



The Economic Impact of Accessible Tourism and the Importance of Training

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Fiera Bergamo, 17 February 2024



@EUaccesstourism

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Accessible Tourism - From quantity to quality

In the context of tourism today and after the Covid pandemic, the tourism sector is paying more attention to tourism quality.

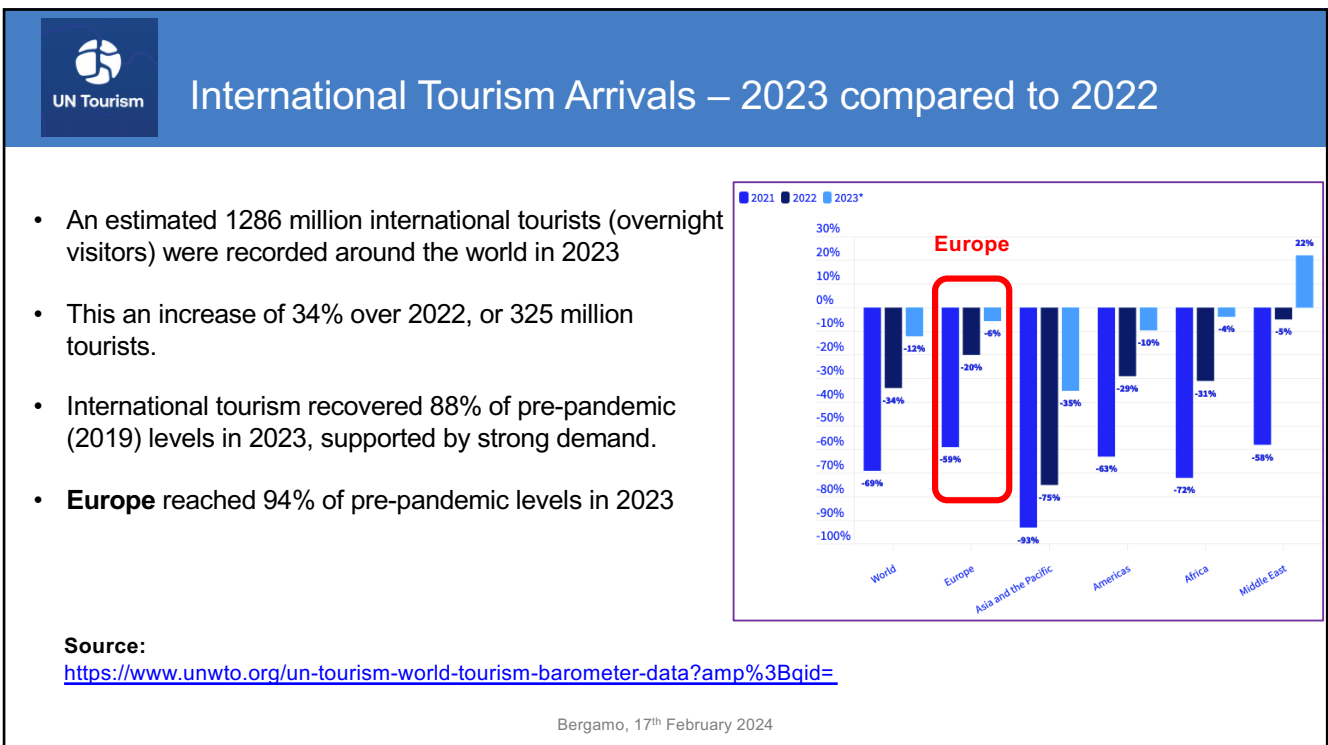
- 2023 was the year when Covid restrictions were lifted and tourism figures in many regions and countries “rebounded”.
- The Covid pandemic showed the fragility of mass tourism and placed a new focus on the kind of tourism we want.
- The aim today is to be more responsible, good for local communities, sustainable and resilient. Instead of focusing only on numbers and growth, it has become more aware of the Quality of tourism offers and experiences.
- **Accessible tourism** is a model for the future development of **quality tourism** – supporting sustainable businesses, destinations and communities, **offering quality experiences for all**.

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Quantity or Quality? Focusing on Accessible and Inclusive Tourism

- **1 in 5 tourists have specific access requirements when travelling**

Based on the figures for global tourism arrivals in 2023...

- **At least 257 Million tourists are looking for Accessible**
 - ✓ Transportation
 - ✓ Accommodation
 - ✓ Attractions and experiences
 - ✓ Customer services
 - ✓ And – most important – **Accessible Information regarding accessibility**



“Accessibility training is simply a “must” for the whole tourism industry to meet the growing market demand

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Accessible Tourism – A Golden Opportunity



- Many businesses see accessibility only as an “additional cost”
- Actually, it can be a “Golden Opportunity”
 - - **if it is developed and promoted in the right way** because
- Accessible Tourism is the future of tourism

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Travel companions: the multiplier effect

People with access requirements travel with **1.9 companions** (on average)

They...

- Stay longer
- Spend more
- Make more repeat visits
- Travel throughout the year



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“Seniors” are 65% of the Accessible Tourism Market



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- 1 in 5 persons in European Union are over 60 and may have a combination of different access needs
- Seniors from Europe take 6 to 7 trips a year
- They want to travel and enjoy life
- They have most discretionary income
- They are more active, “youthful”
- They take most overseas trips
- They travel around the year

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Families, Groups and Business travellers all need good accessibility

Accessibility is for everybody ...

- Essential for 10% of the population
- Necessary for 40% of the population
- Comfortable for 100% of the population



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“Passengers with Reduced mobility” (PRMs) are a growing group of travellers

PASSENGERS WITH REDUCED MOBILITY (PRMs)



“The annual growth in PRM numbers is at least six times that of the overall rate of passenger growth at many airports globally”



European Regions Airline Association, 2018

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Accessible Tourism: How to proceed?

Training is the first step!

Training all stakeholders to:

1. **Improve skills** of tourism and hospitality managers and “front-line” staff
2. **Improve the offer** by ensuring accessible environments, facilities and services at the destination
3. **Improve communication and information about accessibility** to visitors with specific access requirements



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Training comes first!



- **Staff training gives the highest Return on Investment**
- **Through training**, managers and staff need to understand **the importance and value of access and inclusion**, in order to make any accessibility improvements in facilities and services.

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Why invest in Accessible Tourism Training?



- **High staff turnover** in the tourism sector **requires continuous training of new team members**
 - Students across the whole hospitality sector need to be trained on accessibility and inclusion
- ↓
- Good customer service depends on awareness of customers' access requirements

“You can't give high quality service if you don't know what customers want”

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Examples of Accessible Tourism training courses

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Accessible Tourism Training – IN TOUR for university students



Università di Genova



The **IN TOUR project**, funded by the EU ERASMUS+ programme and led by the Italian Association of Multiple Sclerosis (Associazione Italiana Multipla Sclerosi), developed two university-level professional training courses in Inclusive Tourism for hospitality Managers and Front-line Staff.

In the following video, students and professors from the **IN TOUR Master Course** - taught at the University of Genoa - met up to share their experiences.

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Accessible Tourism Training – IN TOUR for university students



Università di Genova



IN TOUR's Inclusive Tourism Managers by EASPD, IN TOUR Partner

https://youtu.be/KLn0jzx58l4?si=9Fg_WgrEAv7PBza

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Accessible Tourism Training – INCLAVI for university students and professionals



The INCLAVI “Inclusive Aviation” project, funded by the EU ERASMUS+ programme, led by Haaga-Helia University, Finland is still under development.

We are developing a training curriculum on services related to Passengers with Reduced Mobility (PRMs) for students and professionals in areas of work related to travel agencies, airports, and airlines.



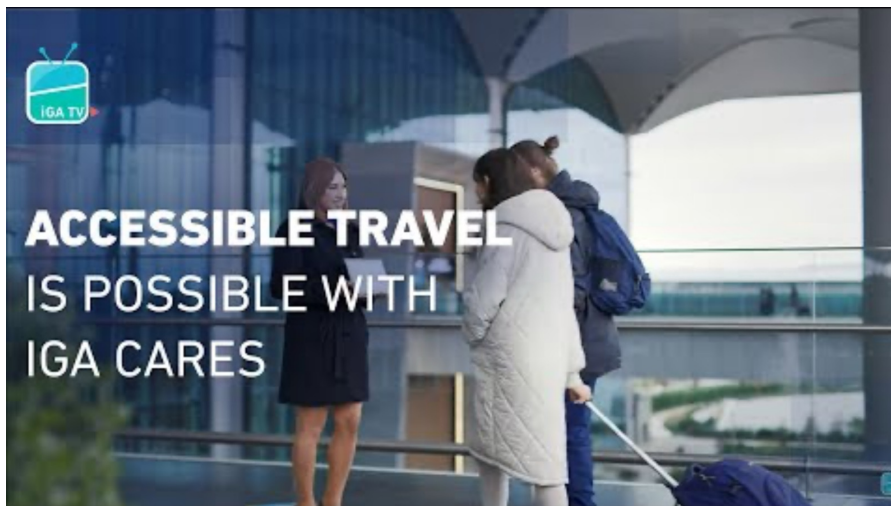
There is a short video made by one of the partners, **Istanbul Grand Airport**, which describes their services for PRMs.

The video has subtitles (in English), sign language for the Deaf, and audio description for the Blind, making it accessible for audiences with a wide range of communication requirements .

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Accessible Tourism Training – INCLAVI for university students and professionals



PRM Services Video
by Istanbul Grand International Airport,
INCLAVI Partner

https://youtu.be/hPlvkdSnWP8?si=5uXp1eAD_QpBE53b (3:53

minutes)
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Mille grazie!

www.accessibletourism.org

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