Minding the Accessibility Gap

An Opportunity and a Challenge for the hospitality industry

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About HOTREC

• An Umbrella Association bringing together 42 National Associations representing the hospitality industry in 27 European countries

• The Voice of Hotels, Restaurants, Cafés and similar establishments in Europe

Mission:

• Promote the industry’s contributions to society
• Represent the specifics of the industry to the EU Institutions
A few economic facts and figures

- 1.8 million businesses
- 99% employing less than 50 employees
- 91% micro enterprises employing < 10 people

→ The hospitality industry employs 10 million people in the EU and supports 16.6 million jobs!
Accessibility: a duty of care

A determining factor to meet people’s needs

- Ageing population in Europe
- Rising demand for accessible services
- Duty of care to meet people’s specifics needs
- An opportunity for the sector
EU 27: Share of 65+ of overall population

Source: Eurostat
Some figures

EU 27 indicators by age groups

Source: Eurostat
Some figures

EU 27 indicators: % change between 2006-2011

Source: Eurostat
Main characteristics

- Sometimes too excessive
- Mainly for built environment
- Sometimes nr. of accessible rooms prescribed
- Requirements on information provision
- Formal standards complement regulations
- Complemented with voluntary cooperation:
  - Agreements between industry and disabled organisations
  - Standards
  - Labels, Certificates
Example Austria

- Elaboration of guidelines for hospitality establishments together with organisations and ministry
- Plan for further publications on accessible tourism in 2014
Example Netherlands

- Cooperation between all affected parties
- AllesToegankelijk: a platform to discuss:
  - What is needed by guest?
  - What can be asked reasonably from entrepreneurs?
- Leaflets and brochures to educate entrepreneurs
- E-learning tool to educate and inform employees
Example Sweden

- Good cooperation between all affected parties
- Establishments provided with manuals and checklists to facilitate implementation
- Exchanging best examples in monthly newsletter of the hospitality association
• Cooperation between all affected parties
• Establishments provided with manuals and checklists to facilitate implementation
• Active support for Tourism for All initiative in Germany
The way forward

• Avoid excessive requirements
• Focus on new buildings
• Real market demands to be considered
• High proportion of micro enterprises in the sector (costs)
• Economical aspects to be considered (e.g. occupancy of special rooms)
• Principle of gradation to be respected
• Public and private sector obligations at least in balance
• Tourism chain in destinations to be developed
• Take into account voluntary cooperations
• Financial incentives
Thank you for your kind attention!

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