

# SCHEME OF ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATION ON ACCESSIBILITY

These guidelines for high quality accessible tourism include a set of dissemination measures, advertisement tools and integrated communication approaches that could be implemented by tourism enterprises, tourism business managers, transportation enterprises, different type of authorities and other professionals in the tourism sector

*Guidelines for high  
quality accessible  
tourism*



ALL NOW

The logo features the words "ALL NOW" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The letter "O" in "NOW" is replaced by a colorful globe showing a diverse group of people of various ages and ethnicities. The entire logo is set against a white background with a subtle reflection effect below the text.

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**Abstract:** The scheme of analysis and transparent communication on the characteristics of high quality accessibility of local resources (infrastructures, services, cultural and environmental resources, etc.) is represented in the form of guidelines that will facilitate public authorities, professionals, enterprises and other actors in the tourism sector in Germany, Italy and Bulgaria to communicate these opportunities to people with disabilities in Europe.

The main goal is the promotion of transparent communication and implementation of an appropriate dissemination approaches that are in compliance with the accessibility requirements, since the lack of visibility of the available information makes it unusable. The increased visibility of the information will facilitate the different actors in the tourism sector and will complement the effect of the other deliverables of the project. Transparent communication might stimulate the actors in the tourism sector who are not in compliance with these requirements to implement them and facilitate their communication with disabled people, including deaf-dumb people or people suffering from dyslexia, daltonism or similar kind of visual impairment. These measures will result in a growing number of consumers that benefit from the Accessible European Itinerary and in a complete success of the project.



## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1. Information about the project

1.2. Main goals to be achieved through the implementation of the scheme of analysis of communication on accessibility

### **2. BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS OF THE BARRIERS IN THE COMMUNICATION ON ACCESSIBILITY**

2.1. Policy priorities

2.2. Statistics

2.3. Advantages and economic spin-offs as a result of improved accessibility

### **3. CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF THE TARGETED GROUPS**

3.1. Definition of the targeted groups

3.2. Needs assessment

### **4. COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND DISSEMINATION SOLUTIONS TARGETING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

### **5. BENEFITS OF THE TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATION**

5.1. Development of the public administration capacity in adaption of national strategies in compliance with the accessibility requirements

5.2. Development of tourism accessibility entrepreneurship and management

### **6. SUCCESS STORIES AND INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES**



# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT

ALLNOW creates and promotes a model of tourism accessible European itinerary. It involves professional operators and the community and makes them acquainted with the opportunity of accessibility in tourism offers by improving their approaching paths to overall accessibility and to the universal design.

The project contributes for the creation of accessible destinations, attractions, sites, and tourism related services in order to raise satisfaction level of travelers. The itinerary enables people with disabilities to experience local cultural festivals and folkloristic events in a real high quality accessible way. Finally, the ALL NOW project strengthens the management skills in the tourism sector and enhances the growth of SMEs, local communities and territories.

### **Partners involved in the project:**

- Italian Chamber of Commerce for Germany
- Sistema camerale servizi S.R.L.
- Marche Region, Italy
- Village 4 All
- Italian Institute for Tourism for All
- Associazione Italiana Confindustria Alberghi
- Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Goranov I & V Ltd.
- Hochschule Anhalt – Anhalt University of Applied Sciences

### **What do we want to achieve?**

The project offers solutions to some of the main obstacles that consumers and enterprises face while trying to exploit the opportunities in tourism sector. The ALLNOW project will enhance the growth of SMEs and the inclusion of local public authorities and many different actors in the development of accessible tourism and the creation of environment for new business opportunities in this sector. A large number of stakeholders and multipliers will contribute for the establishment of community that will be actively engaged with creation a platform for discussion and exchange of good practices as well as with promotion and commercialization of the itinerary.



## 1.2. MAIN GOALS TO BE ACHIEVED THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCHEME OF ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATION ON ACCESSIBILITY

There are many obstacles that impede people with disabilities to benefit from touristic opportunities and accessibility in tourism offers. On one hand these barriers could affect their quality of life. On the other hand the tourism businesses cannot benefit from a large customer segment and an opportunity for new growing market entry. Indeed the improvement of the overall accessibility requires not only the creation of accessibility in tourism (*accessible destinations, attractions, sites, and tourism related services*), but also clear communication strategy and improved awareness. **The scheme of analysis of communication on accessibility includes a set of dissemination measures, advertisement tools and integrated communication approaches that could be implemented by professionals and tourism operators in Germany, Italy and Bulgaria.** Thus the improved access to information will result in a growing number of consumers that benefit from the Accessible European Itinerary. Finally the implementation of effective promotion activities affecting a critical mass of people with disabilities will contribute significantly for the achievement of the project results.

## 2. BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS OF THE BARRIERS IN THE COMMUNICATION ON ACCESSIBILITY (BASED ON THE RESULTS OF WP 2, 3

### 2.1. POLICY PRIORITIES

Accessibility in tourism is just a part of all preconditions needed for the empowerment of the people with disabilities as well as for the creation of inclusive growth. Their full economic and social participation is essential for the achievement of the goals stated in Europe 2020 strategy.

'Accessibility' means that people with disabilities have access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, transportation, information and communications technologies and systems (ICT), and other facilities and services. There are still major barriers in all of these areas. For example, on average in the EU-27, only 5% of public websites comply fully with web accessibility standards, though more are partially accessible. Many television broadcasters still provide few subtitled and audio-described programs.

According to the UN Convention, people with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an



equal basis with others. The Commission will work together with the Member States to tackle the obstacles to a barrier-free Europe, taking up recent European Parliament and Council resolutions.<sup>1</sup>

The “European Disability Strategy 2010-2020: A Renewed Commitment to a Barrier-Free Europe” provides a framework for action at European and national level and aims to facilitate the participation of people with disabilities in the economic and social life. The efforts of the member-states should be focused on the establishment of policy and regulatory framework that stimulate the development of this new market opportunity. Public authorities should undertake the appropriate measures to create an adequate environment and support that will help businesses in Europe to make their services and products accessible to all.<sup>1</sup> The achievement of the strategy goals is related to the need of actions in several different areas. Accessibility is one of these key areas where actions have to be undertaken. Other areas are as follows: Participation, Equality, Employment, Education and training, Social protection, Health, and External Action. In terms of accessibility the European Commission promote the use of a set of instruments by the member-states that will facilitate the accessibility of products, services, transport, ICT etc. These measures could be for example development of universal design, adoption of appropriate legislation that removes existing barriers or implementation of assistive devices for people with disabilities.

Another key document is the “Europe 2020 strategy” where people with disabilities will be also an important priority. According the strategy at national level member states will need to define and implement measures addressing the specific circumstances of groups at particular risk such as people with a disability. These measures aim at establishment of economic, social and territorial cohesion, raised awareness and recognition of the fundamental rights of people experiencing social exclusion.

## 2.2. STATISTICS

Travel and Tourism is an important economic activity and it has important impact on the world GDP. According a research conducted in 2016 by the World Travel & Tourism Council over the next decade the travel and tourism sector is expected to grow faster than many other industries. The direct contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP is expected to grow by 4.2% pa to USD 3, 469.1bn (3.4% of GDP) by 2026.<sup>2</sup>

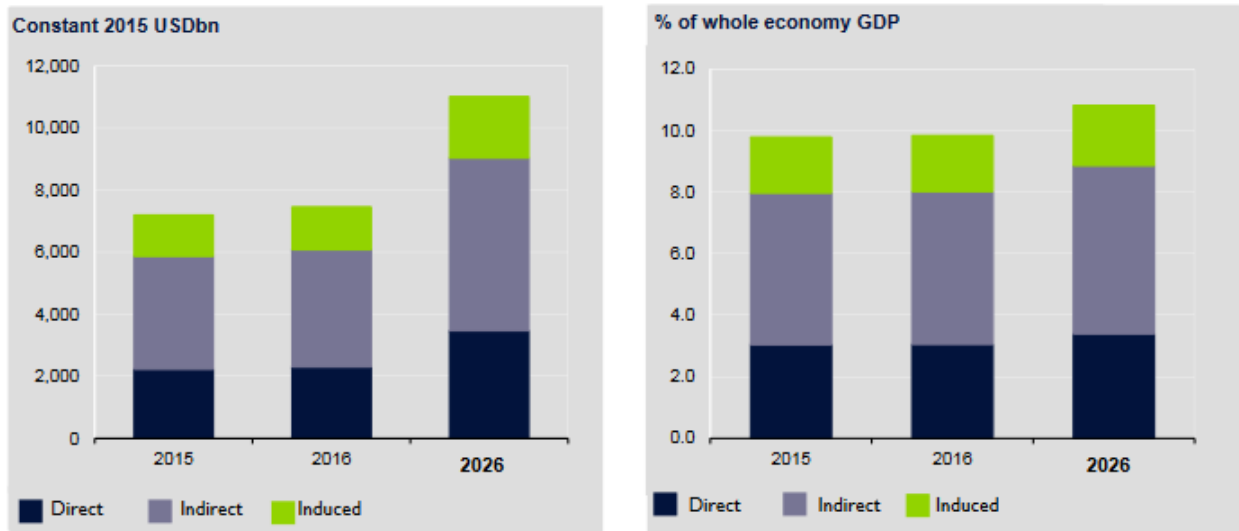
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<sup>1</sup> Council Resolutions (SOC 375 of 2 June 2010) and 2008/C 75/01 and European Parliament Resolution B6-0194/2009, P6\_TA(2009)0334

<sup>2</sup> WTTC , Travel&Tourism World Economic Impact 2016



## WORLD: TOTAL CONTRIBUTION OF TRAVEL & TOURISM TO GDP



<sup>1</sup> All values are in constant 2015 prices & exchange rates

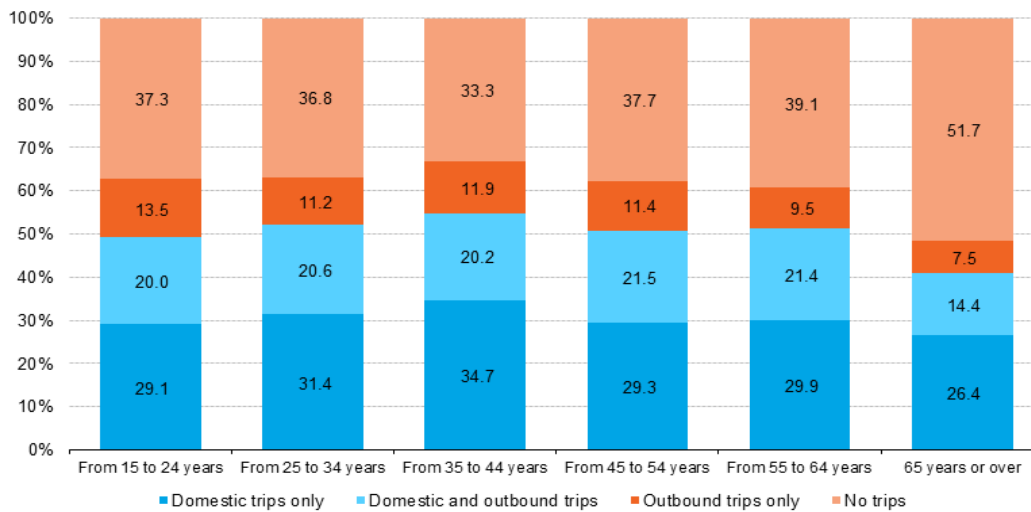
According Eurostat participation in tourism is significantly lower among persons aged 65 and over. On average, 60 % of the EU population in all age groups (15 and over) made tourism trips for personal purposes in the course of 2014. The participation rate ranged between 60 % and 67 % in all groups except for those aged 65 or over, where the participation rate dropped to 48 %.

Due to the ageing populations and the higher risk of disability in older people, in near future disability will be even greater concern. Even today more than one billion people in the world live with some form of disability and we must empower them to remove the barrier that impede them to participate actively in different social activities including tourism<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> World Health Organization and World Bank. [World Report on Disability](#). 2011.



## Share of the EU population participating to tourism, by age group and destination<sup>4</sup>:



(\*) EU-28 aggregate include estimated data for the United Kingdom.

By 2050 there will be some 1.5 billion people with disabilities living in the world with increasing levels of quality of life and disposable income. This is only the starting point of those who benefit from accessible tourism.<sup>5</sup> Tour operators and Travel Agencies could represent the privileged beneficiaries of the growing demand for these services. In order to benefit from this opportunity the actors in the tourism services should adapt not only their services and products, but also to focus their efforts on transparent and effective communication with the target group.

### 2.3. ADVANTAGES AND ECONOMIC SPIN-OFFS AS A RESULT OF IMPROVED ACCESSABILITY



Tourism has become the world's largest and fastest growing industry. The competition between businesses in this sector is increasing and it requires development of management skills, acquisition of competitive advantages and a proactive approach towards consumers. The growing "Accessible Tourism" market presents a challenge to the global tourism industry since there is

<sup>4</sup> UNWTO Tourism Highlights - 2014

<sup>5</sup> Darcy, S. and T. Dickson, A Whole-of-Life Approach to Tourism: The Case for Accessible Tourism Experiences. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management, 2009. 16 (1): p. 32-44.





a need of improving infrastructure, adaption of services and dissemination of information. With the right approach, the tour operators and other actors in the tourism industry will have a new opportunity to serve an important customer segment and increase their revenues.

### **3. CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF THE TARGETED GROUPS**

#### **3.1. DEFINITION OF THE TARGETED GROUPS**

The targeted groups of the project “Accessibility for Leisure in Life NOW” and therefore of this Scheme of analysis of a transparent communication could be separated into two main types of groups: indirect and direct beneficiaries.

The first one includes different stakeholders from the business sector, such as:

- tourism enterprises
- Tourism business managers
- Transportation enterprises
- local, regional, national and international authorities in charge of tourism
- Universities, research centers, schools, etc.
- Hotels and accommodation associations, restaurants, cultural centers (i.e. whole tourism supply chain)

The second target group consists of direct beneficiaries who are mostly people with different disabilities such as reduced mobility, elderly people, people with temporary needs like pregnant women, families with prams and babies, temporary injury, etc. This Scheme of analysis of a transparent communication will be helpful mostly to actors in the tourism sector willing to communicate with deaf-dumb people or people suffering from dyslexia, daltonism or similar kind of visual impairment.

Another direct beneficiaries are also tourism SMEs involved in the construction of the training models on accessibility in management as well as all tourism destinations oriented towards the culture of hospitality and accessibility.



### 3.2. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

People with disabilities have their specific burdens and needs. Therefore in order to benefit from this new growing market tour operators and other professionals should not only adapt their services and products but also to adapt their channels for communications in order to improve the dialogue with the target group and assure that people with disabilities have access to perceptible information on an equal basis with others.

## 4. COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND DISSEMINATION SOLUTIONS TARGETING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

In order to reach a wider community, to answer to all kinds of needs and anticipate all difficulties that people with disabilities could experience the tour operators and the other actors in the tourism sector should think about the provision of information in different formats by using different technologies. The accessibility of the existing information will enhance the access to tourism services and will influence the spending decision. The first step is the self-assessment and the identification of the current gaps and areas for improvement. A plan with a clear schedule should be discussed with all employees of the company in order to brainstorm and define the possible solutions and measures that have to be undertaken. What are the key questions that have to be discussed?

### DO WE PROVIDE INFORMATION IN MULTIPLE FORMATS?

#### **-Turn your information materials into audio and make it available online**

The accessibility of electronic content has become increasingly important and that's why all information materials should be available online. The accessibility of the website and online access to information materials will not only increase the number of potential clients, but also could affect a company position in the search engines.

Furthermore the digital content could be also difficult for use by blind or visually impaired people. The website has to be simple and accessible to persons who use screen readers. The screen reader is a software that transmits the text from the computer screen into a tactile or auditory content. Most screen readers use synthetic voice that read the text from the screen. Another method is the communication of data via a refreshable braille display. It allows disabled people to use their fingers and to read the text that is displayed on screen. Sometimes the screen reader cannot comprehend the whole content in the website such as images. That's why one should always use alt tags

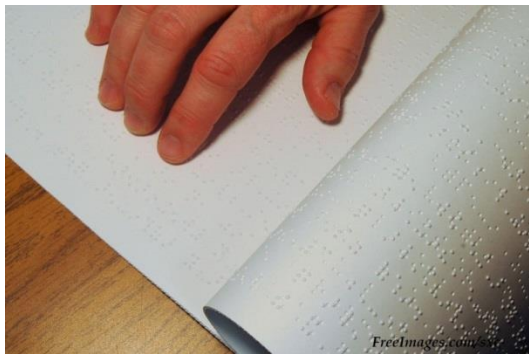


(complete HTML image tag) that describe what is on an image<sup>6</sup>. The term “alt tag” is a commonly used abbreviation of what’s actually an alt attribute on an img tag.

### - Break down the communication barriers with deaf-dumb people

Video could be one step forward in the communication with disabled people, but actors in the tourism sector should not forget to target the deaf-dumb people and translate the audio materials published on their websites. Just adding subtitles is the easiest solution.

### -Translate your information materials in braille



Dissemination of informational brochures and leaflets is one of the most commonly used ways of promotion. Producing a brochure in braille is an alternative way to reach customers suffering from eye disease and vision defects. By using this tactile representation of alphabetic and numerical symbols, tour operators can promote touristic destinations and services for people with disabilities. There are many free of charge

automatic braille translators that could be useful for the translation. Keep in mind that there are more than three hundred sign languages used around the world. It is not a "Universal Language" and that’s why the braille alphabets may vary from language to language. Under international consensus, most braille alphabets follow the French sorting order for the 26 letters of the basic Latin alphabet, and there have been attempts at unifying the letters beyond these 26 (see international braille), though differences remain, for example in German Braille and the contractions of English Braille.<sup>7</sup>

**Bulgarian Braille** is a braille alphabet for writing the Bulgarian language. It is based on the unified international braille conventions, with braille letters approximating their Latin transliteration, and the same punctuation, with the French question mark. In Bulgarian, it is known as Брайлова азбука (Brailova azbuka) "braille alphabet".

**Italian Braille** is the braille alphabet of the Italian language and it is very close to French Braille, but there are some differences. For example French Braille does not have a letter for ó and that’s why Italian Braille uses .: ò for both ò and ó. There are some other differences in punctuation.

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<sup>6</sup> Usability Geek, (December 2016), 6 Principles Of Visual Accessibility Design, Retrieved from URL: <http://usabilitygeek.com/6-principles-visual-accessibility-design/>

<sup>7</sup> Retrieved from URL: [https://www.revolv.com/main/index.php?s=Braille&item\\_type=topic](https://www.revolv.com/main/index.php?s=Braille&item_type=topic)



**German Braille** is one of the older braille alphabets. The French-based order of the letter assignments was largely settled on with the 1878 convention that decided the standard for international braille. However, the assignments for German letters beyond the 26 of the basic Latin alphabet are mostly unrelated to French values<sup>8</sup>.

## **CAN WE ASSURE READABILITY OF THE TEXT?**

Access to information in the tourism sector could be significantly improved by the increased readability of the information materials (brochures, leaflets or online content).

### **-Basic, simple, easily-readable fonts**

There are thousands of fonts and font variations. Most of them are natively available in modern operating systems. Fonts are categorized into "families" based on their characteristics and the most common families are: serif, sans-serif, cursive, fantasy and monospace.

Some specific fonts used in the text of these materials could significantly impact on how the content is readable. One should avoid small font sizes and use relative units for font size. Text in all capital letters or the use of font variations such as bold and italics could also impede the readability. Capital letters should be restricted to headings or very short sentences. Good practices are altering the spacing between letters or words.

What type of typeface should be used? The answer is Serif and Sans Serif<sup>9</sup>.

<b>Serif:</b>	<b>Sans Serif:</b>
Times New Roman	Arial
Georgia	Verdana
Book Antiqua	Helvetica
	Courier
	Calibri

These fonts are considered to be easier to read particularly on screen and that's why professionals and tourism operators could freely use it while preparing their website

<sup>8</sup> Retrieved from URL: <https://www.revolvy.com/topic/German%20Braille&uid=1575>



content. An example of a Serif font would be Times New Roman and an example of a Sans Serif font is Arial, Verdana and Helvetica<sup>9</sup>. The text in the materials should not be written in a lot of different fonts, because it will clutter it and make it more confusing.

### **-Color contrast**

Some eye disease can cause decrease of sensitivity to color contrast. For example red-green color vision defects are the most common form of color deficiency, followed by blue-yellow color vision defects (also called tritan defects) and the less common form called blue cone monochromic. The latter can cause additional vision problems, which can include increased sensitivity to light (photophobia), involuntary back-and-forth eye movements (nystagmus), and nearsightedness (myopia).<sup>10</sup> Tour operators and other actors in the tourism sector should pay attention to colors contrast in order to enable people with this kind of disabilities to understand the message/information published on the website or in paper based materials. For accessibility purposes one should try to pair color with a symbol.

In order to ensure sufficient contrast between the foreground and the background web designers use black text on a white background, because it's a kind of a standard. However the combinations black background with white or yellow text could increase the readability of the text by people with low vision. For people with dyslexia yellow background with black text could be a possible solution. Unfortunately there is no one universal combination that meets the needs of all people with disabilities. That's why one should just ensure good quality of the colors and good contrast for the general public.

Some of the best combinations are:

Black on Yellow	ALL NOW
White on Black	ALL NOW
Yellow on Black	ALL NOW
Black on White	ALL NOW
Blue on White	ALL NOW
White on Blue	ALL NOW
Blue on Yellow	ALL NOW

<sup>9</sup> Retrieved from URL: <http://webaim.org/techniques/fonts/>

<sup>10</sup> U.S.Department of Health & Human Service, National Institute of Health, (2017, May). *Your Guide to Understand Genetic Conditions*. Retrieved from URL: <https://ghr.nlm.nih.gov/condition/color-vision-deficiency#statistics>



Yellow on Blue	ALL NOW
Green on White	ALL NOW
White on Green	ALL NOW
Red on White	ALL NOW
White on Red	ALL NOW
Red on Yellow	ALL NOW
Yellow on Red	ALL NOW

### **-Simple language**

Designing an engaging content that appeals to the target group is essential. People with visual impairments prefer information materials written in simple language. Short sentences and clearly indicated benefits, conditions, price and itineraries could facilitate them to understand better the content and the most important points.

### **-Text icons and images**

Images conveying information could be added in the information materials. Good practice is the provision of a short summary next to the image, informing the clients what the image is showing him.

The placement of images on the page should be carefully chosen, since images placed in a random way can interrupt the information flow and impede the clear understanding. The designer should add images at the end of paragraphs and leave enough space between the image and the text<sup>11</sup>.

### **-provision of contact details including email, skype name in order to communicate with blind and deaf people**

### **IS THE INTEGRATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES POSSIBLE?**

Technological solutions could be very helpful while communicating with disabled persons or preparing information materials for promotion of accessible destinations. There are a lot of apps and gadgets that can help this target group to ease their difficulties and access information. Furthermore enterprises in the tourism sector could

<sup>11</sup> Ability Net, Guide on Producing accessible materials for print and online text  
Retrieved from URL: <https://www.abilitynet.org.uk/quality/documents/StandardofAccessibility.pdf>



appoint a staff member responsible for the communication with this target group. By using the right technology even a person without any experience in the communication with people with disabilities (visual impairment, speech impairment etc.) could easily communicate with them.

### **-Talking labels**

The talking label is a device for blind people onto which one can make a sound recording of all kind of information that would be of interest to a tourist. The devices can provide audible messages stating what a tourism destination includes in terms of attractions and landmarks. Thus pressing a button on the device the clients may identify the best destination that will meet his expectations.

### **-Apps**

Some applications help people with speech and language disorders to communicate with someone else. It translates unintelligible pronunciation into understandable speech so one can easily understand what people with this kind of disability are willing to say. Another innovative application could help a blind person to connect with volunteers from around the world who are available to help for different tasks like support for finding his keys or reading an invoice.

### **-QR codes**

Quick Response (QR) codes could help disabled people access information quickly and easily by using their smartphones. Thanks to a barcode reader QR codes can be read anytime, anywhere with mobile devices and it can contain several hundred digits. There are application that could help blind people to scan braille-like QR codes on products and translate it in audio. Thus QR labels can be used to help the blind check the age of a food product in a store.

### **-Devices and tools**

A recently developed tool using gesture and speech technology works by detecting hand and figure gestures and converting it to the text. By using the tool one could easily communicate with deaf people.

The Finger reader is another wonderful tool aimed at helping visually impaired people to read printed text on an electronic device. The user wear the device on a finger and point it on a body text while a small camera scan the text and give real-time audio translation



## **5. BENEFITS OF THE TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATION (PRIVATE AND PUBLIC STAKEHOLDERS)**

### **5.1. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION CAPACITY IN ADAPTION OF NATIONAL STRATEGIES IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

By integrating strategies in compliance with the accessibility requirements the Public administration will develop its own capacity and will in a higher degree meets its social engagements.

There are some measures that could both be taken into account and implemented by the authorities. The first step is the development of policies and standards for the tourist sector including all kind of stakeholder groups. These policies and standards have to be promoted widely in order to have real impact on the offers in the tourism sector. The impact itself could be measured by estimating investments in the sector. Apart from the strategic perspective the authorities and administrations should provide consultations and trainings for the providers of services for people with disabilities in order to ensure that their services will have the necessary quality. Finally the engagement of the authorities should be to ensure that all facilities in the tourism sector are designed to meet everybody's needs irrespective of age or abilities.

### **5.2. DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM ACCESSIBILITY ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

There are still many companies that have not integrated any measures for providing tourist services for people with disabilities. In this regard there is a huge niche for new entrepreneurial activities related with all these people as a target group. There is still lack of understanding from the tourism sector worldwide about what these people could do for their business and about what their business could do for all of the disabled people.

The whole concept of accessible tourism for all requires a joined approach across the tourism supply chain including transport, accommodation, leisure activities, hospitality, destinations, etc. For a company this new target group will be related with staff capacity building, strict management strategy and action plan, new type of informational materials adapted for people with disabilities and establishment of partnerships with organizations in support of disabled people.





## 6. SUCCESS STORIES AND INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES

### Schönbrunn Palace, Austria

Schönbrunn Palace is the most frequently visited tourist attraction in Austria. The site is a remarkable example of tourism accessible destination for people with disabilities. A separate page of the website provides information for barrier-free access to the Palace. The information is divided in nine categories: Parking, Wheelchairs / seating, Toilets, Assistance Dogs, Accompanying person, Access to the display rooms, Guided tours, Museum Sign Language Guide and Admission fees.

The dedicated guided tours are offered for blind and sight-impaired visitors. These tours gives visitors access behind the cordons and allow them to feel objects such as doors, stoves, furniture, interior surface decoration, curtains, busts or floors. Furthermore, video guides in Austrian Sign Language (ÖGS) and International Signs (IS) are available for the deaf and the hard of hearing.

Although the information is extensive and easily accessible, a phone number and e-mail address are also available on the same page.



### Frankfurt am Main

Frankfurt am Main is also an example of a success story. The Frankfurt Tourist and Congress Board is the primary point of contact for visitors and exceptional care was taken to make the city fully accessible to people with disabilities and for the information to be readily available to all visitors.

A vast number of initiatives have aimed at achieving the various aspects of accessibility:

A new guided city tour for vision-impaired people was developed and all the previously available tours may now be arranged to be stepless. A sign language interpreter is now also available for free.

The way employees of the Tourist and Congress Board deliver service to people with disabilities has also been enhanced as they had the opportunity to attend various seminars led by experts in the field of accessibility. Those were related to hearing-disabilities and deafness, blindness and visual impairments, reduced mobility. It helped employees better appreciate and respond to the requirements of persons with specific needs.



Communication was not left out of the initiative. Employees learned through another seminar how to create accessible documents. A brand new brochure dedicated to people with disabilities was launched and new webpage was created and added to the German National Tourist Board with all the relevant information, including tactile maps. Lastly, accessible Frankfurt was promoted at the REHCARE Trade Fair in Dusseldorf and the Sight City Trade Fair for blind people in Frankfurt.

This all-encompassing and committed approach made of accessible Frankfurt an example to follow.



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