesque historical and cultural heritage.

The project involves public and private entities guided by a common goal: to provide the monuments and services that integrate the Route with the necessary conditions for its enjoyment and access by the whole community, allowing, with more or less difficulty, all people to (re-) discover an inalienable good - their ancestral heritage.

The Accessibility Promotion Plan for the Romanesque Route, which began in September 2008, has thus sought to establish itself as an imperative of citizenship, a basic right and as an obligatory criterion of quality.

In addition to the physical interventions providing access and circulation routes related to its centuries-old monuments, the Rota do Românico has also stimulated a series of other actions aimed at improving the access and understanding of its spaces and cultural offerings:

- Promotion of training actions in the field of accessible tourism;
- The creation of adapted didactic games;
- The realization of accessible tourist programmes;
- The optimization of the website, giving it a read-aloud system;
- Editing of Braille writing materials;
- The production of videos with the addition of subtitling and sign language;
- Making virtual visits available;
- And finally an innovative mobile application with extensive geo-referenced information about the Romanesque Route and the tourist resources of the twelve municipalities in its territory of influence.

For further information, download the [PDF Document - The Romanesque Route](#)



**Figure 8-1. Environmental Upgrading on the Romanesque Route: Património Para Todos**



**Figure 8-2. Tactile models depicting decoration and buildings on the Romanesque Route**

## 8.4. TOUR OPERATORS

A growing number of tour operators provide accessible tours and experiences that are specially tailored to the accessible tourism market, focusing on inbound and domestic tourists. The examples shown below give an indication of just some of the types of services now available in Portugal.

### 8.4.1. TOURISM FOR ALL, PORTUGAL

Tourism for All is a Tour Operator (DMC) and Travel Agency specialized in accessible and senior tourism.



#### Specialized Transportation

Tourism for All owns a large fleet of adapted transportation with electrical platform, carrying up to 10 wheelchairs.



Figure 8-3. Wheelchair accessible transport

### **Daily Care and Health Services**

The company provides various health services like Nurse Care, Physiotherapists, etc. in the Hotel or Tours occasionally or for periods (12 to 24 hours). If necessary, special meals are made to fit the needs (textures, consistency, for diabetics, celiac, hypertensive, etc).

### **Rehabilitation and Technical Aids**

Services include equipment (rentals) and the support of healthcare professionals.

### **Accommodation**

The company proposes clients many options for accommodation in different hotels categories, with all accessibility conditions. Also, when needed, there is access to a Continuing Care Unit.

### **Visits, Tours and Experiences**

Tourism for All offers an extended list of activities, including First Experiences in surf, diving, horseback riding and paragliding, Visits to monuments and museums, Tours around all Portugal, Spain and Cape Verde.

See: [Website of Tourism for All](#)

#### 8.4.2. WATERLILY – SPECIALISED TOURISM COMPANY

##### Description of products and services

The services provided by Waterlily are available to all those who visit Porto or for people from the local community that want to have fun, learn about their city and socialize.



Tailor made tours are tours defined by and made for the client to suit their interests and needs; these can include specialized guides.

##### The Waterlily Experience

A range of activities has been designed to meet the needs and expectations of each individual client, organized by experts and accredited organizations. The company offers a “SBY Service – StandByYou”, proposing temporary and specialized care services essential for a quality touristic experience adjusted to you're the customer's needs and/or preferences.



This extends to SBY Kids - Indoor and outdoor recreational activities for children; Mobility Support Service; Supporting the use of Assistive Devices. For example, in a city tour, it is possible to ask the WL service to support someone that needs assistive devices, like a wheelchair. The company also offers Specific Health Care, with temporary care service for persons with temporary or permanent limitations provided by specialists (nurses, occupational therapists).

Waterlily also has partnerships with health professionals that can offer temporary care.

CityPartners are specialized professional guides, with specific training, an excellent knowledge and love for Porto, that make the guest feel at home.

Assistive Devices - hire of equipment - helps clients who have physical limitations (temporary or permanent).

Finally, the company provides adapted vehicles for transport during the Waterlily adapted tours, taking up to two passengers with limited mobility.

See: [Website of Waterlily](#)



### 8.4.3. PENA AVENTURA ADVENTURE PARK

PENA AVENTURA PARK offers lively activities and adventure sports located in Ribeira de Pena - Vila Real, designated for all types of people who like to practice activities while being in contact with nature.



Pena Aventura Park is suitable for all age groups and will have the most diverse activities in the open field. It will also provide feelings of freedom and pure adrenaline, leading people to socialize more, promote a healthier lifestyle and release stress of day-to-day life.

The company offers adventure packages for visitors with reduced mobility, seniors, people with visual/auditory impairments and learning difficulties.



**Figure 8-4. First climbing experience for a young boy with a vision impairment**

**See: [Pena Aventura Park](#)**

## 9. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

This Section gives guidance on how to engage local tourism businesses in accessibility improvements and monitoring schemes. It addresses how to engage with NGOs and consumer groups; Involving other stakeholders in the development process and particularly involving architects, designers and physical Planners as well as Tourist Guides in development.

### 9.1. INVOLVING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

Involving disabled people in a consultative or participatory process demonstrates a commitment to and valuing of, the disabled visitor or customer.

By consulting people with disabilities, you are able to show a real commitment towards universal design and service by putting their requirements at the centre of your projects. You can also gain huge insight and knowledge that you may not otherwise have had into specific accessibility issues.

Involving them in destination access audits can give a user's perspective on existing access conditions. All auditors – disabled or not – must be trained to gather accessibility data in the correct way. For some this may become a regular task, either as a volunteer or, possibly, as a consultant or employee.

Disabled people's organisations in the local area will bring more specific knowledge that can be used to enrich visitor information about access to facilities and services. You

will be able to collect details relating directly to particular service providers and venues and to the geographic landscape. By involving them from the outset and incorporating their views, services and destinations will be better able to identify “gaps” and tailor their delivery and their environments to ensure customers’ needs are catered for effectively. Not only does this bring greater customer satisfaction but it can also stimulate greater revenue.

Some useful tools for managing the process of engaging with associations of people with disabilities and other representative organisations are available in English language.

**Involving Disabled People in Access Audits – A Destination Zones Toolkit For Best Practice (EN)**

[Accentuate toolkits. How to involve disabled people Establishing an inclusive steering committee \(EN\)](#)

[Website of Accentuate UK](#)

## **9.2. ENGAGING WITH ARCHITECTS AND PLANNERS**

DMOs have a role to play in raising awareness and informing key players in the design professions about the importance of accessibility in their projects. This is especially needed since many – if not most – architects and designers have no formal training in accessibility issues. DMOs can provide resources and establish

professional discussion fora with architects, designers and planners focusing on:

- The need to adopt inclusive development principles within the public realm and in businesses,
- Public procurement of buildings and public spaces, requiring that accessibility standards are followed,
- The benefits of Universal Design for inclusive and sustainable development.
- Good practice examples of building and environmental/city design-planning projects,
- How conformity assessment improves the quality of design projects.

See, in particular, [Section 5. Built Environment and Facilities](#) for further information.

### 9.3. ENGAGING WITH LOCAL TOUR OPERATORS AND TOURIST GUIDES

Tour operators and tourist guides are important resources for DMOs, in particular when they have experience of catering for customers with access needs.

“Nowadays 80% of my tour groups have at least one person with some kind of access need. It may be a slow walker, someone who is hard of hearing or a person in a wheelchair... It is something you have to be prepared for and adapt to. ”

- Greek professional tourist guide

Increasingly, travel agents and tour operators are being asked to cater for tourists with access needs, among their “regular” customers. A group of older tourists will typically

present a range of perhaps small but significant issues that need to be considered when arranging a visit or an excursion, or booking a hotel room. Requirements such as gluten-free or diabetic diets are more and more commonplace and, accordingly those venues that offer these services are gaining customers.

New professional skills are required to meet changing needs and tour operators, agents and tourist guides are in the forefront when it comes to handling visitors' needs on a day-to-day basis.

Tourist guides are often seen as “ambassadors” of a destination. They are a human point of contact with the visitors and through their daily work they inform, advise, and shape the visitor's experience of a place, its history and its people. Many tourist Guides have established links with museums, monuments and heritage sites and here they can bring their skills in guiding people with disabilities.

Training is of paramount importance in these professions. Since 2016, for example, the “T-Guide” Continuing Professional Development course in guiding people with learning disabilities has been offered by FEG and ENAT. Thanks to this training, accredited T-Guides are able to assist destinations and cultural heritage venues in making their offers attractive to visitors with intellectual impairments, ensuring inclusive experiences and sharing cultural heritage with new audiences.

**See: [T-Guide Training for Tourist Guides](#)**

## 10. BENCHMARKING AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

“Benchmarking” refers to comparing a destination’s progress towards the goal of providing “accessible tourism for all” against internal and external performance measures.

Although no two destinations have the same starting point nor the same resources and conditions for development, DMOs can follow the experiences and practices of other destinations that are working towards becoming an accessible tourism destination.

Examples of tourist destinations that are focusing on accessibility and inclusion can be helpful at the very outset of a new DMO accessibility project, by providing reference examples of:

- how to develop an overall strategy,
- learning about the practical steps to introduce change to an organisation,
- identifying good practices,
- assessing competitors and
- establishing a first set of Key Performance Indicators.

Seeing how others address similar challenges – organisational, managerial, technical or financial – can help to shape ideas and perhaps also avoid some of the difficulties that others may have encountered. It has already been mentioned that **networking among DMOs** can bring considerable benefits through sharing

experience, developing methodologies and applying common approaches.

In recent years a number of comparative case studies have been made examining the development of accessible destinations in Europe. The studies have focused on various factors, such as policy-making, organisational perspectives, business incentives, marketing strategies, approaches to implementing design-for-all in business and in the public sector, participatory planning techniques, training, skills and employment, and the development of labels, accessibility information schemes and tourism standards. Some useful accessible tourism destination case studies are referenced below.

### 10.1. KEY REFERENCES FOR BENCHMARKING ACCESSIBLE DESTINATIONS

**EU Study: Mapping the Supply and Performance of Accessible Tourism Services in Europe. Fifteen Case Studies, (2014).** [EWORX S.A.](#), [ENAT](#) and [VVA](#)

Fifteen Case Studies of Accessible Tourism Destinations were commissioned in 2013 by the European Commission (Tourism Unit) as part of a research project examining the supply side of accessible tourism in Europe. The studies examined: London UK, Frankfurt Germany, Arona Spain, Stockholm Sweden, Lousã Accessible Destination Portugal, Paris - Ile de France, Disneyland Paris, France, Slovenia NTA, ŠENT NGO and Premiki, Slovenia, Moravia-Silesia & Tešín Czech Republic, Athens Greece, Trentino Italy, Schloss

Schönbrunn, Vienna Austria, Hérault, France, Barcelona Spain and Rovaniemi Finland.



**Figure 10-1. Accessible Destination Case Study, Athens**

The selected destinations can be regarded as *examples of good practice*, although certain weaknesses are also identified in some cases. All the cases are from Member States of the European Union. Each case study report has a table, in Annex, indicating the "justification for good practice" with ratings on a number of parameters including Innovation, Relevance, Transferability, Efficiency and Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability.

The Case Studies can be downloaded in PDF format from the ENAT website. Each one is about 20 - 30 pages long.

See: [Accessible Destinations: 15 Case Studies](#)

## **Design for All in Tourist Destinations (2017), EUCAN**

In January 2017 a collection of case studies of Accessible Tourism Destinations was published by the European Concept for Accessibility Network, [EUCAN](#), an organisation based in Luxembourg.

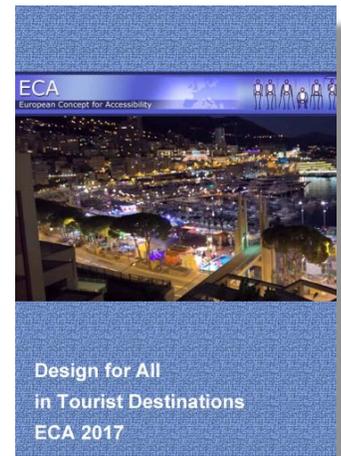
The destinations are: Eiffel National Park Germany, Erfurt Germany, Milan Italy, Turin Italy, Flanders Belgium, Östersund Sweden, Müllerthal Region Luxembourg, Hamburg Germany, Montserrat Abbey Spain, Sydney's "Cultural Ribbon", Australia.

The case studies are described and analysed in relation to seven "success factors", giving a broad assessment of their level of achievement in fulfilling their aims to provide inclusive tourism experiences for everyone.

The report is available as a downloadable PDF.

See: [Design for All in Tourist Destinations](#)

For details of how to develop Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for your accessible destination development project, see [Section 14. Monitoring and Evaluation](#)



## **10.2. DESTINATION AUDITS**

Carrying out a destination audit is typically one of the first steps in addressing the existing situation before planning any environmental improvements and/or developing new tourism products and services. The audit will provide essential information to inform the project KPIs and guide the development work.

A destination audit is an assessment procedure, which aims to find factual information and answers to key questions that are needed to advise, inform and plan the next stages of improvements.

While the main focus of an audit will often be to make an “access audit” of a defined physical location, it is also necessary to identify and evaluate tourist services from a “visitor perspective”, that is, examining how customers interact with the services and, if possible incorporating feedback from customers, as an added dimension of the evaluation. The destination audit can involve tourism business partners, public agencies and advocacy groups, such as disabled people’s organisations, in order to build up a holistic view of the environments, attractions, cultural experiences, transportation, accommodation and other tourism offers and services. It may also involve examining the marketing, accessibility information provision and accessibility of the DMO’s website and other information products.



**Figure 10-2. Carrying out a destination access audit**

The following steps are proposed for DMOs when developing a destination audit:

1. Planning the audit
2. Procurement of the audit
3. Carrying out the audit
4. The audit report
5. Evaluating the audit

**1. Planning the audit** involves identifying the scope, deciding on the scale and the purpose of the assessments. It includes budgeting the work and agreeing on the timescale and also the time of year when the audit will take place, bearing in mind the seasonal variations in the numbers of visitors and services that are available. It may be necessary to link the audit to other local investment programmes that are already ongoing, as this may require modifications to the scope of the audit and also the affect the budget that is available for the study.

When identifying the parameters for the audit, have in mind that some small-scale and quick improvements may be desirable, to show the immediate benefits of the accessibility project, so these possible remedial actions must be anticipated in the kinds of assessments that are made.

Choosing the actual venue for the audit is important – it should include visitor “Points of Interest” and the main transport hubs and pedestrian routes (as described in [Section 5. Built Environment](#) – Accessible Routes).

**2. Procurement of the audit** will either involve identifying an internal team or leader to undertake the audit, if suitably experienced staff are available, or tendering the work to an outside contractor. In either case the works shall be described under specific headings, as suggested below:

- Background to the project
- Aims of the project
- The scope and detail of the audit
- Related development programmes, data sets, if any
- Format of the audit report
- Timescales and delivery date
- The budget/cost
- Previous experience of the auditor

**3. Carrying out the audit** requires careful and detailed planning and scheduling. While an experienced auditor will work effectively following a structured plan, it is essential that venues are open and that any necessary contact persons or staff are informed and available to give access, answer questions or guide the auditor around the venue. The auditor should carry visible identification (if not known by the venue owner/manager) and any necessary clearances which may be required, should be authorized by the DMO or relevant authority. Where it is necessary to use maps or building plans, these should be made available to the auditor well in advance of the visits so that any missing or inaccurate information is remedied before the audit.

**4. The Audit Report** should be provided in a 1<sup>st</sup> draft and possibly 2<sup>nd</sup> draft before the final version is delivered. This allows possibilities to examine results in depth, possibly with other responsible heads or sections of the DMO before the final recommendations and conclusions are developed. Key findings should be disseminated to the destination stakeholders and partners, ensuring that those who may be affected are fully informed and consulted about the plans that may arise from the results.

**5. Evaluating the audit** is a necessary step to ensure that those consulted during the assessment are able to provide follow-up comments and also that the project team gives its views on the success of the audit as performed. If the audit exposed unexpected results these must be addressed with the responsible departments or stakeholders. The outcome of a destination audit should include, besides the Audit Report :

- **An Action Document** with tasks and time-lines,
- **Identified roles** of those who will carry out the tasks
- **Management and project plan** – or amendments, as necessary to guide the next stages of the project.

## 11. EMPLOYMENT, VOLUNTEERING AND TRAINING

This Section explains the direct and indirect advantages of employing persons with disabilities in the tourism sector. It describes the role of Social Responsibility in the reputation of destinations and businesses.

Here we highlight the benefits of employing disabled people – a valuable resource in helping to make destination accessible and inclusive.

A common perception is that there are many barriers preventing tourism businesses, such as hotels, from hiring people with disabilities because of perceptions by management that there will be higher training costs, greater absenteeism and mobility issues. There is also the notion that guests will be uneasy around disabled employees.

### 11.1. LEGAL OBLIGATION TO EMPLOY WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES

The Decree Law 29/2001, of February 3 (Employment Quota System) defines positive measures to promote the employment of people with disabilities in central and local public administration. There is a 5% quota for people with disabilities (motor, visual, hearing, mental or cerebral palsy) with a degree of incapacity greater than or equal to 60%.

Law no. 38/2004, dated 18 August defines the general bases of the legal system for prevention, habilitation, rehabilitation and participation. Article 28 states that 'according to their size, companies should contract people

with disability by means of a work contract or other forms of employment for a maximum quota of 2% of their workforce.

### [Legal texts on Rehabilitation and Employment \(PT\)](#)

#### 11.1.1. BENEFITS OF EMPLOYING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE TOURISM SECTOR

Disabled people constitute the World's largest minority group, yet employers often regard disabled people as particularly hard to employ. A common misconception is that there are many barriers preventing tourism businesses, such as hotels, from hiring people with disabilities because of perceptions by management that there will be higher training costs, greater absenteeism and mobility issues and the belief that people with disabilities are restricted to certain jobs. The truth is that people with disabilities are working in all fields, at all levels and in a variety of jobs.

Some disabled people do, and will, require adjustments including training and support. Without such adjustments, good candidates may not apply for advertised positions and their talents will be lost to the organisation that may so desperately need them.

Another common myth positions disabled people as a health and safety risk. However, research shows that this is far from true. In fact, disabled people tend to have better attendance records, stay with employers longer and are no more likely to have accidents than non-disabled colleagues.

There are increasing examples where businesses are

embracing diversity and disability to leverage their competitiveness. Organisations have decided to widen their recruitment and selection. They do this because it enhances reputation and loyalty from internal and external stakeholders and customers; allows for a better understanding of the needs and expectations of disabled people as customers; and increases efficiency linked to staff recruitment.

**Tourism for All** – a UK-based non-profit organisation, has conducted research on how tourism business can benefit from employing persons with a disability. They list 10 reasons for doing so, as follows:

1. To employ motivated and talented people
2. To choose dynamic personalities
3. To offer experience of disabilities to your disabled guests
4. To recruit reliable colleagues
5. To cultivate team spirit
6. To support the blossoming of every person
7. To observe the law by integrating differences
8. To strengthen the identity of your establishment
9. To take advantage of financial incentives
10. To make the first step by brushing aside stereotypes

Source: [Tourism for All, UK - 10 good reasons for employing disabled people \(EN\)](#)

Stefan Gröschl, a professor at France's ESSEC Business School, argues that hotel managers, for example, should be more open and proactive in employing people with disabilities because of the wide range of jobs within a

hotel. His experience has been that management and co-workers who know people with disabilities or who have worked with them in the past are more positive about employing the disabled or working alongside them.

DMOs should identify local businesses in the destination that are successfully employing disabled people to understand the benefits for them, their staff and their customers.

Based on this information, DMOs may develop Case Studies in order to use these for promoting employment of disabled people in the region or municipality, highlighting the advantages this brings them.

DMOs can also involve partners and stakeholders to contribute to employment actions, either with examples from their own business or by encouraging them to see what more they can do in support of the strategy to employ more disabled people within the tourism sector.

## 11.2. THE NEED FOR TRAINING AT ALL LEVELS

If a visitor experience is to be truly accessible then all elements of the supply chain or customer journey must be accessible. As a result, a person's place in the tourism value chain is less important for determining skills and training needs than the *role* that this person fulfils in the business.

Skills needs and training provision must differentiate between different skills levels (basic, in-depth) and different occupational roles (Managers with / without

customer contact, frontline staff, others (including technical specialists).

Training content and learning outcomes should include:

- Knowledge of disabilities / types of disability and access requirements,
- Barriers to accessibility & Design for All,
- Strategic development of accessibility in business,
- Principles of effective customer service,
- Proper etiquette for dealing with PwD,
- Recognising and responding appropriately to people using personal supports and Service animals and assistive technology

On the whole, businesses should achieve a higher awareness and understanding of accessibility, which will lead to a greater demand for the appropriate management and staff training.

Examples of some relevant training programmes for DMOs are given below.

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#### 11.2.1. UNIDADES DE FORMAÇÃO CERTIFICADA (UFCD'S)

In 2009, Perfil – Psicologia e Trabalho conducted a Study on Inclusive Tourism with the goal to better understand the dynamics of providing hospitality services to people with disabilities.

That study enabled the building of a Training Package designed exclusively to equip tourism professionals with the necessary hospitality skills to successfully receive and cater to people with special needs.

The Training Package “Inclusive Tourism – hospitality skills to receive and entertain people with special needs” is developed with 4 modules: (UFCD’s – *Unidades de Formação Certificada*)

- A “Cross-sectorial” module for all tourism professionals;
- An “Accommodation” module;
- A “Food & Beverage” module;
- An “Other Tourism Services” module.

Each one of the modules covers the 4 main areas of disability (motor, visual, hearing and intellectual) as well as elderly tourists needs by the limitations arising from the ageing process. This Training Package is included in the *Catálogo Nacional de Qualificações* (the National Qualifications Framework) which is the strategic tool that the Portuguese government uses to manage the formal and vocational training for professional qualifications. It is important that training is promoted together with awareness-raising.

#### 11.2.2. EDUCATION FOR PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION

Tourism of Portugal has carried out several training courses in Accessible Tourism or Tourism for All, aimed at professionals in the tourist sector (public and private). These training sessions were held at the schools of Turismo de Portugal. The initiatives have been very well evaluated by the participants and will be replicated in other schools of the country soon.



**See: [Tourism Schools of Turismo de Portugal](#)**

An upcoming programme for intermediate level in high school, will include accessible tourism in the courses of tourism with 25 hours (“soft skills”) knowledge, simulations and a theoretical module for improving students’ understanding of the diversity of clients. With this initiative, the new staff coming into the tourism sector will have already acquired the essential grounding in inclusion and accessibility for all, enabling them to bring their knowledge to bear on their professional lives and serve as an example to their colleagues.

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11.2.3. NGO – TRAINING IN TOURISM FOR ALL

**[Acesso Cultura](#)** is a not-for profit cultural association that works for the improvement of physical, social and intellectual access to cultural venues and the cultural programming. They organise training courses, an annual conference, public debates and they also carry out access audits, studies and consultancy.

Every year they give the Access Culture Award that aims to distinguish cultural organisations for their exemplary policies and good practices.

Colleagues who participate in our initiatives say that they develop a new way of looking at their work and evaluating how accessible their offer is. They also feel motivated to try and change the way things are done. Quoting one of our trainees: “I confess how good this training was for me. Great trainers, interesting contributions from colleagues, but, most of all, I was able to see how distant I was from certain realities and the impact that everything I learnt had on me. Like being on a mission, I feel the need to speak

out and raise awareness among colleagues and work partners.”

Acesso Cultura uses its newsletter and social media to let the whole cultural field know about the efforts cultural organisations in Portugal and abroad make in order to become more accessible.

**Figure 11-1. Training Session by Acesso Cultura NGO**



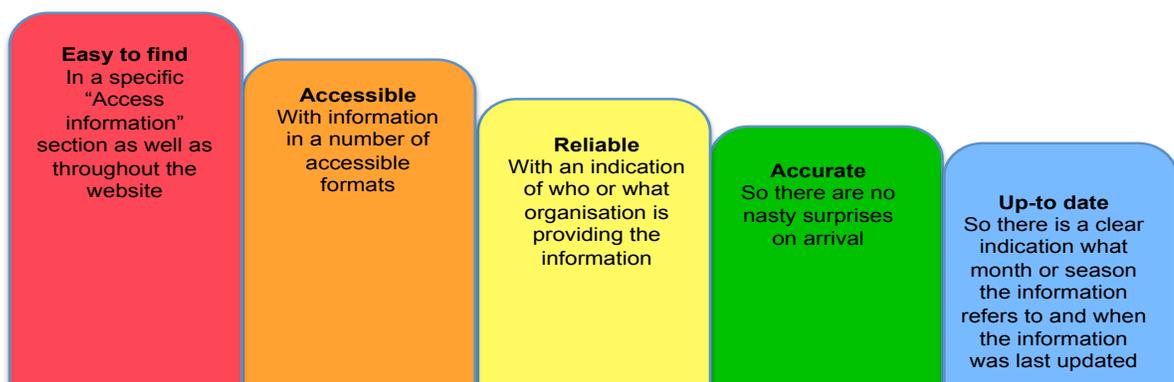
**Foto:Luis Filipe Santiago**

## 12. INFORMATION

It is self-evident that **the quality of information about access** is crucially important to visitors with access requirements when choosing a destination, attraction, accommodation, mode of transport and a tourist experience.

DMOs have a particular responsibility for collecting and organising accessibility information, either directly or in collaboration with providers. A range of tools and methods can be used to create relevant and suitable information for people with a range of access requirements. It is also important that all team members who have customer contact know and understand the information and to whom it is relevant. Whether the information is delivered via the Website, on the phone or in written form, it must be accurate and consistent. Marketing images should reflect a wide range of visitors, of different ages and abilities.

It is particularly important that information for people with disabilities shall be:



Source: VisitEngland / ENAT

## 12.1. GETTING STARTED

As you start the process of making your destination fully inclusive and welcome to all it is necessary to ensure:

- That everyone in your organisation understands the principles of Accessible or Inclusive Destinations, who the beneficiaries are and how they benefit.
- Each member of staff understands the role that they will play in this development and identify any training needs they may have.
- You have an understanding, through using this Handbook and other resource, of how you can develop accessibility in partnership with key stakeholders. (See [Section 9 Stakeholder Engagement](#)).

Good communication, both internally with all staff and your partner stakeholders, will be key to your success in developing Accessible Tourism. It's important they understand the issues, why you are looking to develop and improve inclusion in the destination, what their role will be and the role they will play.

Your recognised Access Champion (see [Section 3 Policy and Strategy](#)) and those of your stakeholder partners have an important role to play at this stage as they need to communicate to their staff and others the commitment that is being made to this development.

Success is likely to be achieved where there is strong 'buy-in' for this development from your staff and other stakeholders. A sense of ownership is also important.

If businesses can understand the benefits for them, their customers and the destination by serving this market better, and have an opportunity to contribute to the strategy and action plan that is produced they are more likely to commit to undertake actions in support of this aim. Then the more likely it is that you, as the DMO, will achieve your aims and objectives and be successful in meeting your overall goal of becoming a more inclusive destination.

Consider creating a small team internally from across all departments in the DMO that comes together to act as internal 'Champions' to help develop accessibility by sharing information, ensuring that strategic actions are being delivered.

## 12.2. INTERNAL WORKSHOPS

A good starting point is to hold an internal workshop(s) to introduce all staff to the concept of Accessible Tourism and the important role played by accessibility information in visitors' decision-making.

- The workshop is an opportunity to explain what Accessible Tourism is, and why you are producing a strategy to develop this in your destination.
- It should seek to help each member of staff to understand their role in this development and what new skills they may have to acquire with further training.
- A Workshop may include information about:
  - The size and value of the accessible tourism market.
  - The beneficiaries of Accessible Tourism.

- The benefits to businesses and the destination.
- Understanding the market - the range of access requirements and how these can be met by the destination and local businesses.
- Showing how representatives of local access / disability groups can be involved in destination planning.
- A draft strategy and proposed key actions.
- Understanding how marketing and information provision will need to reflect a change in approach e.g. development of an accessible website and alternative information formats for providing information.
- Changes in content to reflect more information provided about accessibility of the destination and the businesses.

Further workshops with Stakeholders should be held to present similar content as above, in addition it should include:

Introduction to any network and resources you may provide to support them (see [Section 9 Stakeholder Engagement](#)).

Carefully planned workshops offer many benefits for you and your stakeholders:

- They can act as an introduction to an area of business development where knowledge will vary from those who are already doing much and some are just starting out.
- Working closely with disabled people can help you address any fear or misunderstanding that businesses may have (e.g. that the mistaken idea

that market is solely based on wheelchair users) and they are not sure what to say and do when dealing with disabled people, so it is easier for them not to engage with them. By meeting and talking with disabled people they can hear what they are looking for as customers. Team members can ask them questions to gain greater confidence and understanding about how they can best serve this market.

Wider benefits can be gained by bringing different stakeholders together. For example by encouraging Accommodation, Attractions and Restaurants / Cafes to work more closely and develop partnerships between themselves they may agree to share details on their websites about partners' accessibility information and create combined offers for visitors as an incentive to visit.

Workshops can also be an opportunity to identify businesses that want to work closely with you so that specific accessible itineraries may be developed which recognise easy accessible routes identified in the public realm with businesses that, at a minimum, ensure their staff have disability awareness training and produce an Access Statement / Accessibility guide.

To ensure the initial workshops forge the development of an active group:

- Develop an online forum where businesses can ask questions, share information and good practice to learn from each other e.g. understand good suppliers of access equipment
- Facilitate businesses coming together, via the forum and any other communication channels, to help create self-support groups that can work closely

together, and where appropriate, share development costs, for example accommodation providers collectively purchasing appropriate kit for someone who is deaf and sharing this resource.

Suggestions include:

- Developing a structure for introductory workshops for Destination Managers to be delivered at the local level, introducing them to the principles of Accessible Destinations, how to develop them and the benefits to be gained.
- Providing an online forum for Destination Managers, Planners, businesses etc. to ask questions, exchange information, share best practice and experiences, case studies
- Working with local professional tourist guides.

From initiating these workshops, the goal should be to develop long-term self-support within the groups.

### 12.3. ACCESSIBLE WEBSITES AND APPS

It may sound obvious but if you have great facilities and services for visually impaired people do you have marketing materials that are also suitable?

Make sure that your Website is accessible to screen readers used by blind people, by requiring your Web development team to comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Developers should design to WCAG version 2.0 level AA. This requirement is to be implemented in all public sector Websites and mobile apps in Europe within the next two years, **[under EU Directive 2016/2021 \(EN\)](#)**

- [PT version of the Directive on Accessible Websites and Apps](#)

Maintaining an accessible Website also depends on the content management team providing content which is suitably organized, “tagged” and coded. Content managers and Web developers must ensure that a user with a screen reader or other assistive device can navigate the pages properly, read text without difficulty and interact with the website, for example being able to make a booking on-line or, if this is not possible, finding the helpline or telephone number where human assistance can be requested. Web content managers must have appropriate training in order to make their online information accessible, complementing the technical accessibility features of the website.

When placing information about the accessibility of venues and services on the destination’s website it must be placed prominently, so that it can be found easily by site visitors. All too often, access information is “buried” in the more remote pages of destination websites or under an obscure title or page heading. This makes the information hard, if not impossible to find.

**Make sure you have a clear link on your homepage and/or booking page about accessibility.** If someone has to spend lots of time searching for access information the chance is they will give up before they find it and you will lose a valuable customer.

**Figure 12-1. Link to your Accessibility Guide**

[The Eden Project, Accessibility Guide \(EN\)](#)



## 12.4. MATERIALS IN ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

To reach all your audience, you need to make effective use of accessible communication formats (also known as alternative formats).

Involve disabled people from your audience in developing and reviewing a strategy for producing information in accessible formats. They will know their needs and could help you find the most effective ways of meeting them. You can also approach disability organisations for advice.

Your strategy should outline:

- how you will anticipate the needs of disabled people
- what minimum standards are in place
- who is responsible and who will pay for the accessible formats
- what type of information you will prioritise.

To deliver best practice in alternative formats:

- involve relevant experts, such as marketing and communications, from the earliest planning stages
- consider the needs of your audience in advance – assess which, if any, accessible format versions are likely to be required
- plan ahead – make sure any accessible formats you produce are available at the same time as the standard print
- if you intend to supply accessible formats on demand, procedures should be in place to produce these within a few days of the request

- make sure you are in contact with a range of suppliers who can produce good quality materials in accessible formats.

Typical alternative formats include large print and audio. There may also be materials you want to present in Video, Braille and/or **“Easy Read”**.

There are many sources of information about how to produce information in alternative formats.

One example is the [UK Government website](#) which gives useful information and guidelines on the use of alternative document formats that are readable by people with disabilities.

A comprehensive set of [Toolkits for Customer Engagement in Tourism Services](#) is provided by the Centre of Excellence in Universal Design, Ireland. The toolkits can be downloaded free of charge and used as training materials for those managers and staff who deal with any aspect of customer information, including print media, telephone, audio, video, face-to-face communications, video, and electronic communications including email, Websites and mobile apps.

Continuing the publication of Guides of good practice in Accessibility, Tourism of Portugal in partnership with the Directorate General of Cultural Heritage, publishes a *Guide on Inclusive Communication in Monuments, Palaces and Museums*. This Guide will be publicly available in early 2017.



Guia de Boas Práticas de Acessibilidade  
Comunicação Inclusiva  
em Monumentos, Palácios e Museus

## 12.5. DESTINATION AND CITY GUIDES

Destinations that place a strong focus on welcoming visitors with access requirements will – sooner or later – realise there is a need to create an Accessible tourism guide. Accessibility Guides are a great way of promoting accessible businesses and services and, if placed online, they serve to stimulate visitors to consider the destination as a worthwhile place to come.

At the destination, the Accessibility Guide will help visitors find their way and enjoy all the accessible experiences that are on offer.

Tourism of Portugal has a new Web space dedicated to accessible tourism. It includes accessible touristic itineraries in cities of mainland Portugal and the islands. Each itinerary identifies the route recommended for people with specific access requirements as well as the points of tourist interest that can be visited, mentioning the accessibility conditions of each one.



See: [Accessible Tourism Itineraries](#)

### 12.5.1. EXAMPLE: ACCESSIBLE TOURISM GUIDE - "LISBON FOR ALL"

The first Accessible Tourism Guide - "Lisbon For All" appeared in 2016 as a result of Lisbon's Pedestrian Accessibility Plan outlined actions that the City Council has been developing within the scope of the Social Rights and promotion of people with disabilities' inclusion.

The project was developed in partnership between the City Municipal Authority partnering with Lisbon Tourism Association, among other entities, aiming to fulfill the needs of a very specific public: wheelchair users.

This Guide intends to inform the tourist demand and guarantee higher security and comfort levels during the journey as well as support tourist agents on monetizing the accessible supply and contribute to the competitiveness increase of Lisbon while an Accessible Destiny.

Basic accessibility means that a visitor with reduced mobility (e.g. someone in a wheelchair or someone with a pushchair) will be able to (1) enter the building, (2) move around freely inside, (3) make use of the service and (4) have access to a toilet facility that has been adapted for people with reduced mobility.

"Lisbon for All" is published in Portuguese and English which includes: hotels, restaurants, gardens and viewpoints, museums, monuments. It is also suggested accessible tours by the city.



Figure 12-2. LISBOA Para Todos - City Accessibility Guide

See: [Video presentation of the Guide \(PT\)](#)

Guide: English: [Download the Guide in PDF format \(EN\)](#)

Português: [Download the Guide in PDF format \(PT\)](#)

## 13. MARKETING AND PROMOTION

### 13.1. MARKETING

A key part of your accessibility development, must be around the promotion of the accessible offer. Some businesses will state they have made access improvements but there is no demand. Without appropriate marketing, demand will be low. If you don't let the target audience know about the accessibility of your offer they will quickly move on to destinations and businesses that are. Appropriate marketing should therefore be a crucial part of your strategy.

Effective marketing via a range of different channels is crucial in a world where there is so much online traffic. Just how do you make your destination different, stand out from the rest, and make you the destination of choice to visit? Promoting your accessibility can help you do this.

In Section 12 the importance of **information** was emphasised. Information describing the destination or a business is crucial in the decision-making phase for the target audience. However, prior to this you need to get the attention of people.

Your marketing must therefore be smart and targeted for this market, using appropriate messages and channels to reach maximum numbers. Signposting to relevant information and including images for those with access requirements is essential, so that they feel they will be welcomed and able to enjoy the available offers.

People with access requirements do not make up a neat segment that can be marketed to in exactly the same way. They feature in every social and cultural group and have diverse interests and passions both on holiday and at home. They are a rich mix of potential customers, often travelling with friends and family, who are all looking for what everyone wants on holiday – a good time.

Most disabled people have some particular requirements when travelling therefore some specialist knowledge about their needs will help tour marketing and promotions. But there is no need to become an expert in disability. Approach this market as you would any other: research your customers' backgrounds, their travel habits, interests and requirements and then adjust your product and promotional channels to attract them.

Think of the destination and your businesses as being 'accessible' rather than 'disabled friendly'. This will help you widen your opportunities to attract those who have access requirements, but don't see themselves as disabled.

Like any other market, disabled people will make booking decisions based on what they can find out about your destination and your tourism businesses.

Many disabled people, their carers, family and friends complain that while they want to travel, often they cannot find the information that they require and be assured that it is up to date, accurate and reliable.

Even destinations that have venues with good accessibility do not always present their accessible facilities clearly and openly. Customers are unlikely to

assume that you have good access. In fact, 95% of disabled people look for access information when deciding whether or not to visit a venue. So it all comes down to how you market your accessibility.

Here we present a list of key points to remember when planning your marketing strategy and approach:

### **Accessible Tourism Marketing – Key Points**

**Don't assume all disabilities are the same** - Think of the spectrum of different access requirements and remember that no two people who, for example, may be wheelchair users, are exactly alike;

**Don't hide the accessibility information**, put it where the rest of the facility information is. Bookings are often made by friends, family or employers. Headings such as “special facilities” or “compliance requirements” are meaningless and demeaning. (Have a clear link on the website home page to accessibility information - avoid using the term disabled or disability);

**Provide enough detail.** This is critical, as every person with a disability has a different need and a different level of expectation. Don't try and categorize. Provide the detail so that they can make the decision as to whether a facility is suitable for them or not. Any customer would make a choice based on the information about room types – visitors with access needs have preferences. (There is a balance required in providing what information that needed and no more: information overload may make it unusable);

**Get feedback from visitors** to understand what information is key for them. The “look and feel” of the information is important to them, as well as the access information itself;

**Include photographs** of your accessible facilities;

**Include people with a disability in your general marketing and imagery** (but not in a tokenistic way e.g. a solitary wheelchair user sitting on the edge of a cliff)!

**Figure 13-1. Photo of lady in wheelchair, promoting Pantou - the European Accessible Tourism Directory**



Photo Credit: [Photoability.net](https://photoability.net)

## 13.2. DESTINATION CAMPAIGNS, BRANDING AND PROMOTIONS

As part of any destination’s outreach to potential and new visitors, campaigns and promotions are used to attract greater attention and raise awareness of new possibilities and offers.

Having started on the path to becoming an **accessible tourism destination**, plans should be made to promote the actions that are taking place, seeking to capitalise on every major improvement and to spread the message when key milestones have been reached.

Destinations that aspire to gain a reputation for being “accessible for all” can use various means to consolidate even small gains by creating products that complement each other in a consistent way. Noting what successful destinations have done in terms of product development can give inspiration to create campaigns and promotions drawing on similar approaches and ingredients.

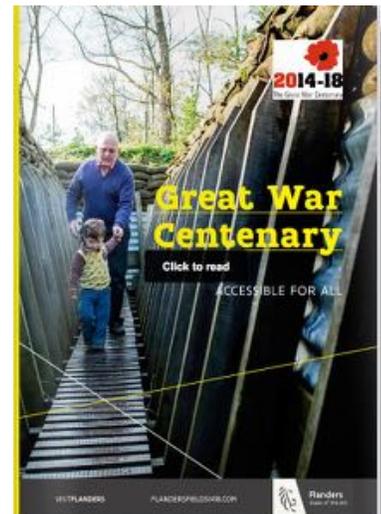


Ideas for new accessible destination brands and products might include:

- itineraries, routes, corridors and thematic groupings;
- ‘joined up product’ such as thematic consortia, use of digital/tech solutions...
- transport-related options such as through-ticketing, destination passes and pricing solutions.

Drawing on the example of a successful accessible tourism branding campaign, [The Great War Centenary 2014-2018 \(EN\)](#) in the Flanders Region of Belgium, your destination campaign may be guided by the following:

- a specific objective and a strategic approach,
- clear ownership and control of the brand of the brand
- a clear proposition, laying out what is included and what visitors can do,
- strong leadership, with a “Champion” who can drive public relations, help to secure funding and generate a unified message,
- wide-ranging partnerships that support the aims of the campaign,
- an experiential proposition – that this experience will change the visitor as a person in a meaningful and positive way,
- bookable events, accommodation, transport, offers, all tied in to the product,
- engagement with small businesses, attractions and community groups, ensuring that the local community as a whole is active and benefits from the campaign,
- integrated transport modes with car hire deals, public transport, national/international connections and transfers,



- digital app [AccesSEAbLe \(NL\)](#), with accessibility information (attractions, accommodation, restaurants, parking, paths, public toilets, etc.)
- catering both for the “mainstream” visitor and those who require good accessibility, at all price levels, targeting universal access for all
- linking the campaign to social media pages of NGOs and activists who promote local events, itineraries, etc.

### 13.2.1. SOCIAL MEDIA AND VIDEOS

Every tourism destination must be present and active in the social media space nowadays. Destinations, big and small, need to build relationships with individuals and communities by entering into a public dialogue about the things that matter to visitors.

One thing is to “push” the destination’s messages through social media but to use the new media successfully there must be an interaction – a conversation – between:

- those who are marketing the destination,
- the local community and
- the visitors or potential visitors.

Only by entering and engaging in this online space is it possible for a destination to develop a meaningful relationship with its followers and, ultimately, a build and maintain a reputation as a desirable place to visit.

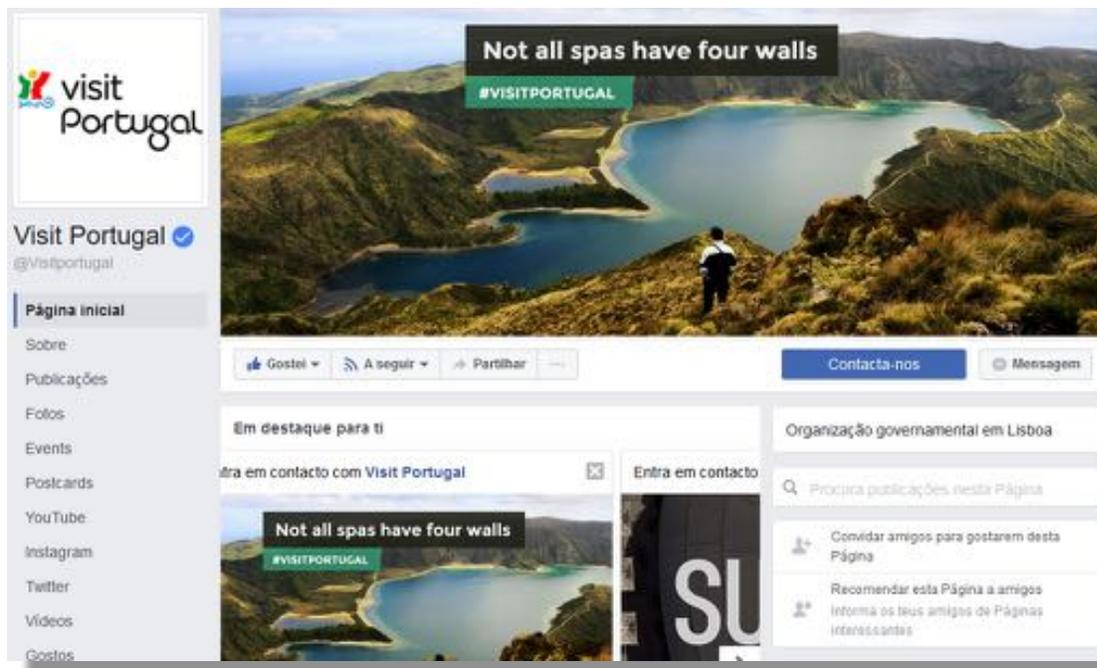
It is also vitally important for DMOs to *link with, like* and *follow* other players in the social media, such as on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and so on.

**Twitter** is used by disabled travellers in two ways. One is to follow key tweeters (bloggers, magazines etc.) and obtain relevant information. The second way is to build up



a following of like-minded people, share information, and when necessary ask a question from your community. If you and your businesses can participate in either of these then you will start to attract a following to your Twitter account.

**Facebook** used to be a more “closed” space used between friends but it has also established business pages and communities. Now, many companies and organisations have a Facebook page, finding it a useful platform to receive customer feedback and promote their latest news.



**Figure 13-2. Facebook page of VisitPortugal**

Remember that social media outlets are valued for providing advice and help. You would quickly lose all trust if you just used them to promote your destination.

- Start by telling your story – use news, articles, pictures and videos to share your journey and aims to being a more accessible destination with your customer.

- Build your community – respond to requests for information and start to build trust with your target audience.
- Include a call to action – once people are engaged with you then you can announce your latest offers or a new service.
- Invite disabled bloggers from your target market countries to visit your destination and show them your hospitality and the experiences available to visitors with access needs.
- **Blogs** are becoming more popular as they reflect the liking for human stories. Increasingly there are many blogs written by disabled travellers, who can be influential in inspiring others to visit places.

Here is an example of a power-chair user, who is 27, from the UK who writes about his experience of a trip to Lagos, Portugal. [Blog post about Lagos, Portugal by a power wheelchair user \(EN\)](#)

**Travel Review Websites** are also being developed that give disabled people a voice and an opportunity to share information about their travel experiences. One example is [Euans Guide](#) which has ambitions to gather disabled users' experiences from destinations and venues around the world. At present it has a strong presence in the United Kingdom and is gathering reviews from travellers visiting other countries, mainly in Europe.



Euan's Guide also presents tips for businesses on how to improve access generally and how to market accessible products to customers.

### **Testimonials**

DMOs should encourage their tourism businesses to get feedback and testimonials from Visitors. Testimonials provide authentic and original expressions of visitors'

experiences and, if used carefully, can help to build the reputation of the accessible tourist destination.

Both words and text, in combination, can provide the most valuable feedback.

'Word of Mouth' advice and independent reviews from family, friends and online sources such as Trip Advisor is now the most valued source of information when booking a holiday. Disabled travellers in particular value this information.

### **Impressions of Sintra, from visitors with access needs**

*"Thank you so very much for the fantastic super speedy tours of Sintra's rich heritage. Needless to say that I was extremely impressed by the level of professionalism and eagerness to keep on improving accessibility for all, by equipment like the chairs and of course the Swiss-Tracs and by the sensory tours for visually impaired people." Aicha Nystrom 12-09-2016*

*"We wanted to say thank you to all the team that helped us during our visits of Queluz and Sintra. Our French speaking guides (...) were perfect and your team was very helpful. Thanks a lot for the authorization to enter with our 3 vehicles. Without this it could have been so much difficult with our disabled people, but everything was done to make things easier for us." Decalage 7-10-2014*

More traditional means of receiving customer feedback can be combined with on-line media to reinforce positive messages, for example by publishing visitor testimonials as images or videos. All published material from visitors should, of course, be strictly managed and monitored by the DMO or tourism provider who is responsible for the media channel.

Watch the [video “All for All”](#) from Turismo de Portugal.



### 13.2.2. SPECIALISED ONLINE MARKETING CHANNELS

**Pantou** <https://pantou.org> is the name of the European On-line Accessible Tourism Directory. (Pantou means “Everywhere” in Greek).

This is a Website where businesses in Europe can register free of charge to promote their accessible tourism services. To be listed with Pantou, tourism suppliers must indicate the type of service(s) offered and the particular target groups they can serve.

Tourism providers should either join an **Accessibility Information Scheme (AIS)** that verifies the accessibility of the services offered - or fill out and submit the **Pantou Accessibility Guide** self-declaration form.

**TUR4ALL** [www.tur4all.pt](http://www.tur4all.pt)

(Website will first be available in mid-2017).

TUR4all is a digital platform and mobile app that presents audited accessibility information of visitor accommodation, restaurants, venues and tourist attractions in Portugal and Spain. It will be free for tourism providers to join the scheme. The service is supported by



Turismo de Portugal and Portuguese Vodafone Foundation and operated by the Accessible Portugal Association in collaboration with the PREDIF NGO, Spain.

**Lonely Planet's "[Travelling with a Disability Guide](#)" (EN)** is a downloadable PDF document offered free of charge to travellers and businesses.

Accessibility Editor, Martin Heng, who is paraplegic, produced the first two editions in 2016. This global guide, produced in association with ENAT, contains hyperlinks to accessible venues, services and destinations around the world.

It is planned to be updated every 6 months.

DMOs in Portugal are encouraged to submit their accessible venues to Lonely Planet, and inform the local businesses that have accessible offers to do the same.

**Email Martin Heng: [travelforall@lonelyplanet.com.au](mailto:travelforall@lonelyplanet.com.au)**



### 13.3. MAINSTREAM ACCESSIBILITY MARKETING

Whilst you will need to focus marketing to the target audience and use appropriate channels to reach them, you should also ensure that accessibility is included as part of your mainstream marketing.

**SCANDIC Hotels**, based in Sweden with over 300 hotels in northern and central Europe, has gained an international reputation over the past 15 years as one of the first “mainstream” hotel chains – and certainly the most well-known – for the quality of its welcome for guests with disabilities. *“When we take over a hotel, we implement our accessibility programme within three months and after just one year we tend to notice more bookings from private guests and from companies and organisations.*



*We don't separate access from our mainstream marketing. We refer to it in every channel so whether we are promoting a business offer or a sporting event, there will always be a reference to access. This gives us a clear competitive advantage as well as showing our commitment to social responsibility.”*

**Magnus Berglund**, Disability Manager

See: [Scandic Hotels - Special needs](#)

### 13.3.1. USING IMAGES TO REFLECT A DIVERSE RANGE OF VISITORS

Destinations should reflect the range of visitors they can cater for in marketing and promotional materials.

Using pictures of disabled visitors, older people and families with young children, for example on your website, can have even more impact than written testimonials as they clearly reinforce that people with access needs are welcome. Where you can, show a range of people with

different access requirements e.g. people who may use a wheelchair, a walking stick or frame, use a cane if they are blind, or with an assistance dog or show a deaf person near a hearing loop or using sign language.

Stock photos portraying people with access needs in tourism settings can be difficult to find. One online provider of such images is [PhotoAbility](#). This is a professional commercial image bank which pays royalties to disabled persons who submit their photos to the company.



Disabled visitors and residents at your destination should be encouraged to submit their photos to this site to build up the stock of suitable images for marketing and promotions. Videos can also illustrate the accessibility of the destination. Make sure the film reflects a wide range of visitor requirements, again not just focusing on wheelchair users, and has high quality production values as people will judge this as reflecting the quality of the destination. Ensure videos have subtitles so they can be read as well as listened to.

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### 13.3.2. PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN IN MAINSTREAM PRESS

#### **Example: VisitEngland “Access for All” project 2014-2016**

Following a successful pilot project in 2013/14, VisitEngland obtained a grant of €125,000 from the European Commission to expand their Access for All initiative. They partnered with seven regional destinations to develop and promote their accessibility actions.

The project consisted of two phases:

1. Product development, where 56 businesses were supported in improving their accessibility.
2. A national consumer marketing campaign in partnership with the Sunday Express (a UK national newspaper).

As part of the development, each business was required to:

- Attend a one-day introductory meeting with DMO representatives and all other businesses in the destination participating in the project.
- Managers attend a one-day 'Champions' workshop.
- All staff undertake online relevant accessibility training.
- Undergo an audit of the business and respond to suggested improvements in service, facilities and building structure, where possible.
- Produce an Accessibility Guide.
- Have their website reviewed for accessibility and make improvements where applicable.

The national campaign comprised of newspaper supplements, online and print adverts, competitions and more, and surpassed its target of **generating £12m by delivering £32m in incremental spend.**

See: [Access for All Project Roundup \(PDF, 3.4MB\) \(EN\)](#), including the [Project overview video \(EN\)](#).

The following images show examples of the different channels and messages that were used to reach the target audience.



Figure 13-3. UK newspaper and magazine advertisements

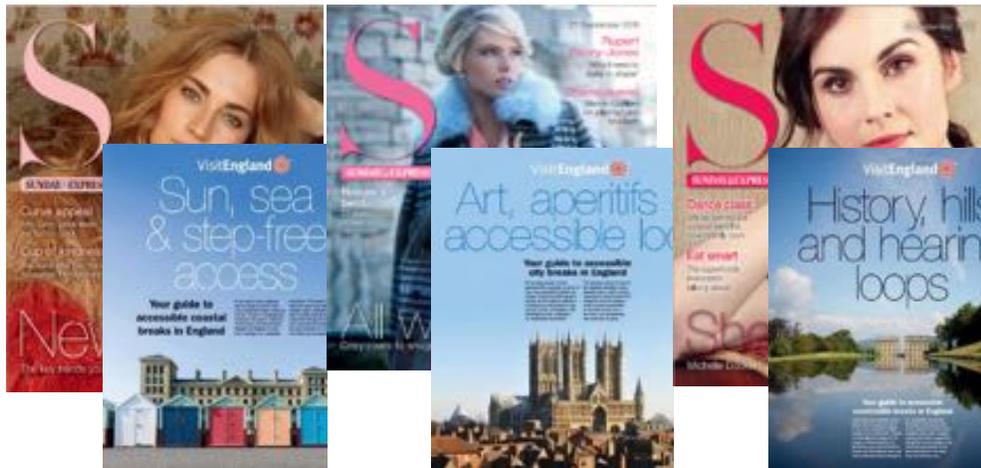


Figure 13-4. UK Regional guides publicising short accessible breaks

### 13.3.3. ACCESSIBILITY AWARDS

Awards can be a very useful tool as part of your marketing strategy, raising awareness about accessibility among tourism providers in your region or destination.

They enable you to:

- Showcase businesses in your destination that are inclusive and offering high quality and memorable experience for their customers.
- Generate Press, PR and Social Media activity to highlight and publicise these businesses not only to potential visitors but also to other businesses to encourage them to become more inclusive.
- Share good practices of the winning businesses.

It is useful to produce case studies of the award-winning businesses to understand how they have improved their accessibility and made their service more inclusive, and the benefits they have gained, for other businesses to learn from.

**See:** [VisitEngland Excellence Awards website](#)



### 13.3.4. EU ACCESS CITY AWARDS - FUNCHAL

In November 2016 the city of Funchal, in Madeira island was awarded an Honourable Mention in the European Commission Accessible City Award 2017.

The Access City Awards are not designed as a tourist promotion award but there in some respects the award criteria address issues, such as transportation, that are relevant to welcoming tourists with access requirements.



In 2016 a total of 43 European cities competed in the contest. The finalists also included: Chester – 1st place winner (United Kingdom), Rotterdam (Holland), Alessandria (Italy), Jurmala (Latvia), Lugo (Spain) and Skellefteå (Sweden) .

The Honourable Mention attributed to the Madeiran municipality recognized that due to its "volcanic character, the effort in the sense that its beaches, main tourist sites, hotels and public spaces are accessible, so that both residents and tourists with weaknesses, have the same opportunities as the rest of the population while enjoying their vacation".

For the municipal official, Paulo Cafôfo, this Honourable Mention came to give visibility to the work that is being done to make the municipality more Accessible and Inclusive. The mayor also added that Funchal wants to be a destination of Excellence for Inclusive Tourism.

The Funchal Council displays information on its website about several accessible services.

See: [VisitFunchal website](#).

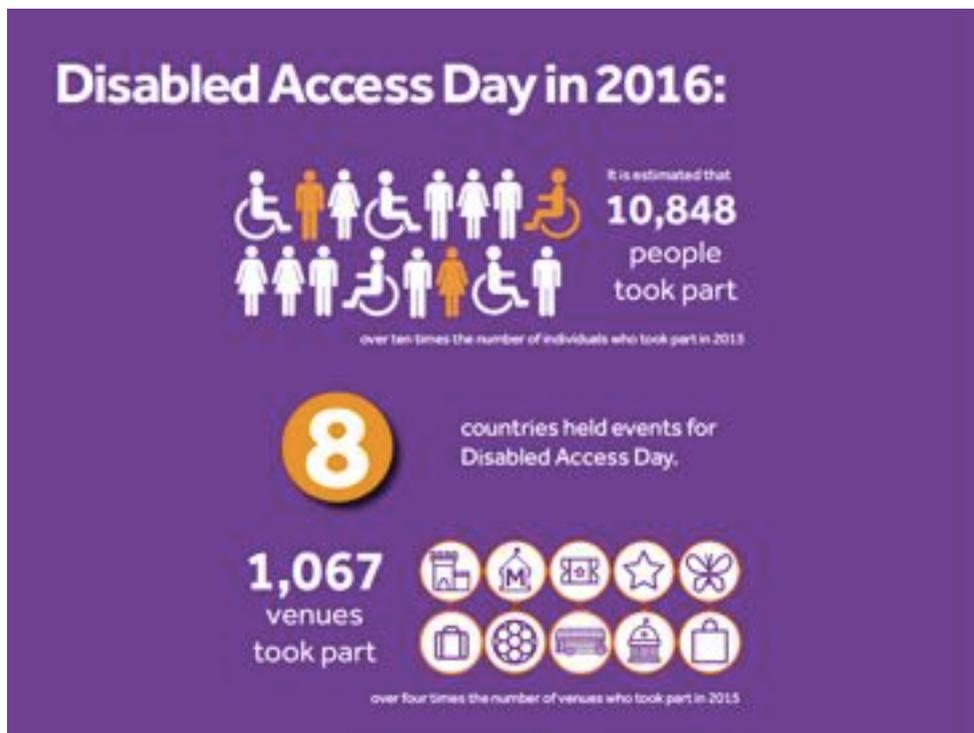
#### 13.3.5. EVENTS FOCUSING ON ACCESSIBILITY

**Disabled Access Day** is a relatively new event which started in the UK in 2015. Its aim is to encourage disabled people to do things that they may not usually do, for example go for a cup of coffee or the cinema or visit a museum.



The Day is promoted as “a unique opportunity for transport, tourism businesses and destinations to

showcase their accessibility and welcome for disabled people. It is also a great way for businesses gain greater understanding and confidence, by trying new things and engaging with disabled people.”



**Portuguese destinations and tourist venues can join in this event.**

Downloadable resources are available to help businesses with many useful hints and tips about welcoming disabled people. The 2017 edition will run from 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

See: [Disabled Access Day](#)

### 13.3.6. CASE STUDY – HOW ACCESSIBLE EVENTS CAN HELP DEVELOPMENT.

#### **Disabled Access Day, Borough Market, London, UK**

*“Borough Market’s involvement in Disabled Access Day 2016 provided a good example of how the impact of a one-day event can be felt far beyond that initial 24-hours.*

*Their participation was centred around a cookery demonstration in the Market Hall, in which their regular cook provided a typically fascinating masterclass on the power of taste and aroma. What made this particular demo stand out from their usual twice-weekly programme was the presence of a registered signer, who provided a British Sign Language interpretation of the cook’s words.*



*The response was amazing: a packed crowd absorbed the signed commentary as enthusiastically as they*

*gobbled up the samples. There was clearly an audience for this—a passionate group of food lovers who had never previously had access to the demos.*

*Disabled Access Day finished, but their commitment to deaf people continued. Now, on the second Friday of every month, a sign language interpreter is on hand at the demonstration kitchen, beside the stove, while some of the best cooks in the country work their magic.”*

Source: [Reference: Disabled Access Day 2015 edition \(EN\)](#)

## 14. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### 14.1. UNDERSTANDING SUCCESS

You need to understand what success looks like and that you are achieving your overall aim of improving accessibility across the tourism supply chain in your destination.

To help you recognise this you need to have in place a set of measurements, ideally at destination and business level. These Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will help you understand what is happening, where you are succeeding and where you may need to take corrective action and adjust your strategy accordingly. Remember, the strategy is a living document and should be under constant review, you can only do this by evaluation and monitoring.

In order for your strategy to be meaningful you must be able to measure against the aims and objectives you have set for your DMO and your businesses, to understand whether they have been achieved and how you can build on these, or where they have not been met, take corrective action. Without understanding this you may not be using your limited resources most effectively. You may therefore need to review such things as relationships, key messages to partners businesses and visitors, communication channels etc. tools provided for the industry, to ensure you remain on track and your strategy or action plan is being effective and bringing about the changes you want.

Through your strategy or action plan, you will have agreed a specific aim and objectives, with allocated responsibility and timescales against a budget, where applicable. It is vital that there is someone nominated to monitor the plan and actions on a regular basis and giving feedback to the partners / key stakeholders who are participating in any project management team.

## 14.2. KEY INDICATORS FOR ACCESSIBLE TOURISM DESTINATIONS

In addition to monitoring the detail of your strategy / action plan there are some **key indicators** that you should seek to monitor. Some suggested indicators come from ETIS, the European Tourism Indicators System for Sustainable Destination Management.

**See:** [European Commission sustainable tourism indicators \(EN\)](#)

They are:

- Percentage of rooms in commercial accommodation establishments accessible for people with disabilities
- Percentage of commercial accommodation establishments participating in recognised accessibility information schemes
- Percentage of public transport that is accessible to people with disabilities and specific access requirements
- Percentage of tourist attractions that are accessible to people with disabilities and/or participating in recognised accessibility information schemes.

In addition you may consider also monitoring at destination level:

1. Measure the awareness of visitors of the efforts made by the destination to be accessible to all.
2. Measure the level of accessibility information, marketing and branding at destination and business level, that is provided to help visitors make informed decisions.
3. Measure the numbers of disabled people employed in tourism related businesses.
4. Measure accessibility across the tourism value chain in a destination, essential for full inclusion, to understand overall level of accessibility.
5. Understand the satisfaction level of residents with access requirements with the accessibility of the destination for those with disabilities or specific access requirements
6. Understand the satisfaction levels of residents with access requirements, with their involvement and influence in local tourism planning and development.

Businesses should be encouraged to adopt a standard format of KPI's that they can use for themselves. Ideally DMOs can aggregate this data as part of the monitoring process and, where appropriate, help to identify businesses that would make good case studies.

Businesses should have an understanding of the impact of their improvements to accessibility by monitoring other factors such as:

1. Website activity, number of users who look at relevant access information e.g. how often the Accessibility Guide is accessed or downloaded.
2. Identify the number of bookings made where guests have accessibility requirements. (These bookings need to be understood before any measures to improve accessibility are put in place to recognise the impact of these e.g. increase demand).
3. Common search terms related to access on destination Website
4. Identify additional revenue earned as a result of accessibility measures put in place. (This requires a common framework of measurement to be developed)
5. Understand from visitors their satisfaction levels with relevant accessible services and facilities (this needs to be identified under agreed categories of recognised disability characteristics)
6. Understand from visitors what could be improved.

Ensure that you explain the purpose of the KPIs to partners and businesses in the destination that you are asking to collect this information. They should understand why you are collecting it and how it can be used. At destination level the information helps you to understand the impact your strategy is having, using the business data. For the businesses, they can be motivated if they can see that their actions to address this market are paying back by attracting more visitors, increasing customer satisfaction, repeat visits, recommendations and customer spend.

Put KPI data collection systems in place in your DMO, involving appropriate staff to manage this. Work with partners / key stakeholders to agree common KPIs that can be used by them all and which they are prepared to collect. In this way, monitoring KPIs can lead to continuous improvement of the accessible tourism destination.

**Further reading** on accessible tourism indicators is available in the Spanish language manual published by UNWTO as an accessible PDF document:

[Manual on Accessible Tourism for All: Principles, Tools and Good Practices, Module IV: Indicators for Assessing Accessibility in Tourism](#) (Fundación ONCE and ENAT. UNWTO Publications, 2015).

## 15. ANNEXES

### 15.1. ON-LINE RESOURCES

A World for Everyone. Declaration from the World Summit Destinations for All Montreal, 2014

<http://www.accessibletourism.org/?i=enat.en.reports.1656>

ENAT Code of Good Conduct

<http://www.accessibletourism.org/?i=enat.en.enat-code-of-good-conduct>

ENAT - Mind the Accessibility Gap (Video EN)

<https://youtu.be/uNgEQvPj1N8>

Establishing an inclusive steering committee (EN)

[http://www.accentuateuk.org/?location\\_id=2204](http://www.accentuateuk.org/?location_id=2204)

[EUCAN \(2017\) Design for All in Tourist Destinations \(EN\)](#)

Disabled Access Day

<http://www.disabledaccessday.com/>

acessibilidade de Hotelaria

Guia de Boas Práticas de acessibilidade de Hotelaria (PT)

<http://www.turismodeportugal.pt/brochuras/pt/GuiaAcessibilidade/>

Guia de boas práticas de acessibilidade – Turismo ativo (PDF)

[http://www.turismodeportugal.pt/Portugu%C3%AAs/turismodeportugal/publicacoes/Documents/Guia%20de%20boas%20praticas%20a%20cessibilidade\\_%20turismo%20ativo.pdf](http://www.turismodeportugal.pt/Portugu%C3%AAs/turismodeportugal/publicacoes/Documents/Guia%20de%20boas%20praticas%20a%20cessibilidade_%20turismo%20ativo.pdf)

Involving Disabled People in Access Audits – A Destination Zones Toolkit For Best Practice (EN)

[www.accentuateuk.org/toolkits-how-to-involve-disabled-people](http://www.accentuateuk.org/toolkits-how-to-involve-disabled-people)

Pantou - The European Accessible Tourism Directory

<http://pantou.org>

Study of Tourism Standards

<https://studyoftourismstandards.wordpress.com/>

Turismo de Portugal ALL FOR ALL programme

<http://www.turismodeportugal.pt/Portugu%C3%AAs/turismodeportugal/all-for-all/Pages/all-for-all.aspx>

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League of Historical Accessible Cities (LHAC).

Accessible Routes in Historical Cities (2013)

[http://www.accessibletourism.org/resources/2013\\_lhac-best-practice-guide-accessible-routes-in-historical-cities-1.pdf](http://www.accessibletourism.org/resources/2013_lhac-best-practice-guide-accessible-routes-in-historical-cities-1.pdf)

Mandate M/420 CEN Report on Procurement of Accessibility of the Built Environment

<ftp://ftp.cen.eu/CEN/Sectors/Accessibility/ReportAccessibilityBuiltEnvironment%20Final.pdf>

UNWTO / Fundación ONCE / ENAT Recommendations on accessible tourism

([http://www.accessibletourism.org/resources/accessibilityen\\_2013\\_unwto.pdf](http://www.accessibletourism.org/resources/accessibilityen_2013_unwto.pdf) )

Fifteen Accessible Tourism Destination Case Studies, developed by ENAT and partners for the EU Study on “Mapping the Supply of Accessible Tourism in Europe”.

<http://www.accessibletourism.org/?i=enat.en.reports.1739>

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## 17. GLOSSARY

### ACCESS AUDITOR

A trained professional who has expertise in making inspections of buildings and/or external environments and reporting their level of compliance with relevant legislation, standards and best practice guidelines.

### ACCESS GUIDE

A guide in the form of printed material or website for tourists, travellers or local citizens that provides details about the accessibility of a tourist destination, an outdoor environment, facility or building and its components.

### ACCESS REQUIREMENTS

Technical or functional specifications related to the planning, design and management of a building, environment, product or service in order to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities and other specific user groups, e.g. older people.

### ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Conditions, circumstances or requirements (e.g. qualification, education level, skills or work experience, etc.) governing admittance to and participation in education and training institutions or programmes.

### ACCESSIBILITY

The degree to which a product, device, service, or environment is available to and usable by as many people as possible, including people with disabilities. Accessibility can be viewed as the “ability to access” and benefit from the above.

### ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT

A comprehensive inspection and assessment of the accessibility of a building, facility or external environment against relevant legislation, standards and best practice guidelines.

#### **ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST (for buildings or urban environments)**

Provides assessment criteria based on accessibility standards or requirements in order to establish the degree to which the building or environment meets these.

#### **ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES**

Document containing functional and technical requirements for accessibility.

#### **ACCESSIBILITY STANDARD**

A formal document that establishes uniform functional or technical criteria, methods, processes and practices for ensuring accessibility of products, devices, services, or environments for people with disabilities and other specific user groups, e.g. older people.

#### **ACCESSIBLE**

Any product, device, service, or environment that can be accessed/reached or used by as many people as possible including people with disabilities.

#### **ACCESSIBLE OR ALTERNATIVE FORMATS**

Alternatives to printed information, used by blind and partially-sighted people, or others with an impairment that does not allow them to read standard print. Accessible formats include large print, audio, Braille, electronic text, and accessible images, among others. For deaf people or people with hearing impairments, speech can be presented in text format (e.g. subtitling for film or video).

#### **ACCESSIBLE TOILETS**

Toilets that have been designed to serve the needs of all people, including people with disabilities and more specifically, wheelchair users who require more space and certain fittings or toilet layout.

#### **ACCESSIBLE TOURISM**

The on-going practice to ensure tourist destinations, products and services are accessible to all people, regardless of their physical limitations, disabilities or age. Accessible tourism enables people with access requirements, including mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimensions of access, to function independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universally-designed

tourism products, services and environments. This definition is inclusive of all people including those travelling with children in prams, people with disabilities and seniors.

#### ACCOMMODATION (TOURIST)

Tourist accommodation refers to every type of establishment or facility where tourists can be lodged, such as: hotels and similar establishments, holiday dwellings, tourist campsites, rented accommodation and other types of private accommodation.

#### ADAPTATION(S)

A modification to an existing product, service, building (or part of a building) or environment which, in this context, typically improves its accessibility or ease of use for people with disabilities.

#### ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY (AT)

An umbrella term that includes assistive, adaptive, and rehabilitative devices for people with disabilities and also includes the process used in selecting, locating, and using them. AT promotes greater independence by enabling people to perform tasks that they were formerly unable to accomplish, or had great difficulty accomplishing, by providing enhancements to, or changing methods of interacting with, the technology needed to accomplish such tasks. Assistive devices may support mobility, communication, safety, orientation, eating, personal hygiene, leisure activities etc.

#### AUDIO GUIDES

Provide a recorded spoken commentary, background, context, and information on the things normally viewed through a handheld device, to a visitor attraction such as a museum. Audio guides are often in multilingual versions and can be made available in different formats.

#### BRAILLE

A tactile writing system which enables blind and partially sighted people to read and write through touch. It was invented by Louis Braille who was blind. It consists of patterns of raised dots arranged in cells. Each cell represents a letter, numeral or punctuation mark.

#### CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Education or training after initial education and training, or after entry into working life aimed at helping individuals to:

- improve or update their knowledge and/or skills;
- acquire new skills for a career move or retraining;
- continue their personal or professional development..

#### DESIGN-FOR-ALL

Designing, developing and marketing mainstream products, services, systems and environments to be accessible and usable by as broad a range of users as possible, without the need for adaptations or special interfaces. It also means that mainstream products and services use interface standards which match those of technical aids, allowing disabled people to use mainstream equipment.

#### DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

The process of organising, developing and marketing a tourist region, city or other territory.

#### DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION (DMO)

A destination-based organisation tasked with the responsibility of coordinating and managing destination activity including planning and promotion

#### DISABILITY

Disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

#### EQUITABLE ACCESS

The principle of providing access on equal terms for all users – that is, providing solutions which do not discriminate against certain users by failing to take their access requirements into account.

#### INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

A broad concept covering various intellectual deficits or impairments, including mental retardation, mild mental deficits, various specific conditions (such as a specific learning disability),

and problems acquired later in life through acquired brain injuries or neurodegenerative diseases like dementia.

#### INTERNATIONAL SIGN LANGUAGE

Sign Language uses manual communication and body language to convey meaning. It is not a universal language, however, international sign is composed of vocabulary signs from different sign languages that deaf people have agreed be used for example at international events, meetings and games.

#### MEDICAL MODEL OF DISABILITY

The medical model of disability views disability as a 'problem' that belongs to the disabled individual. It is not seen as an issue to concern anyone other than the individual affected.

#### NATIONAL TOURIST ORGANISATION (NTO)

An official organisation in a country that encourages tourists to visit that country. Its responsibilities may include regulation of the tourism industry sector industry, developing and enforcing policies and standards, issuing guidelines and collecting statistical information on economic and market data related to travel and tourism.

#### PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

Any impairment which limits the physical function of one or more limbs or fine or gross motor ability.

#### REGIONAL TOURIST BOARD (RTB)

An official organisation in a region that encourages tourists to visit that region.

#### SENSORY DISABILITIES

Impairment of one of the senses. The term is used primarily to refer to vision and hearing impairment, but other senses can be impaired.

#### SERVICE STANDARD

A service standard is a public commitment to a measurable level of performance that clients can expect for regular day-to-day operations of a business

#### **SIGN LANGUAGE**

A language which uses manual communication and body language to convey meaning.

#### **SOCIAL INCLUSION**

The integration of individuals – or groups of individuals – into society as citizens or as members of various public social networks. Social inclusion is fundamentally rooted in labour market or economic inclusion.

#### **SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY**

Says that disability is caused by the way society is organised, rather than by a person's impairment or difference. It looks at ways of removing barriers that restrict life choices for disabled people. When barriers are removed, disabled people can be independent and equal in society, with choice and control over their own lives.

#### **STANDARD**

A series of elements whose content is defined by concerned actors.

#### **TACTILE INFORMATION**

Information that a person gets through the sense of touch.

#### **TOURISM STAKEHOLDERS**

A person with an interest or concern in tourism.

#### **TOURISM**

It comprises the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited.

#### **UNIVERSAL DESIGN**

The design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design.



