



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



GreenTour

2021-1-RO01-KA220-ADU-000028259

PR4.

Manual for Mentors

COMCY
October 2023



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS
CYPRUS



UNIVERSIDAD
DE SALAMANCA



AIMS

The aim of this manual is to provide mentors and green touristic providers with comprehensive guidance on working with people with disabilities in the context of sustainable and inclusive tourism. The manual seeks to accomplish the following objectives:

- **Increase Awareness:** Raise awareness about different types of disabilities, their unique challenges, and the importance of creating inclusive environments for people with disabilities.
- **Enhance Mentorship Skills:** Provide mentors with practical strategies, skills, and qualities necessary for effective mentorship, enabling them to support individuals with disabilities in their personal growth and development.
- **Promote Inclusive Green Tourism:** Offer insights and best practices for green touristic providers to design and deliver accessible and sustainable travel experiences, ensuring that individuals with disabilities can fully participate in and enjoy the tourism activities.
- **Foster Collaboration:** Encourage collaboration between mentors, touristic providers, and local communities to create a network of support and enhance the overall accessibility and inclusivity of travel experiences for people with disabilities.
- **Provide Practical Guidance:** Offer practical tips and recommendations for mentors and touristic providers on various aspects, including communication, personal assistance, safety, and environmental awareness, to facilitate smooth and meaningful interactions with individuals with disabilities.

Manual: Mentors and Green Touristic Providers for People with Disabilities

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Contents

1. Introduction	4
Purpose of the Manual	4
Introduction to the Manual	5
Target Audience	6
Key Terminology	7
2. Understanding Disabilities.....	7
2.2 Accessible Communication	8
Role and Responsibilities of Mentors	10
3.1 Benefits of Mentoring for People with Disabilities.....	10
3.2 Effective Mentoring Strategies	12
3.3 Monitoring Progress and Providing Feedback	13
Interaction with the Interactive Map (IO1).....	14
Driving Forces: Understanding the Motivation of Tourist Providers in Pursuit of Environmental Sustainability (IO3).....	16
Resources and Tools	17
3.1 Assistive Devices and Technologies	17
Technologies to Enhance Accessibility During Travel	18
7. Conclusion.....	19
8. References	21
9. Appendices.....	22
9.1 Glossary of Key Terms.....	22
9.2 Sample Accessibility Checklist.....	24
9.3 Recommended Reading List.....	25

Introduction

Purpose of the Manual

The primary goal of the manual is made explicit in this section: to provide mentors and green tourism providers with useful and practical advice. It emphasizes how crucial it is to promote inclusive experiences for people with disabilities within the framework of ecotourism. The objective is to arm professionals with the information and resources they need to make their services available to everyone, regardless of ability.

The goal of this manual is to serve as a lighthouse pointing mentors and green tourism providers toward a more inclusive future in the field of ecotourism. This manual embodies the industry's dedication to achieving universal accessibility. It acknowledges that mentors and providers play a crucial role in the lives of people with disabilities and that their actions can have a big impact on those lives. The manual serves as a thorough instruction book and recognizes the value of creating a setting where everyone, regardless of ability, can take part in and appreciate the wonders of nature-based travel experiences. The goal described in this section denotes more than just a how-to manual in the context of ecotourism; it denotes a transformative endeavor. It emphasizes the fundamental truth that diversity and inclusion are necessary conditions for a thriving ecotourism industry as well as noble ideals. This manual provides mentors and service providers with useful information that enables them to close the accessibility gap. By embracing this goal, they help remove obstacles so that people with disabilities can interact with nature, learn, and be inspired in the same way as people with no disabilities. Additionally, this instruction manual has an impact on readers that extends far beyond its printed words. It embodies a dedication to understanding, compassion, and equal opportunities. The manual urges mentors and providers to lead the change in their communities by highlighting the value of fostering inclusive experiences. It motivates them to develop settings where people with disabilities can actively participate in ecotourism and enrich their lives rather than simply observe it. The goal stated here becomes a catalyst for a more understanding and open world through shared knowledge and teamwork.

In conclusion, this manual serves as a call to action, encouraging readers to change how ecotourism is viewed and practiced. It puts mentors and providers under pressure to see beyond constraints and seize opportunities. The manual encourages these professionals to pave the way for a future where inclusivity is not an exception but a standard by arming them

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

with useful information and resources. In the end, this goal demonstrates how much the industry believes that ecotourism can have a profound impact on everyone's lives, regardless of their abilities, and not just the environment. With the help of this guide, the path to a truly inclusive ecotourism experience is opened up, promising a better, more open future for all.

Introduction to the Manual

This manual aims to provide mentors and green touristic providers with practical guidance on supporting and facilitating inclusive experiences for people with disabilities. It covers key concepts, strategies, and resources to enhance their roles and responsibilities in mentoring and creating accessible green tourism experiences.

This manual's introduction sheds light on a crucial objective in the field of ecotourism: guaranteeing inclusivity for all. This manual stands out as a guiding light, providing useful and tangible support by focusing on the crucial roles of mentors and green tourism providers. Its main goal is to provide these professionals with the information and resources necessary to build environments where people with disabilities can fully participate in and enjoy the wonders of ecotourism. This goal is both noble and important. The manual transforms from a resource to a symbol of compassion by acknowledging the particular difficulties faced by people with disabilities, ensuring a more accessible future for the green tourism sector. Moreover, this manual's pages weave together important ideas, tried-and-true tactics, and a wealth of resources to create a tapestry of knowledge. This all-encompassing strategy encourages mentors and providers to take on their roles with renewed commitment by enhancing their skills. The manual offers practical solutions to problems encountered in the real world rather than simply focusing on theory. As a result, mentors and service providers are better equipped to promote inclusive experiences that go beyond simple accessibility. It highlights the significance of comprehending the subtleties of disability and promotes the development of environments where people are not just accommodated but truly valued, enriching their ecotourism experiences (Hano, 2011).

Target Audience

The target audience for the manual is described in this section. The main readers are identified as mentors and green tourism providers. This includes professionals in the tourism sector who focus on sustainable practices (green tourism providers) and knowledgeable individuals who mentor others. To ensure that it is pertinent to and applicable to their roles, the content will be customized to meet the needs of these professionals.

The target market has been carefully identified, and it mainly consists of two important groups: mentors and green tourism providers. Because they are knowledgeable people, mentors are essential in directing and forming other people's experiences. They are mentors in this context, but not just mentors in the conventional sense; they are mentors in the particular field of ecotourism, where they have a wealth of knowledge and experience. They are trusted with more than just providing advice; they are also expected to foster inclusivity and foster understanding among their mentees, ensuring a cascade of knowledge and acceptance throughout the industry (Darcy & Dickson, 2009). On the other hand, the foundation of sustainable tourism practices is made up of green tourism providers. These experts are passionate about encouraging environmental protection and societal well-being while providing top-notch travel experiences. Their actions are motivated by their adherence to the fundamentals of ecotourism. The manual makes sure that its message resonates with the challenges and aspirations these providers face on a daily basis by adjusting the manual's content to fit their particular needs. The manual acknowledges the unique roles of mentors and green tourism providers while also recognizing the industry's wide range of expertise and working to further their skills. The manual can be transformed from being merely informative to being transformative by customizing the content. The manual becomes a useful tool when the advice is in line with the unique roles and difficulties that mentors and green tourism providers face. It addresses the difficulties these professionals face because it offers more than just general solutions. The manual will no longer be a theoretical work thanks to this customization, which will also provide mentors and providers with useful resources and strategies. In the end, this specialized strategy improves their capacity to design inclusive, long-lasting, and enriching ecotourism experiences, fostering a paradigm shift within the sector toward a more reachable and kinder future (Załoska et al., 2022).

Key Terminology

Important terms that will be used throughout the manual are defined in this subsection. For instance:

Mentor: An expert who offers mentees advice, encouragement, and knowledge. In the context of this guide, mentors are professionals in the travel and tourism sector who help others design inclusive experiences.

Green tourism: Sustainable tourism methods that prioritize protecting the environment and fostering social cohesion. By highlighting the significance of both sustainability and inclusivity in tourism practices, this definition clarifies the manual's main objectives.

Understanding Disabilities

Types of Disabilities (Physical disabilities/Sensory disabilities (visual, hearing, etc.)/Cognitive disabilities/Neurological disabilities) (Strelnikova et al., 2023)

1. **Physical impairments:** Conditions that make it difficult for a person to effectively move or use their body. Amputation, muscular dystrophy, and paralysis are a few examples.

These conditions make it difficult for a person to move or use their body in an efficient manner. Just a few examples include paralysis, which is the loss of muscle function in a specific area of the body, muscular dystrophy, a group of diseases that cause progressive weakness and loss of muscle mass, and amputation, in which a person has lost one or more limbs. Tasks that other people might find simple, like navigating uneven terrain or getting to public facilities, can become very difficult for people with physical disabilities.

2. **Sensory impairments:** Problems with the senses. This includes hearing impairments (deafness or hard of hearing) as well as visual impairments (blindness or low vision). People with sensory impairments have difficulty communicating and interacting with their environment. Deafness and other hearing impairments can make it difficult to understand auditory information, while low vision and other visual impairments, such

as blindness, impair the ability to recognize visual cues. The world frequently uses alternative forms of perception and communication for people with sensory impairments, such as tactile aids or braille for the visually impaired and sign language for the hearing impaired.

3. **Cognitive impairments:** Conditions that impair a person's capacity for information processing. This includes intellectual disabilities and learning disabilities (such as dyslexia and ADHD).

A person's ability to process information and learn new things is impacted by cognitive disabilities. This category covers a wide range, including learning disabilities like dyslexia (difficulty reading) and ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), as well as intellectual disabilities, which are characterized by limitations in intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviors. A customized approach to communication and education may be necessary for people with cognitive impairments, who may also need extra time to comprehend and finish tasks.

4. **Neurological disabilities:** Nervous system disorders. Cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, and epilepsy are a few examples.

Nervous system disorders present special difficulties. This includes ailments like multiple sclerosis, a disease that affects the central nervous system, cerebral palsy, a group of disorders that affect movement and muscle tone, and epilepsy, a condition marked by recurrent seizures. Planning accessible environments and activities for people with neurological disabilities requires careful consideration because managing unpredictable symptoms, which can affect mobility, coordination, and cognitive functions, is a common challenge.

[Accessible Communication](#) (Puspitasari Rochman et al., 2022)

- 1. Clear and Concise Language:** The use of simple, direct language is the first step in creating communication that is accessible. The message will be understandable to a broad audience, including those with varying levels of language proficiency and cognitive abilities, if it is written in plain language. It's important to stay away from jargon, technical terms, and intricate language structures that could lead to confusion. Mentors and green tourism providers can ensure that people with disabilities are not excluded due to linguistic barriers by using straightforward language that is easy for everyone to understand. By making information available to everyone, regardless of background or education, this strategy encourages inclusivity.
- 2. Effective Use of Visual Aids and Nonverbal Cues:** Communication is greatly improved by the use of visual aids and nonverbal cues, especially for those who have sensory impairments. Body language, gestures, and facial expressions can be used to communicate feelings, intentions, and background information. People who have hearing loss can benefit from these nonverbal cues because they rely on visual cues to understand the mood and sentiment of a conversation. Additionally, providing supplemental information through the use of visual aids like charts, images, and videos can help those who have visual impairments. For viewers with vision or hearing impairments, descriptive audio can be added to videos to help set the scene and create a more engaging experience. By using these strategies, mentors and providers establish a multi-dimensional communication environment that meets a variety of sensory needs and promotes a richer, more inclusive conversation.
- 3. Alternative Formats for the Dissemination of Information:** Since everyone processes information differently, making content available in alternative formats is crucial for accessibility. For those who struggle with reading, audio formats like podcasts and audiobooks provide an alternative method of information consumption. People with dyslexia or other cognitive disabilities will benefit the most from this format. Additionally, providing information in braille makes it easier for those who are blind to access information and ensures that they can read printed materials on their own. Mentors and green tourism providers can better engage people with disabilities by providing content in a variety of formats that cater to their different learning

preferences and skill levels. This strategy makes sure that information sharing is not constrained by the medium and can be tailored to the individual needs of each person, promoting a more inclusive learning and communication experience.

Role and Responsibilities of Mentors

Benefits of Mentoring for People with Disabilities (Mildon)

1. Disability-specific mentoring offers a distinctive platform for professional and personal growth. People can learn a variety of interpersonal and practical skills with the help and support of mentors. These abilities not only help them in their professional lives but also greatly aid in their personal development. For instance, they could learn how to handle stress and conflicts, as well as effective communication methods, problem-solving techniques, and time management techniques. These abilities are essential for navigating the challenges of daily life, in both their personal and professional relationships. With the help of the mentor's knowledge, people with disabilities are better able to learn, adapt, and succeed, improving their general quality of life.
2. Increased Confidence and Self-Esteem: People with disabilities can experience a significant increase in their confidence and self-esteem when they receive regular encouragement, constructive criticism, and positive reinforcement from mentors. This increased self-assurance frequently has a positive effect on many different areas of their lives, going beyond the mentorship relationship.

The increase in self-esteem and confidence that mentoring provides for individuals with disabilities is among its most significant advantages. Mentors' consistent support, frank criticism, and supportive feedback are crucial to this transformation. Having a mentor who believes in their abilities can be transformative for people who might experience social stigmas or who feel limited as a result of their disabilities. People can explore their potential in the mentorship relationship without worrying about being judged. Their confidence increases, which has a positive impact on many aspects

of their lives. Assertiveness, openness to social interaction, and self-assurance in expressing ideas and opinions all increase. This boosted self-confidence can help them in their interactions with coworkers, friends, and family outside of the mentorship context. In the end, this increased confidence serves as the foundation for their success on both a personal and professional level, helping them to overcome obstacles and seize chances they may not have previously considered.

- 3. Expanded Opportunities and Networks:** Mentors can assist people with disabilities in extending their professional networks. Mentors help students access opportunities and contacts that might not otherwise be available. These widened networks may be crucial for landing jobs, internships, or other worthwhile experiences.

The chance to broaden their professional networks is one of the key benefits of mentoring for people with disabilities. With their knowledge and contacts, mentors are extremely important in introducing people to a wider range of opportunities and contacts. Finding meaningful experiences and employment can be difficult for many people with disabilities because of various barriers. Mentors act as a conduit, introducing One of the major advantages of mentoring for people with disabilities is the opportunity to expand their professional networks. Mentors play a crucial role in connecting people to a wider range of opportunities and contacts because of their expertise and connections. For many people with disabilities, it can be challenging to find meaningful experiences and employment due to various barriers. Mentors serve as a bridge, exposing mentees to opportunities they might not otherwise have access to mentees to a world of opportunities that might not otherwise be available. Additionally, mentors assist mentees in navigating the frequently challenging and hostile job market. They might offer interview coaching, assistance with resume polishing, and insights into market trends. Through these interactions, mentees acquire crucial skills as well as a deeper comprehension of the business environment, enabling them to make wise decisions about their careers. Finally, expanded networks can also result in mentorship and advocacy opportunities within disability-focused organizations, which brings us to employment opportunities. Through these

relationships, people with disabilities are able to interact with encouraging groups and take part in activities that advance inclusivity, ultimately fostering a sense of identity and empowerment. In essence, mentor-facilitated expanded networks open doors to a world of opportunities for people with disabilities, enabling them to realize their ambitions.

Effective Mentoring Strategies (Benjamin et al., 2020)

- 1. Active Listening and Empathy:** Active listening is a fundamental mentor skill. It entails paying close attention, comprehending what the mentee is saying, and responding to it. Here's why it's important: **Building Trust:** The mentor shows the mentee that they are valued by actively listening to their thoughts and feelings. This fosters the trust and chemistry needed for a successful mentor-mentee relationship. **Understanding Needs and Challenges:** By actively and sympathetically listening to the mentee, mentors can better comprehend their worries, challenges, and goals. This knowledge enables mentors to offer more pertinent advice and assistance. **Emotional Support:** Mentoring involves more than just knowledge exchange; it also involves giving and receiving emotional support. A crucial element of this is empathy, the capacity to comprehend and share the emotions of another. Mentees are more likely to participate actively in the mentoring process when they feel heard and supported.
- 2. Giving Advice and Criticism:** Giving Guidance and Criticism: Mentors are essential in offering advice and criticism. However, how this is carried out can have a big impact on the mentee's development: **Knowledge Transfer:** One of a mentor's main responsibilities is to impart knowledge and experience. This can speed up learning and prevent the mentee from making common mistakes. **Constructive criticism:** Constructive criticism involves giving feedback that enables the mentee to identify their strengths and potential areas for improvement rather than simply pointing out flaws. It ought to be communicated in a way that is inspiring and encouraging. **Feedback that is Specific and Useful:** Good mentors offer their mentees feedback that is both specific and useful for making improvements. Feedback that is unclear or

overly critical can be demoralizing, so the mentor's role is to guide and encourage growth.

- 3. Fostering Independent Decision-Making:** A good mentor gives their mentees the freedom to make their own decisions rather than just making them for them. This tactic has several advantages:
Promoting Critical Thinking: Mentors develop critical thinking abilities by encouraging mentees to make decisions on their own. This not only aids in the immediate problem but also equips the mentee for future difficulties.
Building Confidence: Giving mentees decision-making autonomy helps them develop self-assurance in their skills. They develop greater self-assurance and independence when they realize that their decisions can result in favorable outcomes.
Ownership of Growth: When mentees take responsibility for their own development, they take ownership of their own growth. They are more likely to take the mentoring process seriously and to be invested in it.

In conclusion, effective mentoring combines active listening, empathy, offering counsel and criticism, and encouraging independent decision-making. Mentoring relationships can be supportive and growth-oriented when mentors use these techniques thoughtfully and customize them to the needs and personalities of their mentees.

Monitoring Progress and Providing Feedback (Mildon)

- 1. Regular Check-Ins and Evaluations:**

Monitoring Progress: Through regular meetings, mentors can keep tabs on their mentee's development. This makes it easier for mentors to gauge the mentee's learning rate and spots any problems that need to be fixed.

Obstacle Identification: Mentors can assist mentees in identifying potential obstacles by having open discussions with them. These challenges may be caused by their knowledge, self-assurance, or outside variables. Early detection of these issues enables mentors to offer focused advice and support.

Setting Goals: Regular evaluations give you the chance to set specific goals and objectives for your mentee. These goals serve as benchmarks that both the mentor and the mentee can use to assess progress and change their approaches as necessary.

2. **Constructive Criticism and Encouragement:**

Balanced Criticism: Development requires constructive criticism. Mentors direct their mentees on where to concentrate their efforts by highlighting areas that require improvement. However, it must always be countered with support. The mentee's confidence and motivation are increased when their accomplishments, no matter how small, are acknowledged.

Supportive Learning Environment: Mentees are more apt to take constructive criticism to heart and put forth effort to improve when it is delivered in a supportive manner. As a motivator, encouragement helps the mentee feel valued and understood—even when they make mistakes.

3. **Celebrating Milestones and Achievements:**

Increasing Morale: The mentee's morale is increased by celebrating both modest successes and significant milestones. It strengthens their confidence in their skills and the advancements they are making. Enhancing motivation and the willingness to put forth the effort necessary for continued growth are two benefits of positive reinforcement.

Recognition and Appreciation: Public acknowledgment of accomplishments, whether through awards, compliments in meetings, or other forms of recognition, not only helps the mentee feel appreciated but also draws attention to their achievements to others. This encouragement to succeed can help the mentee even more, and it fosters a good learning environment.

Sense of Achievement: Celebrating successes gives mentees a feeling of achievement. They become more devoted to their objectives and the mentoring process because it validates their hard work and dedication.

Interaction with the Interactive Map (IO1)

An innovative and sustainable online tool called the IO1 Interactive Map for Green Tourism for People with Disabilities will provide information on the opportunities for green travel in the partner countries to travelers with limited options. This technological advancement will assist tourism-related businesses in defining their activity as being prepared to address accessibility issues and meet or generate demand from clients with access requirements. The map will show a variety of green tourist attractions, including cultural, historical, natural, and tourist destinations. The map will be created to include all of the partner countries, including Romania, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Italy, and Spain, but it may also include some of the most popular sights in some of the nearby nations.

The map will be interactive; when a specific point on the map is selected, a new window containing details about the chosen tourist attraction is shown. Along with information on the facilities that are available, there will also be a synopsis of any relevant cultural or historical background. The information about the facilities for people with disabilities will be properly marked for each point on the map to show the location's level of accessibility and readiness. The locations on the map will initially be predefined using data gathered by the **GreenTour** partnership from partner countries and compiled through desk research mapping green, eco-friendly tourist providers, places & locations, product/service specificity, and element of innovation of the solution created in a way to ease the access of people with disabilities to the place.

Once the provider reaches the necessary level of readiness to be deemed as accessible for people with disabilities, the interactive solution will allow the data base with marked places to be enriched over time. The chosen tourist destinations will make reference to elements of accessible tourism and address various accessibility issues that will be detailed in the map planning phase. There, landmarks will be marked specifically to denote not only the type of the sites but also their readiness based on a range of access requirements that tourist service providers may undertake. The locations on the map will be gathered from various tourism enterprises that represent various indoor and outdoor eco-tourism establishments and activities. A short video with a storyline that aims to highlight the benefits of accessible tourism products or services offered by owners and organizations will be used to present detailed information about the sites in a variety of ways, including pictures, text, and

storyboards. Partners will take pictures and videos during a site visit that will capture the spirit of the service provider. Additionally, partners will create scripts for each video, which will then be translated into all partner languages and used to create subtitles before being uploaded to the Map in all languages that are available.

The following requirements must be met in order for interested parties to be included on the map: accessibility of facilities and infrastructure; accessibility of transportation infrastructure; accessibility of recreational activities information; accessibility of content; activity with an impact on the environment; impact on society. The unique aspect of IO1 is that these videos and maps will actually help create a business case for accessibility improvement, which hasn't been well-defined for some organizations that aren't prepared.

IO1 will help increase people's knowledge of the commercial opportunities in accessible tourism and encourage their investment in this market. Additionally, it will raise project stakeholders' awareness of the advantages of improving tourism accessibility in tourist destinations. Additionally, the Map will assist both target groups in maximizing the use of the accessible online technologies while navigating it.

Driving Forces: Understanding the Motivation of Tourist Providers in Pursuit of Environmental Sustainability (IO3)

As the name suggests, Driving Forces: Understanding the Motivation of Tourist Providers in Pursuit of Environmental Sustainability (IO3) will be targeted at Tourist Providers to provide them with guidance on how to be more Sustainable in providing their Touristic Services. The handbook will offer guidance on how to add new green and ecotourism offers to their existing touristic portfolio and support them with strategies for encouraging and promoting green behavior among their clients, including those with special needs and disabilities. The goal of IO3 for tourist providers is to encourage them to develop accessible environments for people with disabilities and to enable sustainable offers for their visitors as part of their portfolios of green initiatives. Last but not least, IO3 will teach the tour operators how to act as genuine change agents.

With the help of important stakeholders, IO3 aims to advance the tourism service providers by offering practical business support and guidance and co-creating green tourism products. End-users of **GreenTour** should learn from IO3 materials how to do things like (but not limited to): conserve resources, cut back on energy use and waste, offset carbon emissions, provide sustainable and/or local food, form partnerships with local businesses, etc.

Resources and Tools

[Assistive Devices and Technologies](#) (UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner)

Travelers with disabilities benefit greatly from improved accessibility thanks to assistive technology. For the purpose of developing inclusive green tourism experiences, it is crucial to comprehend these tools:

1. **Wheelchairs:** People with mobility impairments can use manual or electric wheelchairs to help them move around. For wheelchair users to be accommodated, it is essential to provide pathways and facilities that are accessible.
2. **Mobility Scooters:** Designed for people with mobility issues, mobility scooters are electric vehicles. They give you more freedom and are especially practical when you want to explore bigger areas.
3. **White Canes:** For people with visual impairments, white canes are crucial. They aid in spotting obstacles and navigating strange surroundings. White cane users' safety can be improved by maintaining clear pathways and offering auditory cues.
4. **Guide dogs and other service animals** help people with disabilities carry out their daily activities. It's crucial for establishments to be aware of their legal obligations and rights with regard to accommodating service animals and creating a welcoming environment.
5. **Hearing aids:** For people with hearing loss, hearing aids amplify sound. Effective communication for those wearing hearing aids is ensured by providing visual cues, such as subtitles or sign language interpreters, along with auditory information.

Technologies to Enhance Accessibility During Travel

1. **Mobile Apps:** A range of mobile apps are available that can help travelers with disabilities. These apps offer details on facilities, services, and routes that are accessible. Some apps also provide real-time navigation, ensuring that users can efficiently plan their routes.
2. **Accessible Websites:** Travel agencies should spend money on creating accessible websites. Websites with keyboard navigation, alt text for images, and logical heading structures make it easy for screen reader users to navigate the site and find crucial details about services and amenities.
3. **Guides for augmented reality (AR):** AR guides offer audio-visual details about points of interest. Travelers with visual impairments can receive thorough descriptions of their surroundings through smartphones or augmented reality (AR) glasses, improving their comprehension and enjoyment of the environment.
4. **Services for captioning and subtitling:** By using captions and subtitles, videos and multimedia presentations can be made accessible. This guarantees that people with hearing impairments can understand the content, ensuring inclusivity in online marketing materials and instructional videos.
5. **Apps for Accessible Transportation:** These apps offer details on accessible modes of public transportation, such as taxis, trains, and buses. Travelers can efficiently plan their trips thanks to real-time tracking and knowledge of accessible features (like wheelchair ramps).

In addition to improving the travel experience for people with disabilities, understanding and using these assistive technologies and devices demonstrates a commitment to inclusivity within the green tourism sector. Providers can significantly help to make green tourism accessible to everyone by incorporating these tools into their services, creating a more inclusive and welcoming environment for visitors with disabilities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this manual is a thorough resource that aims to close the accessibility gap between the field of sustainable and inclusive tourism and people with disabilities. This manual aims to make the green tourism industry more accessible and welcoming by addressing the specific needs and difficulties faced by people with disabilities. The goals of this manual, as summarized by several key points, have been accomplished:

- Raising Awareness

Mentors and green tourism providers now have a greater awareness of the various disabilities and their challenges, which fosters empathy and understanding.

- Improve mentoring abilities:

Mentors can now lead people with disabilities toward personal growth and development because they have the practical strategies, abilities, and qualities needed for effective mentoring.

- Encourage inclusive green travel:

Insights and best practices from the green tourism industry have helped providers create and deliver accessible and environmentally friendly travel experiences. This guarantees that people with disabilities can take part in and enjoy tourism-related activities.

- Encourage cooperation

Collaboration between mentors, tourism providers, and local communities has been promoted, resulting in the development of a strong support system. The accessibility and inclusiveness of travel experiences for those with disabilities have significantly improved thanks to this collaboration.

- Offer Advice That Is Practical:

This manual's helpful hints and recommendations have aided in the smooth and fruitful interactions between mentors, tour operators, and people with disabilities. These recommendations cover topics like communication, personal assistance, safety, and environmental awareness.

In summary, this manual has achieved its objectives while also laying the groundwork for a more equitable and sustainable future for the travel and tourism sector. This manual equips mentors and tourism providers to significantly improve the lives of people with disabilities,

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



ensuring that they can fully appreciate the wonders of travel in a truly inclusive setting. It does this by encouraging collaboration, awareness, and practical advice.

References

- Benjamin, S., Bottone, E. and Lee, M. (2020) 'Beyond accessibility: Exploring the representation of people with disabilities in tourism promotional materials', *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 29(2–3), pp. 295–313. doi:10.1080/09669582.2020.1755295.
- Darcy, S. and Dickson, T.J. (2009) 'A whole-of-life approach to tourism: The case for accessible tourism experiences', *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 16(1), pp. 32–44. doi:10.1375/jhtm.16.1.32.
- Hano, K. (2011) 'Accessible tourism: Concepts and issues', *Tourism Planning & Development*, 8(4), pp. 467–468. doi:10.1080/21568316.2011.603886.
- Mildon, T. (no date) The importance of mentoring for disability inclusion, LinkedIn. Available at: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/importance-mentoring-disability-inclusion-toby-mildon> (Accessed: 11 October 2023).
- Office of the High Commissioner, U.H.R. (no date) Policy guidelines for inclusive sustainable development goals ... - OHCHR, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Disability/SDG-CRPD-Resource/ThematicBriefs/thematic-brief-tourism.pdf>. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Disability/SDG-CRPD-Resource/policy-guideline-introduction.pdf> (Accessed: 11 October 2023).
- Puspitasari Rochman, G. et al. (2022) 'How accessible is tourism for people with disabilities?', *KnE Life Sciences* [Preprint]. doi:10.18502/cls.v7i5.12528.
- Strelnikova, M. et al. (2023) 'Development of inclusive tourism as a means of achieving sustainable development', *Journal of Law and Sustainable Development*, 11(1). doi:10.37497/sdgs.v11i1.273.
- Zańska, U., Kwiatkowska-Ciotucha, D. and Grześkowiak, A. (2022) Travelling from perspective of persons with disability: Results of an international survey, MDPI. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/2Fijerph191710575> (Accessed: 11 October 2023).

Appendices

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Accessible tourism:** This ensures that everyone can access, engage in, and enjoy tourism-related activities and services, regardless of their physical limitations, disabilities, or age. Environments that are accommodating to everyone, including people with disabilities, are created by tourism providers who use accessible tourism practices.
- **The term "universal design"** refers to the process of creating objects, settings, and services that, to the greatest extent possible, can be used by everyone without special adaptations or designs. It refers to developing facilities and services that are available to everyone, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, in the context of tourism providers.
- **Tourism that actively includes all individuals**, regardless of their background, age, aptitude, or disability, is known as inclusive tourism. Tourism businesses that practice inclusive tourism make sure that all visitors from different backgrounds can use their services and facilities.
- **Adaptive technologies** are specialized instruments and tools created to help people with disabilities carry out tasks that they might otherwise find difficult or impossible. Adaptive technologies could refer to mobility aids, hearing aids, or other assistive devices that improve accessibility for people with disabilities in the context of tourist service providers.
- **A barrier-free environment** is a physical setting without any obstructions or restrictions that might make it difficult for people, particularly those with disabilities, to move around freely. To ensure that all visitors can move freely and independently, tourism businesses strive to create barrier-free environments.
- **Personal assistance services** enable people with disabilities to take part fully in tourism-related activities by offering them support and assistance. In order to make

sure that visitors with disabilities have a comfortable and enjoyable experience, tourist providers may provide trained staff or services.

- **A sensory-friendly environment** is one that is made to accommodate people who have sensitivities or sensory processing disorders. By reducing noise, utilizing calming lighting, and providing quiet areas, tourism providers can create these environments, ensuring that customers with sensory sensitivities can take in the experience without feeling overwhelmed.
- **Training and Sensitization:** To increase staff awareness of the needs of individuals with disabilities, tourist providers run training and sensitization programs for their employees. This training makes sure that staff members are aware of how to assist guests with disabilities in a respectful and inclusive environment.
- **Signage and Information Accessibility:** To make information accessible to people with visual impairments or reading disabilities, tourist organizations use clear, understandable signage and offer information in different formats, such as Braille, large print, or digital formats.
- **Assistive Communication:** Assistive communication refers to methods and devices that enable people with speech or hearing impairments to communicate effectively, such as communication boards or sign language interpreters. To ensure effective communication with visitors who have communication disabilities, tourism providers can provide these services.

Sample Accessibility Checklist

A practical and efficient way for green tourism providers to guarantee that their facilities and services are inclusive and accessible to people with disabilities is to create an accessibility checklist. An explanation of a Sample Accessibility Checklist for Green Tourism Providers in the Context of People with Disabilities is provided below:

- ✓ **The building's entrance and common areas Elevators and Ramps:**
Ensure that wheelchair users can access different levels of the facility using elevators and ramps with the proper slopes. **Wide Doors:** Keep doors wide so that wheelchairs and other mobility aids can pass through. Keep pathways free of obstructions to make it easier for people with mobility issues to move around.
- ✓ **Facilities for Accommodation: Accessible Rooms:** For guests with mobility issues, there should be accessible rooms with widened doorways, roll-in showers, grab bars, and low-level switches. Install visual and auditory alarms to help guests with hearing impairments in the event of an emergency.
- ✓ **Restrooms:** Provide wheelchair-accessible restrooms with enough room for them, grab bars, and accessible sinks and mirrors. Include Braille signage in your restroom facility descriptions.
- ✓ **Staff Education:** Ensure that staff members have received the necessary instruction to interact with guests who are deaf or hard of hearing. Think about providing instruction in sign language. **Devices for Assistive Listening:** For guided tours or events, provide assistive listening devices.
- ✓ **Signage and Information:** Brochures, menus, and other essential information should be made available in alternative formats, such as large print, Braille, or electronic formats.
- ✓ **Clear Signage:** Ensure that all signage is legible, clear, and positioned at a suitable height for people of different heights or levels of mobility.
- ✓ **Outdoor pursuits and excursions:** Create accessible trails with firm, stable surfaces for wheelchair users if you plan to offer outdoor activities or nature trails.
- ✓ **Tours that Are Accessible:** Make sure that leisure activities and guided tours are accessible to people with mobility issues. Ensure rest areas with seating.



- ✓ **Trained Staff:** Provide staff members with the necessary training to assist visitors with disabilities, including how to use wheelchairs.
- ✓ **Personal Assistance:** If necessary, provide personal assistance services to make sure that visitors are well-accompanied throughout their stay.
- ✓ **Accessible Seating:** In dining areas, set up tables with enough room for wheelchair users.
- ✓ **Menu options:** Provide menus in large print or electronic formats, and train your staff to help guests who are blind or visually impaired choose from the menu.
- ✓ **Emergency Departure:** Establish a clear evacuation strategy that takes into account the needs of visitors with disabilities. Make sure staff members are prepared to help visitors in an emergency.
- ✓ **Feedback System Feedback System:** Establish a system for receiving feedback from visitors on the accessibility of facilities and services. Respond to criticism to continually increase accessibility.

Recommended Reading List

- https://www.accessibletourism.org/resources/accesibilityen_2013_unwto.pdf
- https://www.accessibletourism.org/resources/enat_study-2_services_and_facilities_en.pdf
- <https://www.gstcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/The-Responsible-Tourist--issue-1-FINAL.pdf>