



Rights of Tourists with Disabilities in the European Union Framework

December 2007

**Working together to make tourism in Europe
Accessible for All**

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1. Executive Summary

Accessibility in tourism is a social right that concerns all citizens in Europe. Accessibility is not only necessary for people with disabilities but also for the elderly, for families with young children, for people with temporary or chronic diseases, among many others. Actually accessibility is a requirement from the environment that we all need, but we are only aware of it when we need it, when there are barriers that restrict it.

In Europe it is estimated that 10% of the population have some type of disability, this means around 50 million people. And this number will continue to grow due to the inevitable process of demographic change as half of them are over 65. It can be then stated and deduced that accessibility is essential for 10% of the population, necessary for 40% and convenient for 100% of the population.

To be able to speak of an Accessible Tourism for All, the tourist industry as a whole should be accessible to everyone. A trip is nothing more than a service chain that begins with the information on the offers, events, destinations and the ways to reach them. Therefore, the information needs to be accessible. This means, among other things, for example, that the web pages of destinations and companies that make up the service chain must also be accessible for people with visual impairments. Another example within the service chain would be the improvement of accessibility in public and private transportation and of the different tourist resources of each destination.

In recent years the rights of disabled people to travel and to participate in tourism, leisure, sport and other activities away from home have been strengthened in a number of areas by legislation and regulations at international, European and national levels.

This report presents an overview of the key legislation and the way in which the rights of people with disabilities are being extended and safeguarded. Although there is still far to go in the delivery of accessible tourism for all, the report shows many examples of how the front-runners in sections of the tourism industry and in particular countries are beginning to respond to the increasing demand for accessible tourism products and services. Examples of good practices related to accessible transport, information, environments and services are drawn from various countries and regions of Europe.

The report concludes that while the demand for accessible tourism is expected to increase in the coming years, due especially to the demographic ageing in Europe, there is a continuing need for human rights based legislation to support access to tourism for all citizens and visitors to Europe. Consequently, in the years ahead, greater efforts will also be required from the travel and tourism industries to deliver tourism products and services that are accessible for all.

2. Introduction

Accessibility in tourism is a social right that concerns all citizens in Europe. Accessibility is not only necessary for people with disabilities but also for the elderly, for families with young children, for people with temporary or chronic diseases, among many others. Actually accessibility is a requirement from the environment that we all need, but we are only aware of it when we need it, when there are barriers that restrict it.

In Europe it is estimated that 10% of the population have some type of disability, this means around 50 million people. And this number will continue to grow due to the inevitable process of demographic change as half of them are over 65. It can be then stated and deducted that accessibility is essential for the 10% of the population, necessary for the 40% and convenient for 100% of the population.

From the total amount of people with disabilities officially registered, it is assumed that the size of the potential tourist market would be 70% of these, which are the ones physically and financially able to travel. In addition to this potential, there is another reality, people with disabilities do not usually travel alone, they are considered multi-clients. This is the case, for example, of families travelling with a family member with disabilities, not only such person will be conditioned to the level of accessibility to travel but also the whole group. This indicates that the number of people actually demanding accessible tourism products and services (Tourism accessible for All) is much higher than these official figures.

To be able to speak of an Accessible Tourism for All, the tourist industry as a whole should be accessible to everyone. A trip is nothing more than a service chain that begins with the information on the offers, events, destinations and the ways to reach them. Therefore, the information needs to be accessible. This means, among other things, for example, that the web pages of destinations and companies that make up the service chain must also be accessible for people with visual impairments. Another example within the service chain would be the improvement of accessibility in public and private transportation and of the different tourist resources of each destination.

For the tourist Industry there are two possible approaches to Accessibility and Design for All of such industry:

The first is a proactive approach, that is to say that the employer and the administration responsible of the tourist destination are able to promote changes voluntarily to reach Accessibility and Design for All. Most examples of Good Practices in the paragraph 5, refer to a proactive approach in the sector. A proactive approach from the tourism sector could be, for example:

- To have a vision of Accessibility and Design for All as a factor of quality and added value of the tourist service or product and ultimately a comparative advantage over competitors.
- To think about the existing potential market considering people with disabilities as multi-clients.
- To think of the corporate social responsibility and of the benefits and value their actions will mean to Society.
- To think that the actions made will be sustainable over time, knowing that Accessibility and Design for All takes into account all phases of the life of an individual and that the investments made will be useful for many over time.

The other is a reactive approach, which means that that the employer and the administration in charge of the tourist destination are on the obligation to eliminate or modify their products, facilities and services because they are not accessible to all people. The Rules and recommendations that affect directly or indirectly to the European Tourist sector which seek to give a perspective on the rights of people with disabilities or with reduced mobility during their journeys within the European Union are compiled in paragraphs 3 and 4.

On most occasions, laws are much more effective in the short term for the implementation of Accessibility. But the conviction, for one reason or another, to take steps towards Accessibility and Design for All, to make tourist products and services more accessible tourism, is certainly a more sustainable and more effective measure in the long term.

In this environment, this report seeks to answer two basic questions:

- Are the rights of disabled tourists secured in the legislation of the European countries?
- Does the reality of the European tourist offer respond to the needs of people with disabilities?

To be able to answer the first question it must be taken into account, on the one hand, that all Treaties, Recommendations and International guidelines impact on the national and local limits of the EU, and secondly, that tourism is a cross-sector industry affected by the decisions on communications, transport, construction, training, human rights, etc..

Before examining the relevant legal frameworks and statutes, it is important to take into account the basic concepts of Accessibility.

Basic concepts of Accessibility

- **Tourist activity** is, according to the WTO (World Tourism Organization), the economic activity aimed at satisfying the needs of those who move from their usual places of residence. More specifically tourism relates to those journeys made in our spare time, usually aiming to rest, to learn about other cultures, other ways of life, or just to have fun.
- **Accessibility** is according to the concept of European Accessibility (1996), a basic feature of the built environment. It is the condition which enables us to reach, enter, exit and use the houses, shops, theatres, parks, public administrations, workplaces, .. ultimately, the whole environment. Accessibility allows people to participate in social and economic activities for which the built environment has been created.
- **Global Accessibility** is, according to AENOR certification regulation UNE 170,001, the quality of an environment (natural, urbanised, built, technological or virtual), which allows its social or individual use on an equal basis, safely and independently by everyone, regardless their potential weaknesses in their sensory, intellectual functions or in their corporal structures.
- **Design for All** is, according to the European concept on Accessibility (2003), the intervention on the environment, products and services with the aim of being able to reach as many potential customers as possible, taking into account the different present and future generations, regardless of age, gender, abilities or cultural background. According to Design for All, accessibility must be introduced from the beginning, taking into account the design, instead of waiting to improve it once products and services have been created.
- **Accessible Tourism for All**, is the one that allows all people, regardless of having a disability or not, to travel to another country, within the country and to any place, attraction or event they wish to visit. (Nordiska Handikappolitiska Radet – 2002)

3. Regulation of the Rights of Disabled Tourists at the International Level

Everything that happens at an international level and at an European level on the subject of the rights of individuals in general and of accessibility in particular, has in one way or another direct effects in the short or medium term at a national and local levels in most member States of the European Union.

For this reason, it is interesting and important to know the origin and consequences of many of the treaties, recommendations and international guidelines that end being included in the national, regional or local regulations, depending on the competent body that regulates each issue, and that affects therefore to each of the citizens of the European Union. Any decision on communication, transport, construction, training, public contracts or rights of persons affects directly or indirectly to the tourism industry in one way or another.

3.1 Rights of persons with disabilities in the United Nations framework

3.1.1. United Nations Standard Rules on equal opportunities for people with disabilities. A/RES/48/96

In the year 1993 at the United Nations 85th plenary meeting A/RES/48/96, some Standard Rules on Equal Opportunities for People with Disabilities were adopted. (For the full text: <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r096.htm>)

As an example, four of these rules directly related to the tourism sector are quoted below: The four regulations are:

- Rule 1. Awareness-raising. Countries will increase their awareness and sensitization of society (e.g. Potential tourists, tourism entrepreneurs, etc..) on the rights and obligations, needs and the contribution that people with disabilities can make to society in general through campaigns, advertisements in the media, distribution of information, public training programmes, and so on.
- Rule 5. Accessibility. Countries will introduce action programmes to ensure accessible physical environments, like the development of mandatory standards and guidelines in all spheres of society and that these measures reach people responsible for implementing them (e.g. Buildings or means of both public and private transport for public use) and to take measures to provide access to information and communication in all possible formats for people with disabilities.
- Rule 10. Culture. Countries will ensure that persons are integrated and participate in the different cultural activities that take place in each country on an equal basis.
- Rule 11. Recreation and Sports. Countries will take steps to make beaches, hotels, sports, gyms, etc. accessible to people with disabilities. All travel and leisure activities organizers should organize services thinking of the needs of people with disabilities, for which it is necessary to train people.

3.1.2. International Treaty by which the rights and freedoms of people with disabilities are guaranteed

In August 2006, the UN Convention on Rights of People with Disabilities took place in New York. An International Treaty was approved there (mandatory, binding and with coercive potentiality), by which the rights and freedoms of people with disabilities are guaranteed, being the first treaty on Human Rights, which was approved in the XXI century. It will undoubtedly lead to an improvement from the practical point of view of the treatment of people with disabilities. (For the full text: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/documents/tccconvs.pdf>)

The objective of the Convention was to develop in detail the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and to establish a code of application for those rights to be effective. The treaty includes among others, the 1993 Uniform Standards. All countries that have ratified the treaty, European Union countries among others, are bound to modify or abolish the laws to conform to the requirements of this treaty on the subject of Equal Opportunities, to make population aware from the earliest ages and to provide resources to the maximum available, and if necessary in the framework of international cooperation.

3.2. The rights of persons and the World Tourism Organization (WTO)

3.2.1. Declaration on World Tourism

In the year 1980, the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization founded in Manila in the year 1980 stated in its Declaration on World Tourism: "... the right to tourism, which should be conceived in line with the priorities, the institutions and the traditions in each country, means to society the duty to create for all citizens the best practice conditions of effective and non-discriminatory access to this type of activity ... "

3.2.2 Ruling A/RES/284(IX) Annexe– Document "For an accessible tourism for the disabled in the 90's"

In 1991, the World Tourism Organization -WTO- in the annexe to the resolution A/RES/284 (IX) of the General Assembly adopted at the 9th Session, uses the next quotation in his paper "For a tourism accessible for the disabled in the 90's". The text focuses on defining the concept of a person with disabilities and to give their plan of action to the tourism sector in the field of information and tourist advertising, staff training and the general and specific requirements to be met by the different tourist facilities so that they are accessible to people with reduced mobility. (To read more about the subject: www.unwto.org/quality/std/en/pdf/handi.pdf)

3.2.3. Ruling A/RES/492(XVI)/10 – Paper "Towards an accessible tourism for all", which sets out the requirements that the tourist sector should take.

In 2005, the WTO approved the ruling A/RES/492 (XVI)/10, in the session Nr. 16 of the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization, on the recommendation of the Committee of Quality and Trade Support. It resulted in the paper "Towards an accessible tourism for all", which states the requirements that the tourist industry should take to allow equal opportunities for people with limited capabilities (PCR). This paper was prepared with the help of experts from the ONCE Foundation (for the full text: www.unwto.org/quality/std/en/pdf/02_2_accesibility.pdf)

The paper explains, in some detail, the accessibility requirements that each element which forms the tourist service should have. This paper is the revised and updated version of the paper that the WTO published in 1991. The structure of this paper is as follows:

- Staff training
- Common requirements in all establishments
- Specific requirements of the different establishments:
 - Terminals or stations
 - Tourist accommodation
 - Restaurants
 - Museums and other buildings with tourist interest
 - Tours
 - Conference rooms
 - Main roads

3.2.4. Programme “Competitiveness and trade in tourist services” of WTO

The World Tourism Organization includes the concept of accessibility in its current programme of "competitiveness and trade in tourist services." Accessibility is considered by the World Tourism Organization, as a factor included in the concept of quality, together with the concept of Safety, Hygiene, Authenticity and Harmonization of tourism with the environment. (to read more about the subject: www.unwto.org/quality)

3.3. Rights of persons in the European Union framework

3.3.1. European Charter of Fundamental Rights and European Agreement for the protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

From European Union Institutions, the right of everyone to equality before the law is recognized, as well as the protection against discrimination which is included both in the European Charter of Fundamental Rights and in the European Agreement for the Protection Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

The EU recognizes the right to an independent way of life, to an employment and to security. It also recognizes that access to benefits and opportunities arising from leisure, travel and tourism should not be denied to citizens with disabilities, always in comfort and security conditions, and which are currently available to other European citizens.

3.3.2. Article 13 – Constituent Treaty of the European Union

Article 13 of the European Union Constituent Treaty authorizes the Council to "take appropriate actions to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual condition."

3.3.3. The year 2003, European Year of People with Disabilities

The council of the European Union declared the year 2003 as the European Year of People with Disabilities. During this year awareness campaigns and sensitisation of the discrimination against people with disabilities were carried out in all Member States and in all areas and the exchange of good practices in this sector were promoted (to read more on the topic: <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/es/cha/c11413.htm>).

This year had very positive consequences in the whole tourist industry but not enough. Any changes need time and in the field of tourism there were a lot of changes but there are still many to be done.

3.3.4. The year 2007, European Year of Equal Opportunities for All

The European Union council declared the year 2007 as the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All, with the aim of raising awareness to reject discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, and to provide more information to citizens regarding their legal rights and obligations. (To read more about the subject: <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/es/cha/c10314.htm>)

In line with the objectives of this year, we can highlight as an example, the publication of the rights of passengers in the Air and Railway Transport and wait for the publication of the rights of the passengers in other means of transport in the near future. This can help suppliers in the European tourist sector to know what steps have to be taken to ensure that their products and services can be used and consumed by all its customers on an equal basis.

3.4. “Accessible Tourism for All” in the European Union

The EU has no legal competence on the subject of tourism. The impulse to "Accessible Tourism for All" from the EU has been given through other type of actions, such as the preparation of a Manual for the private sector or the writing of a Ruling from the European Economic and Social Committee.

3.4.1. Manual for the Tourist Industry from the European Commission

In 1996, the European Commission. General Directorate XXIII Tourism Unit published a Manual for the Tourist Industry entitled "For an accessible Europe for tourists with disabilities" with the intention of providing the main operators involved, whether they were travel agencies, tour operators, providers of transport or lodging or responsible of tourist attractions, an explanation of the main types of disabilities and enough information as to provide safety to the satisfactory tourist services in different situations to customers with disabilities. The Manual gave a special emphasis on encouraging operators to treat tourists with disabilities like any other customer who requires their services.

3.4.2. Ruling from the European Economic and Social Committee on the subject "For an accessible and socially sustainable tourism for all"

In 2003, a ruling of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) was published on the subject "For an accessible and socially sustainable tourism for all." In this ruling the EESC invites NGOs of people with disabilities, European authorities, national governments, regional and local administrations as well as private operators on the field of tourism to join efforts to make of Europe an effective centre of world tourism, a barrier free and sustainable space open to all. This ruling contains a series of measures to implement the rights of people with disabilities to enjoy their leisure and tourism fully and for that, to make sustainable and accessible tourism for a reality some changes in mentality, information, awareness and management are needed, the ruling says.

Among the initiatives proposed by the European Economic and Social Council to achieve an accessible tourism we can highlight the following:

- To ensure that people with disabilities have real and effective right to regular and standardized access to tourist goods and services.
- To ensure that mobility or communication problems may not ever serve as a basis to prohibit, deny, limit or condition their access to goods and tourists services on an equal basis with the rest of citizens.
- Public authorities at different levels shall establish and ensure compliance with uniform legal and technical standards which ensure free access of people with disabilities to goods and tourist services.
- Besides, the authorities will promote programmes and activities aimed at encouraging accessibility and the gradual elimination of all kinds of barriers and obstacles which prevent or hinder people with disabilities to access to satisfactory tourist services in comfort and safely.
- To favour that accessible tourism or tourism for all is not an issue that corresponds exclusively to public authorities but to all private bodies operating in this socio-economic area.
- Public authorities and private agents operating in the tourist area should really have into account, for the purposes of providing advantages in pricing and in the hiring of tourist products and services, the objective disadvantage that people with disabilities have, especially those who need the aid or assistance of others.
- The ability to access and to use tourist goods and services freely by people with disabilities will be one of the elements to be taken into consideration when it the

time comes to credit, grant and recognize quality ratings to tourist establishments and facilities.

- All materials or services of tourist information will collect references to the terms of accessibility of tourist goods and services offered so that people with disabilities can know exactly and in advance the possibilities regarding the free access to tourist offers.

3.5. Regulation of the rights of people with disabilities at national level

Below, there are two examples whereby Standards on the subject of the rights of people with Disabilities, of Accessibility and of Design for All can affect the tourist industry directly.

One type of regulation is the centralized, as it is the case of the United Kingdom, where there is only one Law, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, which regulates equally the actions of the tourist industry providers throughout the United Kingdom on the subject of Accessibility and Design for All. The other type is the decentralized regulation as in the case of Spain, where each Autonomous Region dictates and regulates its own laws which refer to Tourism and Accessibility. So, in Spain the level of demand is different for each of the Regions, which means in practice different accessibility levels in the tourist Industry of each of them.

3.5.1. Centralized Regulation: United Kingdom's case

The United Kingdom is a country remarkable for its effective implementation of a legislation at a national level, the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA, 1995), introduced to prevent possible discrimination against people with disabilities. This has had a significant impact on public awareness in the laws regulation accessibility and in the development of standards and laws (Part M and BS8300: 2001 Design of buildings and how to meet the needs of people with disabilities - Code of Practices). The implementation of this law has been made in different phases:

Since 1995 it is illegal to refuse to serve someone, charge more or give a poor quality of service because they have a disability.

Since 1999 all service providers have been required to make the reasonable changes needed to make their services accessible to people with disabilities. If access to facilities is difficult, law provides two possibilities: to adapt the facilities or to find an alternative route to perform the service. In other words, service providers must supply the technical aids (e.g. Inductive loop in a television to be better heard by a person with limited hearing), the services required (to bring food to the room where the restaurant of a hotel is not accessible) and to direct its policies (e.g. Policy of banning animals with the exception of guide dogs), practices and procedures (e.g. leave where all belongings of people with visual limitations were after cleaning a room) to ensure that people with disabilities have better access to their services.

Since October 2004, law requires that service providers remove, alter or provide a reasonable solution to access and to use facilities.

This legislation has a pretty broad definition of what a person with a disability is, in which many kinds of limitations that are not always obvious or visible are included. Some examples would be:

- People with blindness or visual impairment
- People with deafness or hearing impairment

- People with heart problems
- People with epilepsy
- People with problems of continence
- People who are insulin dependent by having diabetes
- People with Down syndrome
- People with dyslexia
- People with arthritis
- People using a wheelchair
- People who have experienced mental health problems
- People with learning difficulties

This legislation also protects workers and the environment and labour services.

The legislation introduces the concept of "reasonable Adjustments", which means that the level of change that the service provider will have to make will depend on the resources (financial, human and physical) of its organization. For example, the way a hotel chain must respond to the needs of people with disabilities may be different to the way of a family hotel. This does not mean that a small business can ignore the requirements of the law, but the law recognizes that solutions to take may be different for each one.

There is a Code of Practices which accompanies the Law published by the Commission on the Rights of People with Disabilities (Disability Rights Commission). The code is not the law but it can be used by judges to make a decision in case of doubt faced with an unclear case. The code states that service providers must anticipate the potential needs of people with disabilities and not just respond to individual needs as they appear. The code invites the service provider to analyse all services offered by thinking of all the possible needs of each of person with disabilities and to provide all procedures needed to be followed and to take all necessary measures to anticipate every need with additional aids, changes in procedures or in facilities.

3.5.2. Decentralized Regulation: Spain's case

In Spain there are several types of laws related to accessibility and to the Rights of People with Disabilities. Some of them affect the entire national territory equally and there are others that are regulated exclusively by each of the Autonomous Regions.

In Spain, there is a national law, Law 51/2003 of December 2nd, which ensures equal opportunities, non-discrimination and universal accessibility for people with disabilities. This Law was passed to guarantee and recognize the right of people with disabilities to equal opportunities in all spheres of political, economic, cultural and social life. The Law on a nationwide scale is applied in the following areas all related to tourist activity:

- Telecommunications and Information Society
- Urbanized public spaces, infrastructures and building
- Transport
- Goods and services available to public
- Relations with public administrations

Despite this law of national nature, each Autonomous Region regulates with technical specifications the whole area of Tourist Planning and Accessibility in the Building and in Communication. Therefore, and due to this, the level of accessibility required by the Spanish

tourist infrastructure may differ from one community to another. This fact makes the agreement on criteria and the degree of demand difficult nationally.

There are two other laws at a national level to be considered. One is the Law 17/1997 of November 21st on guide dogs, which guarantees the right to free access for people with visual impairment, in whole or in part, accompanied by a guide dog, in any public place or of public use on an equal basis with those who do not suffer from such deficiency. All means of public transport for public use and urban and intercity services of transport in light cars and all tourist accommodations and other places open to the public which provide tourist services are included as places of public use, among others. The other is Law 27/2007 of October 23rd, from which the Spanish sign languages are recognized and the means of support to oral communication of the deaf, of people with a hearing impairment and of the blind and deaf are regulated. Both laws are of nationwide scale and therefore binding equally and with the same demand in the whole Spanish country.

4. The Tourist Sector That Believes in Tourism for All in Europe

4.1 Accessibility in Information and Marketing

A fundamental principle in Accessible Tourism for All is to provide information which should be reliable, accurate and accessible to All users.

Many different languages are spoken within the European Union. There are some majority languages and other minority languages which are spoken or used by a significant amount of people to be taken into account, such as sign languages. Both type of languages are used by different groups of people within their national borders. The multitude of languages creates a very interesting cultural and communication wealth within Europe. The language can be a barrier in communication or an opportunity for wealth and business. Therefore, in the first paragraphs of this section a review of the status of the languages on the European Union is intended to be done, developing extensively the status of sign languages in the Union Member States. It wishes to convey the importance of the knowledge and of the use of many languages to communicate and as a right that all persons in the Union have and as a business opportunity for the tourist sector in Europe.

Besides knowing many languages to make its products and services more accessible, the tourism industry must invest in technology. The third paragraph focuses on introducing the reasons and the importance of having an accessible website and to use new information technology and communication so that tourist providers can sell and make available their products and services as more accessible as possible to All their potential customers.

The content of the information provided by the tourist sector has to be precise. For many customers some steps are critical in deciding whether to purchase or consume a product or service. This question is dealt in the fourth section.

The last section discusses the importance of training to manage the Accessible Tourism for All correctly. This training is essential for reporting, designing and marketing tourist products and services correctly and to ensure that these are adapted to the needs of our customers.

4.1.1 Accessibility in Communication

4.1.1.1 The different languages of the European Union

The European Union has 27 member states and 23 official languages. Apart from the official languages in each country there are also regional and minority languages spoken by different groups of population of the country.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union states that the Union respects the linguistic diversity and prohibits, among other reasons, discrimination on the language. In addition, respect for linguistic diversity is, along with others, one of the core values of the European Union. The diversity is therefore appreciated within the Union as a source of wealth.

In most tourist destinations, the tourism industry is "obliged" to adapt their products and services to make them accessible to European visitors who speak other languages. Depending on the tourist area, the most widely used languages are English, German, French and Italian. As the most prominent examples of the steps being taken to make products and services more accessible to multilingualism we could highlight:

- Staff is required to speak one or different languages to cater for the tourist.
- The menu of the restaurants is translated into different languages and sometimes they are accompanied by drawings so that the dish ordered is known.
- Products are labelled also in other languages.

4.1.1.2 Sign language in the European Union

Sign language is a body language or code of signs that a large group of people uses in each Member State of the Union. Each Member State may have one or more sign languages used by different regional groups. In each Member State the language of signs used have one consideration or another depending on the State.

The European Parliament has already passed two resolutions to the Member States asking for recognition of their respective national sign languages, one in 1988 and another in 1998. [European Parliament Resolution of June 17th, 1988 on sign language for the deaf (OJ C 187, 18.7.1988, p.. 236.)].

The recognition of the sign language has been carried out in various ways between the different Member States of the Union.

For example, Finland is one of the two only European Union countries that has made a constitutional commitment for the right to use Finnish Sign Language (FinSL). In 1996 a working group was formed to find the way to put into practice this constitutional right and to make recommendations to include it on all existing laws.

Portugal has also included a reference to the Portuguese Sign Language (LGP) in its constitution protecting it and appreciating it and as a tool for cultural expression and as a tool to access education in equal opportunities.

In 1981, Sweden subsidized people with limited hearing the right to a bilingual education. The Swedish Sign Language is offered as "foreign" language in many schools.

Denmark offers a bilingual education for people with limited hearing. Parents have the right to attend sign language classes subsidized by the local authorities.

The Austrian Sign Language (ÖGS) is recognised as a language in the Austrian Constitution since 1st September 2005.

Since February 27th, 2005 the Swiss-German Sign Language (DSGS) is recognized in the Statute of the Zurich region.

The German Sign Language (DGS) is a an independent language, recognized in Germany as such, which means that people with limited hearing have the right to a translator. The legal recognition was in 2002 with the Law on Equal Opportunities for People with Disabilities.

The British Sign Language (BSL) appears in the Manual of Police since 1984 the right to an interpreter of BSL. In 1979 appears for the House of Justice and in 1990 for the Medical Community. In 1996 the regulator Agency of Television Programming requested the digital terrestrial television to provide BSL in a 1% of its programmes every week (increasing it to 5% when they completed 10 years after its opening). The BSL is also mentioned as a criterion for the nationalization of the United Kingdom accepted as an English substitute. The Code of Practices for the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 suggests that the term "reasonable accommodation" may include the use of an interpreter of BSL under certain circumstances. All these references to the British Sign Language (BSL) in the legislation can be taken as an "official recognition" of the BSL.

The Spanish Sign Language (LSE), since October 2007, is recognized as the language of the hearing impaired people who freely choose to use it, as well as the use of the Catalan sign language in its sphere of linguistic use. Also, measures and guarantees are established needed to ensure that deaf people or with a hearing impairment and the deaf and blind can freely make use of sign language in all public and private areas, like education, health,

labour, justice or culture (cultural, sporting, recreational and leisure activities to be determined, such as cinemas, theatres and national museums), as well as stations of sea, land and air transport in which the authorities considered it necessary from its volume of passengers. Also necessary measures will be taken so that the instructions on performance standards and transport safety are also spread, whenever possible, in sign language and through means of support to oral communication. The necessary measures will be promoted to ensure that:

- Social media is accessible to all and that institutional advertising campaigns and the different audiovisual medium in which they are made available to the public are accessible to these persons through the incorporation of entitled.
- The necessary steps will be taken to encourage access to telecommunications in Spanish Sign Language and through means of support to oral communication and subtitling.
- Internet websites and web pages publicly owned or publicly funded will be adapted to the standards established at each time by the competent authorities to ensure accessibility to the deaf, the hearing impaired and the deaf and blind through the provision of the corresponding systems of access to information in the language corresponding to its linguistic field.
- When Public Administrations promote or subsidize Congresses, Conferences, symposiums and seminars in which deaf, hearing impaired people or deaf and blind people participate they will facilitate their accessibility through the provision of sign language interpreters in Spanish sign language and / or in Sign languages from the autonomous regions themselves if any, and will also facilitate their accessibility through the use of means of support to oral communication, upon request.

Despite the recognition of sign language at a national level by many Member States, the number of interpreters of sign language is not enough in any of them to meet the existing high demand for interpreters.

4.1.2 Accessibility in the Web, Information and Communication Technologies

The term Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) covers a wide range of services, applications, technologies, equipment and software, that is, tools such as telephony and the Internet, distance learning, television, computers, networks and software necessary to use these technologies. These technologies are revolutionizing the social, cultural and economic structures having generated new behaviours in front of information, knowledge, professional activity, and so on.

In September 2005 the European Commission issued a Communication on electronic Accessibility [COM (2005) 425 - not published in the Official Journal]. This was intended to encourage Member States to strengthen the promotion of initiatives to favour access of everyone to information technology and communications (ITC), particularly for people with disabilities and the elderly. (To read more: <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/es/lvb/l24226h.htm>)

The concept of "electronic accessibility" relates to the initiatives taken to ensure access of all citizens to the services of the information society. Therefore, it is about to eliminate technical, legal and any type of barriers which certain people can find when they use the services related to ICT. It also aims to encourage these people the use of ICT and the Internet, and to make them aware of the prospects these can offer them.

There are still many problems with the ITC. Examples that can be related to tourist marketing through the ICT are the following:

- There are no rules at an European level (for example, there are seven systems of text telephones for the deaf or for the hearing impaired, but they are mutually incompatible)
- There are insufficient websites adapted to the visually impaired
- There are no products or services for certain groups (for example, telephone communications for sign language users)
- There are incompatibilities in the software with support devices (for example, screen readers for blind users).

Many of these barriers could be removed, but this requires cooperation, coordination and greater determination at European level.

Accessibility of the website of private and public corporations is responsibility of its managers, the employer or tourist government belonging to the site. Besides being a responsibility, it is an opportunity to reach a large potential of consumers and citizens.

The communication of the Commission published in 2001 "eEurope 2002: accessibility of public websites and their content" [COM (2001) 529 final] was followed by resolutions of the Council and Parliament in 2002. As a result, Member States have committed to make their websites accessible in accordance with international standards. (To read more: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/es/com/2001/com2001_0529es01.pdf)

The right to universal access to the Web accessibility comprises any type of hardware, software, network infrastructure, language, culture, geographical location and the adaptation to the different abilities of the users. Accessibility to the Web known as WAI (Web Accessibility Initiative) is born from this approach. This is an activity carried out by the W3C (Consortium "World Wide Web").

The main idea is to make the Web more accessible to all users regardless of the circumstances and devices involved when it is time to access to information. Based on this idea, a page will be accessible both for a person with disability and for any other person under external circumstances that hinder their access to information (in case of external noises, in situations where our visual and hearing attention is no longer available, and so on.).

There are some patterns or guidelines at international level to design accessible Websites. These guidelines are the W3C standards. There are guidelines for the content of the Web (see patterns in: www.w3.org/tr/wcag10), for Author tools (see patterns in: www.w3.org/tr/atag10) and for user applications (see patterns in: www.w3.org/tr/uag10).

The W3C standards are considered by the EU as in fact standards and are taken as a reference in the existing international laws on Information Technology.

4.1.3 Information on the level of Accessibility of a place

There is a lack of information about accessibility of the European tourist offer and, on the other hand a great demand for this information.

For many people, some given information on accessibility of each of the links that form the chain of a tourist service is essential to decide whether to travel to a particular place or not, to know whether they will need some specific technical aids to save the lack of accessibility, all in all, they need information in order to successfully plan their trip.

The Tourism Unit within the General Directorate for Enterprise and Industry of the European Commission published in 2004, a booklet called "Improving information on accessible tourism for people with disabilities" (for the full booklet: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/services/tourism/doc/studies/improving_information_on_accessibility/improving_accessibility_es.pdf). The booklet contained a series of checklists to facilitate hoteliers the self-evaluation of their facilities

It is necessary that the tourist industry knows exactly the level of accessibility that its establishment, product or service has. This information can be obtained from a self-diagnosis and it is recommended by the diagnosis of an external and objective body. With this information staff can properly inform the customer the level of accessibility of the place, product or service to be able to decide whether or not it is appropriate to his personal needs and the employer will know the improvement actions to be carried out to make his offer accessible to all his potential customers.

The team that has made the European project OSSATE (see more about it in: www.ossate.org) has developed a platform to provide online information on the accessible resources and tourist accommodation available at regional and national levels in the Member States: www.europeforall.com

4.2 Training in Accessibility and Design for All

Currently, accessibility is still not sufficiently considered within the tourist training programmes. The knowledge of the needs of customers is very important to work in the tourist industry and it should be included as part of the knowledge acquired at schools and universities of Tourism. There is a need for qualified personnel in the field of Accessibility and design for all to fill positions in all the links in the chain of the tourist service.

Several initiatives already exist at European level and in each Member State regarding training in Accessibility and Design for All. There are, among others:

- European projects like Eu.For.Me (read on activities in the project: www.euforme.net) and DIADA (read more activities in the project: www.apintech.com/diada) have been focusing on staff training in the tourist sector.
- Seminars given from the Institute of Geography at the University of Muenster on Accessibility and Design for All in the design of cities, products and tourist services (read more about the subject: www.uni-muenster.de/Geographie/institut/arbeitsgruppen/AG_Reuber/Neumann/Neumann_Seite.htm).
- In La Salle University Centre, attached to the Autonomous University of Madrid (Spain), a Postgraduate in Universal Accessibility and Design for All is taught (you can read more at: <http://www.eulasalle.com/organizacion/estudios/posgrados/accesibilidad.html>).

- The Association of instructors of Tyrol (Austria, read more about the subject in: www.snowsporttirol.at) and the International Association of Diving for People with disabilities (read more about the subject in: www.iahd.org/) provide courses to their instructors to learn about the needs of People with disabilities, the specific equipment that can be used and the necessary security measures to be taken to ensure that any person, including Persons with Disabilities can enjoy both sports safely.

5. Accessibility in Transport

In the last thirty years, mobility has experienced an incredible expansion in Europe. If this is compounded by the demographic change and the actions for Equal Opportunities that are taking place in Europe, it is essential to talk about accessibility in the field of transport.

Tourism and transport are totally interconnected. One of the first and most important links in the chain of services of a trip is transport. A fully accessible transport which takes into account the needs of people who use it is essential for the enjoyment of any trip.

The Commission has published a White Paper «European policy on transport for 2010: time to decide» [COM (2001) 370 final - Not published in the Official Journal]. For the full text: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52001DC0370:ES:HTML>. The intention of this paper is to guarantee citizens, precise and valid rules throughout the European Union to ensure that all are of them know their rights. It is therefore expected that a greater protection of the rights of the passengers contributes to improving the image of public transport in relation to the use of private cars and to create fair competition among operators to develop competitive and efficient European transport services. The Commission proposes in this paper almost sixty measures to create systems that are able to balance all means of transport that exist in Europe: railway, sea, fluvial and air transport.

5.1 Accessibility in Air Transport

To travel by plane is now almost as common as doing so by car. Distances "has been shortened" within Europe thanks to the plane and travel prices which have become cheaper. For such a cheap and fast means of transport to be accessible for all, including people with disabilities, it is necessary that airlines and airports take action together towards accessibility and design for all of its facilities and services.

The statistics show that airlines attend up to ten million passengers needing assistance each year at European airports (people with reduced mobility). Therefore, the need has been seen to give clear and agreed guidelines on a European scale. It would be pointless that one or a few of the 27 EU member states had a valid law and the rest had a poor one, or lacked of it. (read more on the 2005 Strasbourg debate on the rights of passengers in air transport: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20051213+ITEM-062+DOC+XML+V0//ES>)

Many airlines have made improvements invoking a voluntary agreement. However, without a proper legislation, there will always be those who, through negligence or indifference, ruin vacations or trips to vulnerable people. Without this type of impermeable legislation there is a risk that some airlines try to find excuses to avoid attending people with disabilities and those who need additional assistance.

Many airports and airlines already offer excellent services to people with disabilities. The regulation recognizes that reality by providing explicitly that the airport managing bodies of airports can, while retaining their overall legal liability, contract with other entities, including airlines, services on the ground. Thus, those airlines that are already providing a high level of service to passengers with disabilities should be able to guarantee contracts with the management agencies of the airports so that they can continue doing it.

In August 2006, the Regulation (EC) No. 1107/2006 of the European Parliament and the Council on the rights of people with disability or reduced mobility in air transport [Official

Journal L 204, 26.7.2006]. The deadline for the transposition of the Member States is 26.7.2008. (See full text at: <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/es/lvb/l24132.htm>)

The regulation on the rights of people with reduced mobility in air transport:

- It prohibits operators to the denial of reservation or boarding of a person because of disability.
- People with reduced mobility have the right to receive free assistance both at the airports (at the time of departure, upon arrival and in transit) and on board (for example, transport in wheelchairs or guide dogs).
- The managing bodies of the airports will be responsible for providing assistance and will be authorized to impose fees to airlines to finance these services.
- Member States should establish the penalties for any infringement and create independent bodies to make complaints.

However, there are a number of exceptions, including good reasons of safety predicted by the law. The airlines may refuse to accept the reservation of a person with reduced mobility, deny boarding or require that, when travelling, he/she goes with another person when:

- It is about to comply with the safety requirements established by law.
- The size of the aircraft make the physical boarding of the person impossible.

The airline must notify in writing its reasons to the person concerned within five working days from the denial of reservation or boarding or the imposition of the condition of having a companion.

In the Regulation (EC) Nr. 261/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11th February 2004 the common rules on compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denial of boarding and of cancellation or long delay of flights are established and the Regulation (EEC) No 295/91 is repealed [Official Journal L 46, 17.2.2004]. (For the full text: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:046:0001:0007:ES:PDF>).

A strong campaign has been carried out in all airports of the Member States called "Rights of Air Passengers". A toll-free phone number (00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11) has been made available to passengers, which can be called from anywhere in the EU over the timetable for enquiries.

5.2 Accessibility in Sea Transport

In the year 1998 the Directive 98-18-EC of the Council on the rules and safety standards for passenger ships was passed (read more about the subject in: <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/es/lvb/l24168a.htm>).

In the year 2003 the Directive 2003/24/CE of the European Parliament and of the Council was published (read more about the subject in: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexplus!prod!DocNumber&lg=es&type_doc=Directive&an_doc=2003&nu_doc=24), which modifies, among other things, a series of items of the Directive 98/18/EC of the Council concerning people with reduced mobility. These items are:

The addition of the concept of people with reduced mobility defined as anyone who has particular difficulties when using public transport, including the elderly, people with disabilities, people suffering from sensory disabilities and people in wheelchairs, pregnant women and people who go with young children.

It urges Member States to ensure that proper measures are taken (guidelines in Annex III), so that people with reduced mobility can have safe access to all passenger ships in Classes A, B, C and D and to all high-speed crafts used for public transport.

For the purposes of the modification of the ships, Member States will apply the guidelines in Annex III to the extent that it is reasonable and practical from an economic point of view.

The safety guidelines for people with reduced mobility (Annex III) are:

- "Access to the ship. The ships will be constructed and equipped in such a way that a person with reduced mobility can embark and disembark safely and easily, as well as go along among decks without the need of assistance or through ramps or lifts. Directions to this access will be placed in the rest of accesses to the ship and in other appropriate places throughout the ship.
- Signs. Signs placed on the ship to help passengers will be accessible and easy enough to read by people with reduced mobility (including persons with sensory disabilities) and will be positioned at key points.
- Messages Media. The operator of the ship will have on board the necessary means to communicate visually and verbally to people with different forms of reduced mobility messages relating, for example, to delays, program changes and services on board.
- Alarm. The system and alarm buttons must be designed so that they are accessible to all passengers with reduced mobility, including people with sensory disabilities or learning problems, and so that they alert such passengers.
- Additional requirements to ensure mobility inside the ship: handrails, corridors and hallways, entrances and doors will allow the movement of a person in a wheelchair. Lifts, vehicle decks, passenger lounges, accommodations and services will be designed so that they are reasonable and proportionately accessible to people with reduced mobility."

5.3 Accessibility in Railway Transport

The market for international high-speed services has seen a sharp increase in traffic and will continue experiencing a very important development with the duplication and the interconnection of the European high-speed trans-national network from now up until year 2010. However, in both cases, the pressure of competition from low-cost airlines is very strong, making it essential to stimulate new initiatives promoting competition between railway companies.

Due to changes in the demographic structure of the European population, it is anticipated that older people will travel by train, more comfortable and convenient than the car, coach or plane.

Thanks to the passing in September 2007 of the proposed Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council, on the rights and obligations of international railway passengers (Third Railway package - [COM (2004) 143 final] (for the full text: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/es/com/2004/com2004_0143es01.pdf), people with reduced mobility will have the next rights:

- Any person with reduced mobility will have the right to purchase a ticket and a to make a reservation for an international journey leaving the main railway station.

- The station manager will be responsible for providing the necessary assistance for the boarding, the transfer to a shuttle service and the disembarking of passengers.
- The passengers will have the right to request the assistance of the railway company or operator on board or during boarding or disembarking, as long as they have previously notified their particular needs (at least 24h. before departure).

In the case of stations without staff, companies must make "all reasonable efforts" to provide disabled people and with reduced mobility the access to travel by rail.

Railway companies should inform passengers on their rights and obligations. They will be able to use a summary of their provisions that the European Commission will write in all official languages.

The new standards will govern the rights of railway passengers since the end of 2009, both in domestic and international routes. However, States will be able to postpone the implementation of the new rules until fifteen years later.

People with disabilities and those with reduced mobility caused by disability, age or any other factor should have, when travelling by rail, equivalent opportunities to the rest of the citizens. Disabled people and people with reduced mobility have the same right as all other citizens to freedom of movement, freedom of choice and non-discrimination. Among other things, special attention should be given to what information is provided about the possibilities of access to railway services, the access conditions to rolling stock and the facilities on board of the train. In order to inform on delays to passengers with sensory disabilities, in the best possible way, some visual and audible systems must be used for such purpose. People with disabilities and those with reduced mobility must be able to buy tickets on board with no extra charge.

The computerized system of data and reservations for railway transport (SIDRTF), computerized system containing information on railway services offered by the railway companies, should include, among other data, information on accessibility of trains for people with disabilities or with reduced mobility.

The definition of "disabled person" or "person with reduced mobility" is that of a person whose mobility when using transport is reduced on the grounds of physical disability (sensory or locomotive, permanent or temporary), disability or intellectual impairment, or any other cause of disability, or age, and whose situation needs proper care and the adaptation to their particular needs of the service made available to the rest of the passengers.

The above information will be provided in the most appropriate format. In this regard, special attention will be given to the needs of people with visual or hearing impairment.

Reservations and tickets will be offered to people with disabilities and people with reduced mobility at no additional cost. The railway company, ticket vendor or tour operator may not refuse to accept a reservation of a disabled person or of a person with reduced mobility or to issue a ticket, and may not ask them to be accompanied by another person, unless it is strictly necessary.

The railway companies, ticket vendors or tour operators who refuse to make a reservation (case referred to in Article 19) must report in writing to the person concerned of the reasons

for that decision within five working days from the date on which reservation or ticket have been denied or the person has been required to be accompanied.

Railway companies and station managers will ensure that the stations, platforms, rolling stock and other facilities are accessible.

When there is no staff for accompaniment or no staff at the station, railway companies and station managers will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that people with disabilities and people with reduced mobility can have access to travel by train.

In the case of a station with no staff, the railway company and the station manager will ensure information easily on:

- The closest stations provided with staff
- The assistance directly available for people with disabilities and for people with reduced mobility.
- Assistance on board of the train will be understood as any reasonable effort to provide assistance to access on the train to the same services as the rest of the passengers in case their mobility problems do not allow access to them in an independent and safe way.

If the railway company is responsible for the loss of the total or part of the mobility equipment or other specific material used by people with disability or by people with reduced mobility or of the damage suffered by it, no economic restrictions will be applied.

5.4 Accessibility in Road Transport

In 1991, the Parliament and the European Council published the Directive 2001/85/EC on special provisions applied to vehicles used for the transport of passengers with more than eight seats apart from the driver's seat.

In the Directive 2001/85/CE, the Directives 70/156/CEE y 97/27/CE [Official Journal L 42 of 13.2.2002] are modified (read more in: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexplus!prod!DocNumber&lg=es&type_doc=Directive&an_doc=2001&nu_doc=85) and has the aim of passengers safety. It considers, among other matters, the need for people with reduced mobility to find less difficulty getting on and off a bus. This purpose can be achieved through technical solutions in the vehicle (ramp or elevator) or in combination with an adequate local infrastructure so that they can access in wheelchairs. The provisions on access are binding on city buses but they are not mandatory on the intercity or rural buses.

An agreement was reached in the following controversial items:

- Interruption of the manufacture of the existing buses with lower floor, which will have in their hallways an inclination of 12.5% within 3 years, providing better access to passengers with reduced mobility and requesting the bus manufacturers to make an effort for further improvements regarding accessibility in the projects for new vehicles.
- Better facilities for wheelchair users, through technical solutions applied to the vehicle.
- Introduction of a broader definition of "people with reduced mobility" to include not only the elderly and people with disabilities, but to all persons who have difficulty in using public transport, such as people with sensory and psychic impairments,

wheelchair users, people with disabilities in the extremities, people of small height, people carrying heavy luggage, pregnant women, people with shopping trolleys and people with children (including children in pushchairs). Establishment of an anti-slip surface on all slopes.

- Obligation of buses used for urban transport to have an inclination system, either a ramp or an elevator to secure at all times a total accessibility to all wheelchair users, particularly in those cases in which the pavement is not at the same level as the floor of the bus.

There is also another law for tourists with disabilities travelling by road with a car throughout the European Union: the right to park all over Europe on a preferential way and in many cases freely through the European parking card for people with reduced mobility. There is a model of parking card for all European Member States. The tourist who travels to another country within the Union and has a parking card in his country, can ask for the European card which may be shown in the country visited and it will mean that he is a visitor officially recognized as a person with reduced mobility in his home country and it will allow him to have the same parking rights and privileges than a person with reduced mobility resident in the visited country. (Read more about the subject in: <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/cha/c11411.htm>)

5.5 Accessibility in the Transnational Network

Different means of transport should be used to travel efficiently throughout the European Union. For this to become a reality someday, member countries must still work a lot and together to achieve it.

The European Community is struggling to implement the common transport policy considered by the Treaty of Rome, therefore, the Maastricht Treaty strengthened its political, institutional and budgetary fundamentals introducing the concept of trans-European network (TEN).

Among the measures proposed by the Commission, which may affect more directly to tourists when they travel throughout of the Union, is the work especially in the fast rail network for passengers, including high-speed lines and in the systems that allow links to airports.

If the subject of accessibility in each of the existing transports is worked separately, there will be a moment in which some agreements will be found so that the Transnational Network becomes a reality Accessible to All passengers of the European Union, including people with disabilities.

5.6 Accessibility in public and private buildings for public use

Among the public and private buildings for public use there are, among others, the tourist accommodation and the buildings with cultural offerings such as cinemas, theatres and museums.

According to the laws of non-discrimination and accessibility at European and national level, all buildings of public use should be accessible to everybody, including people with disabilities. But this is not yet a reality. The investment required to adapt the physical facilities of tourist use can be very high if they are not designed accessible for all from the beginning, that is, thinking of all the possible needs of people who will use them.

In many cases subsidies will be needed from local, national or European Union governments for buildings already made to cope with investment that small and medium enterprises should do.

For buildings that are going to make changes in their structures for different reasons or buildings that are going to be rebuilt, accessibility should already be covered from the start of their design and implemented. In many cases, the lack of an exhaustive inspection of the works in its building process and once completed, leads to the construction of architectural barriers that could have been avoided.

There are few global references at European Union level on the specific technical requirements that buildings for public use must have to be accessible to all users. So far, the regulation in this area has been competition, whether it has been, of the different local governments of the Member States and without global consensus, that is, the requirements and demands are not the same for some local governments than for others. There is a lack of global consensus on this issue throughout the Union. At the end, the tourist is the damaged one wanting to travel to another place and not knowing, due to lack of information and common approaches, the level of accessibility that he will find when he arrives.

The World Tourism Organization makes some brief and specific references to the characteristics of accessibility that buildings of tourist use, such as tourist accommodation, means of transport, restaurants, museums, etc., must meet (read more in: www.unwto.org/quality/std/en/pdf/revised_handi.pdf).

In March 2004, another big step in terms of accessibility was given with the approval of two new directives on the regulation of procedures for the award of public contracts, which included, for the first time, "Design for All" as an unavoidable principle and requirement:

Directive 2004/18/EC "classical" related to the coordination of the procedures for the award of public works contracts, supplies and services.

Directive 2004/17/EC related to the coordination of procedures for the award of contracts in the "special sectors" of water, energy, transport and postal services.

In late 2006, a handbook was published, which came out from the work derived from an European project called Build for All: www.build-for-all.net), which brings together a number of promotional and training tools on accessibility, with a view to enable technicians of official bodies in public procurement to apply the new criteria on accessibility and Design for All suggested by the Directives.

Build-for-All Handbook: <http://www.accessibletourism.org/?i=enat.en.reports.228>

5.7 Accessibility in the European Health Care

Anyone who travels to another Member State of the European Union has the right to access, in the case of need, to the public health care of the state visited, under the same conditions as someone who lives in such State. This requires to travel with the European Health Insurance Card (read more about the subject in: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/healthcard/index_en.htm)

6. Examples of Good Practices in Tourism Offers for All

In this chapter, we try to examine whether the reality of Europe's tourist offer responds to the needs of people with disabilities. An exhaustive analysis of the offer would have been desirable, but it is a mission whose dedication goes beyond the possibilities of this report. We have opted for a wide selection of good practices in the different tourism elements and products; there are many examples of good practices on accessibility in all areas of the tourist chain which are more and more and better.

6.1 Accessible nature reserves

6.1.1 Project on Accessible Nature Reserves (Italy)

There is a project in Italy called "Parchi accessibili-Interventi per promuovere Visit delle aree naturali protette da parte delle persone variuosly abili" (Accessible reserves - actions to promote the visit of protected natural areas by people with disabilities." It has been done by 'The Centro Turistico Studentesco' (CTS) and the Italian environmental association 'Legambiente' and it was financed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Italy in the year 2004. The aim of the project was to promote the visit and enjoyment of the nature reserves of the region by people with disabilities and people with special needs, through training, actions of sensitizing and knowledge of the environment in certain natural areas developing the social and economic growth of such natural areas through social tourism. Read more about this project in:

<http://www.parchionline.org/UserFiles/File/LineeGuidaParchiAccessibili.pdf>

6.1.2 Project on a guide of Accessible nature reserves (Germany)

There is a guide by Natko that collects all the information about the level of accessibility of the nature reserves of Germany. It was a project of the Verband deutscher Naturparke (Association of Nature Reserves of Germany), together with Natko which was carried out between 2006 and 2007. For more information about the guide:

http://www.natko.de/uploads/File/Tourismus_fuer_Alle/Naturparke/NatKo_Naturparke_fuer_Alle%20neu_homepage.pdf

6.2 Guided tours

6.2.1 Cultural tours in sign language:

6.2.1.1 *Cultural guided tours in Spanish Sign Language (Government of the Balearic Islands, Spain)*

This is an initiative of the Institute of Tourist Strategy of the Balearic Government (INESTUR) together with the Centre for Tourist Routes which offers two-hour cultural guided tours in Spanish Sign Language. Read for more information in:

<http://www.visitbalears.com/accesible/index.jsp?isla=00&lang=ES&sec=0016&item=00000474>

6.2.1.2 *Very quiet Munich. The official guides in sign language (München ganz leise – Die Offiziellen Gehörlosen-Guides, München Tourismus, Germany)*

The Tourist Information Office in the city of Munich offers guided tours in different sign languages (German, Greek and American), adapted to the wishes and preferences of each group. Read more about this offer at:
www.muenchen.de/Rathaus/lhm_alt/mtour/deutsch/gaesteservice/40991/gebaerdensprache.html

6.2.2 Guided tours for two of more types of disabilities

6.2.2.1 Guided tours in Erfurt (Germany)

Erfurt erlebbar für Alle (Erfurt to be enjoyed by all) is an initiative of the Tourist Information Office in the city of Erfurt, which offers unique guided cultural tours for people with visual or hearing impairment and with reduced mobility throughout the city . It also has an inclusive guided tour through the historical part, that is, it is also accessible for people with reduced mobility. In addition to these routes, the tourist information office makes available to the visitor a brochure with relevant information concerning accessibility in transport and tourist resources of the city so that it can be explored independently in the same way. Read more information at: www.erfurt-tourismus.de/de.htm (Erfurt erlebbar für Alle).

6.2.2.2 Guided tours in Siena

Siena per Tutti (Siena for All) is an initiative of the `Comune di Siena' which offers guided tours in Italian Sign Language (Siena in dei Segni Language), and also tours for people with reduced mobility or who move in a wheelchair (Senza sempre più senza barriere). Read more information at: www.comune.siena.it/main.asp?id=1435

6.3 Certification Systems

6.3.1 National Accessible Scheme (Visit England, United Kingdom)

Created by Enjoy England, Tourist Board of the Government of England (Official Tourist Board for England) to identify and unify criteria for the marketing of hotels and tourist resources of the country. The aim is that all visitors from England can identify through a symbol, representing unified and specific features of each establishment, the hotels that best suit their specific and personal needs. It uses 9 different classifications of tourist accommodation depending on the adequacy of their characteristics to the types of limitations of the customers interacting with their facilities or services. The number of ratings are high because it also takes into account different levels within each limitation of the client. Read more at:

<http://www.enjoyengland.com/stay/quality-ratings/national-accessible-scheme.aspx>

6.3.2 Tourisme et Handicaps (France)

The French association "Tourism and Disability" has the label of the same name whose purpose is to provide reliable, descriptive and objective information on accessibility of tourist places and facilities, taking into account all types of disabilities (physical, visual, hearing and intellectual), as well as the development of a tourist offer adapted and integrated into the general offer.

The conditions for granting the label have been regularized by the Ministry of Tourism, which has entrusted the association "Tourisme et Handicaps" with the mission to help to its implementation. The documents used for the assessment before granting the label have been developed in a consensual manner between tourist companies associations and representatives of people with disabilities.

In August 2007 there were 2,385 establishments with the label of Tourisme et Handicaps in France, of which a bit more than a half correspond to accommodation, 12% to museums and the rest to all kinds of tourist offer.

6.3.3 Danish Accessibility Label (Denmark)

This is a label created to inform on the characteristics in terms of accessibility of the different tourist establishments uniformly to be able to commercialize them suitably, depending on the specific needs of each user. It uses 7 classifications. It takes into account many types of user needs, who can suggest them by interacting with the environment. Read more at: www.godadgang.dk/gb/main.asp

6.3.4 Mindeststandards (Germany)

These are minimum standards of accessibility to classify tourist accommodation in Germany and therefore to improve their accessibility, information and marketing. Some landers (regions) have chosen to convert these standards into law and others have regarded them as mere recommendations. For the classification to establishments they use four ratings depending on the type of limitation of the visitor. These criteria are agreed to between the hotel confederation and the different associations of disabled persons in Germany. To read more on the subject: http://www.natko.de/uploads/File/Zielvereinbarung/flyer_zielvereinbarung.pdf

6.3.5 Flag "Towns and Cities for All" (Design for All Foundation, Spain)

The "Flag of Towns and Cities for All" offers councils the opportunity to join a growing group of municipalities that are committed to take actions for the improvement of its public space, facilities, transport, buildings and facilities, improving consequently the quality of life of their inhabitants and visitors. Read more about the project at: www.designforall.org/es/dfa/bandera.html. The main objective of the project is to make visible the continued effort being made by councils to improve the quality of life of their environments and services, making them increasingly appropriate.

The "Flag of Towns and Cities for All" is a project of international dimension that the Foundation began in late 2006 in collaboration with the Portuguese Federation of Municipalities and the Association of Urban Planning of Portugal (www.rededemobilidade.org).

6.4 Online guides and databases on tourist information

6.4.1 Online databases in Spain:

6.4.1.1 *Guide for 100 Accessible Hotels PREDIF (Spain)*

This is an online guide and on paper guide that collects 100 accessible for all tourist accommodations in Spain. The guide is classified by provinces and each province has lists with a number of accessible tourist accommodations. In each of them, the characteristics of physical, hearing and visual accessibility are described in great detail. The web to consult the guide is: www.predif.org (ACCESSIBLE TOURISM OFFER).

6.4.1.2 *Accessible Arona Guide 2007*

Guide published in three languages (Spanish, English and German), which gathers, in great detail, all information about accessible tourist resources, restaurants, shopping centres, beaches, museums, tourist accommodation, etc.. of the tourist destiny Arona. It is a guide that was awarded by the Government of the Canary Islands. The guide can be downloaded from the website in PDF format:

www.arona.org/portalinerno/RecursosWeb/DOCUMENTOS/1/9_5806_1.pdf

6.4.1.3 *Guide "Towards an Accessible Majorca for All"*

Guide published in four languages (Spanish, Catalan, English and German), which collects all information regarding the degree of accessibility of transport, tourist attractions and beaches of the island, along with addresses with potential interest for tourists with reduced mobility who visit the island. The guide can be downloaded from the website in PDF format:

www.infomallorca.net/guias/documents/fl-20.pdf

6.5.1 Online databases Belgium

6.5.1.1 *Accescity*

This is an online database in French and Flemish which informs on the accessibility of tourist resources in Belgium. www.accesscity.be

6.5.1.2 *Toegankelijk Vlaanderen*

This is an online database in different languages which informs on the accessibility of tourist resources in the area of Flanders. www.toevla.be

6.5.2 Online databases, Germany

6.5.2.1 *Baden-Württemberg Barrierefreie erleben*

This is an online database in German which informs on the degree of accessibility of places, accommodations, excursions and tourist resources in the Land Baden Württemberg, for people moving in a wheelchair. There is also a paper version.

http://db.tourismus-bw.de/bw_barrf_suche_0.asp

6.5.2.2 *MobiDat (Berlin):*

This is an online database in different languages which informs on the degree of accessibility of places, accommodations, excursions and tourist resources of the city of Berlin for people with reduced mobility, visual limitation, hearing limitation and with learning difficulties.

www.mobidat.net

6.5.3 Online database Austria

6.5.3.1 IBFT ProWorker IBFT - Infoplattform barrierefreier Tourismus Austria

This is an online database in English and German which informs on the degree of accessibility of places, accommodations and tourist resources throughout Austria, for people with reduced mobility, people with visual limitation, with hearing limitation, with learning difficulties, families with children, the elderly and people with chronic diseases.

www.infoplattform.at

6.5.3.2 Oberösterreich

This is an online database in German which informs on the degree of accessibility of places, accommodations, excursions and tourist resources of the region Oberösterreich for people moving in a wheelchair.

www.oberoesterreich.at/nohandicap/

6.5.3.3 Tyrol ohne Handicap

This is an online database in German and English that informs on the degree of accessibility of places, accommodations, ski, diving and parachuting courses, among many other sports in the area of Tyrol, for people with reduced mobility who move in a wheelchair.

www.ohnehandicap.tirol.at/

6.5.4 Online database, Switzerland

6.5.4.1 International Mobility Schweiz

This is an online database in German which provides information about guides around the world where you can find information on the degree of accessibility of tourist resources: accommodations, restaurants, hotels, etc.. accessible for different types of limitations: allergic people, diabetic people, in need of dialysis, with learning difficulties, with hearing limitation, visual limitation or reduced mobility.

www.mis-infothek.ch

6.5.5 Online databases in Italy

6.5.5.1 Italia per Tutti

This is an online database in Italian which informs, in great detail, on the degree of accessibility of tourist resources in all major cities of the provinces of Italy: accommodations, restaurants, hotels, etc.. accessible to different types of limitations: the allergic, the diabetic, people with learning difficulties, with hearing limitation, visual limitation, with reduced mobility, the elderly, and so on.

www.italiapertutti.it/

6.5.5.2 Alto Adige per tutti:

This is an online database in German and Italian which informs on the degree of accessibility of tourist accommodations in the area of South Tyrol, or Alto Adige, for people with disabilities and with visual limitation.

www.hotel.bz.it

6.5.6 Online databases in Denmark

6.5.6.1 Visit Handicap Guide

This is an online database in German, English and Danish which informs on the degree of accessibility of tourist accommodations in the region west of Denmark, West Jutland, for independent people using wheelchairs, for people dependent on another person to help them using wheelchairs, people with visual limitation or hearing limitation.

www.visithandicapguide.com

6.5.6.2 Foreningen Tilgængelighed for Alle

This is an online database in Danish, German and English which informs, in great detail, on the degree of accessibility of tourist resources in Denmark and Sweden accessible for different types of limitations: the allergic, the asthmatic, with learning difficulties, hearing limitation, visual limitation, with reduced mobility, wheelchair users, and so on. In addition to the database they have developed a system of certification of the establishments and tourist services.

www.godadgang.dk

6.6 Transport

6.6.1 Accessible Taxis (Spain)

Reflecting the widespread feeling of associations of people with disabilities, more than a decade ago, the ONCE Foundation, in conjunction with the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces and the IMSERSO, joined forces to conduct a significant portion of resources to the promotion of the autonomy and the removal of barriers that hinder or prevent the full integration of people with disabilities, whether physical, psychosocial and of communication. Among their funding projects are the euro-taxi or accessible taxi already implemented in almost all Spanish provinces (200 municipalities) and a total of 800 aids for the implementation of the Euro-taxi have been granted.

www.fundaciononce.es/WFO/Castellano/Ambitos_Actuacion/Accesibilidad/Taxi_accesible/default.htm

6.6.2 Accessibility Policy in the Train “Die Deutsche Bahn“ (Germany)

All information on services and accessibility of the national railway network in Germany "Die Bahn" is in audio format (CD & MP3), in PDF format to be able to download it from its Internet website and in paper format. In the website there is also information on accessible destinies that can be reached by train within Germany.

www.bahn.de/p/view/mobilitaet/handicap/handicap.shtml

6.7 Tourist accommodation

6.7.1 Hotel Chain Confortel (Spain)

The hotel chain Confortel belongs to the ONCE Business Corporation (National Organization of Blind Spaniards), which manages 15 establishments both holiday and urban in different parts of Spain. More information in: www.confortelhoteles.com.

Among its specialization tasks there are the following:

- Customer service Training (for staff taking care of customers with disabilities)
- Action Plan to know and adapt their facilities
- Accessibility is part of their strategic policies and Brand Book

Among its most prominent hotels which have received different awards for their accessibility, we can highlight the following: Hotel Confortel Islantilla, Hotel Confortel Badajoz and Hotel Confortel Pio XII, which has become the first hotel that has obtained the certificate of AENOR 170,001 UNE for the management on Global Accessibility.

6.8 Travel agencies and tour operators

6.8.1 Travel Agency Viajes 2000, in Spain

The travel agencies chain Viajes 2000 belongs to the Business Corporation ONCE (National Organization of Blind Spaniards), which has, among its usual customers the Associations for the Disabled throughout the country for years. Among its tasks of expertise for this market there are, among others, training for its staff to access to information on accessible products and destinations and to be able to give advice and sell trips to people with disabilities or to wheelchair users.

6.9 Accessible beaches

6.9.1 Beaches Plan of the Region of Valencia (Spain)

In accordance with the Plan of Accessible Beaches launched by the Ministry of Social Welfare in the beginning of 2000, there are already 84 beaches which already have accessible beach points, with a wide range of equipments and services to enable the use and enjoyment of the beaches, safely, by people with reduced mobility.

The Plan of Accessible Beaches in the Region of Valencia includes a variety of services, ranging from access to the beach (with parking reserved for the disabled, parking route at the beginning of the beach, signs and information on adapted services and routes in the promenades with a maximum slope of 6%), to the beach route with boards that run through the sand to the sea, adapted services and changing rooms, shadow reserved area, as well as technical assistance to access the bathroom (amphibious chairs and crutches).

Besides the Accessible Beaches Plan, a Plan for Adapted Sports has been carried out in the summertime in the Accessible Beaches (read more: www.fesa.es).

6.9.2 Beaches Plan in the region PACA (France)

In accordance with the Plan of Accessible Beaches launched by the Plenary Assembly of the PACA region at the beginning of 2005, there are already 44 beaches which have accessible beach points, with a wide range of equipments and services to enable the safe use and enjoyment of the beaches by people with reduced mobility.

6.9.3 Handiplage

The Handiplage association produces guidelines, a labelling scheme and an on-line database of accessible beaches in France:

<http://www.handiplage.fr>

6.10 Cultural offer : Museums

6.10.1 National Museum “Centro de Arte Reina Sofía” (Madrid, Spain)

The National Museum “Centro de Arte Reina Sofía” has carried out a series of adjustments to make it an "Accessible Museum for All" (the address of the website is:

www.museoreinasofia.es/s-educacion/Accesibilidad.php). The adaptations are:

- Accessible website
- Information with description in text accompanied by photos of how to get there, of the entrances to access the museum, of the physical accessibility and of the available services for people with reduced mobility within the museum.
- Provision of wheelchairs for those who need them
- Provision of adapted toilets
- Availability of Signal-guides, which is an interactive visit in PDA support of the key works in the Permanent Collection of the Museum. The explanations of the works are carried out through recordings in Spanish Sign Language with subtitles.
- Making of Educational Programs with service of Spanish Sign Language interpreters
- Making of Educational Programs through the combination of verbal and tactile exploration

6.11 Public services in destination (European private initiative)

The "Euro-Toiletten-Schlüssel" (the Euro-key for the bathrooms) is an initiative of a German organization of disabled people called “Club Behinderter und ihrer Freunde, Darmstadt und Umgebung e. V. More information: <http://www.cbf-da.de/cgi-bin/shop.cgi?action=show&kategorie=CBF>

This is a key that works in highways bathrooms, in public toilets of many cities in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and in some other European countries. The idea is that this key can only be reached by people with disabilities who need an adapted bathroom and who have a minimum degree of disability of 70%. The idea is a solution so that there are accessible public restrooms to be used by people with disabilities and that they are clean and impeccable. There is a book that compiles all places in Europe where the key can be used.

7. Near Future

Most actions in the field of disability are primarily responsibility of the Member States and also they are dealt with more effectively at national level. Therefore, in order to achieve its strategic objective, the Commission must ensure that each Member State achieves its strategic lines of action. To do so, the Commission invited a group of experts to analyse the lines that Europe must continue to become a future accessible for All (read on the conclusions of this group of experts in the report: "2010: A Europe Accessible for All" (2003). <http://www.accessibletourism.org/admin?i=enat.en.reports.442>

Among the most important lines of action of the European Union for the coming years which affect directly or indirectly to Accessible Tourism for All there are:

- The encouragement of the inclusion of people with disabilities through employment. The access to employment is a key element in the integration of people with disabilities into the economy and in society in the broad sense. Participation in the labour market allows people to earn money and ,therefore, they can allocate their spending on travel and tourism throughout Europe, among other things.
- The appropriate integration of disability issues in the relevant EU policies as a means to ensure better protection of the rights of this group and to promote equal opportunities. La integration strategy requires taking the disability perspective into account in all stages of political processes – from conception and implementation to control and evaluation.
- Improvement of Accessibility for All of goods, services and tourist environments built through the development of European standards and standardisation documents to translate, in technical terms, the concept of "accessibility for all". Also, through a raising awareness of those responsible on the subject of standardisation on the concept of "accessibility for all" and on the opportunities in the tourist market.
- Improvement of the rights of the passengers at the time of travelling by public transport, especially in the next few years efforts will be focused on regulating the rights of passengers in the Road and the Sea Transport, as the Air and Railway Transport have recently been regulated. For an effective Transnational transport network there is still a lot of work to do. Many pilot projects are being tested to become a reality someday equally for All.
- The improvement in New Information and Communication Technologies is, and will increasingly be more important to enable people in Europe to communicate with each another, to buy, sell, commercialize and get informed through them.

A key factor in the real change that will happen in the coming years, which will help tourist market to self-regulate itself, is the unstoppable demographic change that exists in Europe. Tourists are increasingly older. These tourists have an important traveller culture and want to visit perhaps the same places they have been visiting so far but they are increasingly demanding. Moreover, it is known that 63% of people with disabilities are over 45 years old

and probably the incidence of disability in Tourism will continue to grow as many people acquire a disability at old ages.

That is why Accessible Tourism for All should be and will continue being a priority objective in the near future for the European tourist industry. The improvement of accessibility of tourist products and services, using global solutions based especially on the principle of "Design for All" will be a requirement of the present and future tourist towards the tourist sector.

8. By Way of Conclusion

- In general, European laws reflect the rights of tourists with disabilities in Europe.
- The level of demand is very different in each country and, in some cases, even in each region.
- The level of compliance with legal requirements also differs and is not always the appropriate one.
- Work is under way for the improvement of accessibility of tourist environments, of the resources which start from a very low level.
- There is a very slow process in the increase of the level of accessibility of accommodation and a specialization in some chains.
- Accessible cultural offers increase, promoted by tourist entities.
- The reliable information on accessibility is not incorporated into tourist offer information, but there are many initiatives of guides coming from associations of people with disabilities and others.
- In general, the isolated cases of accessible tourist offer grows rapidly and diversified. But we cannot still talk of standardisation of accessibility in tourism.

9. Who is Who in Tourism for All in Europe

There are some organizations that have specialized only in Tourism for All and which we should highlight in this section. Among them, are:

In EUROPE:

ENAT – is the European Network for Accessible Tourism. Founded in 2006 by 9 organizations who wanted to create a network for all those who "support or want to know more about accessible tourism in Europe." Its great achievement is to manage all information relating to good practices in Accessible Tourism in Europe and an extensive database of all the individuals, companies or organizations who are interested and are doing things in the field of Accessible Tourism in Europe. For further information: www.accessibletourism.org

EDF – is the European Disability Forum. The EDF is an independent and non-profit European organization that represents the interests of 50 million people with disabilities in the European Union and which fights for their rights. For further information: www.edf-feph.org

EUCAN – is the European Concept for Accessibility Network (experts network of the European Concept for Accessibility). For further information: www.eca.lu

EIDD – is the European Institute for Design and Disability, now called Design for All Europe (European Institute of Design for All in Europe). The objective of this institute is to achieve quality of life through the Design for All. Further information at: www.design-for-all.org

EDeAN – is The European e-Accessibility and Design for All Network (the European Network of electronic Accessibility and Design for All). This is a network of 160 organisations of the Member States of the European Union and Norway and its objective is to ensure access to the Information Society to all citizens. Further information at: www.edean.org.

www.EuropeforAll.com is a Website developed in a European Commission funded project, OSSATE ('One-Stop-Shop for Accessible Tourism in Europe'), which provides accessibility information about tourist venues in 6 countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The website, which is available as a service for venue owners and data providers in Europe, is managed by EWORX S.A., Greece www.eworx.gr

In AUSTRIA:

ÖHTB - Österreichischen Hilfswerks für Taubblinde und hochgradig Hör- und Sehbehinderte (the Austrian Relief Organisation for People who are deaf and blind and people with significant Hearing and/or Vision Impairments). More information: www.oehtb.at

Atempo – is an organization that fights for the Equality of People. More information: : www.atempo.at

In BELGIUM:

Toegankelijkheidsbureau-TGB – is the centre for the accessibility of Flanders. More information: www.toegankelijkheidsbureau.be

Assoc. Nat. pour le Logement des personnes Handicapées (ANLH) – is the National Association for the accommodation of people with disabilities. They have made different online databases. More information: www.anlh.be.

Autonomia asbl – More information: www.autonomia.org

Infopunt Toegankelijk Reizen – is an information service on Accessible Tourism belonging to the Tourist Government of Flanders. More information: www.toegankelijkreizen.be

In DENMARK:

Foreningen Tilgængelighed for Alle: is an organization that has developed an Accessibility label with Danish quality standards and they provide information about accessibility of public places in Denmark and Sweden. He was partner in the European project OSSATE. More information: www.godadgang.dk.

In FINLAND:

Rullaten Ry – an organization that promotes Accessible Tourism in Finland and develops tourist guides with accessible tourist information of Finland. More information: www.esteetontamatkailua.fi

In GERMANY:

NATKO – is the “Nationale Tourism Koordinationsstelle für Alle eV” (National Organization Coordinator of Tourism for All). For further information: www.natko.de.

Institute of Geography of Muenster & NeumannConsult University - NeumannConsult has been a partner of many European projects. Together they conducted a study for the Ministry of Economy and Labour, which has been used as a compelling argument in Germany to carry out many actions in favour of Accessible Tourism for All in Germany. The language of the study is in German, but a summary of the study is translated into German and English. The study is called: "Economic Impulses of Accessible Tourism for All" -

www.bmwi.de/English/Redaktion/Pdf/economic-impulses-of-accessible-tourism-for-all-526,property=pdf,bereich=bmwi,sprache=en,rwb=true.pdf

In GREECE:

Disability Now – is a non-profit organization run mostly by people with severe disabilities. Its aim is to produce and distribute all kinds of information on disabilities and to train people with disabilities with sufficient knowledge to manage their needs and rebuild their lives. It is an OSSATE partner of the European project (One-Stop-Shop for Accessible Tourism in Europe). More information: www.disabled.gr/lib/?page_id=5772.

In IRELAND:

Failte Ireland – Is a Travel and Trade adviser organization for the disabled. More information: www.failteireland.ie/

National Disability Authority – More information: www.nda.ie

In ITALY:

CO.In Sociale Cooperative Integrate Onlus – is a non-profit organization that works with the Tourism Department of Italy since 1998 with the project "Italy per Tutti." He has been partner and organizer of many European projects and one of the first organizations that fought for Accessible Tourism.

In LUXEMBOURG:

Office National du Tourisme – Is the tourist information office in Luxembourg and it has a service called HELP to provide information and offer services to people in need of assistance in Luxembourg. More information: www.ont.lu

Info-Handicap – is a non-profit organization that has been involved in many European projects. They have published a series of guides on accessible tourist resources and tourist accommodations in Luxembourg. More information: www.info-handicap.lu.

In NORWAY:

Visit Oslo – a public organization responsible for the Tourism and the Tourist Information of the City of Oslo. Since 2004 it has been producing information on accessibility of the tourist resources of the city for people with different types of disabilities integrated into the general brochures. For further

information: www.visitoslo.com/en/oslo-for-all.49114.en.html. It has been a partner in the European project OSSATE (One-Stop-Shop for Accessible Tourism in Europe).

In PORTUGAL:

Secretariado Nacional para a Reabilitação das Pessoas com Deficiência (SNRIPD) – They produce regional guides on accessible tourism. More information: www.snrird.pt.

Associação de Turismo Acessível - um acesso Para Todos
The National Association for Accessible Tourism for All in Portugal
www.aptta.com

In Spain:

ONCE Foundation - is a foundation that belongs to the ONCE (National Organization of Blind Spaniards), which was set up in 1988 for the cooperation and solidarity of the community of blind people in Spain with the other communities of the disabled and to help them to establish and improve their living conditions – www.fundaciononce.es

POLIBEA TURISMO – is a digital magazine in Spanish and English, which publishes information on Accessible Tourism for All in Spain - www.polibea.com/turismo

PREDIF – is a confederation of non-profit associations, on a state scale, which represents more than 30,000 people with great physical disability. Among its most prominent projects in relation to Accessible Tourism for All in Spain, are:

- Guide of 100 accessible hotels in Spain - paper and digital format
www.predif.org
- Study on the habits and attitudes towards Tourism for people with physical disability:
<http://213.190.9.11/predif/doc/HabitosyActitudes1edc.pdf>

FUNDACIÓN SIDAR – is a permanent and volunteer working group, consisting of experts in new technologies and their accessibility. Their members are representatives of the main institutions and associations related to disability, of companies from the new technologies sector, from the public sector and, in general, people interested to manage that information society is accessible to everyone. For more information: www.sidar.org

Design for All Foundation – is a foundation that aims to bring together leaders from companies, entities and administrations that feel the need to improve the attitude of their organization with regard to sustainability and human diversity: www.designforall.org

In SWITZERLAND:

Mobility International Schweiz (MIS) – A Travel adviser organization for people with disabilities, for disabled associations and for the tourist industry of Switzerland. Its main task is the collection of information on accessible tourism around the world and to make all this information know to all who are interested in it. More information: www.mis-ch.ch

In SWEDEN:

Turism för alla i Sverige - is a tourist organization that ensures the interests of people with reduced mobility since 1998. It has been involved in many European projects and, above all, it has specialized in the training of workers in the tourism sector and providing advice to businesses. More information: www.turismforalla.se.

In the UNITED KINGDOM:

Tourism for all – consortium of the United Kingdom among voluntary and governmental business organisations in favour of tourism for All - More information: www.tourismforall.org.uk

VisitBritain – promotional office of tourism in the United Kingdom. They have developed a system of certification of Accessibility for tourist accommodation (National Accessible Scheme) within their programme of action of Quality. More information: www.visitbritain.com/en/accommodation