



## PROGRAMME

### ***Seminar on Accessibility – a new challenge for inclusive tourism***

**Comune di Ponzano Veneto, Italy, 6 November 2012**

Europe is the most important tourism region, both as a destination and as a source. In spite of the steady fall in its market share over the last ten years, as a consequence of the dramatic growth of very dynamic regions like Asia and the global economic crisis, Europe continues to play a central role in the global tourism market.

Tourism is a major economic activity with a broadly positive impact on economic growth and employment in Europe. It generates between 5-10% of EU GDP giving jobs to some 10 million people, including a lot of young people. It is also an increasingly important element of the 'European way of life' as more and more citizens are travelling, either for leisure or business.

The challenge now is to extend the tourist offer to those who traditionally were at a disadvantage: persons with reduced mobility, elderly, children and the disabled. Improving accessibility of tourism information and destinations can provide an immense boost to the mobility of EU citizens, their social and cultural inclusion and create a new demand for accessible regions.

Time and again, accessibility is being portrayed as too expensive to be achieved. There are however clear economic indications that the size of an accessible travel market exceeds 133 million tourists and could generate nearly 90 billion euro. This should encourage the business community to invest in accessible goods and services and to look into how to design their own products and services for all.

Being a leader means knowing when and how to innovate. Europe's regions have to seize the opportunity to make the commitment to develop sustainable, inclusive and accessible tourism offer and make their natural, cultural and architectural heritage accessible to all, independently of their physical or mental abilities.

This seminar will explore the barriers to inclusive tourism and reflect on how these challenges can be addressed to improve the accessibility of information and destinations. Through its political and practice-based sessions, the seminar will demonstrate what can be done to realise economic and societal potential of tourism for all.

08:30 a.m.     **Registration**

09:00 a.m.     **Welcome speech**

- **Mr Leonardo MURARO**, President of the Province of Treviso

**Keynote speeches**

- **Mr René SOUCHON (FR/PES)**, Chair of the Commission for Natural Resources within the Committee of the Regions and President of Auvergne Region
- **Mr Antonio TAJANI**, Vice President of the European Commission, responsible for Industry and Entrepreneurship

9.30 a.m.     **SESSION 1: Accessible tourism for all – a new commitment for a fairer and more competitive tourism in Europe**

*This session will be an occasion to reflect on what is needed on the political level to make tourism in the EU more accessible. The participants will share their views on how the different levels of the EU governance can work together to shape the future of accessible and inclusive tourism.*

**Moderator: Paolo VALENTINI PUCITELLI (IT/EPP)**, Member of the NAT Commission within the Committee of the Regions and Councillor of Lombardy Region (tbc)

- **Mr Piero GNUDI**, Minister for Tourism (tbc)
- **Ms Mercedes BRESSO (IT/PES)**, First Vice-President of the Committee of the Regions and Member of Piedmont Regional Council
- **Mr Carlo FIDANZA (IT/EPP)**, Member of the European Parliament and Rapporteur on 'Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination - a new political framework for tourism in Europe'. (tbc)
- **Mr José Ramón BAUZA DIAZ (ES/EPP)**, Member of the NAT Commission within the Committee of the Regions and President of Balearic Islands
- **Mr Marino FINOZZI**, Regional Minister for Tourism

**Discussion with the audience**

11:00 a.m. **Press conference**

11.30 a.m. **SESSION 2: Improving accessibility of information and destinations to boost tourist mobility and create new possibilities for the sector.**

*In this session, the speakers will focus on the practical ways of improving access to information and to destinations locally. The focus will be on successful policy and practice initiatives that made a difference on the ground and helped to widen the tourist offer and make it more inclusive and sustainable for the benefit of tourists and the local community.*

**Moderator: Luigi GAROFALO**, Full Professor of Principles of European Law at the University of Padua

- **Mr Jerzy ZAJAKAŁA (PL/EA)**, Member of the NAT Commission within the Committee of the Regions and the Mayor of Łubianka
- **Gabriel MASSOU**, Ile-de-France Regional Councilor, Vice president of the Paris Ile-de-France Tourism Board
- **Mr Roberto VITALI**, President of Village for All
- **Prof. Louis-Pierre GROSBOIS**, Architect, expert in Design for All
- **Ms Antonella CORRERA**, Policy Officer, European Commission DG Enterprise and Industry – Unit E2 Accessible Tourism

**Discussion with the audience**

13:00 p.m. **LUNCH BREAK**

15:00 p.m.     **SESSION 3: Developing Accessible Tourism Destinations and supporting SMEs**  
*Accessible tourism needs to be part of strategically planned processes and specific targeting of tourists requiring access provisions. Authorities in charge of tourism destinations (DMOs) have a critical role in leading and steering this process and in passing the right messages to SMEs to become more accessible. This session will focus on the vital role of DMO and SMEs, on the barriers they face and incentives they need to know, and will provide examples of successful and accessible business practices in tourism.*

**Moderator: Ivor AMBROSE**, Managing Director, European Network for Accessible Tourism

- **Mr Chris VEITCH**, Consultant, former Accessibility Officer English Tourism Council
- **Mr Peter DE WILDE**, Chief Executive Officer of Tourism Flanders
- **Ms Krista DE SPIEGELEER**, Policy Officer, European Commission DG Enterprise and Industry – Unit E2
- **Mr Magnus BERGLUND**, Scandic Hotels Accessibility Ambassador
- **Ms Ana GARCIA**, Director General of Accessible Portugal

**Discussion with the audience**

16:30 p.m.     **Closing address**

**Mr Pedro ORTÚN**, Director for Service Industries, European Commission, Directorate General for Enterprise and Industry (tbc)

**Mr Giorgio GRANELLO (IT/NI)**, Mayor of the Municipality of Ponzano Veneto, Member of the Committee of the Regions

17:00 p.m.     **End of the seminar**

**Interpreting arrangements**

Subject to confirmation, interpreting will be provided during the seminar in the following languages:

Participants may speak in 5 languages: ES/DE/EN/FR/IT/NL/PL

Participants may listen in 5 languages: ES/DE/EN/FR/IT