



visit OSLO

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Oslo for all!

VisitOSLO.com is launching a brand new functionality and information especially adapted for people with disabilities. The information is intended to make it easier for guests with wheelchairs, walking difficulties, visual impairments, hearing impairments and asthma/allergies to plan their visit to Oslo.

"We welcome everybody to Oslo – and we acknowledge that some guests require more detailed information in order to choose a hotel, meeting facility, restaurant or museum, or to be prepared for any challenges they may meet during their stay. Our aim is that also these guests find the information they need on the official tourist web for Oslo, www.visitoslo.com", says Katrine Mosfjeld, Division Manager for the Tourist Information Services in Oslo. She continues: "Our guests should not have to go to www.i-am-a-tourist-in-a-wheelchair.com – we aim at helping everybody on our website."

Thus, VisitOSLO has visited and audited more than 100 hotels, restaurants and attractions in Oslo, and checked, measured and registered accessibility according to comprehensive pan-European checklists developed by the EU through the OSSATE project (One Stop Shop for Accessible Tourism in Europe).

"It was very interesting to be involved in OSSATE, where we were allowed to be part of a good network for this particular type of tourist information, and where VisitOSLO was the first, and so far the only, destination management company to develop advanced search engines and implement this type of information."

For each assessed venue, a large amount of information is registered, and an important part of the job has been to find ways to help the users sort the information. So far this has led to the creation of predefined quick searches for critical elements, such as door width for guests with wheelchairs/walkers/baby prams, or alarm systems with vibrating pads for guests with hearing impairments. They have the possibility to search for places that meet critical requirements, and then get access to all the registered information about these relevant places.

"This is not a standard – rather the opposite. Our functionality allows each person to define their most important requirements, and then get further details about all the places that meet their needs. We are also planning to develop the possibility to create personal profiles for guests with multiple disabilities, or for groups that have to

attend to different needs”, says Mosfjeld. “Our city has potential for improvement – as do most big cities – when it comes to accessibility, but this tool is intended to make it easier to find information about the city and the parts of the city that are most accessible for the individual guest.”

Mosfjeld emphasises that this is a matter of tourist information and not of standards and requirements for accessibility. “But we are pleased to see that venues that we have assessed, call to tell us about improvements they have made, like e.g. the Munch Museum did. This is a positive side effect that we hope to see more of.”

Today, the accessibility information is available in Norwegian and English, but during the next months it will also be translated into Spanish, French, Italian and German. Through the OSSATE collaboration, the English information has been distributed to the European website www.europeforall.com, making it possible to navigate from that site to the detailed information about Oslo and the accessibility of the city’s hotels, restaurants and attractions.

The OSSATE project consists of 11 partners from 7 European countries. VisitOSLO is one of the partners and the only destination management company in this project. Oslo’s participation in the project has been financed by VisitOSLO in collaboration with the European Commission.

Check out information, search functionality and project background on www.visitoslo.com/en/oslo-for-all

For more information, please contact:

VisitOSLO – Manager Tourist Information Division Katrine Mosfjeld

Tel. +47 24 14 77 10 / +47 93 41 05 30

Katrine.Mosfjeld@visitoslo.com

OSSATE – Project Coordinator Ivor Ambrose

Tel. +30 210 614 8380

ia@eworx.gr

www.ossate.org

VisitOSLO as is the Oslo region’s tourist marketing and service organization. It is a limited company with shareholders from the travel trade and commerce in the region. VisitOSLO works extensively with the Municipality of Oslo. The company has the following departments: Convention Bureau, Destination Marketing/Press Services and Tourist Information. The latter is responsible for 3 tourist information centres, the call centre and the virtual tourist information www.visitoslo.com. VisitOSLO produces and sells the Oslo Pass and the Oslo Package. The Oslo Pass is a benefit card that gives you free admission to museums and sights, free travel on all public transport, free parking in all Oslo municipal car parks and many other advantages. The Oslo Package is a weekend and holiday package that includes hotel accommodation with breakfast and the Oslo Pass.