How to Develop the Accessibility of Destinations?

Ms. Mieke Broeders, Executive Secretary.

ENAT - European Network for Accessible Tourism

www.accessibletourism.org
Accessible Tourism in Europe is...
Inclusive Tourism
Quality Tourism
Sustainable Tourism
European Network for Accessible Tourism

• ENAT is a “multi-stakeholder” network of tourism and travel businesses, tourist authorities, NGOs, researchers and professionals.
• Has about 200 members in over 25 countries.
ENAT Objectives…

• Spread the word about Accessible Tourism!
• Improve marketing and customer information
• Develop and introduce Service Standards for accessibility in the travel and tourism industry
• Help create Accessible Destinations through improved public-private-NGO joint actions
• Stimulate new projects and networking opportunities with actors and stakeholders
• Publicise accessible travel and destinations!
Europe needs Accessible Destinations!

**ENAT** is leading the way to make European Destinations Accessible for All

**Why?**

- Growing market demand for accessibility
- Because all citizens have the right to enjoy tourism
- Because it makes good business sense!
Accessible Tourism Market Drivers

Demographics

• Ageing populations increase in key global markets due to improved life expectancy and slowing birth rates.

• More than 80 million people with disabilities in Europe.

• People with disabilities or reduced mobility want to travel!
Tourists come in all sizes and shapes!
The Problem:

For visitors

- Travel for people with disabilities is unpredictable, difficult or sometimes even impossible
- Quality of infrastructure, transport, services, and information varies widely from place to place as well as between EU Member States
- Lack of access standards increases uncertainty, reduces travel options and allows a lack of accountability to prevail.
The Problem:

For the tourism industry

• The accessible tourism market is relatively unknown and it seems difficult to attract with existing channels.

• Visitors’ needs and requirements are unknown or misunderstood. Therefore the market is avoided.

• Investment costs are misunderstood, exaggerated

• Access is seen mainly as a ”problem” rather than a ”golden opportunity”.
80 million people with disabilities in EU
Total potential accessible travel market in Europe:
(...adding friends and family)
More than 133 million tourists
(OSSATE, University of Surrey, 2005)
Total potential travel market in Europe: > €89 billion
(OSSATE, University of Surrey, 2005)
Good Business: Scandic Hotels

- Sweden, Nordic and N. European countries
- In 2007, gained 15,000 extra overnights from accessible rooms
- Scandic has expanded to over 100 hotels
- In 2010 built and opened *Scandic Berlin* with 100 accessible rooms
- Scandic gains conference business thanks to access policies and practices
- Uses own checklist of 110 access requirements, for hotels and staff training
- Publishes hotel access information on website.
The ENAT Code of Good Conduct

- A Europe-wide label showing commitment to accessible tourism

- **The Code**: A set of 8 principles guiding business practices and customer service

  - Supervised by the ENAT Board
  
  - Members are supported by ENAT’s resources and training programmes
  
  - Exclusive to ENAT Members

http://www.accessibletourism.org/?i=enat.en.enat-code-of-good-conduct
Training in Accessible Tourism

www.AccessTraining.eu New online course

- Developed in Lifelong Learning Leonardo Programme (released December 2011).
- Introductory Course for Managers and Employees in tourism SMEs
- Raising awareness about the market
- Developing business skills
- Increasing knowledge and competences
- Leads to further face-to-face training in centres around Europe
ENAT Survey of 39 Websites of National Tourist Organisations in Europe
(Tested in 2011)

– Are NTO websites accessible for people with disabilities?
(Compliance with web content accessibility guidelines)
ENAT Survey of 39 Websites of National Tourist Organisations in Europe (Summer 2011)

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

• Oct 2010 – Oct 2011:
  ▪ Over 2 million accessibility searches across UK websites
  ▪ 26% (average) increase in online bookings of accommodation that displays access information
  ▪ Increased number of awareness and consultation campaigns (both online and offline)
Europe needs Accessible Destinations!

By developing accessible tourism destinations we can:

• Help meet the demands of an ageing tourist population in Europe and the older, wealthier incoming tourists from the major world regions

• Help re-build economies in countries that depend on tourism, through new investment

• Promote European cultural heritage to all our visitors

• Extend the active lives of older citizens through travel
Europe needs Accessible Destinations!

By developing accessible tourism destinations we can:

• Extend the tourist season: supporting businesses & jobs

• Support the objectives of cross-border social tourism

• Maintain and develop employment opportunities for young job seekers in Europe, with new specialised jobs

• Make the most of new opportunities with tourism and the care sector

• Support sustainability and high quality tourism development.
Thank you

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