



## A NEW HORIZON: TRANSFORMING TRAVEL THROUGH ACCESSIBLE TOURISM

ARTICLE PRODUCED IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EYSET PROJECT

# EYSET

Empower Youth organizations through  
Social Entrepreneurship in Tourism

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**Co-funded by  
the European Union**

101052081 — EYSET — ERASMUS-YOUTH-2021-CB



## A new horizon: transforming travel through accessible tourism

At the European Union level, accessible tourism holds significant importance for several reasons, ranging from **economic benefits** to **promoting social inclusion** and **upholding fundamental human rights**.



Nowadays, equal opportunities for people with disabilities in tourism are of paramount importance for a variety of reasons. Ensuring accessibility and inclusivity within the tourism industry not only aligns with fundamental human rights but also brings about social, economic, and cultural benefits that contribute to a more equitable and vibrant society. Every individual, regardless of their abilities, has the right to participate fully in all aspects of life, including leisure and travel. Ensuring equal opportunities in tourism upholds the principles of human rights, dignity, and non-discrimination, allowing people with disabilities to exercise their rights without barriers. Furthermore, **equal access** to tourism fosters social inclusion, promoting a sense of belonging and community for people with disabilities. When they can participate in travel experiences, they are more likely to engage in social interactions, share cultural experiences, and forge meaningful connections with others.

Accessible tourism represents a vast and often untapped market segment. By catering to the needs of people with disabilities, the tourism industry can tap into their spending power, contributing to increased revenues, job creation, and economic growth. Empowering this demographic economically benefits both individuals and the broader economy. Indeed, designing accessible facilities, services, and experiences fosters innovation and creativity. Businesses and destinations that invest in universal design often come up with innovative solutions that benefit all travellers, not just those with disabilities. All these result in a positive perception and reputation because destinations that prioritize accessible tourism earn a positive reputation for being inclusive and welcoming.



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The Erasmus+ project **ONAT4All** (<https://www.onat4all.eu/>) is an important step towards achieving a more inclusive society by ensuring access and equal opportunities for PWDs in outdoors and adventure tourism. The project will contribute to improve

### ONAT4All in a nutshell

ONAT4all is a project co-funded by the European Union. Its aim is based on reboosting EU tourism value chain by providing SMEs with



knowledge, competences and skills in defining accessible tourism products, SMEs active in nature/adventure tourism and outdoor activities; C-VET providers and VET providers in tourism; Chambers of commerce; and DMO. From the beginning of the project to date, the collaborative efforts of all partners, among them Controvento and PREDIF, have led to the design of a self-diagnosis tool for micro and small businesses in the tourism sector: <https://sat.onat4all.eu/>.



This tool enables businesses to have a "first contact" and an awareness-raising experience with the themes of accessibility and disability. It serves as an invitation to step out of the daily routine of their activities and to challenge themselves.

The activity will then continue with the adaptation of training modules for accessible tourism, already developed by the Spanish partner Predif, to nature-based and outdoor activities. This **online** and **open-access** course has been designed to develop and promote the knowledge of tourism professionals on the subject of accessibility and to improve the reception and attention given to people with disabilities in nature-based and outdoor tourism activities.

Recreational activities are an integral part of tourism and offer a wide range of opportunities for people with accessibility needs. To this end, this course focuses on sharing knowledge about the needs expressed by customers with disabilities, which will enable tourism sector personal assistants to understand the importance of meeting these needs and to pay adequate attention to accessibility in a comprehensive and holistic manner.

**More resources:**

<https://www.onat4all.eu/>

- **"Inclusive Tourism: A New Strategic Alliance for a Competitive and Responsible European Tourism"** by ENAT (European Network for Accessible Tourism) - This report discusses the importance of accessible and inclusive tourism in Europe and presents the perspectives of stakeholders involved in the tourism sector.
- **"Tourism for All: Promoting Universal Accessibility"**, European Parliament - This briefing outlines the European Parliament's perspective on promoting universal accessibility in tourism, highlighting the benefits and challenges.
- **"Tourism for All - promoting universal accessibility" Good Practices in the Accessible Tourism Supply Chain**, Fundacion Once and ENAT, [https://webunwto.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/2019-08/goodpracticesintheaccessibletourismsupplychain\\_en\\_2016\\_2\\_web\\_20160726122\\_revisado\\_vfinal\\_2\\_accupdated\\_on\\_the\\_web.pdf](https://webunwto.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/2019-08/goodpracticesintheaccessibletourismsupplychain_en_2016_2_web_20160726122_revisado_vfinal_2_accupdated_on_the_web.pdf)