

Reaching All Customers: How do European NTOs Compare on Online Accessibility?

Lilian Müller
ENAT President
Manager,
'Access Sweden'



Angelika Laburda
ENAT Board Member,
'IBFT'
Austria



Overview

- About ENAT (European Network for Accessible Tourism)
 - History, mission, recent activities
- eAccess+ Project
 - Objectives, topics, activities
- **Online Accessibility Benchmarking Report**
 - General framework, methods, questions
 - Results of the study
- Recommendations
- Follow-up by ENAT

About ENAT

- European Pilot Project, 2006 – 2007
- ENAT Non-profit Association (since 2008)
 - Registered in Brussels, Belgium
 - Secretariat in Athens, Greece
- Multi-stakeholder network with about 200 members in 30 countries
 - NTOs, researchers, enterprises, NGOs, etc.
- Affiliated with UNWTO

ENAT's Mission

- To make European tourism destinations, products and services accessible to all travellers, and
- To promote accessible tourism around the world

Activities

- Online information for the tourism sector at www.accessibletourism.org
- Conferences and seminars
- Accessibility training and e-learning for tourism businesses
- ENAT 'Code of Good Conduct'
- European projects and studies
 - Project partner of **eAccessplus**



eAccess+ Project



- The eAccess+ thematic network will establish and systematically develop a cooperative platform for **co-ordinating, supporting and improving** the implementation of eAccessibility throughout Europe.
 - 25 members, over 100 stakeholders from all over Europe
 - coordinated by the University of Linz (Austria)
 - ENAT's role: promoting accessibility in the tourism sector

eAccess+ focus

- Implementation of:
 - Web accessibility
 - Accessible convergent communications and accessible digital audio-visual systems
 - Self-service terminals (SSTs) and devices for banking and financial services, public transport, tourism and cultural heritage, e-government

Web accessibility and tourism

- Definition of accessibility in the www:
 - Information has to be **accessible to all people**, no matter whether they are impaired or not
 - Information is accessible **independent** from which **browser** one uses **or** which **device** is used

Web accessibility and tourism

- A few technical remarks about accessibility of websites
 - Standard HTML code defined by the W3C (World Wide Web Consortium)
 - WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) by W3C
 - WCAG level 1.0, or level 2.0
 - Accessibility level A, Level AA, and Level AAA

Web accessibility and tourism

- Reasons for accessibility in the www
 - Most important source of information and communication
 - Bookings through the internet increases steadily



Web accessibility and tourism

- Without accessibility:
 - Possible loss of customers in general
 - Loss of customers from the increasing segment of people with special needs or disabilities
 - Aging society
 - UN-convention of the rights of people with disabilities



Web accessibility and tourism

- Reasons for accessibility of NTO-websites
 - NTO-websites are an important medium for information visiting a specific country
 - Provide links to other websites and providers
 - Offers, tourist packages, travel and transport possibilities, accommodation, reservations and ticketing

ENAT Survey of 39 Websites of National Tourist Organisations in Europe

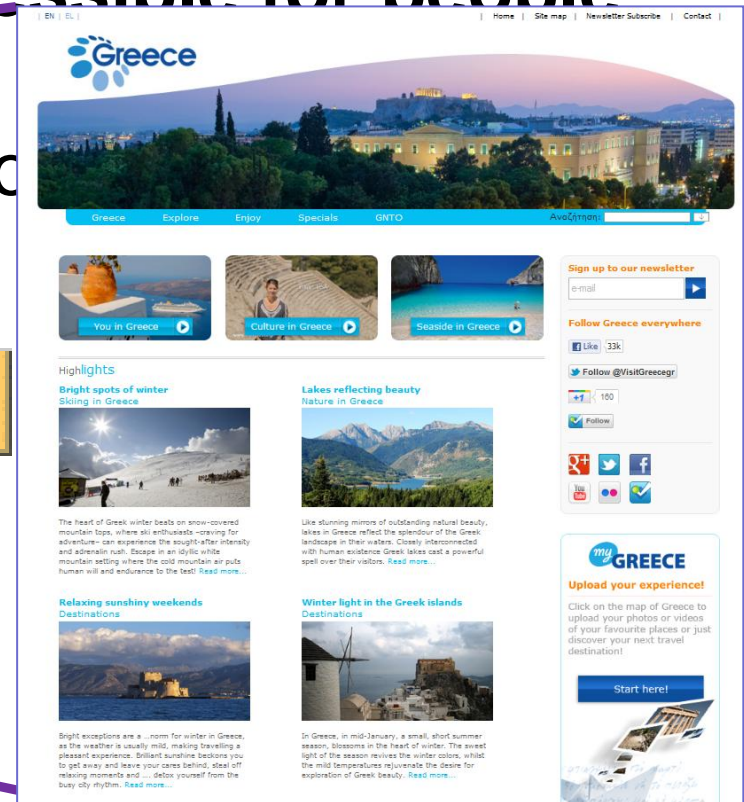
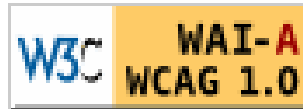
(Summer 2011)

- First Question
 - **Are NTO websites accessible for people with disabilities?**
(Compliance with web content accessibility guidelines)

ENAT Survey of 39 Websites of National Tourist Organisations in Europe

(Summer 2011)

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www.accessibletourism.org

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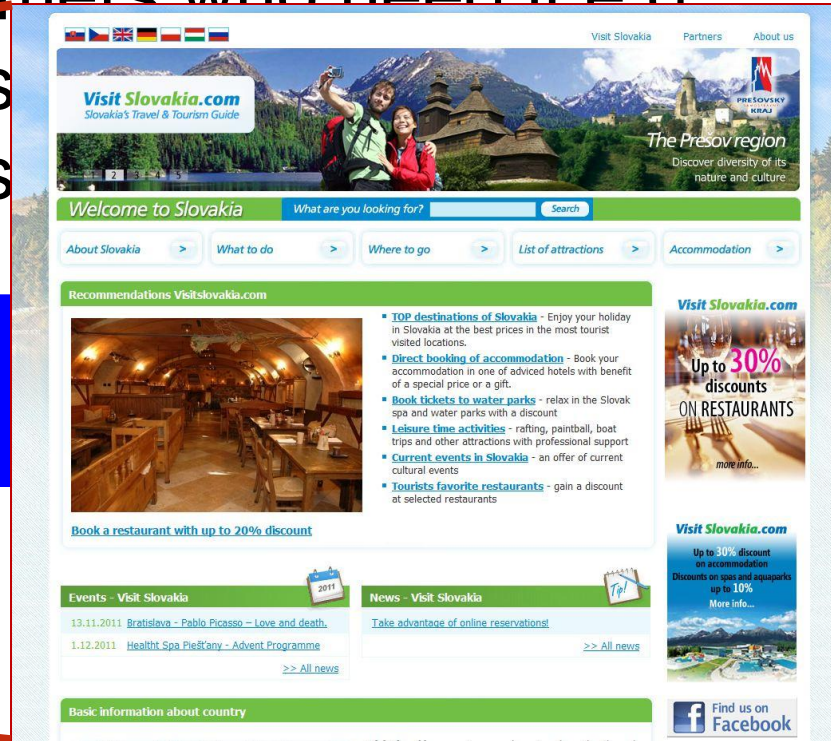
- Second Question
 - Is there access information on NTO websites for the customers who need it e.g. people with disabilities, seniors and others? (Review by market researchers)

ENAT Survey of 39 Websites of National Tourist Organisations in Europe

(Summer 2011)

■ Second Question

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ENAT Survey of 39 Websites of National Tourist Organisations in Europe

■ Test methods

- Automated accessibility test (T.A.W. analyzing software)
 - selected level WCAG level 1.0
Accessibility level A



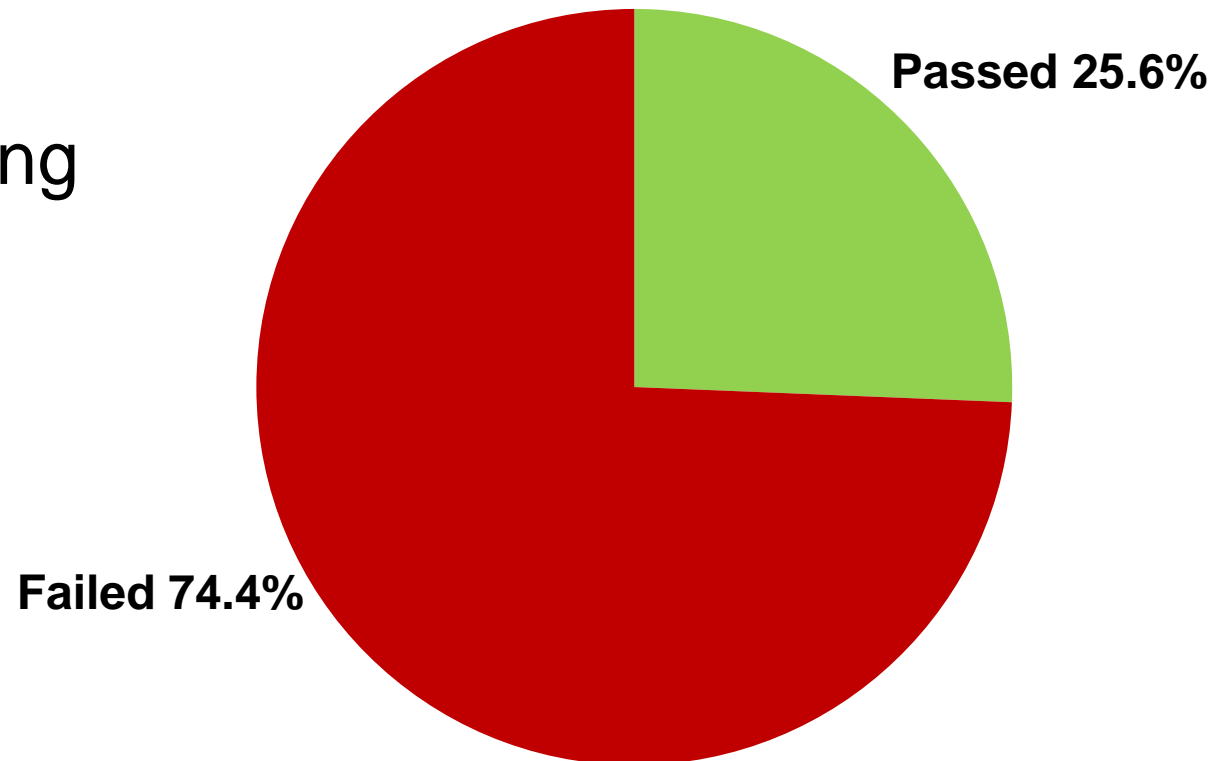
- Accessible information was reviewed by market researchers

■ Limiting factors

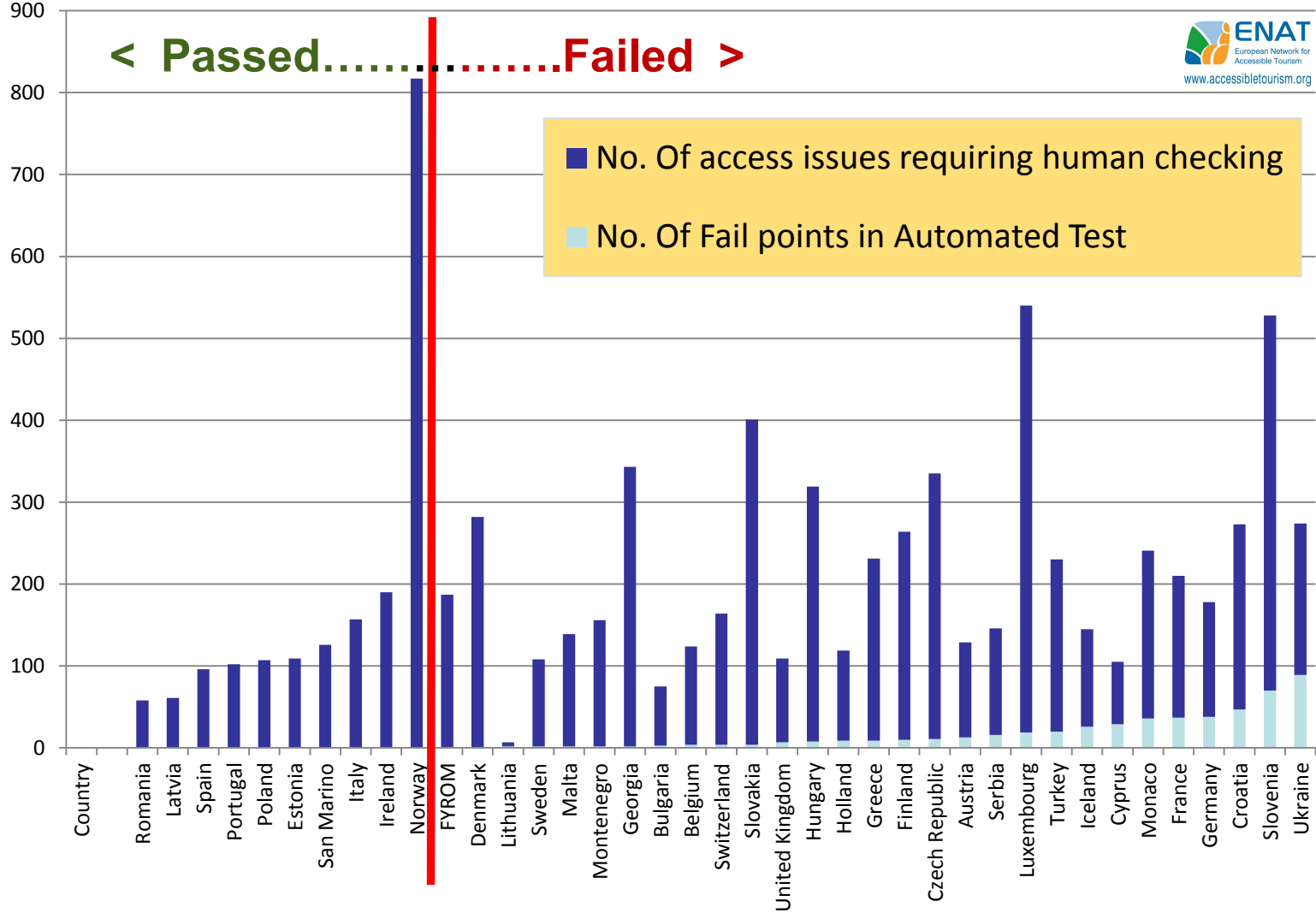
- Snapshot taken in summer 2011
- Automatic testing is just a part – much manual work has to be done

Results of the survey: Accessibility of NTOs' websites

- Result of the automatic testing (WCAG 1.0 level A)



ENAT Survey of 39 NTO websites: T.A.W Accessibility Test

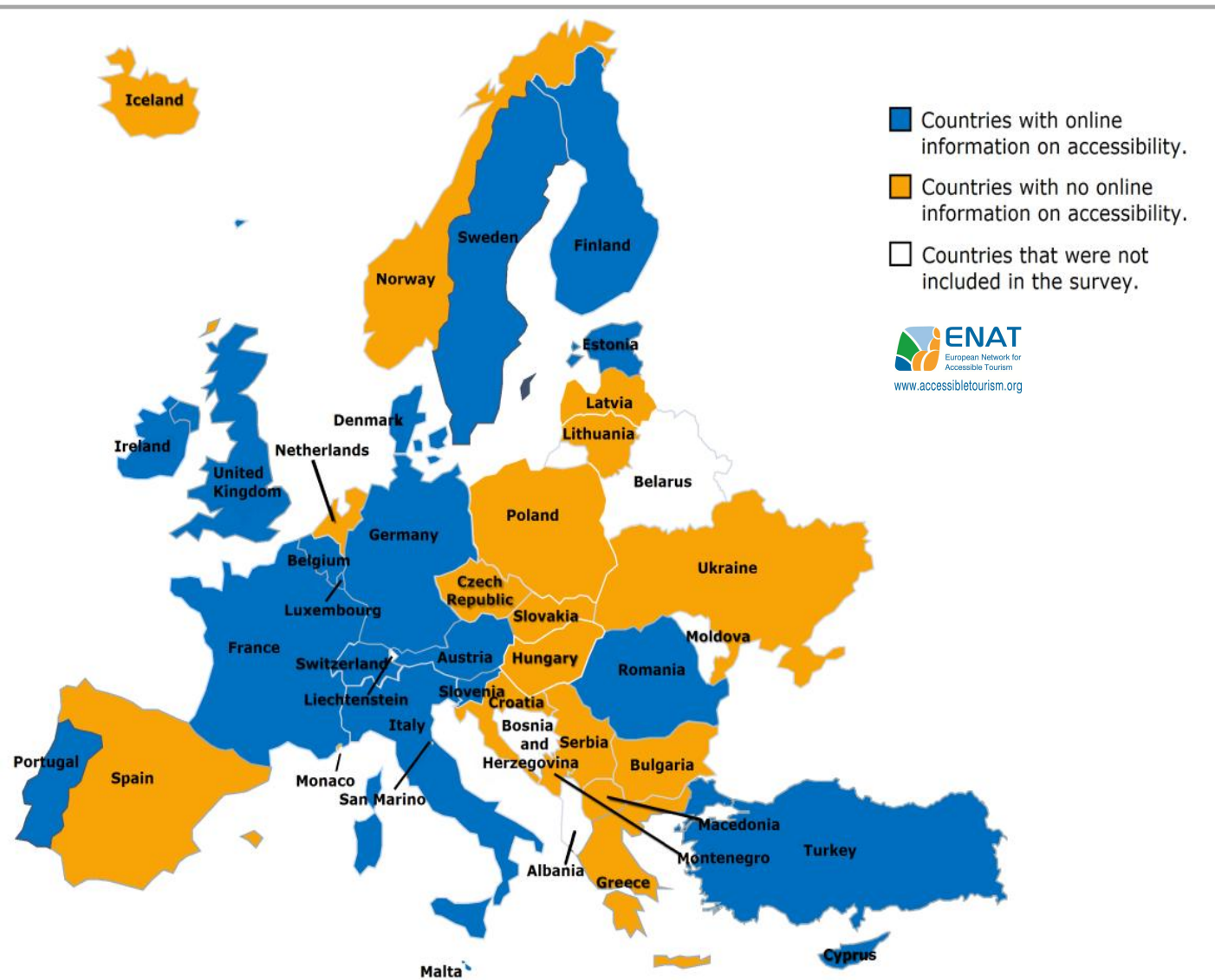


10 NTO sites passed WAI-A - but only on the basis of automated testing.

Results of the survey: Accessibility of the websites

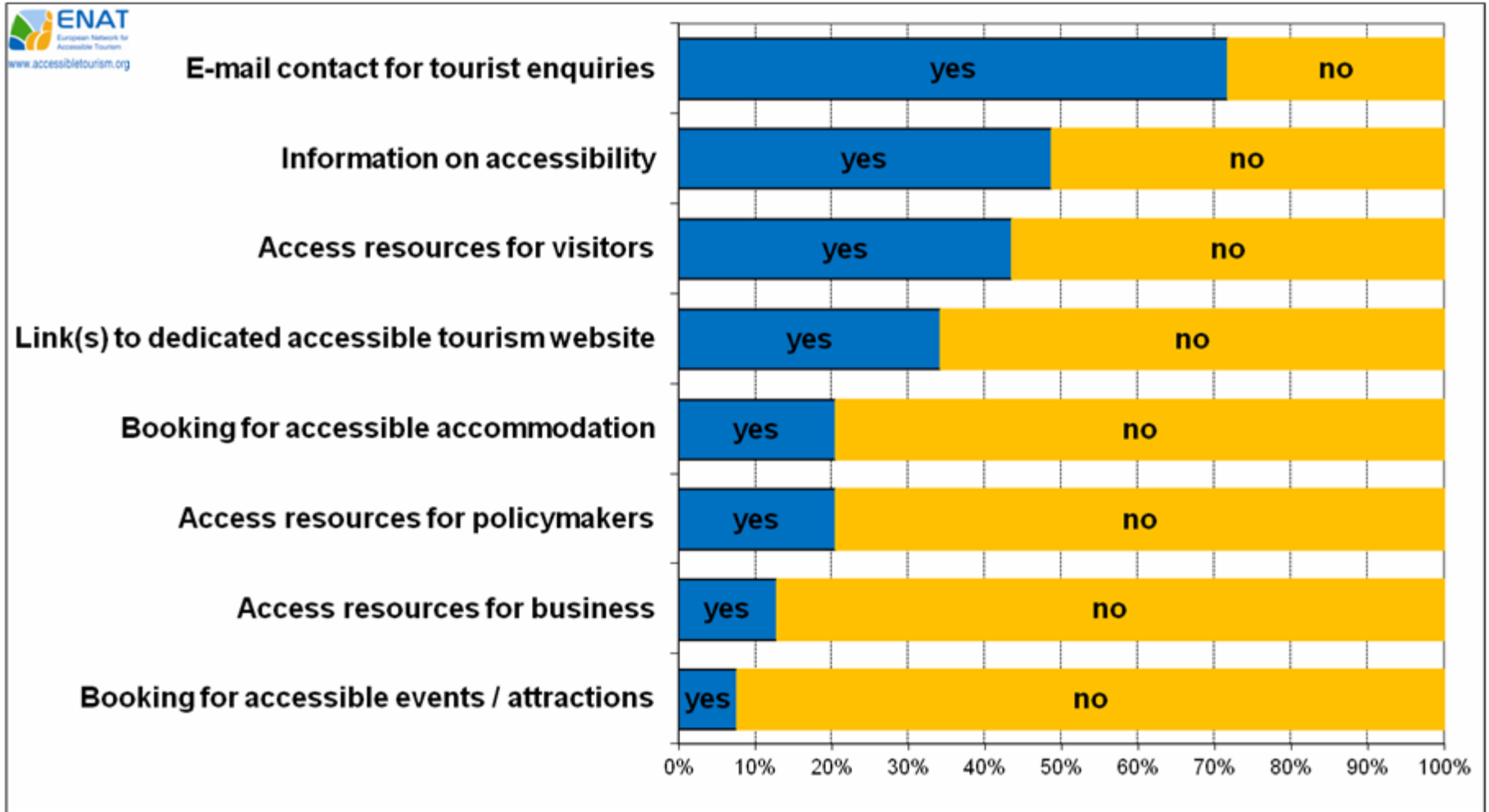
- A few countries which have passed:
 - Estonia, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Spain
- A few countries which have not passed:
 - Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia ...France, Germany, Greece, Holland ...Sweden
- Reasons for failing
 - Syntax problems and faults
 - Design problems

Results of the survey: Accessibility Information on the websites



- NTOs presenting accessibility information on websites:**
- ✓ Austria
 - ✓ Belgium
 - ✓ Cyprus
 - ✓ Denmark
 - ✓ Estonia
 - ✓ Finland
 - ✓ France
 - ✓ Germany
 - ✓ Ireland
 - ✓ Italy
 - ✓ Luxembourg
 - ✓ Malta
 - ✓ Portugal
 - ✓ Romania
 - ✓ Slovenia
 - ✓ Sweden
 - ✓ Switzerland
 - ✓ Turkey
 - ✓ U.K.

Results of the survey: Accessibility Information on the websites



Conclusions

■ Facts

- Only one quarter of national tourist boards provide websites that are accessible to users with disabilities
- There are very variable rates of failures on automatic testing and in errors that require human checking
- Web accessibility is often poorly understood and badly implemented in a majority of European countries
- More than half of the NTOs do not provide information about the accessibility of venues, attractions, accommodation, etc.
 - This information is essential to disabled and elderly people in order to make a decision whether to visit a country or not

Conclusions

- The market for accessible tourism is not functioning equally well in all countries and regions of Europe
- The lack of access to websites and the lack of accessibility information means
 - There is not a “single market” where customers can find sufficient and adequate information
 - The choice of destinations and products is severely limited for those people who need good access

Web Accessibility: “To do” list:

- Communicate with **all** your customers!
- Check the accessibility of your website
- Use accessibility guidelines: WAI / WCAG2.0
- Include accessibility statement on web pages
- Use automatic evaluation tools
- Visit www.eaccessplus.eu



Recommendations

- All tourist boards should systematically address the issue of web accessibility in order to comply with WCAG Guidelines
- Organisations that lack in-house competence in this field should acquire the necessary assistance by requiring accessibility in their procurement procedures
- Web accessibility should be regularly checked by webmasters and content managers
- Countries without any published accessibility information should take steps to gather this information and make it available through their websites
- Countries which do collect and publish accessibility information should ensure that
 - The information is placed in sections that are easy to find
 - With navigation links from the main (landing) page
- Access information should be regularly checked and updated

Thank you for your attention

Contact for further information about the study:

Mr. Ivor Ambrose

Managing Director

European Network for Accessible Tourism asbl.

ENAT Secretariat c/o EWORX S.A.,

Jean Moreas St. 66

GR-15231 Halandri, Athens

Greece.

Tel. 0030 210 614 8380

Fax. 0030 210 672 9312

E-mail: enat@accessibletourism.org



www.accessibletourism.org