

ACCESSIBLE DESTINATION

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TOURISM FOR ALL

Tourism for All Concept

“EVERYONE SHOULD BE ABLE TO TRAVEL TO THE COUNTRY, WITHIN THE COUNTRY AND TO WHATEVER PLACE, ATTRACTION OR EVENT THEY SHOULD WISH TO VISIT.” (NORDISKA HANDIKAPPOLITISKA RÅDET- 2002)

The experience of travelling as the opportunity to get to know new realities and new places, and as an event for personal growth, is everyone's right. Some have, however, more difficulty in realising it than others. That difficulty arises from cultural and architectural barriers. Accessible tourism means exactly higher quality experience for everyone. That is why it concerns and it involves the whole society.

Accessible tourism is the collection of services, facilities and infrastructures that allow people with special needs – such as people with disabilities and with special diet needs or suffering from allergies, the elderly – to enjoy their holidays and leisure time without obstacles and difficulties.

It is about enhancing accommodation services, and ensuring accessibility to the various accommodation facilities, transportation and mobility services, restaurant services and leisure and recreational services. It is about linking all those services in such a way that they can all be equally and easily used, seamlessly, to grant people with special needs and their families, a high degree of autonomy in enjoying their tourist experience.

Background

“All citizens have equal social dignity and are equal before the law, without regard to their sex, race, language, religion, political opinions, and personal or social conditions.

It is the duty of the Republic to remove all economic and social obstacles that, by limiting the freedom and equality of citizens, prevent full individual development and the participation of all workers in the political, economic, and social organisation of the country.”, we read in article 3 of the Italian Constitution since 1946.

In fact, attention towards issues related to disability has been increasing across-the-board since the '80's. 1981 was, in fact, the International Year of Disabled Persons by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Furthermore, on 20 December 1993 the General Assembly of the United Nations passed the Resolution containing “The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities

for Persons with Disabilities". Even if it does not have any legally binding power, it is a very strong recommendation to Governments to issue policies aimed at ensuring equal rights to people with disabilities.

Prompted by that recommendation, some European countries promoted a series of initiatives to raise awareness on the matter. Some of the most important ones are:

- The Barcelona Declaration of 1995 (through which a formal commitment was undertaken by the local public administrations towards a policy for equalization of opportunities).
- The Madrid Declaration of 2002. A document aimed at those who are not familiar with the condition of people with disabilities and with the objective of proposing a set of ideal activities to be undertaken at national, regional and local levels during the European Year dedicated to disabled people in 2003.
- The Norcia Declaration of 2003, approved during the International Convention "The Park belongs to everyone. The World too." The declaration has the principles such as the value of diversity, non discrimination and social inclusion as its inspiring ideas. The key elements, identified as fundamental to guarantee accessibility to the natural protected areas, are represented by adequate systems for:
 - planning and management,
 - welcoming and accommodation,
 - information and communication,
 - education and training.
- The Manifest of Agrigento "Guidelines for the realisation of a tourism system for all" issued in 2004, identifies the basic guidelines for the development of a tourism system that is able to adequately respond to the demand for quality accommodation and accessibility for all. It is also a true opportunity to go from the declaration of principles to specific and actual commitment towards initiatives aiming at creating a new model of tourism that is hospitable to everyone.

An evolution in terminology

The word 'handicap' derives from the English sentence *Cap in the hand*, used in the horse racing context. Exceptionally skilled horse riders were asked to ride while holding a cap in their hand. Over time this term was also associated with the act of begging for money, thus acquiring a negative meaning.

In the '80's, the World Health Organisation (WHO) devised a system for the classification pertaining to the observation and the analysis of organic, physical and behavioural pathologies, called ICIDH (*International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicap*). ICIDH analyses and evaluates consequences associated with health conditions according to three fundamental categories:

- impairment (organic and/or functional damage),
- disability (loss of operational capability due to impairment),
- handicap (difficulty that the individual faces in the environment they are in because of their impairment).

For the first time social exclusion of people with disabilities was related to the social organisation. It was no longer a situation defined on the basis of one's health conditions or by their motor, intellectual or sensorial capabilities alone, but it was instead a dynamic condition on which it was possible to intervene in favour of a more open and welcoming society.

The last quarter-century gone by saw a big evolution of the way of thinking about disability and a strong trend towards enhancing the living conditions of people with disabilities. Principles such as human rights, equal opportunities, social integration and inclusion are now very much part of the aims of initiatives promoted by the various organisations of people with disabilities, who increasingly decide to directly represent themselves, their needs and proposals.

The limitations inherent in the ICDH scheme led the WHO to define a new scheme called ICIDH-2 later in 1999. That new scheme provided the foundation for the final classification system presented in 2001 and called ICF (*International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health*).

This latest classification system allows to analyse the health condition of individuals from a combined perspective of both one's health and the environment they live in. It, in fact, defines disability as a health condition in an unfavourable living environment.

ICF no longer uses the vocabulary present in the previous classification ICIDH (1980) i.e. "impairment, disability and handicap" but introduces new terminology such as "body functions and structures, activities and

participation.”

The *focus* of attention is, therefore, shifted from the person’s disability to their **participation in social life**. The boundaries of disabled persons’ participation in social life are determined by the environment they happen to lead their activities in and that can either present barriers, thus creating the possible handicap, or feature facilitating characteristics that, on the contrary, do not limit their participation.

ACCESSIBILITY

What do we mean by accessibility?

Article 2, letter g, of the Ministerial Law Decree n. 236 of 1989 defines accessibility as:

“the possibility, also for a person with reduced or impaired motor or sensorial capabilities, to reach the building and each and every of its facilities and environmental components, to easily gain access to them and use spaces and equipment in conditions of adequate safety and autonomy.”

Beside physical accessibility to the various spaces, required by law, it is, however, necessary, when speaking about the tourism context, to expand the meaning of the word to include:

- accessibility to information;
- economic accessibility;
- being able to autonomously access and use any tourist facility.

By information accessibility we mean the possibility to easily retrieve detailed information that is reliable and that respond to the client’s needs.

Economic accessibility, instead, means that a person should be able to choose from a price range of holiday offers (very often accommodation facilities and services that are accessible are also the most expensive ones).

By autonomously access premises we mean the possibility to easily reach one’s destination and being able to use the services made available there.

It is, therefore, necessary to bring down not only any architectural barrier to make a destination accessible, but also any potential information, communication and cultural barrier.

Ten reasons for making a destination accessible

What are, therefore, the reasons to make a tourist destination accessible?

1. A SIGNIFICANT MARKET VOLUME

The target group made by people with disabilities and the elderly is actually a highly potential market that is still little known. They usually go on holiday more than once a year, also during low season periods, and are usually accompanied by relatives, friends or personal assistants.

2. INCREMENT OF THE POTENTIAL DEMAND

The presence of people accompanying customers with special needs creates a multiplying effect that increases the number of potential tourists with consequent increase of the potential demand.

3. MARKET GROWTH

Some research studies shows that the European population has been increasingly ageing over the last few years. This could translate into a growth of the market where the *target group* is exactly the elderly.

4. OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP DOMESTIC TOURISM

People with disabilities do not usually tend to travel abroad because they fear they might have to face more barriers. This is why tourism for all could favour the development of the national domestic tourism industry.

5. CUSTOMER CARE

The offer of a holiday 'with no barriers' satisfies the needs of people with disabilities. Clients can consequently more easily become repeat clients and a powerful marketing channel by word-of-mouth. Word-of-mouth is a very important marketing channel to build and spread a positive image of the destination.

Satisfying the needs of people with disabilities could, therefore, translate into an increase of the demand for a destination with positive economic returns for the tourist operators of that area.

6. THE POSSIBILITY FOR OFF-SEASON BUSINESS

It was repeatedly highlighted that tourists with special needs sometimes prefer to travel during low season. That is because it is usually easier to find accommodation in and visit tourist destinations.

As far as the supply is concerned, that would translate into a higher usage of the infrastructure across the seasons. It is easy to understand that it practically means positive economic returns for the tourist operators.

7. POSITIVE EFFECTS ALSO FOR THE OTHER TOURIST TARGET GROUPS

Tourism without barriers brings benefits also to other target groups such as families with small children and the elderly and also those who have, even if temporarily, some degree of impairment.

8. MORE BENEFITS FOR RESIDENTS TOO

When a decision is taken to make a destination accessible to all, the consequent enhancements will not only benefit the potential tourist, but, first of all, the residents and all those who, even if for a limited period of time, are to face difficult situations due to temporary disability.

9. INCREASE OF THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge about services and packages validated as truly accessible also because experienced as such can be quickly spread among the population, also through cooperatives and associations of people with disabilities.

10. DIFFERENTIATION AND COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Design for all and design of accessible tourist services can be the basis for agreements between tour operators and tourist services providers.

Accessibility would bring about a higher competitive advantage against competitors.

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK AND BEST PRACTICES

The legislative framework

The current Italian law unequivocally ratifies that all public areas as well as private premises, where any activity of interest to an individual is carried out, must be accessible.

This important achievement is the result of a legislative roadmap that had as its key prerogative that of aiming at guaranteeing and recognising the rights of people with disabilities.

As far as the right of people with disabilities to be able to use public places or premises open to the public, that right is ratified by:

- Law Decree n. 5 of 30 January 1971, in favour of the maimed and invalid citizens;
- Law n. 118 of 30 March 1971, "Conversion to law of the law decree n. 5 of 30 January 1971 and new norms in favour of the maimed and invalid citizens" (cf. art. 27);
- Law n. 104 of 5 February 1992, "Overarching law on assistance for, social integration and the rights of handicapped people", (cf. art. 8);
- Law n. 13 of 9 January 1989, "Instructions to facilitate the removal and overcoming of architectural barriers in private buildings";
- Ministerial Decree n. 236 of 14 June 1989, "Technical regulations necessary to guarantee accessibility, adaptability and visitability of private buildings and subsidized and financed public housing aimed at removing and overcoming architectural barriers", decree implementing law 13/89;
- Presidential Decree n. 503 of 24 July 1996, "Regulation reporting norms for the removal of architectural barriers in buildings, spaces and public services", applicable to public buildings and spaces for which the same accessibility standards established by the Ministerial Decree 236/89 remain valid, and that annuls the previous law 118/71.

(cf. the text of the various laws reported in the annex)

The best practices

Project Italy for all – Project STARe

“Italy for all” is an initiative by the Directorate General for Tourism of the Ministry of Productive Activities that aims at promoting and spreading accessible tourism, with positive and significant effects on the quality of the Italian tourism system in general and the consequent not-at-all negligible increase of the competitiveness of our Country. It is a project that aims at the overall development of the national tourist offer. It does not, in fact, target the creation of special subsystems or centres of excellence within the tourism offer.

In 1997 the Head of the Tourism Department of the Prime Minister’s Office organised a series of meetings aimed at presenting and evaluating all the experiences relating to tourism and present across the nation. A number of priorities were established to further develop the sector, among them there was tourism for all. A working group was then established comprising the Tourism Department, CO.IN. – Consortium of Integrated Cooperatives – Rome, a non profit organisation, and ENEA – National Agency for Energy and the Environment. The group identified the main problems to be solved and formulated some possible solutions.

Particularly, they focused on:

- lack of a reliable information system about the conditions of accessibility of tourist structures and infrastructures;
- lack of adequate professional training of the tourism personnel on how to welcome people with disabilities;
- lack of national information and assistance services for the disabled tourist.

The project approach included the continuous and precious involvement of the associations belonging to the Permanent Council of the Associations of People with disabilities and their families. The sharing in the same objectives among all the interested parties immediately led to a very significant result, that is the publication in the Official Gazette of the Prime Minister’s Decrees of the document ‘Guidelines to implement the Programme “Holidays for All 1998-2000”’ on 10 March 1998. Through that document, agreed upon during the State-Regional Administrations conference on 5 February 1998, all regional administrations in Italy undertook the commitment to put in place important initiatives to develop tourism for all.

The first deliverable of that project was the “Quality Manual for the accommodation of tourists with special needs”, promoted by the Tourism Department and realised by the non-profit organisation CO.IN.. The Manual, containing a series of behavioural norms and useful information to welcome people with different needs, was distributed to all tourist accommodation

facilities, travel agencies and tourism schools.

A series of initiatives were later started to support interested business enterprises. In fact, the web site www.italiapertutti.org is still operational today and offers an online guide to access information regarding the accessibility of the Italian tourist structures and infrastructures. It is also a specialised knowledge repository with information to support the development of new initiatives by business entrepreneurs interested in operating in this sector. They can retrieve reports from research studies and economic and technical analysis.

The guide on accessibility of the Italian tourist offer contains a very accurate description of the accessibility characteristics of about 5,000 accommodation facilities (hotels, guest houses, camping sites, agritourism facilities, etc.) and complementary services and structures (bars, restaurants, stations, pharmacies, monuments, etc.) in Italy. It was designed in such a way to provide people with some degree of disability with elements to evaluate the degree of accessibility of the facility of interest, compared to one's specific needs. The data gathering methodology (IG-VAE) was developed by ENEA in collaboration with specialists of the sector and the associations of people with disabilities.

Unemployed young people (architects, surveyors, some of them disabled) carried out the data gathering exercise after having been trained by ENEA on techniques to survey accessibility and on computer-based data gathering. They then compiled the data from direct surveys for later publication on the web site.

Data collection is based on the direct visit to the tourist facility. The visit not only allows the surveyors to control the accessibility conditions of each component of the facility surveyed, but to also come into contact with the manager of the facility and try to make them aware of the issue of accessibility.

Data are collected through a **questionnaire** specifically prepared to survey all the characteristics and elements necessary to guarantee comprehensive information about accessibility for a wide variety of needs.

At the end of the each site survey, the collected data are compiled into a **summary report**, which does not report a subjective evaluation of the accessibility, but it just presents the data collected during the survey.

The website also reports two research studies, unique in Europe for the methodological approach adopted and the scope and extension of the data collected, on the demand and offer of accessible tourism. Furthermore, it offers a set of 12 model business plans to develop products and services in the various domains of accessible tourism. Those plans are of sure interest to potential entrepreneurs but to potential users as well. Business enterprises and



local administrations, interested in the promotion of tourism, can use the model business plans to evaluate potential investments in this domain.



INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK.

The adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations of the Resolution "The Standard Rules for the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities" in 1993, even if the resolution was not legally binding, it did represent a strong recommendation for the Governments to adopt policies aimed at obtaining equalisation of rights and opportunities, besides duties, for people with disabilities. The standard rules for the equalisation of opportunities for the disable suggested that: "Nations should:

- (a) introduce programmes to make the physical environment accessible;
- (b) adopt measures to provide access to information and to provide relevant communications." (rule n°5).

The 22 rules are grouped around four themes:

- basic conditions for full participation;
- areas of intervention;
- implementation measures;
- monitoring mechanism.

The areas of intervention

The second group of rules refers to the rights of people with disabilities in the various fields of social life: accessibility of the physical environment and of information, rights to education, employment, income maintenance and social security, family life, culture, sports and to religion.

Firstly accessibility intended at both the physical and social levels. It is, therefore, recommended to eliminate all architectural barriers and, above all, to define policies for construction of homes, public buildings, meeting places etc., keeping always in mind the right of people with disabilities to have access to whatever place any other person can have access to. This, of course, applies to the means of transportation as well.

Accessibility is to be intended in a wider meaning of the word, including accessibility to information and communication, also through taking advantage of new technologies and languages dedicated to some categories of disability.

For the right to education it is recommended to include people with disabilities in the normal educations system as much as possible, with the help of support teachers and appropriate aids.

The right to employment is a fundamental right that belongs to all

individuals, as it is very much linked to human dignity.

Support initiatives must be also undertaken to help people with disabilities lead a normal family life and enjoy their sex life. Thus, family life counselling centres and expert professional advice must be made available to provide support to families with disabled members.

In July 1996 the European Community Commission issued a statement on equality of opportunities for people with disabilities: "A new strategy of the European Community towards disable people". That statement also contained the proposed document that was later adopted as the Resolution of the Council of 20 December 1996. The document represents an important milestone for Europe. It lays the foundation for a new integration policy that will be later widely adopted in various sectors.

It is about the formulation of a new strategy to enable full participation and general involvement of people with disabilities into the economic and social processes. The document identifies the troublesome areas where intervention is required: education, employment, mobility and access, housing and social security systems.

IN FRANCE

In France, the guidance law of 30 June 1975 constitutes the foundation to a paradigm shift about commitment towards people with disabilities. The shift is from a commitment based on assistance to one based on solidarity.

The law defines as the duty of the nation to cater for health issues (identifying the various types of handicap, their prevention and cure), education issues, integration into the work environment (education, professional training and orientation, job placement) and social integration, but also access to sport and recreational activities for minors and adults whether they have physical, motor or mental disabilities.

The duty to make buildings and facilities accessible to people with disabilities is also established by that same law that states that "the architectural and interior design of places to be used as homes and of facilities open to the public (...) must guarantee accessibility to people with disabilities."

Unfortunately, because of the late promulgation of the executive decrees and of a faulty implementation, that law did not produce the desired effects. As a consequence, many buildings open to the public are still today, thirty years later, inaccessible or only partially accessible to people with disabilities.

A subsequent law provided further instructions on accessibility of buildings. The law of 13 July 1991, concerning various measures aimed at facilitating access to dwelling places, work places and public facilities by people

with disabilities, introduced those measures as requirements in the construction and housing Code of regulations.

That law also establishes that controls must be performed on public access buildings before and after their construction. Their qualification for use is subject to their respecting the accessibility regulations. The law took full effect in 1994.

In any case, the regulatory law on accessibility concerns only people with reduced motor capability. As far as sensory disabilities are concerned there are only recommendations.

There are two other laws that have effect on the tourism sector: the law of 13 January 1989, concerning protection against discriminations, that introduced sanctions against refusal to offer a service or good on the basis of the client's handicap, and the law of 12 July 1990 that quantifies those sanctions. The refusal by a museum or a movie house to admit a disabled person because of their disability is considered an act of discrimination.

IN ENGLAND

The reference law for the construction sector can be found in Section "M" of the *Building Regulations*. It concerns the accessibility requirements, both external and internal, for new buildings and for extensions to existing buildings. It will be extended to include also refurbished buildings.

More important is the *Disability Discrimination Act* (DDA – Law on discrimination against people with disabilities) of 1995. From October 1999 providers of goods, services and facilities have the duty to guarantee the absence, on their premises, of factors discriminating against potential clients with disabilities. The duty is active since 2004.

The DDA covers all buildings regardless of their size or function. The various facilities serving the tourist sector, from hotels to small shops, buildings and places of historic interest, are, therefore, included.

Tourist service providers can ask for their facilities to be evaluated for accessibility, to avoid the possibility of complaints and charges under the DDA. Such an evaluation will allow providers to know the degree of accessibility of their venues, to formulate a strategy to remove the barriers identified and to document both the work performed and that proposed or planned.

In the year 2000 the *National Register of Access Consultants* was created with two categories of members: *Access Auditors*, who survey and record the access barriers, and the *Access Consultant*, who can also offer their professional advice on how to solve specific accessibility problems, how to assign priorities to work, how to estimate budgets and can also assist in the

formulation of strategies.

Beside the construction industry, DDA will also have an impact on the management of tourist facilities, tourist information, tourist guides and maps as it requires any of those services to be free from any form of potential discrimination to make tourism truly accessible. Means of transportation like buses, taxis, trains, will also have to be designed in such a way to be free of barriers. In particular, they will have to minimise the need for help by disabled customers when using those means of transportation, so as to maximise their self sufficiency.

IN SPAIN

The relevant law LISMI n. 13 of 7 April 1982, concerning the social integration of people with disabilities, ratifies the duty for Public Administrations to remove architectural barriers in buildings, whether newly built, being extended or restructured.

Since the creation of the State of Autonomies, each autonomous government is responsible for policies concerning tourism. The result is a variety of different legislations since each Autonomous Community passed its own law regulating the sector.

In the past five years, however, public administrations, non-government organisations and private enterprises in some regions like Catalonia and Andalusia, implemented significant enhancements to a great number of buildings that have now rooms and services accessible to people with reduced motor capabilities and with sensory disabilities.

At the same time, improvements to the transportation system and other tourist resources (historical-artistic heritage etc.) are leading to an increasing number of disabled tourists that can easily enjoy them.

IN SWEDEN

The strong influence of the central government bodies and a clearly decentralised decision making process are the factors that more than other affect the conditions of people with disabilities in the Swedish society. The State takes on full responsibility in matters of legislation, public welfare, general planning and provision of services.

While the State defines the objectives of the various initiatives, local bodies and counties have great freedom when it comes to decisions regarding the quality and the nature of the adopted measures, to the extent that they can also levy local taxes to finance the necessary work.

The local administrative bodies take on basic responsibility on matters such as education, housing, child care, social services. The Counties, instead,

take on the primary responsibility with respect to health services.

The past decade was characterised by a process of decentralisation of powers that has given local governing bodies an ever increasing set of responsibilities. Special coordination bodies exist at local, regional and central levels to facilitate contacts between the authorities and the organisations representing people with disabilities. The central public agency is the Statens Handikappråd (National Committee for the Disabled) of Stockholm.

The well established Swedish tradition of popular movements exercises a strong influence on the formulation of policies regarding the field of disability. Many Swedish people belong to various associations and organizations. The movement for people with disabilities count about 460,000 members. There are, in fact, about 40 different organisations that represent specific groups of people with disabilities at the national level and 2,000 local associations across the Country. Such organisations receive public funding from the State, the Counties and local agencies to sustain their activities and consulting work in the field of disability. A close collaboration among organisations active in fields such as disability and adult education encouraged people with disabilities to take part in study groups, study visits, cultural events, travels with the help of public funding.

The State also provides funding aimed at developing new methods and techniques that makes it easier for people with disabilities to take part in cultural and leisure activities such as theatrical performances for the deaf.

The Swedish Tourist Agency (partly-public agency) managed various initiatives conceived to facilitate the creation of facilities for tourists with disabilities until 1992. They also published a guide for disabled tourists. They organised seminars on "Tourism for all" in collaboration with regional tourist agencies and initiated a pilot project together with the Tourist Agency of Skane (the most southern Swedish region). The Agency was dissolved once the project was implemented.

A new agency, the Agency for the Image of Sweden, was later created with the task to respond to the needs for services to support people with disabilities pursuing leisure activities. The agency published a new edition of the Guide for people with disabilities.

In 1995 yet another agency was created, the Delegation for Tourism, with the task to promote Swedish tourism in general. As far as accessible tourism is concerned, the Delegation was also tasked to analyse the situation of disabled tourists (although without receiving specific guidelines on how to carry out such a task).

Even if there is currently no official agency responsible for the development of accessible tourism, a national Project was initiated to evaluate accessibility conditions across Sweden. Such a survey is carried out on the

basis of criteria formulated in collaboration with the associations representing people with disabilities (among them the *Tourism for All* cooperative). The scope of the survey covers accommodation facilities, travelling, restaurants and recreational services and activities.

IN HOLLAND

In Holland, as in many other European countries, there is a national law that regulates the possibility for people with disabilities to use and enjoy all public facilities as well as those of tourist interest.

The "*Gehandicaptenraad*", the Council of people with disabilities, is the body dealing with the matter. It manages part of the state funds for the adaptation of facilities and transportation.

There is also the S.D.G. – the Dutch Society for Rehabilitation, that works to make it easier for disabled passengers to travel.

IN GERMANY

In Germany, the *German Act on Equal opportunities for persons with Disabilities* constitutes the basic legislative framework that deals with the issue of accessibility.

Almost all Federal States have adopted or are about to adopt laws on equal opportunities together with their respective construction ordinances (cf. BMWA 2004, Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour, p. 2).

As far as the legal framework regulating the matter of building accessibility in Germany, each Federal State has its own laws. They also have their own special federal laws regarding the buildings dedicated to tourist activities and services, such as restaurants, camping sites, and for the preservation of ancient monuments.

The most important tools to enhance the accessibility requirements set by the construction regulations are the DIN Norms published by the German Institute for Standardisation. We refer to the DIN Norm 18024 in particular (concerning public buildings, streets, parks, means of transportation and their components and equipment) and the DIN 18025 (concerning buildings for dwelling).

The DIN norms do not carry the same legal binding power as laws, but they represent reference technical guidelines. They become legally binding once they are converted into laws.

There is currently work in progress to merge the two DIN norms mentioned above, i.e. DIN 18024 and DIN 18025, into one single norm the DIN 18030.

Some European examples of excellence in addressing the issue of accessibility.

The European Commission DG (Directorate General) V, Division for people with disabilities, together with the DG XXIII, Tourism Unit, in March 1994, created an exchange platform called "Autonomous life – Tourism" that sees the participation of three representatives for each member State, nominated by the national Ministry responsible for tourism. That work group, which is more a consultative body, met twice a year until 1996.

Its goals were to facilitate the exchange of information and experiences, to deepen the study on how to enhance the tourist offer to respond to the needs expressed by people with disabilities and to advise the European Commission on issues concerning tourism as experienced by people with disabilities.

The study conducted at European level was supported by the work done in each Country by the national coordination cells.

FRANCE: the French tourism and handicap cell

Three associations received the mandate by the French Ministry of Tourism to represent the Country in the work group. They were namely CNRH (French National Coordinating Committee for the Readaptation of People with Disabilities), UNAPEI (National Union of the Associations of Parents and Friends of People with Mental Disabilities), UNAT (National Union of the Tourist Associations and of the outdoor activities).

The three associations created the National Tourism and handicap cell in 1995. The cell included representatives from the user group, the professional tourist operators and the training organisations, for a total of about 40 members.

Its mission is essentially to improve the awareness and responsibility in recognising and servicing the needs of tourists with special needs across the tourist sector.

The Cell meets, as a rule, twice a year in a plenary session. Furthermore, some work groups address specific issues such as the training of the professional tourist operators or information. The Cell has been working along three main lines since 1996:

- training: to raise awareness among the organisations that provide training to professionals in the tourist sector and to propose specific training programme and content;
- statistics: to prepare statistics on the potential demand based on holiday and recreational activities of people with disabilities in France;
- accommodation of clients with special needs: to raise awareness among professional tourist operators.

They decided to start first working on basic professional training. The National Ministry of Education was contacted to understand what the administrative and bureaucratic processes were like to have specific modules inserted in the basic professional training curriculum. They targeted to introduce a new subject in the BTS tourism-recreational activities, which is the standard diploma for the tourist sector. The course is a two-year postgraduate course with two possible specialisations: planning-commercialisation, that focuses on creation, promotion and sale of tourist products; and accommodation-animation, that trains professional operators specialised in accommodation, animation and as group guides.

ENGLAND: the *Shopmobility* system

Shopmobility is a free service for people with motor disabilities who can use small 3 or 4-wheel single-seat electric vehicles or wheelchairs. They can, thus, easily make use of services and facilities in the city-centre area usually closed to traffic.

The system was set up in Great Britain in 1979 and has been ever since growing. There are now more than 230 *shopmobility* services used by more than 200,000 people a year. The service was started to respond to the transformations of the urban areas. In fact, when the conversion of some city areas into pedestrian-only zones, areas inaccessible to people with reduced motor capabilities were paradoxically created. Long distances that can only be covered on foot are, in fact, very often a tough or insurmountable obstacle to people with disabilities. The same goes for big shopping centres that stretch over distances that can easily be covered only by people in good physical condition.

The *shopmobility* system was, therefore, studied and introduced. The system not only allows people with reduced motor capabilities to easily and freely move around, but has also increased the business volume of shops in the big shopping centres, so much so that the large commercial companies are, now, among the main financial sponsors of the service.

The service is completely free and, whoever needs it, can become a member. It is enough for a disabled person to fill in a form and provided their personal details. It is not even necessary for them to certify their physical condition. A code and a membership card are issued to each member. Every time a member wishes to use an *elettroscooter* or any another means of transport provided, they do not need to pay a safety-deposit or leave an identity document. They just need to give their membership number. User can leave a donation if they wish. The money raised go towards management and maintenance costs. The service is staffed by volunteers that work in shifts. Local authorities and the shopping centre contribute to wards the cost and provide space, while the equipment is purchased with money from the sponsors and the members' donations.

SPAIN: PREDIF (Plataforma Representativa Estatal de Discapacitados Fisicos)

The PREDIF, set up in Madrid in 1996, brings together two Federations of people with physical disabilities: Federación Nacional de ASPAYM, Federación de Coordinadoras y Asociaciones de Minusválidos Físicos de las Comunidades Autónomas de España.

One of its goals is to implement an Accessible Tourism Program aimed at fully integrating people with disabilities into tourist activities.

HOLLAND: social welcome: the *De purmer eend* and *'T slothuys* hotels

The experience herewith reported was made by ABLE, a foundation specialised in the building and management of hotels with optimum levels of accessibility. The acronym ABLE stands for "*Active Breaks and Leisure for Everyone*". The stress is on the word *everyone*, because the foundation works to facilitate the integration of people with special needs.

The first hotel, a wooden structure first used as a barn and later converted into a comfortable hotel called the *De Purmer Eend*, was opened in March 1993 in Kwadijk, a village 22 kilometres north of Amsterdam. The hotel has 26 bedrooms, 13 of which are on the ground floor and are completely accessible and completely equipped to allow a disabled person to use it autonomously. The dining room is very large. It has a bar and two terraces, one sheltered and the other completely in the open, overlooking the swimming pool and the garden. There is also a small theatre used as conference hall, recreation room and venue for local events.

The hotel was totally furnished keeping in mind also the needs of people that may suffer of asthma or allergies. At the same time its interior decoration was realised using warm colours and appealing decorative elements, avoiding any colour that could recall to mind a clinic. A bus equipped for the transportation of four people on wheelchair and three passengers was purchased in 1994 so as to make it easy to take in part in external activities. The bus can also be driven by the guest themselves. In 1995, the ABLE Foundation had a traditional wooden boat built featuring a roof and an elevator platform. The hotel also received a sponsorship covering 30% of its construction cost. The insurance company that contributed to the project budget occasionally uses the boat for its personnel. In the same year an elevator platform was added to an old bus. A second-hand bus with an elevator platform was purchased in 1997 in collaboration with the foundation Special Buses. The initiative was so successful that the bus was used not only to transport the hotel clients but also for full-day excursions by local organisations. A second accessible car was purchased in 1998.

After only two years it was clear that *De Purmer Eend* was no longer able

to satisfy the demand from all the groups and singles wishing to stay at a hotel able to offer such a level of comfort, accessibility and mobility services, and located in an area of the Netherlands that draws many tourists and holiday makers.

In 1998, ABLE was contacted by the management team of a home for the aged in Spanbroek, a big village situated 30 kilometres north-west of Kwadjik and surrounded by tulip fields. They knew about the ABLE Foundation because they had stayed at *De Purmer Eend* for a one-week holiday.

The home was purchased and then converted into a hotel, called *'t Slothuys*, in about six months. The hotel was open to the public in Spring of 1999. As for the *De Purmer Eend* hotel, all fabrics and furniture used were chosen to specifically guarantee a comfortable stay to clients who suffer of asthma and to be, at the same time, appealing.

Designed by people who believes in maximum social integration, the accessible bedrooms, at both hotels, demonstrated their economic viability. They are in fact, usually fully booked much more in advance than the regular rooms.

GERMANY: the study "Economic Impulses of Accessible Tourism for All"

The research study "*Economic Impulses of Accessible Tourism for All*", commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour and published in March 2004, has the objective of identifying the economic implications linked to the development of accessible tourist activities in Germany. This qualitative research focuses on the analysis of:

- travel habits;

- expectations and reasons behind choices;

- needs to be considered when offering tourist services.

MARKET & TRENDS

Statistics

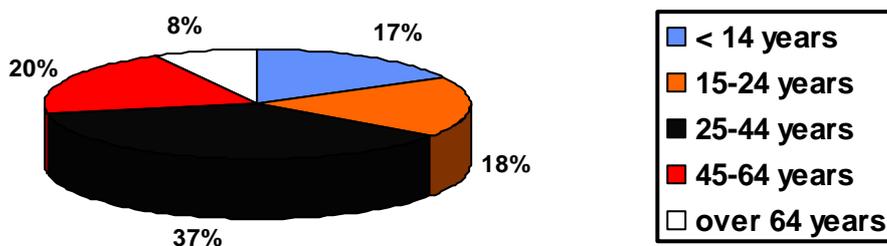
General characteristics of the tourist demand

The tourist demand can be defined as the total volume of requests by the population for tourist goods and services. It can be classified into various categories (sea tourism, mountain tourism, cultural tourism, etc.). It can moreover be classified by travellers' age group, profession and sex.

The chart below reports data pertaining to:

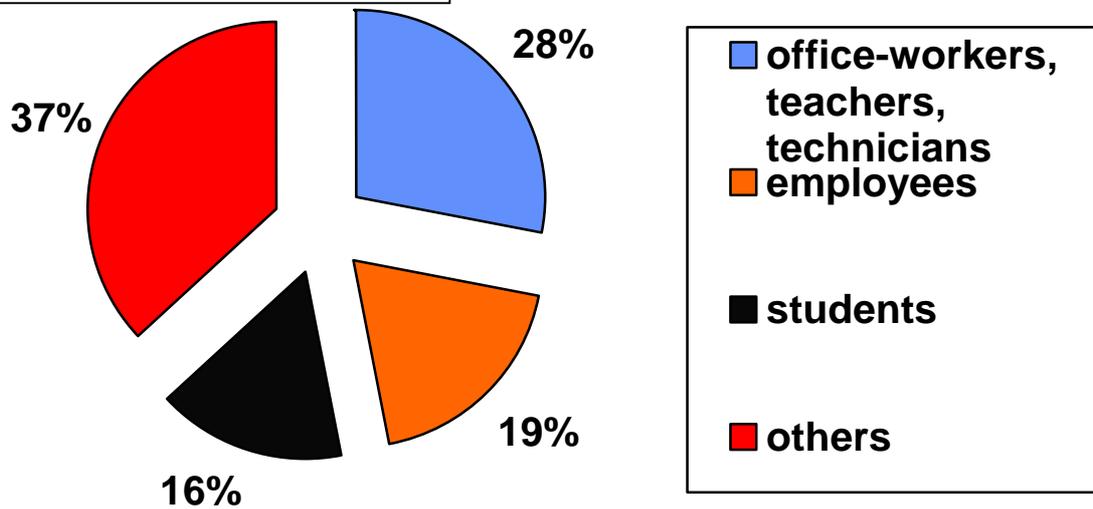
demand for accessible tourism¹

By age group:

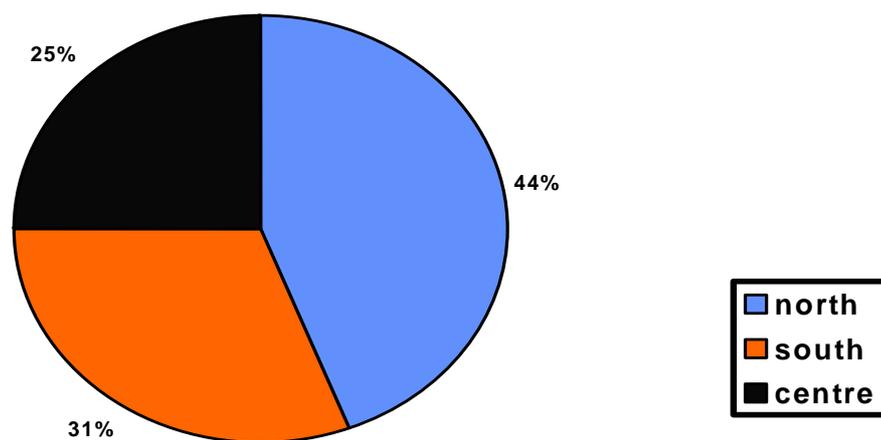


¹ Iter-ENEA research study, 1999

By profession:



By geographical origin:



To better understand the real potential of the market focus of our study, we refer to the results of the Iter-ENEA research study of 1999, conducted by the two companies ENEA and Iter as part of the objectives of the STARe project within the "*Italy for all*" campaign. The research study shows that: 55% of the Italian population, that is about 31 million and 200 thousand people, travel and that the explicit demand for **accessible tourism** is made of:

- 889,330 people with special needs (3% of Italian tourists);
- 2,140,785 elderly people (with more than 64 years of age, that is about 7%);
- 82% of tourists travelling within the country;
- tourists that make 4 trips a year versus 3 trips for the demand as a whole;
- tourists that usually stay longer: 13 days vs. 11;
- tourists that travel also during off-peak seasons;
- tourists that often travel with companions;
- 55% of tourists prefer to use their own car;
- tourists that stay at relatives' or friends' (31%), or at hotels or non-hotel facilities: residences (6.3%) and holiday homes or religious institutes (3.7%).

The general characteristics of the demand for accessible tourism show that this target group travels mainly within the Country (about 82%). They especially show a marked preference for regions such as Trentino, Liguria and Lombardy. This is a further confirmation of their lesser mobility when it comes to harder routes.

Another distinctive trait of this segment of the demand, is that concerning their higher willingness to travel several times for tourist purposes during the year (4 trips a year versus 3 for the tourist demand as a whole). They also tend to stay longer (13 days versus 11), thus demonstrating fairly good inclination and significant interest towards tourist expenditure.

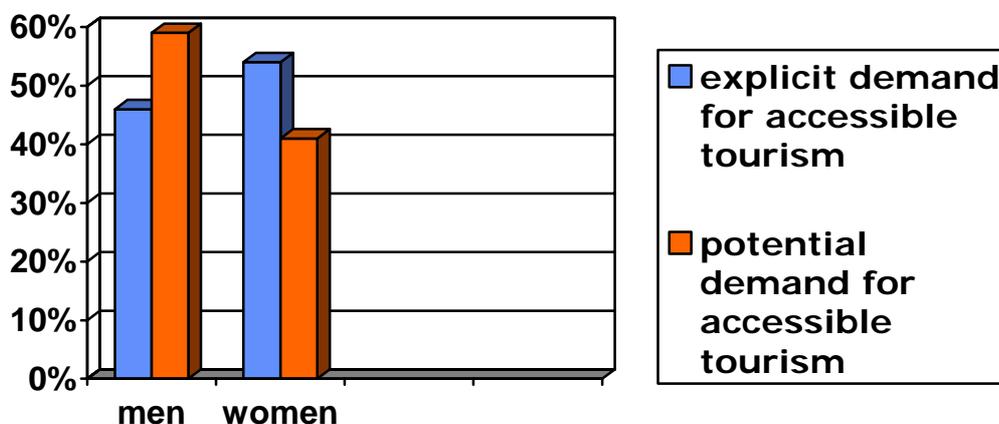
Furthermore, to avoid the discomforts of the peak season, tourists with special needs travel throughout the year, thus offering tourist operators the possibility to operate during off-peak seasons like autumn and spring, as well as during summer.

55% of this target group uses their car as the means of transportation. As far as their preference on the type of accommodation is concerned, it is not very different from the preference expressed by the more general tourist demand, even if the percentage of tourist preferring to stay at their own homes or at relatives' or friends' is higher at 31%. If we compare the disabled tourists' preference with that of the other profiles of the demand we can highlight that travellers with special needs patronise also more economical non-hotel accommodation facilities such as residence, holidays homes or religious institutes (6.3% and 3.7% respectively) usually not patronised by the main stream tourists.

Explicit and potential demand for accessible tourism

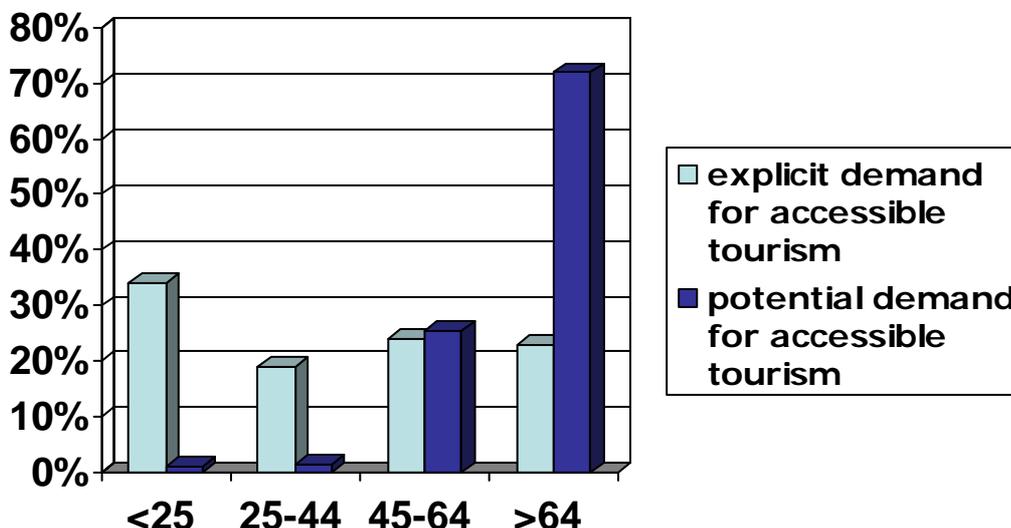
14% of people with disabilities and the elderly do not travel, while 1.9%, that is 490,000 people, decided not to travel for the lack of facilities and the necessary conditions. The chart below reports data pertaining to explicit and potential demand for accessible tourism.

Demand by sex group



From the graph we can see that the majority of people with disabilities that actually travel (explicit demand) is made of women (more than 50%), while men represent only 45% of travellers. The more relevant piece of information is, however, the significant number of people (both men and women) that would like to travel (potential demand), but do not do it because of the lack of adequate facilities.

Demand by age group



As far as the picture by age group, from the graph we can see that people with disabilities that actually travel are those between 25 and 44 years of age. They represent almost the entire age segment of this type of tourism, given the fact that the potential demand is almost zero.

As far as the age segment 45 to 64 years, the explicit demand represents about 22% with the potential demand equally as much. There is, therefore, a margin for growth for this segment. But what strikes is the large volume of the potential demand compared to the size of the explicit demand from the segment of those with more than 64 years of age. The former is about 70% of the market while the latter is about 21%. This means that a large share of this segment would like to travel but cannot do it because of the lack of facilities. The potential demand represents a large room for growth of this particular market to be exploited.

Demand by professional profile

	Tourists with special needs	Over 64 with no special needs	Potential demand for accessible tourism
Student	13.1%	0%	0%
Unemployed	0.8%	0%	0%
Entrepreneur/freelancer	5.9%	10.8%	1.4%
Self-employed /craftsman	11.7%	10.9%	19%
Office worker	33.6%	28.6%	20.9%
Self-employed	18.7%	19.9%	27.9%
Housewife	12.1%	28.6%	29.2%
Others	4.1%	1.3%	1.6%

**DEMOGRAPHICAL CHANGES OF PEOPLE
RESIDENT IN ITALY**

(source www.demo.istat.it)

Year	1982	2001
Age		
< 25 years	37%	26%
25-44 years	27%	30%
45-64 years	23%	25%
> 64 years	13%	19%

From the data on demographical changes of the Italian population over a period of about 20 years we notice that the share of elderly people has been clearly increasing while the number of adolescents has decreased. In fact, the number of people below 25 years of age decreased by 11% from 1982 to 2001. On the contrary, the number of people who are more than 64 years old increased by 6% in the same period. We can, therefore, assume that there will surely be a higher demand for accessible tourism intended exactly as tourism that allows everyone to undertake a holiday experience and enjoy it.

Economic opportunities

From the above analysis we can deduce that people with disabilities and the elderly are a very significant segment whose frequency of travelling can increase because on the one hand their potential demand is constantly increasing, while on the other the offer of accessible facilities is itself increasing.

Tourist operators, therefore, should increasingly turn their attention towards those segments extending their reference *target*.

Furthermore, if the accessible services offered meet the demand, an increase of the volume of travelling, frequency of travelling and daily expenditure by tourist with special needs, can be expected. That will result in a general increase of the quality for all clients too and, of course, also of the tourist operators' income.

An example: the case of Viaggi del Ventaglio

After focusing their attention on the issue of accessibility, the group Ventaglio reached very important results:

- they have assessed the level of accessibility of 14 Ventaclubs present within a long, medium and short radius (Italy, Tunisia, Egypt, Maldives, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Cuba, Brazil).
- They have extended their offer to include other products and brands of the group, after they have surveyed the accessibility of hotels and residences present also in the Mare Italia Columbus, Columbus club and *Best Tours* catalogues, in Cairo, so as to offer a wider range of choices to clients with disabilities.
- They surveyed the level of accessibility of the excursions that one can go on from the holiday villages in Sharm el Sheikh, Mexico and Djerba, allowing clients to personally evaluate the feasibility of the excursions from their view point, before booking it.
- They provided incentives for adequate training for personnel at the *booking* services and sales departments on customer care during the process of travel booking by clients with disabilities: what to ask the client for, how to accurately assess and establish their needs and how to satisfy them, and providing the travel agencies with accurate and adequate information on the accessibility of the facilities and services.
- They created a special edition catalogue for this niche market with descriptions of and information on accessibility.
- They created a web site reporting pictures of the holiday villages surveyed with information also on the dialysis centres close to the main Ventaclub locations.

This approach resulted in an increase of the level of demand for services offered by Viaggi del Ventaglio from clients with special needs with consequent increase of its turnover.

THE TOURISM SERVICE CHAIN

The tourist destination

A tourist destination is the result of an integrated system of attractions and services, that is the coming together of resources such to lead a traveller to wanting to take the necessary steps to travel and spend time there.

For a location to become a successful tourist destination, it is necessary for the riches and resources present in the area (natural resources, architectural and historical heritage, etc.), once considered sufficient to face the market, to be turned into true a competitive advantage through specific *marketing* strategies, targeted at addressing the increasingly sophisticated and articulated needs of potential clients and tourists.

Such an integrated system of attractions and resources that contributes to the establishment of a location as tourist destination, can be represented through the **Tourist Service Chain**, that highlights not only what are the products and services that make the chain, but also the complementary relations among them. In fact, it is not enough to have breath-taking sceneries, crystal clear sea water, spectacular coastlines. To draw tourists it is necessary to have the full chain of services: accommodation and restaurant , recreational, sport and culture oriented, able to satisfy the most varied guest's needs.



The chain is made of the following elements (attractions and services) according to their sequence in time:

- Planning and organising the trip,
- transportation (outbound journey),

- on-site orientation,
- *accommodation*,
- restaurant services,
- on-site activities (sports, cultural..)
- transportation (inbound journey),
- recalling and re-visiting the holiday experience.

The totality of the attractions and services that make a destination is, therefore, something clearly more than what we usually think of it.

Characteristics of the service

INTANGIBLE: the tourist service, unlike the industrial products, is not something tangible. It can be described, pictured in your mind, but it cannot be touched. A client can only make a blind-buy when it comes to tourist services!

NON STORABLE: since it is not tangible, it cannot be first produced and then stored at warehouse. It is not storable.

HIGHLY SEASONAL: this is characteristic of the tourist sector; the flow of tourists going to beach destinations, for instance, takes mainly place during the months of July and August.

EASILY REPLACEABLE: the service is subject to high competition from other companies providing similar services.

PERISHABLE: actually, highly perishable, since what is not sold by the end of the day becomes automatically a profit loss that cannot be resold the following day.

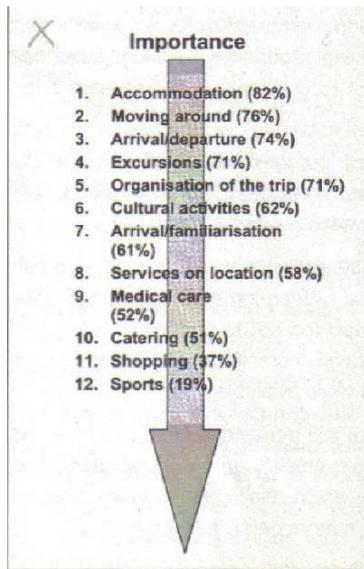
PEOPLE INTENSIVE: the services sector and especially the tourist service sector are very heavily people dependent to provide the various services. The human factor is the critical success factor for many companies in today's competitive environment.

INTEGRATED COMPLEX: the definition of tourist destination implies a close and indissoluble link among the various activities. It is not enough to provide a bed and a hot meal, but a whole range of services must be properly arranged and combined as an organic system to attract a tourist and satisfy their needs.

The accessible destination

In the case of tourism for all, it is extremely important to start from the needs expressed by the client groups that are being targeted.

The following data and graphs refer to the results of the German research study *Accessible Tourism for All in Germany*, conducted by the company *Neumann Consult* of Muenster in 2003.



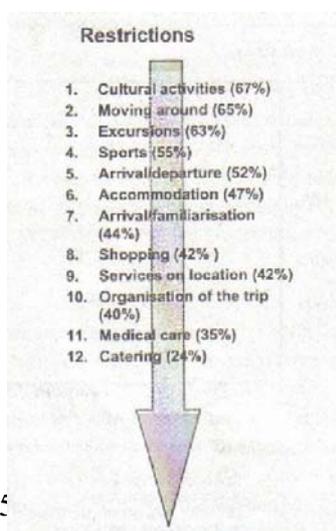
From the results of the research it is clear that 82% of people with disabilities in Germany choose their tourist destination firstly on the basis of the presence of accessible accommodation facilities, then the chance to move within and around the territory of the destination, accessibility of means of transportation that link the destination to the tourist residence place, excursions, ease of organising the trip, cultural activities.

The results also provide further confirmation that beside the accessibility of the accommodation, other functions not strictly regarded as tourist functions are equally important, such as the possibility to

move within and around the territory of the destination.

Furthermore, the study points to those elements that show the highest barriers, that is, those segments of the chain that are more inaccessible than the others. First place goes to cultural activities (67%), followed by the possibility to move within and around the territory of the destination, to go on excursions, to engage in sport activities.

It is, therefore, clear that the current tourist offer is only marginally able to respond to the needs of the target group. In fact, the possibility to move within and around the territory of the destination, which takes second place on the



list of needs expressed by tourists, is the least accessible service. The same can be said for excursions, cultural activities and means of transportation that link the destination with the tourist's place of origin.

From the comparison between the actual needs of people with special needs and the current tourist offer, it is fitting to analyse each service segment of the supply chain highlighting the gaps in the various services and suggesting ways to make them accessible.

Planning and organising the trip

The first service found at the beginning of the supply chain is that concerning the planning and organising the trip. That includes how the services are structured and organised, information sources and the various packages on offer.

The main information sources available to a potential tourist are usually:

- word-of-mouth from friends and acquaintances;
- the catalogues from Tour Operators;
- Travel Agencies;
- the catalogues specially edited for people with special needs.

Other sources that are increasingly becoming reference sources to gather tourist information are:

- Internet;
- agencies and cooperative that specialised in offers for this demand segment.

Generally speaking, however, printed information are, very often, not able to fully satisfy the information requirements from people with special needs. The catalogues issued by the Tour Operator do not usually report information on accessibility of the various facilities featured. The international disability symbols that are reported, are not usually sufficient to specify the actual degree of accessibility of the facility or service. Furthermore, that type of printed material is usually not very readable by people with reduced vision or other visual impairments, as it employs typefaces that are not very clear, too small and with low-contrast colours.

Information regarding the degree of accessibility of the various facilities are also difficult to find, and, whenever available, are not necessarily up-to-date and were not surveyed through appropriate methodologies.

Transportation

Accessibility of the means of transportation from and to the tourist destination and of those that allow the tourist to move within and around the chosen destination is a very important selection criteria for whether to choose or not a particular tourist location.

The means of transportation that are usually least accessible are:

- trains,
- taxis,
- means of public transport such as buses, trams, underground trains,
- aircrafts.

It is very important to travellers with special needs, especially to blind people

or to those with reduced vision, that both the starting point and the destination point have some orientation system. Raised-print maps or guiding paths on the floor of airports and stations are, in fact, very useful. They help blind people with their orientation and allow them to autonomously move around.

The presence of accessible means of transportation that allow mobility within and around the tourist destination should be more advertised.

Accommodation

The degree of accessibility of accommodation services is one of the main criteria for the selection of a destination. It is, however, difficult to find facilities that can fully respond to one's needs, despite the presence of specific norms and guidelines in the national legislation.

Restaurant services

The restaurant services usually have a higher degree of accessibility than the accommodation services.

On-site activities

Cultural activities, even if they are an attraction factor that strongly influences the choice of a holiday destination, are one of the most critical elements of the tourist supply chain as far as people with special needs are concerned.

That is mainly due to the fact that such activities take usually place at historical sites which present a low degree of accessibility.

However, beside the possibility to introduce provisional structures that can allow physical accessibility to the facilities to disabled people, systems to aid the orientation and the enjoyment of the facilities can be used. They are audio-guides, large-prints guides, scale models that are also a way to gain knowledge of the place through touch and feel.

Furthermore, for those sites that are in areas difficult to reach, such as caves or archaeological sites, it would be appropriate to provide equipment that can allow to experience the cultural resource by virtual supports. Videos and pictures of the sites available at an easily reachable place are an example of that.

The possibility to undertake sport activities strongly influences the choice of a destination, even if at least half of the tourists with special needs choose not to engage in such activities while on holiday, because there are often barriers that can be hardly overcome.

Shopping is an activity that is made easy especially in the big shopping

centres. They, in fact, have remarkable solutions that allow an easy use and enjoyment of the place by people with disabilities.

From the above analysis it is evident that it is absolutely necessary to:

- increase information (reliable and trustworthy) currently available on the accessibility properties of tourism facilities and services and to make them easy to be consulted by a variety of users;
- inform the managers of the tourism facilities about the issue of accessibility and tourism for all, encouraging them to take on a real commitment to improve and extend the usability of their territory, in view of the very high benefits that can be derived from that;
- train technicians, planners so that they can work on improving the degree of usability of the tourist facilities and all the others connected services within the tourist supply chain. The adoption, during structural work, of methodologies and solutions that facilitate accessibility to people with disabilities, brings about a consequent higher usability for any other citizen.

HOW TO MAKE A DESTINATION ACCESSIBLE

By accessible destination we mean for a tourist location to be easily enjoyed also by people with special needs, with consequent higher usability for any other tourist and improvement of the liveability also for the residents.

Various research studies, conducted at national and international levels, aimed at analysing the characteristics of the market, its potential and impact on the economy in general. We particularly refer to a study, conducted in Germany, on the economic impact of accessible tourism. The study was commissioned by the Ministry of Economics and Labour to institutes and consultants of the tourist sector.

According to that study, when making a tourist destination accessible two things can be taken into account:

- the pyramid of accessibility;
- the technical duration of the activities necessary to make a destination accessible.

The ultimate goal is that of highlighting the direct and indirect effects brought about by tourism across the tourist supply chain, focusing the attention on the benefits that accessible tourism brings to the tourist sector in general, starting from the analysis of the current situation and underlining the opportunity to increase the percentage of tourists with special needs that travel every year for various reasons.

The pyramid of accessibility

The pyramid of accessibility is a tool that tries to explain the potential benefits that investments for the removal of architectural barriers could bring to the economic system of a territory and to its tourists in general beside those with special needs.

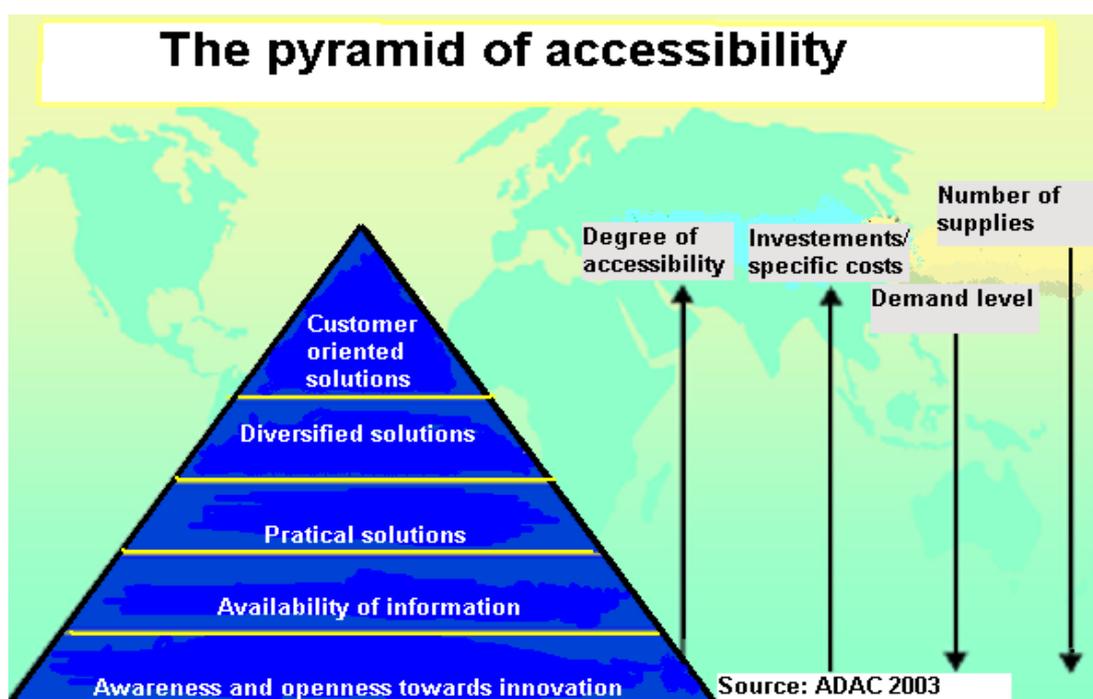
The pyramid, in fact, is a model characterised by parameters such as:

- the volume of investments;
- the degree of accessibility;
- the number of suppliers;
- the number of beneficiaries.

We can compare the pyramid to the market for tourist services. Generally speaking, by increasing the level of investments, the degree of accessibility of the services is increased. Those services become more specialised by considerably lowering potential barriers and, therefore, being able to satisfy the individual needs of their users.

If the level of investments is kept low, the degree of accessibility does not increase. Barriers still stay high and the demand consequently decreases because clients' needs are not satisfied.

The pyramid has various levels. Enterprises are placed on different levels according to the degree of accessibility of the services they offer as a result of higher or lower investments and on the basis of the interaction among the four parameters that characterise the pyramid.



In the lower section of the pyramid we find companies that invest little into accessible services for the following reasons:

1. they focus on other target groups and are little interested in this specific client target segment;
2. even if interested in this client segment do not wish to make high investments.

Those companies, therefore, opt for simple solutions, choosing to improve the quality and quantity of available information.

In the middle section of the pyramid we find, instead, those companies that decide to increase the volume of investments expecting higher returns. Those companies opt for partly practical solutions, result of different plans, on the basis of the segment of clients with special needs they wish to *target*.

Lastly, at the top of the pyramid we find those companies that intend to invest in diversified and very customer-oriented solutions aimed at satisfying a potential client/tourist and that can best respond to the needs of people with disabilities.

Of course, this means that the level of investments is very high and that barriers will be considerably lowered.

From the pyramid as a whole we understand that providers of tourist services invest in solutions to enhance accessibility if they can expect significantly higher profits as a return from those solutions and adequately proportioned to the level of investment.

From this point of view is clear that not all providers of tourist services are interested in developing accessible services. Each provider will make investments that they can sustain and position themselves at the appropriate level of the pyramid.

From the market perspective, however, it is difficult to establish the correct level of accessibility for the territory where the individual tourist facility is located. For this reason, the economic decision and the consequent return on the investment will depend on various factors:

- type of holiday;
- accessibility of the destination;
- presence of accessible services;
- staff availability;
- availability of investment capital.

If a location already has, for instance, accessible services, that is the destination already presents a good level of accessibility, the volume of investments necessary will be lower compared to a location with fewer accessible services.

We have to also consider the volume of investment capital available to companies. If a company wished to invest in diversified and customer-oriented solutions, it will need much more financial resources than a company that, on

the contrary, wished to invest in minimum services.

The pyramid model can be applied to both all segments of the tourist supply chain as well as to all segments of the market. It can be applied with reference to accommodation and gastronomy, recreational and cultural activities, transportation to reach the destination and those present at the destination (public transport and local/regional infrastructures).

In any case, this model is used to understand, on the one hand, how companies decide to invest and, on the other hand, what results can be obtained and how they impact the whole economy.

The overall result can be practically seen from an economic perspective. If demand and offer meet, in fact, we see:

- an increase of the travelling frequency;
- an increase of travel intensity;
- daily expenditure increases;
- the possibility of tourist presence during low seasons.

The pyramid of accessibility is the basis for the calculation of 3 modules, each one of which analysis the relationship between the level of investment and the expected turnover.

The percentages reported below come from the German study we referred to earlier on.

The first module has the following characteristics:

- Companies made occasional investments at all levels of the pyramid;
- 45.7% of people with special needs had never planned a holiday before, and, after the investments made by the companies, only one out of 10 is able to plan one;
- 48.4% of people with special needs express their wish to travel more often, but they manage to make one additional trip only once in 5 years;
- 45.6% of tourists spend, on average, €12.50 a day; this means that the average daily spending for the totality of tourists is €5.70.

The expected results are as follows:

- ✓ people with special needs are about 6.71 million;
- ✓ their travel intensity is 59%;
- ✓ their travelling frequency is 1.39 trips a year;
- ✓ 41.20% of them spend their holidays in Germany;
- ✓ the average length of their holiday is 13.9 days;
- ✓ they spend €71 a day.

The net turnover is approximately 1.980 million euros.

The second module, instead, has the following characteristics:

- companies make investments in practical solutions at all levels of the pyramid and, in some cases, the solutions are diversified and customer oriented;
- 45.7% of the people with special needs had never planned a holiday

before, and, after the investments made by the companies, only one out of 5 is able to plan one;

- 48.4% of people with special needs express their wish to travel more often, but they manage to make one additional trip only once in 3 years;
- 45.6% of tourists spend, on average, €12.50 a day; this means that the average daily spending for the totality of tourists is €5.70.

The expected results are as follows:

- ✓ people with special needs are about 6.71 million;
- ✓ their travel intensity is 64.70%;
- ✓ their travelling frequency is 1.45 trips a year;
- ✓ 41.20% of them spend their holidays in Germany;
- ✓ the average length of their holiday is 13.9 days;
- ✓ they spend €71 a day.

The net turnover is approximately 2.270 million euros.

The third module, instead, has the following characteristics:

- companies make investments at all levels of the pyramid; accessibility is guaranteed by all companies;
- 45.7% of the people with special needs had never planned a holiday before, and, after the investments made by the companies, half of them plan for one;
- 48.4% of people with special needs express their wish to travel more often, and make one extra trip a year;
- 45.6% of tourists spend, on average, €12.50 a day; this means that the average daily spending for the totality of tourists is €5.70.

The expected results are as follows:

- ✓ people with special needs are about 6.71 million;
- ✓ their travel intensity is 75%;
- ✓ their travelling frequency is 1.54 trips a year;
- ✓ 41.20% of them spend their holidays in Germany;
- ✓ the average length of their holiday is 13.9 days;
- ✓ they spend €71 a day.

The net turnover is approximately 2.790 million euros.

From the analysis above we can see that the increase of turnover is directly proportional to the increment in investments. It was, in fact, estimated that an increase of the investments could bring about an increment in the turnover of 24.8%, 43.6% and 77.2% respectively.

Technical time span necessary to make a destination accessible for all

The final section of the study that we analysed above concerns the technical duration of the activities necessary to make a destination accessible to everyone. 3 phases were identified for this purpose to be executed in sequence following a defined process.

- The first phase, called START UP phase, is when the key influencers, that is the executives from tourist companies and service providers, become aware of the importance to make their territory accessible and enjoyable by everyone. The first step is aimed at evaluating the degree of accessibility of the territory against the specific needs that need to be satisfied. An action plan is then developed to analyse what kind of projects are needed for the territory. The *design* solutions are also developed, but above all, the information distribution methods are established.
- The second phase, called the DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH phase, is when the action plan is implemented with consequent development and growth of the destination. In this phase the main attractions, made accessible, are indiscriminately targeted to all tourists. Furthermore, accessible services are developed and the *target* segment becomes very much part of the *marketing* strategy, especially in terms of distribution of information.
- The last phase is called the DIVERSIFICATION AND CONSOLIDATION phase. The destination is by now accessible and accessible services are present throughout the supply chain. A series of strongly diversified solutions have been developed to reach out to the *target* and a true network of services established.

Actually the phases are not so clear-cut. It is difficult to draw the crossing line between one phase and the next. Furthermore, their duration depends on both the destination and the services that need to be made accessible to everyone. Lastly, the characteristics highlighted for each phase are those common to all destinations. It is very likely that each location may need further solutions and more time to make some services accessible.

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The Madrid Declaration

THE MADRID DECLARATION

“NON DISCRIMINATION PLUS POSITIVE ACTION RESULTS IN SOCIAL INCLUSION”

We, over 600 participants in the European Congress on Disability, meeting in Madrid, warmly welcome the proclamation of 2003 as the European Year of People with Disabilities as an event, which must act to raise public awareness of the rights of more than 50 million Europeans with disabilities.

We set down in this Declaration our vision, which should provide a conceptual framework for action for the European Year at European community level, national, regional and local level.

PREAMBLE

1. DISABILITY IS A HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE.

Disabled people are entitled to the same human rights as all other citizens. The first article of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights states: All human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights. In order to achieve this goal, all communities should celebrate the diversity within their communities and seek to ensure that disabled people can enjoy the full range of human rights: civil, political, social, economical and cultural as acknowledged by the different international Conventions, the EU Treaty and in the different national constitutions.

2. DISABLED PEOPLE WANT EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND NOT CHARITY.

As with many other regions in the world, the European Union has moved a long way during these last decades from the philosophy of paternalism towards disabled people to one of attempting to empower them to exercise control over their own lives. The old approaches based largely on pity and perceived helplessness of disabled people are now considered unacceptable. Action is shifting from an emphasis on rehabilitating the individual so they may 'fit in' to society towards a global philosophy of modifying society to include and accommodate the needs of all persons, including people with disabilities. Disabled people are demanding equal opportunities and access to all societal resources, i.e. inclusive education, new technologies, health and social services, sports and leisure activities, consumer goods and services.

3. BARRIERS IN SOCIETY LEAD TO DISCRIMINATION AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION.

The way our societies are organised often means disabled people are not able to fully enjoy their human rights and that they are socially excluded. The statistical data that is available shows that disabled people have unacceptable low levels of education and employment. This also results in greater numbers of disabled people living in situations of real poverty compared with non-disabled citizens.

4. DISABLED PEOPLE: THE INVISIBLE CITIZENS.

The discrimination disabled people face is sometimes based on prejudice against them, but more often it is caused by the fact that disabled people are largely forgotten and ignored and this results in the creation and reinforcement of environmental and attitudinal barriers which prevent disabled people from taking part in society.

5. DISABLED PEOPLE FORM A DIVERSE GROUP.

As with all spheres of society, disabled people form a very diverse group of people and only policies that respect this diversity will work. In particular, people with complex dependency needs and their families require particular action by societies, as they are often the most forgotten among disabled people. Also, women with disabilities and disabled people from ethnic minorities are often faced with double and even multiple discrimination, resulting from the interaction of the discrimination caused by their disability and the discrimination resulting from their gender or ethnic origin. For deaf people the recognition of sign language is a fundamental issue.

6. NON DISCRIMINATION + POSITIVE ACTION = SOCIAL INCLUSION.

The recently adopted EU Charter of Fundamental Rights acknowledges that to achieve equality for disabled people the right not to be discriminated against has to be complemented by the right to benefit from measures designed to ensure their independence, integration and participation in the life of the community. This synthesis approach has been the guiding principle of the Madrid congress that brought together more than 600 participants in March 2002.

OUR VISION

1. Our vision can best be described as a contrast between this new vision and the old vision it seeks to replace:

- a) **Away from** disabled people as objects of charity... and **Towards** disabled people as rights holders.
- b) **Away from** people with disabilities as patients... and **Towards** people with disabilities as independent citizens and consumers.
- c) **Away from** professionals taking decisions on behalf of disabled people ...and **Towards** independent decision making and taking responsibilities by disabled people and their organisations on issues which concern them.
- d) **Away from** a focus on merely individual impairments...and **Towards** removing barriers, revising social norms, policies, cultures and promoting a supportive and accessible environment.
- e) **Away from** labelling people as dependants or unemployable... and **Towards** an emphasis on ability and the provision of active support measures.
- f) **Away from** designing economic and social processes for the few... and **Towards** designing a flexible world for the many.
- g) **Away from** unnecessary segregation in education, employment and other spheres of life ...and **Towards** integration of disabled people into the mainstream.
- h) **Away from** disability policy as an issue that affects special ministries only....and **Towards** inclusion of disability policy as an overall government responsibility.

2. INCLUSIVE SOCIETY FOR ALL.

Implementing our vision will benefit not only disabled people but also society as a whole. A society that shuts out a number of its members is an impoverished society. Actions to improve conditions for disabled people will lead to the design of a flexible world for all. *"What is done in the name of disability today will have meaning for all in the world's tomorrow"*.

We, the participants in the European Congress on Disability, meeting in Madrid, share this vision and request all stakeholders to consider the European Year of People with Disabilities in 2003 as the start of a process that will make this vision a reality. 50 million European disabled people expect us to give an impulse to the process to make this happen.

OUR PROGRAM TO ACHIEVE THIS VISION

1. LEGAL MEASURES.

Comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation must be enacted without delay

to remove existing barriers and avoid the establishment of new barriers that disabled people may encounter such as in education, employment and access to goods and services and which prevent disabled people from achieving their full potential for social participation and independence. The non-discrimination clause, Article 13 of the EC Treaty allows this to happen at Community level, thus contributing to a real barrier-free Europe for people with disabilities.

2. CHANGING ATTITUDES.

Anti-discrimination legislation has proven to be successful in bringing about changes in attitude towards people with disabilities. However, the law is not enough. Without a strong commitment from all society, including the active participation of disabled people and their organisations in securing their own rights, legislation remains an empty shell. Public education is therefore necessary to back up legislative measures and to increase understanding of the needs and rights of disabled people in society and to fight the prejudice and stigmatisation that still presently exists.

3. SERVICES THAT PROMOTE INDEPENDENT LIVING.

Achieving the goal of equal access and participation also requires that resources should be channelled in such a way as to enhance the disabled person's capacity for participation and their right to independent living. Many disabled people require support services in their daily lives. These services must be quality services based on the needs of disabled people and must be integrated in society and not be a source of segregation. Such support is in accordance with the European social model of solidarity – a model that acknowledges our collective responsibility towards one another and especially towards those who require assistance.

4. SUPPORT TO FAMILIES

The family of disabled people, in particular of disabled children and people with complex dependency needs unable to represent themselves, plays a vital role in their education and social inclusion. In view of this, adequate measures for families need to be established by public authorities, in order to allow families to organise their support for the disabled person in the most inclusive way.

5. SPECIAL ATTENTION TO DISABLED WOMEN

The European Year has to be seen as the opportunity to consider the situation of disabled women from a new perspective. The social exclusion faced by disabled women can not only be explained by her disability but also the gender element needs to be considered. The multiple discrimination faced by disabled women has to be challenged through a combination of mainstreaming measures and positive action measures designed in consultation with disabled women.

6. MAINSTREAMING OF DISABILITY.

Disabled people should have access to the mainstream health, education, vocational and social services and all the opportunities, which are available to non-disabled persons. The implementation of an inclusive approach to disability and disabled people requires changes in current practice at several levels. First of all, it is necessary to ensure that services available to disabled people are co-ordinated within and across the different sectors. The accessibility needs of the different groups of disabled people need to be considered in the planning process of any activity and not as an afterthought when the planning has already been completed. The needs of disabled people and their families are varied and it is important to devise a comprehensive response, which takes into account both the whole person and the various aspects of his or her life.

7. EMPLOYMENT AS A KEY FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION.

Special efforts need to be made to promote the access of disabled people to employment, preferably in the mainstream labour market. This is one of the important ways to fight against the social exclusion of disabled people and to promote their independent living and dignity. This requires, not only the active mobilisation of the social partners, but also of the public authorities, which need to continue to strengthen the measures already in place.

8. NOTHING ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE WITHOUT DISABLED PEOPLE.

The Year must be an opportunity to grant disabled people, their families, their advocates and their associations a new and expanded political and social scope, at all levels of society, in order to engage governments in dialogue, decision-making and progress around the goals for equality and inclusion.

All actions should be undertaken in dialogue and co-operation with the relevant representative disability organisations. Such participation should not only be limited to receiving information or endorsing decisions. Rather, at all levels of decision-making, governments must put in place or strengthen regular mechanisms for consultation and dialogue enabling disabled people through their disability organisations to contribute to the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all the actions.

A strong alliance between Governments and disability organisations is the basic requisite to progress most effectively the equal opportunities and social participation of disabled people.

In order to facilitate this process, the capacity of disability organisations should be enhanced through greater resource allocation to allow them to improve their management and campaigning capacities. This also implies the responsibility on part of the disability organisations to continuously improve their levels of governance and representativeness.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

The European Year of People with Disabilities 2003 should mean an advancement of the disability agenda and this requires the active support of all relevant stakeholders in a wide partnership approach. Therefore concrete suggestions for action are proposed for all relevant stakeholders. These actions are to be established in the European Year and continued beyond the European Year; progress should be evaluated over time.

1. EU AUTHORITIES AND NATIONAL AUTHORITIES IN EU AND ACCESSION COUNTRIES

Public authorities should lead by example and therefore are the first but not only actor in this process. They should: -

- review the current scope of Community and national legal frameworks aiming at combating discriminatory practices in the fields of education, employment and access to good and services;
- initiate investigations into those restrictions and discriminatory barriers that limit the freedom of disabled people to fully participate in society, and to take whatever measures are necessary to remedy the situation.
- review the services and benefits system to ensure that these policies assist and encourage disabled people to remain and/or become an integral part of the society wherein they live.
- undertake investigations on violence and abuse committed against disabled people, with particular attention to those disabled people living in large institutions.
- strengthen legislation on accessibility to ensure that disabled people have the same right of access to all public and social facilities as other people.
- contribute to the promotion of the human rights of disabled people at world wide level by participating actively in the work to prepare a UN Convention on the rights of disabled people.
- contribute to the situation of disabled people in developing countries by including the social inclusion of disabled people as an objective of the national and EU development co-operation policies

2. LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

The European Year must really occur firstly at the local level, where issues are real to citizens and where associations of and for people with disabilities are doing most of their work. Every effort must be made to focus the promotion, resources, and activities at the local level.

Local actors should be invited to integrate the needs of people with disabilities

in urban and community policy, including education, employment, housing, transport, health and social services, bearing in mind the diversity of disabled people, including, among others, older people, women and immigrants.

Local governments should draft local plans of action on disability in co-operation with representatives of disabled people and set up their own local committees to spearhead the activities of the Year.

3. DISABILITY ORGANISATIONS

Disability organisations, as representatives of disabled people, have a major responsibility to ensure the success of the European Year. They have to consider themselves as the ambassadors of the European Year and proactively approach all relevant stakeholders proposing concrete measures and seeking to establish long lasting partnerships when these not yet exist.

4. EMPLOYERS.

Employers should increase their efforts to include, retain and promote disabled people in their workforce and to design their products and services in a way that these are accessible to disabled people. Employers should review their internal policies to ensure that none of these prevents disabled people from enjoying equal opportunities. Employer organisations can contribute to these efforts by collecting the many examples of good practice that already exist.

5. TRADE UNIONS.

Trade unions should increase their involvement to improve the access to and maintenance in employment of disabled people and ensure that disabled people benefit from equal access to the training and promotion measures, when negotiating the agreements in the companies and professional sectors. Also increased attention should be paid to promote the participation and representation of disabled workers, both within their own decision making structures and those existing in the companies or professional sectors.

6. MEDIA.

The Media should create and strengthen partnerships with associations of people with disabilities, in order to improve the portrayal of disabled people in mass media. More information on disabled people should be included in the media in recognition of the existence of human diversity. When referring to disability issues, the media should avoid any patronising or humiliating approaches but focus instead on the barriers disabled people face and the positive contribution to society disabled people can make once these barriers have been overcome.

7. EDUCATION SYSTEM.

Schools should take a leading role in spreading the message of understanding and acceptance of disabled people's rights, helping to dispel fears, myths and

misconceptions and supporting the efforts of the whole community. Educational resources to help pupils to develop a sense of individuality with regard to disability in themselves and others, and to help them recognise differences more positively should be developed and widely disseminated.

It is necessary to achieve education for all based on the principles of full participation and equality. Education plays a key role in defining the future for everybody, both from a personal point of view, as well as a social and professional one. The education system has, therefore, to be the key place to ensure personal development and social inclusion, which will allow children and youngsters with disabilities to be as independent as possible. The education system is the first step towards an inclusive society.

Schools, colleges, universities should, in co-operation with disability activists, initiate lectures and workshops aimed at raising awareness of disability issues among journalists, advertisers, architects, employers, social and health care-givers, family care-givers, volunteers, and members of local government.

8. A COMMON EFFORT TO WHICH ALL CAN AND SHOULD CONTRIBUTE

Disabled people seek to be present in all spheres of life and that requires that all organisations review their practices to ensure that they are designed in a way that disabled people can contribute to them and benefit from them. Examples of such organisations include: consumer organisations, youth organisations, religious organisations, cultural organisations, other social organisations that represent specific groups of citizens. It is also important to involve places such as museums, theatres, cinemas, parks, stadiums, congress centres, shopping malls and post offices.

We, the participants at the Madrid congress support this Declaration and commit ourselves to disseminate it widely, so it may reach the grass roots, and we will encourage all relevant stakeholders to endorse this Declaration before, during or after the European Year of People with Disabilities. By endorsing this Declaration, we organisations state openly our agreement with the vision of the Madrid Declaration and commit to undertake actions which will contribute to the process that will bring about real equality for all disabled people and their families.

Madrid, March 2002

If your organization want to support this Declaration and to make public this endorsement, it should acquaint the European Disability Forum – info@edf-feph.org - that will insert your organization in a special section of its web-site (www.edf-feph.org) dedicated to Madrid Declaration endorsement.

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The text of the law can be found in the Italian version of this document.

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The Norcia Declaration

The text of the declaration can be found in the Italian version of this document.