

# *European Commission Actions related to Accessible Tourism in the EU*

**Split, 4 November 2016**



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# Economic Importance of Tourism

- **EU = Nr 1 destination of the world** – 478.3 million international tourist arrivals (2015)
- **The 3<sup>rd</sup> largest economic activity in the EU** (after distribution and construction)
- **Dominated by SMEs** (>90% = 3.4 million)
- **Direct and indirect contribution:**
  - **9.9% of EU GDP**
  - **25 million jobs** (10 % of the total labour force)
  - **20%** of the employees in the sector are **aged below 25**
- **Spill-over effects:** agro-food, transport, construction, retail, culture, design, etc.

## Main goal for EU tourism

- Help sector boost its contribution to economic growth and maintenance or creation of quality jobs
- Respect of sustainability goals (economic, environmental and social) = intrinsic to competitiveness of the sector on medium-long term

# Priority actions for EU tourism

1. Attract **investment** & improve **business environment** (well-functioning Single Market for services, smooth access to finance, reduction of unnecessary burden, etc.)
2. Exploit all opportunities of **digitalisation**
3. Improve **skills and competences** to provide the industry with the skills they need and improve quality of jobs
4. Joint **promotion of Europe as tourist destination**, particularly towards key third countries (diversification of tourism products, synergies between tourism and cultural and creative industries)

# Accessible Tourism – Tourism for All

- UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (2006)
- EU Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (2010)
- EU Accessibility Act (2015) - improve functioning of internal market for accessible products and services by removing barriers created by divergent legislation.

# Accessible Tourism Economic Importance

- €400 billion contribution to GDP - 3% of total EU GDP (2012)
- 9 million jobs



# Accessible Tourism Potential

- 2012: 783 million trips within the EU
- By 2020: demand set to rise to 862 million trips per year
- But only 9% of tourism services in Europe are accessible
- **Loyal, frequent travellers, travelling off season and for longer periods**

# European Commission initiatives related to Accessible Tourism

- 3 studies (demand, supply & skills)
- Several projects related to implementing and marketing accessible tourism itineraries
- "European Excellence Award for Accessible Tourism" (2012 & 2016)
- Several conferences
- Access City Awards
- EU Disability Card



EU Disability Card

BE

Name

Surname

Date of birth

Card serial number

Expiry date



# European Accessible Tourism Directory

- **European Accessible Tourism Directory** = online registry collecting information on existing tourism services and products for travellers with special needs

[www.pantou.org](http://www.pantou.org)



## Major tourism events to come

**European Tourism Day**, Brussels, 29 November 2016  
**Conference on ethical, responsible and sustainable tourism**,  
Krakow (Poland), April 2017



## Contact details

**European Commission,  
Tourism website:**

**[http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/index_en.htm)**



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*Thank you*