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About GreenTour

Sustainable environment friendly tourism is very important nowadays.

GreenTour project aims to:

- Develop an Interactive map to enable people with disabilities to be able to plan, realise and enjoy green touristic travels, in more sustainable & environment friendly way and to explore all green tourism offers that the country can provide.
- Motivate the people with disabilities to lead an active life, do tourism and become true agents of the environmental change through development and implementation of new and targeted teaching approaches.
- Raise the awareness among people on the need to consider the environmental impact of touristic travels and to make green choices while organizing while being on the trip.

The current Green Travel Manual provides guidance for the people with disabilities on how to plan, organize and realise their green touristic travels. The Manual teach them on how to opt for sustainable choices during the entire process.

The Manual informs on what is considered green tourism and what are the green tourism destinations; what distinguishes them from the conventional ones; why they are the better choice and how they are environment-friendly.

All materials of the project are available here: https://greentour.usal.es

Preconditions and personal requirements of participants

- Laptop with Internet access/accounts to different sites and social media channels;
- 2. ICT skills required such as usage of PowerPoint, Internet browsing machines, Video Recording, audiovisual media, etc.
- 3. Open mindset and willingness to learn
- 4. Accessibility awareness and respect for diversity
- 5. Self-motivation and time management



Introduction

In this chapter, we are going to provide more information to tourism providers on what green tourism is and what it means to work with people with disabilities. Additionally, this chapter will analyze the reasons why tourism providers should offer green tourism services for people with disabilities (hotels, accommodations, farms, restaurants, etc).

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the module, participants would be able to:

Knowledge

Soft and Hard skills

Attitudes

- Definition of Green tourism
- Best practices of green tourism services
- The reasons to convert their businesses "green" and "accessible"
- Implementing green tourism
- Minimize negative impacts on the environment
- Local community support
- Social Responsible
- Cooperative
- Practical

Duration:

- 1. Global duration (for the entire module) 1 academic hour
- 2. Estimation of the different sub-sections:
- lessons/learning 30 minutes
- useful resources 30 minutes

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1. a. What is Green Tourism?

Green Tourism is defined as environmentally friendly tourism activities with various focuses and meanings. In a broad term, green tourism is about being an environmentally friendly tourist or providing environmentally friendly tourism services. Green tourism, also known as sustainable tourism, eco-tourism, or responsible tourism, is a form of tourism that focuses on minimizing the negative impact of travel and promoting environmental conservation and social responsibility.

The green tourism concept would be highly appealing to tourism enterprises and operators owing to increasing governmental pressure to improve environmental performance by adopting effective and tangible environmental management techniques. Furthermore, the achievement and promotion of internationally recognized environmental awards would be instrumental to the tourism enterprises in marketing their services. As a result, many concerned and responsible parties put forward recommendations for green tourism products to regulate tourism's negative impacts.

Green tourism aims to:

Create Balance between economic growth, environmental and social responsibility Allowing tourists to enjoy Travel Experiences Contributing to the preservation of the natural & cultural heritage of the destination





1.b. What it means to work with people with disabilities?

In other words "Accessible Tourism" is an approach to tourism development that ensures tourist destinations, services, and amenities are accessible to all people, regardless of their physical or cognitive limitations. It includes a wide range of services and initiatives designed to improve the tourism experience for everyone, recognizing the diverse needs of the global population. Accessible tourism is important for both moral and economic reasons, as it promotes equal access and social inclusion, while also representing an exceptional business opportunity for the tourism industry.

The focus of accessible tourism is not only to ensure tourist destinations, accommodations, and transportation are physically accessible but also

- to offer practical travel-related support,
- and access to information.

For example, many cities and destinations now provide online accessibility maps, which allow users to find information about the accessibility of various attractions and amenities. These are often provided by the official tourist site for the area.





Introduction

In this chapter, there are presented the main reasons to provide green and accessible tourism for people with disabilities.

Also, you will learn about the recognized green certification programs and labels in the tourism industry as well as obtaining certification for them.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the module, participants would be able to:

Knowledge

Soft and Hard skills

Attitudes

- Advantages of accessible and sustainable tourism
- Best practices of green tourism implemented
- Recognized green certification programs
- Obtaining EarthCheck Certification
- · Promoting green tourism
- Initiative

- Curious
- Motivated
- Open
- Practical

Duration:

- 1. Global duration (for the entire module) 3 academic hours
- 2. Estimation of the different sub-sections:
- lessons/learning 2 academic hours and 30 minutes
- useful resources 30 minutes

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2.a. Why tourism providers should offer green tourism services for people with disabilities.

Disability inclusion is everyone's matter. Green Tourism is connected with responsible traveling and sustainability which is one of the top priorities of the EU strategies and the first on the list of the next generation profile of travelers. Additionally, the aging population in Europe and worldwide is growing rapidly. Seniors and generally people with disabilities are one of the biggest markets in tourism. Therefore, tourism providers must adjust their services according to their needs if they want to be compatible and successful.

Green Tourism services for people with disabilities are an opportunity for tourism providers to differentiate their services and add value to their tourism products. For example, a guided tour of a lavender maze designed especially for blind people is better than having only a lavender field where people can just walk. A nature trail with facilities for disabled persons near your establishment will add value to your services.



Tourism providers can benefit from offering green tourism services to people with disabilities for the following reasons:

- Sustainably manage their businesses
- Attract a big target audience
- Equality Offer the same services to all visitors regardless of their disabilities
- Marketing purposes
- Niche
- Funding Opportunities





2.b. Why tourism providers should offer accessible tourism

<u>2.b.1. Accessible and sustainable tourism and its importance.</u>

Accessible tourism offers travel and tourist experiences, services, and places accessible and pleasurable for everyone, including those with disabilities. This includes ramps, elevators, modifications for people with visual or hearing impairments, and clear signage and information for those with cognitive issues. The goal is to make travel and tourism accessible to all.

Sustainable tourism minimizes negative impacts on the environment and local communities while maximizing positive contributions. It protects the environment, local economy, and culture. The goal is long-term benefits that balance environmental and community well-being.

2.b.1.1. Importance of Accessible Tourism





2.b.1.2. Sustainable tourism is vital for various reasons



2.b.2. Recognized green certification programs and labels

2.b.2.1. EarthCheck

EarthCheck is a leading certification program for the travel and tourism industry.

2.b.2.2. The Rainforest Alliance

Offers a certification program that verifies tourism businesses' commitment to environmental conservation, social responsibility, and sustainable business practices.

2.b.2.3. The Blue Flag

This certification is primarily associated with beaches and marinas, indicating their high environmental and safety standards.



2.b.2.4. Obtaining EarthCheck Certification:







As a benefit, you receive an enhanced reputation, eco-conscious traveler attraction, industry leadership, and EarthCheck <u>support throughout the process</u>.

2.b.3. Sustainable goals

Sustainable tourism methods that promote equity and inclusion benefit locals, visitors, and the industry. It creates a more dynamic, respectful, and egalitarian tourist landscape that improves lives while preserving the destinations.

Promoting Local Community Development:

Tourism programs that prioritize inclusion and equality help local communities grow. Tourism can empower marginalized groups like the ones with disabilities.

Empowerment and Economic Opportunities:

Inclusive tourism allows marginalized people to participate. This can be done by offering training and jobs in hospitality, guiding, handicraft manufacturing, and cultural performances. Tourism improves people's quality of life who might otherwise have low economic prospects.

Preservation of Cultural Heritage:

Local culture and customs are often celebrated in inclusive tourism. This promotes the preservation of unique cultures, languages, arts, and information. Visitors' reverence for a community's past motivates them to conserve and pass it on.



Introduction

In this chapter, are presented some tips for tourist providers to make an accommodation facility (hotel, agrotourism, restaurant, etc) more green and eco-friendly. This section provides guidance on promoting accessible tourism, emphasizing the importance of designing tourism offerings suitable for people with disabilities, creating accessible destinations, and offering accessible accommodations, restaurants, and activities in nature. It also highlights the use of web accessibility and its importance for people with dissabilities.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the module, participants would be able to:

Knowledge

- Best practices of green tourism implemented
- Ways to become more environmentally friendly
- Understading of accessible tourism
- Web accessibility and marketing

Soft and Hard skills

- Promoting green tourism
- Revamping
- Find sustainable resources
- Accessibility planning and implementation
- Customer service training
- Empathy and inclusivity
- Communication, problem-solving

Attitudes

- Curious
- Motivated
- Open
- Practical
- · Open- mindedness
- Continuous improvement
- Customer-centric approach

Duration:

- 1. Global duration (for the entire module) 5 academic hours
- 2. Estimation of the different sub-sections:
- lessons/learning 4 academic hours
- useful resources 1 academic hour



3.a. How to become greener

Our Green Tour project wants to create a synergy between accessible tourism and sustainable tourism, promoting for people with disabilities, not only a suitable offer that meets their needs but also sustainable, allowing the customer to have the possibility to make more ecological and sustainable choices aimed at respecting the environment.

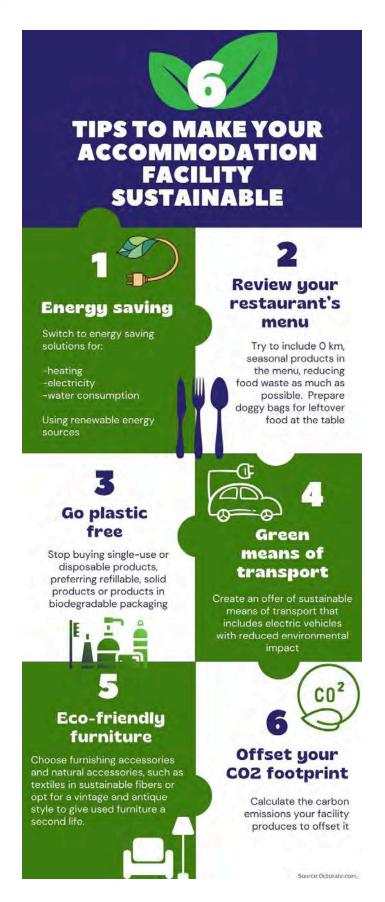
As tourist services **suppliers**, it is important to try to do everything possible to create an inclusive environment for customers with disabilities by also offering eco-friendly services and initiatives that encourage them to make more sustainable choices.

3.a.1 What can you do if you are a tourism service provider, to become more "green"?

There are several solutions to undertake to make your structure more eco-friendly, without causing an upheaval in management.

- Try to save and not waste resources
- Find useful strategies to reduce energy consumption and waste
- Try to integrate these principles in different aspects of the touristic offer: accommodation, transport, activities and catering services.
- Understand how to offset carbon emissions







The most impactful interventions in this regard concern the energy saving, adapting the restaurant menu, offer eco-compatible solutions in terms of consumption, furnishings, transport, experiences that enhance local realities, and offset your carbon footprint.

3.a.1.1. Energy saving

To guarantee greater energy savings, with a consequent reduction in the waste of resources, it would be desirable to reconvert one's structure to the use of renewable energy sources for energy and water supply, through clean sources (biomass, photovoltaic panels); solar panels to heat the rooms, rainwater collection to be reused for the laundry service.

Other suggestions include the installation of LED lamps to replace the traditional incandescent or halogen ones, the installation of presence sensors, the installation of high-efficiency inverter fans to allow variable airflow regulation.

Today there are various technologies that allow the activation via card and automatic switching off of the air conditioning and lighting systems of the rooms.

The adoption of smart sockets could also be taken into consideration, which allow appliances to be automatically switched off in stand-by as well as having energy-saving appliances in the rooms (eg replacing traditional mini-bars with the most recent models equipped with innovative technology).

As far as water consumption is concerned, it would be very useful to install flow regulators to reduce water consumption and water collection tanks to reduce irrigation-related consumption.



3.a.1.2. Adapt the restaurant menu

If your facility offers a restaurant service, from the point of view of sustainability it would be important to offer organic foods, perhaps at zero km (or almost) and products labelled with recognized certifications; giving priority to the seasonality of local foods and taking care to limit food waste as much as possible.

You can become more aware of food waste not only in the kitchen, paying attention to reusing the same ingredients for different preparations, for example, or creating themed **menus** that revolve around a main seasonal ingredient, but also by arranging the preparation of " doggy bag " or containers for leftover food that guests were unable to consume at the table.

The restaurant **kitchen** itself can become a place where, if the correct modifications are put in place, can actively contribute to saving energy in the entire structure.

An electric current optimizer could be installed, this device is a powerful tool for implementing energy saving in professional kitchens. It rationalises and improves energy distribution by first analysing the electrical energy demand of the various equipment and then based on the data collected by changing the way in which the electrical load is distributed.

Another element to increase energy saving and take actions in the direction of environmental sustainability could be the renewal of obsolete refrigeration equipment with new generation models which, unlike their predecessors, use the ecological gas R290, a natural and non-refrigerant refrigerant. toxic.





3.a.1.3. Offer eco-compatible solutions in terms of consumption, furniture, transport, experiences that enhance local realities.

When managing a hospitality facility, it would be better to pay attention to some behaviours that make the difference when it comes to sustainability and respect for the environment.

One of the requirements that are now fundamental, to ensure that a structure is eco-sustainable is going **plastic free**, by not using the disposable plastic containers. It would be preferable to adopt refillable dispensers, solid soaps and shampoos formulated with ingredients that respect the environment, biodegradable guest toiletries stored in recyclable or made of recycled material packaging.

In addition to reducing the use of plastic, a "greener" choice is to limit the use of paper and carefully manage waste disposal through separate collection programs.

It is also important to offer ecological alternatives in terms of **transports**, acquiring charging stations for electric vehicles or suggesting transfers using ecological means of transport with low environmental impact. Another way of going "greener" is to organize activities and experiences for guests that enhance **local realities**.

The cooperation and **involvement** of guests is essential for the implementation of all these tips, making them aware of the eco-friendly policies adopted in your accommodation facility. Today, in fact, there are several online booking platforms for eco-friendly structures like Ecob&b (you can acces their site at https://ecobnb.com/).

The same principle can be applied to staff, making them aware of the attention and need to reduce waste, so that they can intervene in any circumstance or situation that is harmful to the environment.

Furniture can also play its part in transforming traditional structures into sustainable hotels. This means choosing natural furnishings and accessories, such as textiles in sustainable fibers (bamboo, cotton, hemp, recycled wool), or opt for a vintage style that can exploit the resources of antiques and give a second life to used furniture.



3.a.1.4. Offset your carbon footprint

The carbon footprint is the parameter that makes it possible to determine the environmental impacts that man-made activities have on climate change and consequently on global warming of the planet.

Specifically, it is an indication of the amount of carbon dioxide (CO2) emitted into the atmosphere both directly and indirectly.

William Rees and Mathis Wackernagel were the first to define the carbon footprint in 1992.

Emissions that cannot be cut must be compensated through the purchase of *carbon credits* generated thanks to reforestation activities and the protection of parks and natural reserves which act as if they were the lungs of our planet: they "breathe" carbon dioxide and they release oxygen.

Carbon credits are a form of market, a "exchange" created to provide economic incentives to those who want to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions; stock exchange which, however, does not use a currency such as the dollar or the euro as a unit of measurement for carrying out transactions, but CO2 expressed in tons.

Talking about offsetting CO2, then, means thinking about ways to restore, as far as possible, the balance in favour of the planet, introducing every possible action to reduce the pollution produced. Offsetting CO2 is certainly the first act of conscience increasingly important both on the part of companies and individuals.



3.b. How to become more accessible

Accessible Tourism has evolved from the traditional adjustments so that people with disabilities could do tourism in an autonomous way towards quality tourism for all, understanding that accessibility is an important part of this quality.

3.b.1. Design a tourism offer suitable for people with disabilities, focusing on eco-tourism and sustainable travel.

The main barriers appear between the user/client and the environment where he/she travels (barriers in transport, architectural barriers, or in communication, among others). These barriers make it difficult, and in many cases impossible to access and enjoy tourism infrastructures and services.

3.b.2. Accessible tourism destinations

The 2016 UNWTO document proposes some recommendations for creating accessible tourism destinations:

3.b.2.1. Information is the key

It is essential to provide reliable and up-to-date data on the state of accessibility at the destination.

3.b.2.2. Chain with no breaks

Destinations should create a coherent Tourism for All offer that includes all elements of the value chain (booking systems, accommodation, transport, etc.) and easy access to them.

3.b.2.3. The challenge of transport

Appropriate means of transport must be available to reach and move around the destination.



3.b.2.4. Safe use

In making a resource accessible, safety conditions for all visitors must be taken into account.

3.b.2.5. Inclusion

It is necessary to offer the appropriate services in an integrated manner within the destination's offer.

3.b.2.6. Attitude is everything

It is fundamental to provide specific training for staff to deal with people with access needs, as this will favour individualised care.

3.b.3. Promoting the accessible tourism offer of a destination.

Once the accessibility actions have been carried out at the destination, a communication/marketing plan should be developed to attract potential customers. For example:

- Creation of a guide to accessible tourism including tourist establishments and resources that meet accessibility requirements.
- Inclusion of the above information in the destination's promotional channels.
- Contact with travel agencies and tourist intermediaries specialised in accessible tourism.
- Present the accessible tourism offer at general and specialised fairs.
- Informing customers about the accessibility conditions of a destination.

Regular contact with associations of people with disabilities is also recommended, as well as the creation of accessible tourism packages.

Finally, information should always be provided in accessible formats, following the criteria of font, colour and content in line with the principles of 'easy reading'.



3.b.4. Web accessibility

The recommended web accessibility measures, in terms of content, can be checked at the following page: https://www.w3.org/, where The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) develops standards and guidelines for accessibility measures.

Of these, we highlight the following:

- Add alternative texts to informative images (also in links with images).
- Correctly associate form controls.
- Design with style sheets that allow fonts to be enlarged and reduced, avoiding content overlaps in different browsers and changing colour contrasts.
- Insert subtitles in audiovisual content.
- Implement accessibility plug-ins.

3.b.5. Tourist information offices

Many tourists get their first impression of the destination through the offices. Preferably, and whenever possible, the tourist information office should be located on the ground floor, at the same level as the public road.

Entrance doors will be accessible to all users. To this end, they will have a minimum width of 90 cm at the frame, with free passage space provided by a single leaf of at least 85 cm for hinged doors and 80 cm for sliding doors. Their opening system should preferably be automatic, with sliding or folding doors.

The counter should have at least one space with a height accessible to wheelchair users and people of small stature. For people with hearing problems, it is important that the counter is equipped with a magnetic induction loop.

3.b.6. Guided tours and customer service

If guided tours are organised, it is advisable to plan ahead:





- Visits and workshops in sign language for deaf people.
- Educational workshops for children and adults, including those with cognitive accessibility needs.
- Tactile tours for the visually impaired.
- Loan of wheelchairs for visitors with reduced mobility.
- For deaf people without hearing aids, there should be a voice amplification system for the guide and individual headphones.

3.b.7. Accessible accommodation

Accessible accommodation does not have to be a more complex or aesthetically unattractive building. It is advisable to consider the following elements:

3.b.7.1. Parkings

All accommodation shall have at least one reserved parking space for PRM for each accessible accommodation unit, in an area with no slope, located as close as possible to the property. The space shall be marked with the International Symbol of Accessibility (AIS), both on the pavement and on a vertical plaque.

3.b.7.2. Reception desks

See the section on tourist information offices.

3.b.7.3. Corridors

A minimum space width of 1.20 m and a minimum height of 2.20 m free of obstacles must always be ensured in traffic aisles.

3.b.7.4. Adapted rooms and bathrooms.

For example, the entrance door to the room shall have a minimum clear path of 85 cm, with an easy opening system and no return spring; switches, sockets or controls shall be located at a height of between 40 cm and 1.20 m; shelves, drawers and coat





racks shall be located at a height of between 40 cm and 1.20 m; and the height of the bed shall be between 45 cm and 50 cm.

Bathrooms shall also have a minimum width for access and an unobstructed space of 1,50 metres in diameter. The washbasin shall not have a pedestal and shall be at a maximum height of 85 cm; the mirror shall have a maximum height of 90 cm; the toilet seat shall be between 45 and 50 cm above the floor and shall be fitted with two horizontal support bars; the shower floor shall be non-slip and the taps shall be single-lever taps.

Sample of Good practices: Hotels ILUNION

https://www.ilunionhotels.com/landings/hoteles-accesibles/

3.b.8. Accessible restaurants and cafés.

An accessible catering space is one that takes into account the needs of all people, from a physical, cognitive, sensory and nutritional point of view.

3.b.8.1. Parking and access

There shall be at least one space reserved for PRM, in an area with no slope, located as close as possible to the accommodation.

3.b.8.2. Spaces for catering

The furniture - tables, chairs, bars, benches and service furniture - shall be arranged in such a way that the minimum distance between furniture is 80 cm, preferably at least 1,20 m. There shall be at least one place in the room where a circumference of 1.50 m in diameter can be inscribed. In addition, TUR4all makes a number of recommendations:

 Under the tables there shall be a clear width ≥ 80 cm, a clear height ≥ 70 cm and a minimum clear depth of 50 cm.





- Access to the restaurant must be allowed with the assistance dog and guide dog.
- The self-service bar table shall have a space where the tray can be supported and pushed without the need to hold it.

3.b.8.3. Food requirements

In catering establishments it is necessary to take into account the different dietary needs of people, related for example to allergies or intolerances. TUR4all recommends the following:

- The type of allergens contained in each dish must be published on the menu, in conformity with the regulations in force.
- All staff in the establishment must be trained on how to act in the event of an anaphylactic reaction.
- It would be advisable to have an adrenaline auto-injector. En el buffet, es recomendable disponer de productos alimentarios envasados alternativos a los productos a granel.

3.c. Accessibility in protected natural spaces.

The experience of enjoying a natural environment for everyone implies taking into account the accessibility of all the elements that make it up, such as the use of trails or routes, visits to natural parks, information or nature interpretation centres, recreational areas and also the carrying out of different outdoor activities. TUR4all advises to follow the following guidelines:

The accessible itinerary within the natural space must consist of paths wide enough to allow for the movement and manoeuvring of people using wheelchairs, walking sticks/crutches or with pushchairs. They shall be at least 1.80 m wide and not less than 1.20 m narrow. They shall be at least 2.20 m high and shall not have projections of more than 15 cm without signs. There shall be no steps or stairs, the longitudinal





slope shall be \leq 6% and the transverse slope \leq 2%, and sections with a higher gradient shall be treated as accessible ramps.

It is also recommended to indicate the estimated time of completion, the length and type of route, whether it is flat, sloping, uneven pavement, etc., as well as to protect the road surface with an anti-derailment handrail at possible changes in level. On long routes, there must be a space that allows a wheelchair user to make a 360° turn.

<u>Samples of Good practices</u>: Accesible Green Areas: https://www.viasverdesaccesibles.es/

3.c.1. Activities in nature.

TUR4all also foresees a series of considerations to be taken into account when carrying out accessible activities in nature and the following can be highlighted:

- From the car park or access to the recreational area there must be a signposted accessible route.
- When designing activities in contact with nature, it is necessary that the materials used can be adapted to the needs of all people.
- If specific means of transport are used (canoes, horses...), it may be necessary to have seats or saddles with backrests, belts and armrests, etc.
- Attractions must also be adapted for people with accessibility needs. Safety and security measures are essential.
- Whenever possible, the natural or cultural resources to be interpreted should be accessible from the itinerary itself so that they can be touched and perceived. If Braille signs are available, they should be placed at a height of between 1.20 and 1.75m.





 Provide location plans in high relief, with large characters and contrasting colours.

<u>Sample of good practice</u>: Travel Xperiencie (Andorra) https://www.travel-xperience.com/

3.c.2. Collaborative platform TUR4all

TUR4all, 'Accessible Tourism for All', is a collaborative platform (mobile application and website www.tur4all.com), developed by PREDIF and Fundación Vodafone España. TUR4all publishes all the tourist resources analysed by PREDIF's accessibility experts and those introduced by users through an evaluation questionnaire. In addition, users can comment on the tourist resources and rate their level of accessibility and customer service.

Link: https://www.tur4all.com/es/home



Introduction

This module will examine efficient methods that travel service providers can use to connect with a wide range of customers and guarantee that their offerings are inclusive.

This module focuses on providing accommodations and information to individuals with disabilities, and it will walk you through the necessary steps to make traveler experiences inclusive, hospitable, and accessible for everyone.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the module, participants would be able to:

Knowledge

- Implement systems for collecting feedback
- Expand the services to people with disabilities
- Distribute information and advertise services
- Partnerships & networks

Soft and Hard skills

- Adaptability
- Customer Service
- Integrate the offer to be adaptable
- Expand the offer to people with disabilities
- · Establish partnership networks

Attitudes

- Customer-centric approach
- Commitment to social responsibility
- Motivation to work with people with disabilities
- Interaction with other stakeholders

Duration:

- 1. Global duration (for the entire module) 6 academic hours
- 2. Estimation of the different sub-sections:
- lessons/learning 4 academic hours and 30 minutes
- useful resources 1 academic hour and 30 minutes





4.a. How you can promote facilities to people with disabilities

4.a.1. How to offer sustainable and/or local food

4.a.1.1. Sourcing Locall, Seasonall and Sustainable produce

To get fresh, in-season, and locally farmed ingredients, build connections with nearby farmers, fishers, and food producers. In addition to strengthening the local economy, using local suppliers guarantees the authenticity and caliber of your food. Create meals that are in line with the seasons and the availability of regional food. Make meals that highlight the distinctive characteristics of the area so that visitors may experience authentic regional food. To keep your food fresh and varied, rotate your menu according to what's in season.

4.a.1.2. Waste Reduction

Reduce food waste, recycle, and compost organic waste in your kitchen. These are examples of sustainable practices. Inform your employees and visitors of your dedication to reducing waste and the value of responsible consumption.

4.a.2. How to promote cultural values, local foods, and traditions, and handcrafting.

4.a.2.1. Promoting Cultural Values

- Cultural Immersion Activities: Plan storytelling sessions, cooking classes, and traditional dance performances as examples of cultural immersion activities.
 Involve local historians, artists, or cultural specialists to inform visitors about the rich cultural legacy of the area.
- Heritage Tours: Provide guided tours of historical sites, art galleries, museums, and places of worship. Give guests enlightening stories about the cultural significance of these locations so they can understand the history and customs of the area.



 Conduct language and manners workshops for visitors to acquire fundamental expressions in the native tongue. Inform them of regional traditions, customs, and manners to facilitate polite conversations with the local populace.

4.a.2.2. Promoting Local Foods:

- Farm-to-Table Experiences: Arrange for guests to visit farms and harvest fresh produce while learning about organic farming methods. A farm-to-table dining experience that highlights the freshness and authenticity of regional cuisine by serving guests a meal made with ingredients that have been harvested comes next.
- Local Wine and Food Tastings: Organize tastings with regional wines, foods, and drinks. Collaborate with regional farmers and craftspeople to offer guests a range of genuine tastes. Inform them of the components, cooking techniques, and cultural significance of each food and beverage.

4.a.2.3. Promoting Traditions and Handcrafting

- Workshops with local artisans: Work with them to plan events where visitors
 can learn how to make traditional crafts like painting, weaving, or pottery.
 Encourage participants to design their own mementos to foster a sense of
 pride and admiration for the regional handicrafts.
- Craft Markets: Hold exhibitions or craft markets on your property to display the handcrafted goods made by nearby artisans. Give craftspeople a venue to sell to visitors directly, encouraging the community's economy to be sustainable.
- Authentic cultural artifacts, traditional artworks, and handicrafts created by regional artisans should be displayed in your establishments. Give guests background knowledge on the significance and background of these artifacts so they can fully immerse themselves in the community's culture.
- Encourage Local Cooperatives: Assist women's groups or local cooperatives
 that are involved in handicrafts. Acquire their merchandise to utilize within
 your establishments, assisting these communities and providing visitors with
 an opportunity to purchase souvenirs sourced ethically.



4.a.3. How these principles can be integrated into various aspects of tourism operations, including accommodation, transportation, activities, and food services.

4.a.3.1. Accommodation

- Local Architecture: Create spaces with architectural details that are representative of the area. Preserve the local aesthetic by integrating the property seamlessly with the surroundings through the use of traditional building materials and construction techniques.
- Culinary Experiences: Provide cooking lessons for visitors to learn how to make regional cuisine in-house. Incorporate customary dishes into the room service menu so that visitors can enjoy genuine tastes without ever leaving their lodging.

4.a.3.2. Transportation

 Cultural Narratives during Travel:Train tour leaders or drivers to narrate cultural tales and provide historical background while on tours. In addition to improving the traveler experience, this storytelling informs visitors about the locations they are visiting.

4.a.3.3. Activities

 Guided Heritage Walks:Provide guided tours of historical buildings and landmarks while highlighting their cultural significance. To make the experience more authentic, promote conversation with locals, artists, or storytellers.

4.a.3.4. Food Services

 Traditional Food Festivals:Plan recurring food festivals that highlight local cuisines. Ask seasoned cooks and chefs from the area to prepare traditional meals. In addition to introducing visitors to regional flavors, this also helps foster culinary talent in the area.





4.b. How to create networks and partnerships for more inclusive offers

From individuals with disabilities to seniors, from families with young children to those with language barriers, there is a significant and growing need for accessible travel.

GreenTour project strives to support the mobility of the people with disabilities and to provoke them to travel more and to travel in more sustainable way. However, in order for them to venture to travel and to enjoy themselves during that time, the tourist service providers should understand better their needs and be better prepared and more motivated to work with this target group of potential tourists.

This module will provide some practical guidance and ideas on how and why it is important for the tourist service providers to work also with people with disabilities.

4.b.1. Why should we as tourist service provider expand our tourist offer to people with disabilities?

Expanding your offer towards the target group of people with disabilities can be both a strategic and a socially responsible decision that will bring benefit to your business. Some of the main reasons to follow such path:

4.b.1.1. Market growth and unused potential of the market

The market for touristic services directed towards people with disabilities is an undiscovered and not fully utilised segment. According to the WHO, over 15% of the world's population lives with some form of disability – a significant group of potential customers.

4.b.1.2. Positive brand image

Being inclusive is a positive message of your brand. Inclusivity shows that you respect the diversity and are open to offer welcoming, accessible and comfortable environment for all your customers. It could lead to increased loyalty, positive word-of-mouth talks and a better image in front of your customers.



4.b.1.3. Competitive Advantage

If you offer more accessible services, it could make your business stand out among your competitors. Thus, you can use this to your advantage to attract a broader group of customers, especially ones that need & look for more inclusive services.

4.b.1.4. Legal and Ethical Compliance to local and EU regulations

This require the provision of equal access to goods and services for people with disabilities (incl. in tourism).

4.b.1.5. Engaging in socially responsible practices & improving your corporate social responsibility profile

Thus, you can attract more socially conscious consumers, investors, and other stakeholders.

4.b.2. Interaction of other stakeholders and organizations for extending your offer to people with disabilities

When you engage more actively with stakeholders, organizations and community of people with disabilities, you as touristic service provider can support the development of more inclusive tourism environment and contribute to the overall accessibility of the industry. You can follow some of these steps to achieve better interaction with the stakeholders:

- Research and identify the specific needs. By identifying and researching the needs, requirement and preferences of travellers with disabilities, you will be better prepared to develop and offer more inclusive services to all your customers.
- Organise training of your staff on how to be more aware, sensitive and respectful towards people with disabilities, you will create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all your customers – with or without disabilities.



- Get to know the local and international accessibility regulations. The aim is to be able to comply with these standards and to provide a barrier-free & positive experience.
- Establish cooperation with hotels, transportation providers and attractions that offer accessible facilities in order to enhance the tourist experience you offer.
- Make sure thar your marketing messages are inclusive and accessible by providing information in various formats like braille, large print, voice-over-text and by implying other accessibility features for the online communication.
- Apply proactive approach to enhance the overall inclusivity of your brand, by developing offers, creating facilities and designing services that are accessible to everyone, regardless of their abilities and disabilities.
- Promote inclusive tourism events through support and participation in various inclusive touristic events and initiatives in your region.
- Network with other peers, by attending conferences, workshops and forums related to accessible and inclusive tourism, you can understand interesting insights, learn best practices and discover potential collaboration opportunities.
- Implement feedback mechanisms to gather input from your customers with disabilities. Afterwards, you can use this information to continuously improve and adapt your services and facilities to better meet and respond to their needs and preferences.

4.b.3. Creating networks and partnerships with other organizations to develop more inclusive and adaptable offers for people with disabilities

Creating networks and partnerships to develop more inclusive and adaptable offerings for people with disabilities involves strategic planning and collaboration. Some of the key steps in the process are summarised below.

 Identify potential partners among organizations, businesses, NGOs and local groups with interest in inclusive tourism, especially with expertise in accessibility, inclusivity and expressed commitment to serving and supporting people with disabilities.



- Actively look for potential partners through attending industry events, conferences, and workshops to connect with like-minded organizations, to build relationships and open doors for collaboration with other peers.
- Clearly define your objectives for collaboration it should be clear whether it's
 creating accessible tour packages, improving facilities or enhancing the
 inclusivity of the services provided to the tourists with disabilities.
- Make use of and combine the strengths of each partner through sharing resources, combining expertise and creating more comprehensive and inclusive offerings.
- Involve people with disabilities in the planning and decision-making processes as their perspectives and insights are invaluable in creating truly inclusive offers.
- Provide training and capacity building to your staff and across your partners'
 organizations to enhance their understanding of the issues and problems that
 the people with disability face during their travels as well as the importance of
 inclusive practices and the consistent approach to accessibility.
- Use available technology to enhance accessibility of your offer (apps, websites social medias or communication tools) and to make the information useful for people with diverse abilities.
- Collaborate with joint marketing initiatives to promote inclusive and more accessible tourism as such campaigns can reach a wider audience, reinforce the commitment to accessibility and promote the importance of inclusion of all in the world of tourism.
- Develop metrics to measure the impact of your collaborative efforts when you evaluate the progress regularly and seek feedback from people with disabilities, you will be better prepared to make informed adjustments.

The strong networks and partnerships can support you to discover resources, share knowledge and contribute to making tourism more inclusive and accessible for people with disabilities.



4.b.4. Networks with local partners - how & why?

Creating networks with local partners is a key step towards the expansion of the touristic offer to people with disabilities and towards making the touristic services more accessible and inclusive for all travellers. How to identify, establish and manage your partnerships – we want to share some hints on the topic below.

- Identify local businesses, local groups of people with disabilities, local community organizations and government agencies promoting the accessible tourism.
- Attend local events, meetings and workshops to connect with potential partners and stakeholders to learn about local needs, to establish personal connections and to discover how the local specifics can be integrated in a wholesome touristic offer for the people with disabilities.
- Engage actively with local organizations and support groups of people with disability in order to understand better their specific needs and to gather insights on how to better design & adapt your touristic offers.
- Join targeted forums and online groups where stakeholders discuss accessibility and tourism in order identify potential partners and stay informed about local issues.
- Organise workshops or training sessions on accessibility for local businesses
 to initiate partnerships and to raise awareness but also to position your
 business as a leader in inclusive tourism and to be more visible to travellers
 with disabilities.
- Join and participate in small-scale "pilot" projects in cooperation with local partners. It will you to test your offers in real life and to build trust within the community.
- Customize your offers to reflect and respect local culture and traditions on one hand. On the other - consider the unique needs of people with disabilities that you are targeting as potential customers.



- Establish clear and open communication with your local partners in order to address concerns, share updates and cooperate for the benefit of the tourism market for people with disabilities and for tourists in general.
- Create and/or actively join events that promote inclusive and accessible tourism. This can be a platform to showcase your accessible offerings and build support from the local community.
- Share resources, best practices and information with local partners. It will
 enable the building of a collaborative knowledge base and creation of
 supportive network that will bring benefit to all stakeholdrs.

By establishing strong relationships with local partners, you can create a network that enhances the accessibility and inclusivity of your touristic offerings for people with disabilities while contributing positively to the local community.

4.b.5. Integrating the principles of accessibility in accommodation, transportation, activities and food services.

Integrating the principles of accessibility and inclusivity into various aspects of tourism operations requires a comprehensive approach. All these principles can be applied to all aspects of tourist service provision to make them more adaptable for people with disabilities

4.b.5.1. Accommodation

- Accessible Facilities: Design and modify accommodations to ensure they are wheelchair accessible, with features like ramps, elevators and widened doorways.
- Include accessible bathrooms with grab bars, roll-in showers and lowered fixtures.
- Communication: Provide information about accessibility features on your website and promotional materials.
- Offer alternative formats for guests with visual or hearing impairments, such as braille signage and closed-captioning services.





- Train your staff to be aware of the diverse needs of guests with disabilities so that they can provide assistance when needed in the correct way.
- Promote a culture of sensitivity, mutual understanding and respect.
- Offer rooms with features like visual alarms, vibrating alarms and accessible controls for guests with sensory and other impairments.

4.b.5.2. Transportation

- Accessible Vehicles: Ensure that transportation vehicles are wheelchair accessible, with ramps or lifts & provide securement systems for wheelchair users.
- Clearly communicate accessibility features of transportation services & make the information available in multiple formats (paper, voice message, online, in-person).
- Create option for flexible schedules and routes to accommodate different mobility needs and preferences of your customers.

4.b.5.3. Staff Training

Train your staff to be able to:

- assist correctly to passengers with disabilities in boarding and alighting during travel.
- to address the needs of passengers with various impairments visual, hearing, etc.

4.b.5.4. Organisation of activities

 Universal Design - design activities and attractions to be accessible for all; ensure that pathways, exhibits and interactive elements are accessible & usable for all visitors; provide adaptive support during activities: beach wheelchairs, hearing loops, guided tours with sign language interpreters, sensory touristic tours, etc.



- Clear Information clearly communicate the accessibility status of each activity or attraction and provide detailed information about potential challenges and what assistance is available at site.
- Inclusive Events organize events that are inclusive and considerate of various abilities encourage and facilitate participation for individuals with disabilities.

4.b.5.5. Food Services

- Create Accessible Dining Spaces ensure that dining areas are wheelchair accessible with adequate space between tables; provide menus in braille or large print and consider offering digital (text-to-speech) menus.
- Train restaurant staff to be aware of and accommodate diverse dietary needs and communication styles and foster a welcoming environment for guests with disabilities.
- Assistance with ordering offer assistance with ordering for guests with cognitive or communication impairment and train staff to communicate effectively with guests who use assistive communication devices.
- Allergen Information clearly label allergen information on menus to facilitate guests with dietary restrictions or allergies.

These principles will support you in creating more inclusive and adaptable experience for your guests with disabilities. By doing so, you will not only enhance the quality of your service and improve your brand but will also contribute to a positive and inclusive reputation in the tourism industry.



Best practices of green tourism implemented

1. Nature trails accessible in Troodos mountains - Cyprus

The Livadi nature trail is accessible for persons using wheelchairs. It has a circular route of 1.5 km length and a duration of 30 minutes. It is one of the friendliest routes on the Troodos Mountain range due to the easy level of hiking experience it requires. Route through pine forest. Good views towards Solea Valley. All participants must be accompanied.

Livadi Trail (circular):

Starting point: On the main Troodos - Karvounas road, 1.5 km before Troodos Square (Plateia Troodous), 9 km from location Karvounas, at Kampos tou Livadiou picnic site. The starting point is approximately 300m along the narrow paved road.

Length: 1.5 km









2. "Nature near us" - <u>Nucșoara Visitor Centre</u> - <u>Retezat National Park</u>, Romania

A unique tourist trail for children and people with motor, hearing, and visual impairments has recently opened in the Retezat National Park, in the courtyard of the Nucşoara Visitor Centre, in the village of Sălaşu de Sus. This trail measures 36 metres and a wooden ramp with handrail has been installed all along it.

The people who designed this trail have created a perfect sensory infrastructure. So the vegetation, leaves, soil, conifer cones, and animal tracks can be seen along the entire



length of



the trail, and they are placed at a height that allows them to be seen from a wheelchair.

They created animal track boxes (otter, ferret, jackal, wild cat, boar, wolf, bear, black goat) with life-size casts of animal tracks living in the National Park. They are accompanied by explanations in braille and have been mounted on the trail according to the altitude at which they are found in their natural environment.

This trail was developed by the Retezat Tourism Association in partnership with the

Romanian Wilderness Society and the Retezat National Park Administration, within the project "Discover the Tara Hategului - Retezat Ecotourism Destination!".



3. "Large farm Torricella" - Masseria Torricella - Alberobello, Italy

This accommodation facility is an example of the redevelopment of an ancient structure once used as a convent of Jerusalemite friars (around 1400).

Modern elements have been integrated in this hotel respecting the natural typical Apulian landscape to offer guests all the comforts such as a heated swimming pool and hydromassage and a massage room.

The architecture of the place blends harmoniously with the surrounding landscape, enhancing its beauty. The rooms have been furnished respecting the oldest peasant style, with wrought iron beds and hand-embroidered pillowcases.

In this place it is also possible to stay in an ancient historical residence typical of the Apulian territory called Trullo (type of conical construction in traditional dry stone of central-southern Puglia.)

This place is an example of green tourism for the following elements:

- the structure was born from the redevelopment of a convent
- Electricity from 100% renewable sources
- Organic or Km0 food
- Accessible without a car
- Ecological cleaning products
- Separate collection over 80%
- Low consumption light bulbs
- Bio architecture
- Solar panels for hot water
- Flow reducers for water
- Recovery and reuse of water
- Organic garden



The accommodation facility is classified as accessible; offers ecotourism itineraries, bicycle routes, typical cooking courses, and valorization of the local territory.



4. Ilunion hotels - Spain

4.1. The Group

ILUNION Hotels represents the hotel chain associated with the ONCE Social Group companies, a globally distinctive organization dedicated to fostering the employment inclusion of individuals with disabilities and promoting accessible tourism. Over 40% of its workforce comprises individuals with disabilities.



The portfolio consists of 30 hotels, all meticulously adapted to cater to individuals with disabilities, holding the universal accessibility certification (UNE 170001-2) and the Qsostenible seal, emblematic of the sustainability inherent in their infrastructure.

ILUNION Hotels proudly stands as the pioneering entity in its sector to attain the prestigious EFQM 600+ European Seal of Excellence, bestowed by the Excellence in Management Club. This honor recognizes the chain's exemplary business model and management practices. Additionally, ILUNION Hotels achieved the distinction of being the first Spanish company to receive the Ethics Award from the World Tourism Organization (WTO) in acknowledgment of its outstanding contributions to accessible tourism.



Source: Ilunion hotels

4.2. Ilunion hotels: 100% certified in universal accessibility

In ILUNION Hotels, the importance of accessible tourism is promoted, recognizing that many individuals with reduced mobility and other disabilities may forgo vacations due to the challenges of finding accessible spaces in Spain.

At ILUNION Hotels, access to tourism is considered a universal right. Therefore, an accessible reservation engine has been implemented on the website, enabling individuals with physical, visual, or auditory disabilities to efficiently book stays at our



hotels. In addition to this, our establishments offer accessible rooms designed to meet the needs of guests, whether they have disabilities or not, with a focus on factors such as comfort and design.

Their hotels, adapted for individuals with reduced mobility, provide adapted rooms with adequate maneuvering spaces, motorized adjustable beds, proximity card-operated automatic doors, accessible handles, adapted wardrobes with folding hangers, perimeter edge on bedside tables, motorized curtains, ceiling-mounted aids for getting in and out of bed, voice-activated smart TVs, and enhanced lighting with an acoustic-luminous beacon that incorporates a distinct warning signal.

In the bathrooms of our hotels, features include support bars, floor-level showers with portable chairs, accessible dual-transfer toilets, single-lever handheld showers, motorized shower screens, an emergency button connected to the hotel reception, fall detectors, and full-body dryers.

Their establishments, in general, feature spacious meeting and event rooms, ample breakfast areas, and restaurants, and are equipped with technical and technological aids to enhance the comfort and convenience of guests with disabilities.

At ILUNION Hotels, there is a commitment to making overall environmental adaptations to their hotels for individuals with disabilities, including adjustments to furniture, signage, assistive devices, and more. Furthermore, all their staff members have received training on accessibility to ensure excellent service to all guests.

As a result, they are the world's only hotel chain certified 100% in Universal Accessibility, allowing all guests to access and enjoy the facilities under the same conditions of usability.







Source: Ilunion hotels





4.3 Iluinon hotels: committed to sustainability

ILUNION Hotels is dedicated to offering its customers a distinctive service that sets it apart from competitors and serves as its primary competitive edge. Recognizing the ever-evolving demands within the tourism sector and the paramount importance of ensuring utmost customer satisfaction by aligning services with their needs and expectations, ILUNION Hotels is committed to integrating elements related to universal accessibility, sustainable development, environmental responsibility, and the preservation of our surroundings into its operations.

4.4. Special employment centers

Twelve of Ilunion hotels operate as Special Employment Centers. This is a new type of integration model in the tourism industry and serves as an example to show integration as a workforce.

In a Special Employment Center, more than 70% of the workers are people with some type of disability. Its main objective is to perform productive work in the market in which it operates, guaranteeing paid employment and the provision of services through the personal and social adjustments required by workers with disabilities.



Source: Ilunion hotels. See more information at: https://www.ilunionhotels.co.uk/?gl=1*1mq5n08*_gcl_au*NDE3ODE1ODQxLjE2OTUwNTM https://www.ilunionhotels.co.uk/?gl=1*1mq5n08*_gcl_au*NDE3ODE1ODQxLjE2OTUwNTM https://www.ilunionhotels.co.uk/?gl=1*1mq5n08*_gcl_au*NDE3ODE1ODQxLjE2OTUwNTM https://www.ilunionhotels.co.uk/?gl=1*1mq5n08*_gcl_au*NDE3ODE1ODQxLjE2OTUwNTM





5. Annual "Enriching and Greening Larnaka's Beaches" Program - Cyprus

Larnaka takes care of its natural assets as shown by the annual "Enriching and Greening Larnaka's Beaches" programme. Within this programme beaches are upgraded with increased greenery, urban equipment, sand playgrounds, open-air gyms, beach sport courts and more. Additionally, several beaches are fully accessible by means of floating wheelchairs. Thanks to sand cleaning machines, beach cleaning campaigns, recycling and further actions Larnaka's beaches consistently attain the coveted Blue Flag and water cleanliness certifications.



GreenTour Project: 2021-1-RO01-KA220-ADU-000028259







6. The RILA Monastery - inclusive touristic place in Bulgaria

The Rila Monastery is situated in the heart of Rila Mountains in Southwestern Bulgaria and is one of the greatest cultural and spiritual landmark of the country. Founded in the 10th century by the hermit Ivan Rilski, the monastery is dedicated to Saint Ivan of Rila, the patron saint of Bulgaria. Surrounded by the Rila Monastery Nature Park, the site offers not only cultural richness but also picturesque landscapes and opportunities for outdoor activities. (Picture 1).

The Rila Monastery is declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1983. Its architectural magnificence reflects a fusion of medieval, Byzantine, and Bulgarian Revival styles, with the complex comprising the Nativity of the Virgin church, residential quarters, and a medieval tower. (Picture 2)

The interior of the main church is painted with colourful frescoes of religious scenes and themes created by renowned Bulgarian and international artists. (Pictures 3 & 4) Beyond its cultural significance, the monastery hosts various events, religious ceremonies, and festivals, contributing to the vibrant cultural fabric of the region.

Accessibility Features:

- Wheelchair Accessibility: Ramps and smooth pathways have been implemented to facilitate wheelchair access to key areas of the monastery.
- Accessible Restrooms: The monastery has adapted restroom facilities to be accessible, catering to the needs of visitors with mobility challenges.
- Signage and Information: Signage throughout the site includes clear and visible information, often provided in multiple languages, ensuring that visitors with diverse abilities can easily navigate and understand the historical significance of different areas.

Guided Tours for All: The monastery offers inclusive guided tours with knowledgeable guides who are trained to communicate effectively with visitors with disabilities. Audio guides with multilingual support and audio descriptions may also be available for a more immersive experience.

Technology Integration: The use of technology, such as mobile apps or audio guides, provides an alternative means of experiencing the rich history and culture of the monastery for visitors with visual impairments.



Cultural Sensitivity Training: Staff at the Rila Monastery are trained in cultural sensitivity, including understanding the needs of visitors with disabilities, to ensure a welcoming and inclusive environment.

Community Engagement: The monastery collaborates with local disability advocacy groups to gather feedback and insights on improving accessibility continually.

Official website: https://rilskimanastir.org/ (available in Български/ English/ Русский/ Français/ Ελληνικά)



Picture 1: Monastery & Rila Mountain (source: link)





Picture 2: The interior of the Monastery (source: link)



Picture 3: The Main Church (source: link)



Picture 4: The Main church & part of the monks' cells (source: link)



Extra resources

- IO2 Green Travel Manual for people with disabilities (please find it at: https://greentour.usal.es/)
- IO4 Manual for mentors (please find it at: https://greentour.usal.es/)
- IO5 Choose Green Tourism Booklet (please find it at: https://greentour.usal.es/)

YouTube channel - https://www.youtube.com/@GreenTourProject

Website of the project - https://greentour.usal.es/



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