ONAT4ALL - OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES AND NATURE-ADVENTURE TOURISM FOR ALL

ANALYSIS OF THE ACCESSIBILITY LEVELS

PR 1 Self-Assessment tool for accessible tourism SMEs

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1. Definition of accessible tourism indicators

People with disabilities are increasingly involved in tourism activities because of their growing economic and social integration. However, there are still many and all kinds of barriers that make accessible tourism services very difficult.

Moreover, there is still a long way to go to achieve universal accessibility within the tourism sector, at least in developing countries and emerging destinations. A change in the mindset and the model of tourism services is needed, not only to guarantee the human rights of persons with disabilities and their families, but also to meet a large existing market demand that could significantly increase the competitiveness and growth of tourism destinations and businesses.

For this reason, the European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT), the ONCE Foundation and Tourism Organization (UNWTO), developed a Manual to provide tools for the implementation and efficient management of accessibility in tourist destinations. This "Manual on Accessible Tourism for All: Principles, Tools and Good Practices" provides a framework of reference on the interventions, tools and resources needed in the provision of services and management of Accessible Tourism. Through these instruments, UNWTO aims to encourage key actors in the sector to implement measures that encourage greater participation of different target groups in tourism activities, including persons with disabilities among others.

This manual is divided into 5 modules that provides answers to the main questions on accessibility in tourism: general context, recommendations, main areas of intervention, indicators for national tourism administrations and good practices at international level.

Due to the objective of the first project result, which is to support SMEs and stakeholders in the tourism value chain to take a selfie and analyse their "accessibility" status, we focus on the Module IV of the Manual on Accessible Tourism for All: Principles, Tools and Good Practices. The reason is that this module provides a range of indicators, aimed at national tourism organizations, so that they can assess the evolution of accessibility in tourism destinations. In addition, this module is accompanied by a detailed methodology for their application. These indicators can serve as a practical tool not only to assess the current situation within destinations but also to consider further actions that may be required.

This manual has developed the indicators through the following steps:

1. Definition of accessibility in the tourism value chain and its areas of intervention or links.

2. Provide the elements in which each accessibility areas in the tourism value chain is assessed.

3. Developed the key issues in evaluating accessibility in each link of the chain and its elements.

4. Finally, design and classification of general indicators.

To analyse the performance indicators defined by Module IV of the Handbook on Accessible Tourism for All, and to adapt them to outdoor, nature/adventure tourism activities, various working groups have been organized between the project partners.

Below, the elements included in the Manual and the first modifications/integrations (highlighted in yellow) made by the consortium:
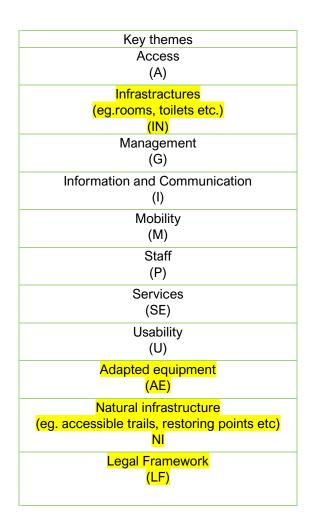
Elements for the study of accessible tourism indicators

Links in the accessible tourism value	Element
Planning and advance information and reservations	- Information and reservation websites - Travel agencies
Arrival/Departure to the destination	- Transport infrastructure (airports, railway stations, intercity bus, and maritime terminals) - Mobile equipment (transport vehicles) Transport operators (airlines, railways, shipping companies, etc.) - Signs - On-site Information (e.g. Sensorial support etc). ==Specialized customer care== ~~Transport operators (airlines, railways, shipping companies, etc.)~~
Accommodation	- Hotels and similar establishments (e.g. Camping, Shelters, Country houses, Hostels, AIRBNB etc.) - Reception - Restaurants - Infrastructures (stairs, doors etc.) - Signs - On-site Information (e.g.Sensorial support etc). ==Specialized customer care==
Catering	- Catering establishments - Catering companies - On-site Information (e.g. Sensorial support etc). - Signs - Restaurants - Infrastructures (stairs, doors etc.) ==Specialized customer care==
Local Transportation	- Station infrastructure and services - Stop infrastructure (bus shelters and poles) - Rolling stock (bus, metro, tram) - Transport operators - Parking - Natural paths - Signs - On-site Information (e.g. Sensorial support etc). ==Specialized customer care==
~~Touristic areas nearby~~	~~Touristic areas nearby~~
Touristic resources	- Infrastructures - Signs - On-site Information (e.g. Sensorial support etc). ==Specialized customer care== - Parking - Adapted activities - Training to meet the needs of the costumer - Personal assistance
Public tourism administrations	(National, regional, local) tourism administrations, destination management organisations, municipalities, regional tourism councillors or other tourism destination managers - How to communicate and promote the accessibility of the destination - Legal framework/requirements

Each element is linked to a key theme and indicator:

Key themes
Access (A)
Infrastractures (eg.rooms, toilets etc.) (IN)
Management (G)
Information and Communication (I)
Mobility (M)
Staff (P)
Services (SE)
Usability (U)
Adapted equipment (AE)
Natural infrastructure (eg. accessible trails, restoring points etc) NI
Legal Framework (LF)

Country brainstorming meetings

Following the first activity described above, the consortium worked on defining the accessibility levels. Country brainstorming meetings have also been organised with the participation of companies, tourism sector experts and representatives of disabled associations, to share the work of the partnership and make any additions or changes.

Participants were reached in different ways considering the period of implementation of the action.

An evaluation of:

- the methodology we have designed,
- the areas of analysis and the indicators,
- the questions asked about the self-assessment tool,

they were asked.

Below you will find a summary of the results of the country brainstorming meetings.

ITALY

Elements of analysis and evaluation

Methodology	Areas (Key themes) and Indicators	Self-assessment tool (SAT)
The project methodology adopted is suitable and valid to assess the level of accessibility of SMEs and tour operators.	Indicators well targeted on specific areas of disability, but the areas should be better defined, and the indicators grouped accordingly. Indeed, the number of indicators is very large and should be grouped by specific areas (the 7 areas are still too large). Some indicators are not very clear, and some are too broad and not applicable to many paths	The tool (SAT) can be extremely useful and versatile if we consider that it is addressed to different types of organizations, from accommodation facilities to tourist services.

Suggestions:

- Perhaps some figures could be added in the Personal Assistance area, e.g. sign language experts, specialised educators/operators for individual disabilities, whether physical, mental or sensory.
- Involvement of public bodies and institutions.
- Involvement of private citizens who can benefit both from outdoor practice, which is still too little widespread, and from accompanying people with disabilities as a mutual enrichment.

- Translating the SAT into Italian before testing the tool, as most of the managers in rural/outdoor tourism areas will probably have difficulty working in English.

FRANCE

Elements of analysis and evaluation

Methodology	Areas (Key themes) and Indicators	Self-assessment tool (SAT)
The project methodology adopted is well designed to assess the level of accessibility of SMEs and tour operators.	Areas and indicators are quite specific and precise.	The tool looks easy to use. Simple questions that users can easily answer. On the other hand, perhaps it would be better to be more specific in some of them, according to each family of disability.

Suggestions:

- Revising the scoring system: not scoring enterprises.
- Remove the Key theme 2: "Arrival/Departure to the destination part" from the indicators.
- It will be important to propose general and specific indicators for each sport activity, according to 4 families of disability: Mental, Physical, Hearing impaired (deaf), Visually impaired (blind).

SPAIN

Elements of analysis and evaluation

Methodology	Areas (Key themes) and Indicators	Self-assessment tool (SAT)
The approach covers the whole travel journey (from the decision to travel and planning, arrival to accommodation, activities you do there and the whole post-stay...) is very successful.	Areas and indicators are very complete. For example, Area 3 "Accommodation" represent a very interesting guideline when building new accommodation or when renovating existing accommodation.	The approach is good, but the questions are very general. Let them be more specific for each service. Because they can focus on physical disability and have accessibility with those needs but not for hearing impairment. Companies tend to think about accessibility and relate it to

		reduced mobility and don't look at other visual or hearing disabilities.

Suggestions:

- it would be good to add the information of accessibility with photos because the people with disabilities have a better idea of how it is and if it is suitable for them.
- it would be necessary to know if the equivalent regulations in the different EU countries are compatible in as many aspects as mentioned in these documents.
- Involvement of public bodies and institutions.
- Need to train staff to understand guests' needs so that they can provide better care for people with special needs. Encourage accessibility training in the same way that training is provided in traditional occupational areas.

IRELAND

Elements of analysis and evaluation

Methodology	Areas (Key themes) and Indicators	Self-assessment tool (SAT)
Participants agree on the standard proposed. If followed, it would be a fantastic guideline to implement across the board, in all outdoor services and activities.	Areas and indicators are very detailed and informative. People would learn a lot from the tool itself and hopefully aspire to it.	It will be a fantastic and very interesting tool because they have never come across anything like it. They were all in agreement that 200 questions would be far too much, and all are looking forward to seeing the finished product. It served also as an educational tool and something to aim towards.

Below you will find a SWOT analysis of the results of the country's brainstorming meetings:

Strengths	Weaknesses
- The approach used to evaluate accessibility is very interesting and valuable. - The materials we are developing represent a useful guideline for	- The areas and in particular the indicators to assess accessibility are too many. - Some of the SAT questions may be more specific and well designed to

tourism organizations interested in improving their accessibility.	better represent all families with disabilities. - Lack of economic and human resources of SMEs to invest in the transition towards accessibility.
Opportunities	**Threats**
- SMEs and tourism organizations need to train staff to help or provide information and support to people with special needs. - Involve public bodies in the process (especially as regards public transport) to promote new accessible destinations	- Different regulations in EU countries - Other tools already available for a self-assessment of accessibility

Following the indications provided by the participants in the Country brainstorming meetings, we reviewed the categories and elements to evaluate the accessibility of SMEs. We grouped indicators and as you will notice in the table below, we eliminated the 2nd category: "Arrival/Departure to the destination" and we have merged it with "Local Transportation".

Links in the accessible tourism value chain	Element
1. Planning and advance information and reservations	● Information and reservation websites ● Travel agencies
2. Arrival/Departure to the destination (Local Transportation)	● Station infrastructure and services ● Stop infrastructure (bus shelters and poles) ● Rolling stock (bus, metro, tram) ● Transport operators ● Parking ● Natural paths ● Signs ● On-site Information (e.g.Sensorial support etc). ● Specialized costumer care
3. Accommodation	● Hotels and similar establishments (e.g. Camping, Shelters, Country houses, Hostels, AIRBNB etc.) ● Reception ● Restaurants ● Infrastructures (stairs, doors etc.) ● Signs ● On-site Information (e.g.Sensorial support etc). ● Specialized costumer care

4.	Catering	- Catering establishments - Catering companies - On-site Information (e.g.Sensorial support etc). - Signs - Restaurants - Infrastructures (stairs, doors etc.) - Specialized costumer care
5.	Touristic resources	- Infrastructures - Signs - On-site Information (e.g.Sensorial support etc). - Specialized costumer care - Parking - Adapted activities - Training to meet the needs of the costumer - Personal assistance
6.	Public tourism administrations	(National, regional, local) tourism administrations, destination management organisations, municipalities, regional tourism councillors or other tourism destination managers - How to communicate and promote the accessibility of the destination - Legal framework/requirements

2. Accessibility levels

Methodology

In each of the 6 categories identified we have added the elements to be assessed by adapting them to outdoor and adventure tourism, however we have observed, thanks to feedback from organisations in the tourism value chain, that there are far too many elements to be assessed by SMEs who do not have an advanced knowledge of the topic, therefore, we have regrouped these elements, categorising sub-elements within these categories.

Below you can see the categories and subcategories:

1. **Planning and advance information and reservations.**

- Website.
- Information panels: visible, at a good distance, with concise information that is easy to understand, with alternative formats.
- Signposting and maps: colour contrast and with graphic symbols or characters and embossed or braille maps: maps situated in different areas.
- Information documents: information on accessibility conditions, accessibility in immediate surroundings, guides, maps, restaurants, lodgings, parking spaces, event's accessibility.
- Characteristics of information: Written content with easy-to-read option, accessible formats, on fixtures in the accommodation.
- Personal assistance.

2. **Arrival/Departure to the destination (Local Transportation).**

- Awareness of accessible transportation options.
- Personal assistance: provide assistance during travels, ticketing, pick up at the airport...
- Proposed services during travel.

3. **Accommodation.**

- Entrance: accessible for every accommodation, accessible main entrance, doors at least 90cm wide, collapsible doors at least 85cm wide, sliding doors at least 80cm wide, entrance door's threshold at least 85 cm wide.
- Bathrooms: free of obstacles.
    - o Toilets: seat situated between 45-50 cm from the ground, flushing system easy to activate and located between 70-120 cm high.
    - o Shower: shower stool, portable chair with back support, or a collapsible shower chair, obstacle-free space, measuring 80 cm wide, horizontal grab bar located 80 cm from the ground. - single-handle shower tap - shower curtain - Shower accessories should be within reach of the shower stool.
    - o Bathtub: equipped with a swivelling seat located between 45-50cm high.

- Bedroom
    - o Doors: Cubicle door frames are 80 cm wide; doors are easy to open, and the accommodation's number is easy to read.
    - o Lighting: adjustable, homogeneous, and indirect

o Services: information provided in braille, use of visual and audible signals (audio description, tactile models, information written in braille); Wheelchairs, stools, and walking sticks are available to lend to visitors; available complementary systems and technology or alternatives.

- Pools: visible pool perimeter, contrasting pool ladders, accessible way to access the pool.
- Gym: accessible.

4. **Catering.**

- Equipment provided.
- Tables: space under tables' ends and sides measure at least 80 cm wide, 70 cm high, and 50 cm in depth.
- Menu: accessible formats.

5. **Touristic resources.**

- Accessible Natural or cultural resources.
- Nautical Activities.
- Accessible beach.
- Specialized customer care.

6. **Public tourism administrations.**

- Services and visits promoted.
- Communication and promotion of the accessibility of the destination.
- Legal framework.

In following link, you can find all Key themes (Areas) and Indicators:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1c7GY_a_I5amL4m-IWwwOC_WPaqXSFAbL/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=118168985551455511154&rtpof=true&sd=true

Description of Accessibility levels

Considering that the accessibility involves many elements of an infrastructure as well as a service, and there are many different operators in the value chain of tourism, we have approached the accessibility levels in general terms, considering the number of items the operators cover.

We have set 4 levels, which are as follows:

1. From 0 to 4 points: **Need to work on it**

2. From 5 to 6 points: **Basic**

3. From 7 to 8 points : **Good**

4. From 9 to 10 points : **Excellent**

Level 1:

The tourism organization has general information on accessibility, but not specifically. It is taking its first steps to make its facility and services accessible, but it must continue to work to become an accessible tourism player.

Level 2:

The tourism organization provides sufficient access to its structure or services to people with specific needs.
It needs to improve accessibility in some areas, provide specialized accompaniment and improve the training of its staff, but the first step has been taken by providing clear information to users.

Level 3:

The tourism organization guarantees access to its structure or services to people with disabilities.
It has staff trained on the subject and in the services offered it is possible to find some universal accessibility actions implemented for some disabilities.

Level 4:

The tourism organization promotes accessible tourism for all!
It respects the general and specific criteria relating to the various disabilities, successfully carries out many actions in this regard, and has qualified staff to accompany people with disabilities during the tourist experience.

Assessment of the accessibility of tourism actors

To provide an overall assessment of accessibility, we have defined a set of questions for each of the 6 categories and indicators, also considering the key themes links to each element of study.

Click on the following link to find out more:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SAEuFYDUGMMJj2zMZPaHxprIJFgDaWZj/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=118168985551455511154&rtpof=true&sd=true

In the Self-Assessment Tool - SAT that the partnership will develop, users will be able to select the desired level of accessibility (from 1 to 4). After filling a questionnaire targeted for assessing the specific level selected (i.e., the SAT), the software will compute the current score and will give suggestions about the actions (and resources) to be undertaken to improve it and reach the desired level.

The calculation will be performed based on the questions and **for each 'YES' selected users will get a point**. The final score for each of the six areas will be then calculated proportionally according to the number of questions that each area has.

In this way, the user will fit into one of the four levels of accessibility (1 'need to work on it'; 2 'basic'; 3 'Good'; 4 'Excellent'). For instance, if area 1 has 10 questions and the user answers 'YES' to 7 questions, he/she will be level 3 'Good' of accessibility. In this way, we will be able also to compare it with the desired level of accessibility. In other words, the levels of accessibility will be characterized by the number of 'YES' answers in each area.

Results – 4 levels of accessibility:

1. From 0 to 4 points: **Need to work on it**

The tourism organization is not working properly for accessible tourism, and keeping in mind some of the described criteria, at least it is respecting a sub-category of three / four categories. On the basis of the criteria described in the methodology, the organization has evaluated itself through the self-assessment tool and has a total average of 0 to 4 points.

2. From 5 to 6 points: **Basic**

The tourism organization is starting to work properly for accessible tourism bearing in mind only some of the described criteria, and respecting one and/or two sub-categories of each category. On the basis of the criteria described in the methodology, the organization has evaluated itself through the self-assessment tool and has a total average of 5 to 6 points.

3. From 7 to 8 points: **Good**

The tourism organization is working in a correct way for accessible tourism and considering most of the described criteria, it is complying with three and/or four subcategories of each category. Based on the criteria described in the methodology, the organisation has evaluated itself through the self-assessment tool and has a total average from 7 to 8 points.

4. From 9 to 10 points: **Excellent**

The tourism organization is sensitive to accessible tourism and inclusion is reflected in its strategy. It works perfectly for accessible tourism and considers most of the criteria described because it satisfies most of the sub-categories of each category. Based on the criteria described in the methodology, the organization assessed itself through the self-assessment tool and obtained a total average from 9 to 1 0 points.