European Commission Actions related to Accessible Tourism in the EU

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Economic Importance of Tourism

- **EU = Nr 1 destination of the world** – 478.3 million international tourist arrivals (2015)
- **The 3rd 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
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
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:

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Thank you