

Good practices in accessible tourism – Hungary¹

Most people take living without barriers for granted. But in fact, some estimates suggest that around 10% of the European population has a disability; in fact, according to Eurostat data for 2022, they will account for more than a quarter of the total population, according to the self-reported data of the surveyed population (ec.europa.eu 2022). In developed countries, accessibility is also receiving increasing attention in the organisation of tourism supply, partly out of humanity and partly in recognition of the significant business potential of this segment. In the most general terms, barrier-free tourism is tourism that is equally accessible to all, including people with disabilities, people with temporary disabilities, older people, people with young children and multi-generational families. Accordingly, the main areas of analysis of equal access are the same as the main areas of the supply side of tourism, namely: accommodation services; catering facilities; tourist attractions; transport; and communication. Of these, it is perhaps the accessibility of attractions that is most addressed in the literature, probably in the context of the fact that a significant proportion of attractions are public institutions owned by the state (Csesznák É. et al. 2009, Káldy M. 2010).

The very definition of the target group for accessible tourism is already problematic. In many cases, the public does not even include in the target group those who, due to their life situation, are members of the target group for a shorter or longer period of time: for example, pregnant women, people with temporary disabilities recovering from surgery, or the elderly. The proportion of the latter in the overall population is steadily increasing, and for them many forms of accessibility are

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an essential need. Many of us therefore live with a permanent or temporary disability which can be a barrier to their lives and a barrier to their journeys. In fact, “Accessible tourism is a continuous effort to make all destinations, tourism products and services accessible to all people, regardless of any physical limitation, disability or age, and whether they are private or public tourist sites” (Akadálymentes Turizmus 2017).

At the level of declarations, accessibility is no longer an issue, but the reality is different. This is confirmed by the results of research carried out as part of an international project (Peer Act). When exploring the relationship between people with disabilities and tourism, it should always be borne in mind that different disabled visitors have different specific needs. For them, however, accessibility is vital, as in many cases ignoring their specific needs can make it impossible for them to actively participate in tourism. In Hungary, the tourism opportunities and thus the habits and needs of people with disabilities show significant differences in some aspects compared to the general population sample.

Defining disability is not an easy task, as it takes many forms. “We can include not only people with limited mobility, visual and hearing impairments, intellectual disabilities, but also those who suffer from other conditions that have a long-term impact on their quality of life, such as allergies”. (Zsarnóczky, M. 2018:39) According to WHO estimates, one in six people on earth has a disability, and the proportion is steadily increasing (WHO 2011). The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted by the United Nations in 2006 and proclaimed in Hungary, obliges Party States to ensure access for persons with disabilities to sport, recreation and tourism facilities and services (Act XCII of 2007). We can be affected by this issue at any time, just think of our advancing age (but an accident can also make someone permanently disabled at any time). Special needs occur in older age for everyone, but there are also many other life situations that can give rise to special needs: e.g. people undergoing rehabilitation after an accident, families with young children (Darcy, S. – Dickson, T. J. 2009).

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) is committed to promoting accessible tourism. In this spirit, it dedicated World Tourism Day 2016 to this theme. The organisation has made a number of recommendations and published a handbook on the issue (UNWTO 2016).

Human kind has made many efforts in the field of accessibility throughout their history, but it only became a widely recognised social issue in the second half of the 20th century. It is now widely accepted that everyone, despite a disability, should be able to enjoy the pleasures of travel as much as anyone else, “since the enjoyment of the fullness of life is a right for all” (Végh, Zs. 2005:31). The European Commission’s resolution of 29 October 2015 on the European Union’s priorities for the development of sustainable, responsible and accessible tourism stresses the importance of developing sustainable, responsible and accessible tourism; the principle of ‘tourism for all’; and that full accessibility and affordability of tourism is a key element for the sustainability of the sector. It recommends that Member States develop a Europe-wide, uniform and transparent labelling system for accessible supplies and make accessibility a criterion for support in economic support programmes for the tourism sector (eur-lex.europa.eu).

At the regulatory level, Hungary is not lagging behind other EU countries. According to Act XXVI of 1998, persons with disabilities have the right to an accessible, and also perceptible and safe built environment. They must be able to visit cultural, educational and sports facilities and to use transport systems and means of transport safely. The new National Disability Programme (2015-2025) adopted in 2015 noted that service providers had not yet recognised the tourism opportunities by people with disabilities. It is therefore important to update existing tourism demand surveys and disseminate them within the tourism profession, as well as to train and sensitise service providers and staff. The programme also stresses the importance of the principle of universal design: the aim is to encourage the operation of tourism packages for people with disabilities, with a complex accessibility objective. It emphasises the development of accessible websites and accessible e-services.

According to the 2011 census data of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO), there were 595,187 people with disabilities living in Hungary. In our opinion, the population concerned by accessible tourism may be much larger, as it can be assumed that an elderly person in good health does not consider him/herself as disabled, but already requires access to accessible facilities when using tourism services. The 2022 census data show that the experts of the HCSO also introduced new terminology when examining this issue: the various questions were no longer only aimed at identifying disability, but also at the obstacles that exist in everyday activities (HCSO 2023). Thus,

there is a significant discrepancy between the latest census results: the number of people with a traditional disability has almost halved compared to the 2011 census (499,000 people in 2011, while in 2022 only 273,000 people declared themselves as disabled). By contrast, in 2022, 6.6% of the Hungarian population will be severely limited and 16.4% will be non-severely limited. As researchers, we need to assess the qualitative and quantitative changes that society has undergone in terms of how people experience and live with disability. It can be seen that many people who live with a limitation do not classify themselves as disabled. The latest data from the HCSO also show that the number of people with and without severe disabilities increases significantly with age, and with it the number of people who are potential target groups for accessible tourism (Farkas, J. et al. 2023).

As tourism has become a social phenomenon, it has also become an important factor in shaping quality of life (Gonda, T. et al. 2019). Fortunately, it is nowadays accepted that facilitating travel for people with disabilities and ensuring the necessary physical conditions is not only a human, ethical, moral and legal obligation, but also an important economic issue. At present, this represents an untapped niche in the tourism market, although there have been several positive counter-examples in the recent past (Buhalis, D. et al. 2012). However, this untapped market segment should not be seen as a homogeneous group, as they have different specific needs for services, depending on the type and extent of their disability. There are barriers that can affect all travellers and barriers that are insurmountable problems for certain narrow segments, only (Shaw, G. – Coles, T. 2004). The existence of different disabilities leads to different and specific needs, which can be addressed with specific ideas and solutions. The needs of blind and hard of hearing (deaf) people and creative solutions for accessibility designed to meet their needs are presented by Zajadacz (Zajadacz, A. 2014; Zajadacz – Lubarska, A. 2020).

Different tourist destinations have different levels of accessibility. Some destinations are developing special offers for people with disabilities, others are making accessibility a distinctive feature – recognising the market opportunity it represents. Unfortunately, there are still places that do not address this issue at all. The major European countries in the international tourist trade are clearly placing great emphasis on this issue. Thus, the efforts made by Spain (Vila – Darcy – González 2015) and Italy (Agovino, M. et al. 2017) in the field of accessibility in tourism deserve

to be highlighted. Among the former socialist countries, Poland is paying a lot of attention to research on the topic (Zajadacz, A. 2014, 2019), and it is also clear that there is a growing interest in research on accessible tourism among researchers in Hungary. In our personal experience, the situation is much better in Germany than in Hungary, where correct solutions for accessibility and equal accessibility are in place in all areas of life (including transport, which is of particular importance for tourism).

The implementation of accessible tourism is not just about physical accessibility, the experience of an accessible destination is much more than that: it is about the implementation of the principles of independence, equality and human dignity in the tourist experience. Experiencing the spirit of a place, exploring a geographical space is as important for people with disabilities as it is for anyone else. Therefore, the geographical aspects of the subject should be addressed in the analysis of this topic. Important perspectives can be drawn from Kitchin's work on the meaning of place (Kitchin, R. 2009), the approach and values of positive geography (Kitchin, R. 2015) and the threats and opportunities of smart settlement (Kitchin, R. – Dodge, M. 2017). It is generally accepted that the experience of travel and holidays enhances subjective feeling of happiness (Csapó J. et al. 2018). This is particularly true for people with disabilities, for whom tourism often offers the opportunity to escape from the hardships of everyday life. In many cases, travel is a holiday for them, and the experiences help them to make contacts and integrate more easily into society (Gálné Kucsák K. 2008).

Several empirical studies in Hungary have shown that people with disabilities face significant problems when travelling and that their disability hinders them in realising their travel plans. This is why many of them choose the option of “non-travel” (Csapó J. – Gonda T. 2019, Csapó J. et al. 2019). Around half of the people with reduced mobility had a disability that prevented them from implementing a tourism programme, and this proportion is 75% at the visually impaired (Motiváció Alapítvány and Revita Foundation Research Workshop 2009). Providing a high quality of service to disabled guests requires empathy and attention from the tourism industry.

“Accessibility” is a very broad concept and covers a wide range of individual needs. Therefore, just as it is not easy to define the target group itself, it is not easy, nor is it possible, to fully map all that is being done to meet the very wide range of needs of people with different disabilities or

impairments. However, an important starting point is that any vision for accessibility in any tourist destination, and the enforcement of legislation and policies, can only be successful if it addresses the whole tourism supply chain. If any element of the tourism product is inaccessible to a particular disabled person, not only will the complex guest experience be significantly reduced, but it may even become impossible for a disabled person to travel. A destination aiming at accessibility should implement accessibility changes in the tourism supply chain (i.e. among tourism service providers), from information provision to the customer journey, in addition to accessibility of the built environment. If inclusive tourism for people with disabilities becomes a reality, it would already mean that all parts of the supply chain, i.e. the different stages that people go through from decision-making (information and marketing), booking, travel, to the destination and its surroundings, and the place where they experience it, should be accessible. For some people, this need is so critical that failure to ensure equal access in any part of it will act as a barrier and could mean potentially excluding them from fully enjoying the tourism experience.

Information is vital for all visitors. But it is even more important for people with special accessibility needs. Accessibility information is needed throughout the supply chain. Different people need different types and levels of information to decide whether a place is suitable for them. Information plays a key role in the decision-making process and in attracting visitors, and the quality, accuracy and reliability of this information is key. Providing information on accessibility not only plays a key role in communicating with potential visitors to help them make decisions, but can also provide an indication of the situation in the supply chain, so that the strengths and weaknesses of accessibility within the destination can be identified. As changes progress and accessibility is addressed in the supply chain, information should be updated to reflect these changes. It is essential to note that the issue of accessibility depends on personal access needs. For some people, the tourism supply chain should be accessible in its entirety, while for others it should be accessible only in parts. However, this reinforces the need to make the whole supply chain accessible if the host area is to attract and serve the large and growing number of people who need accessibility. Therefore, full accessibility is only likely to be achieved if a destination's entire supply chain or visitor experience is fully inclusive.

This is a consequence of the recognition that to be successful, a tourist destination must be inclusive, as this brings economic, social and cultural benefits not only for residents but also for visitors. Of course, easier accessibility increases the potential for more people to visit, whether for business or leisure, or to visit friends and family and enjoy the city. Their accessibility may vary and what they can do depends on the resources available, not only in terms of budget but also in terms of human resources. There are a few examples where the business case for accessible tourism is clear, for example, it is possible to quantify the return on investment of the lifting equipment provided in individual hotels. However, as many reports point out, more needs to be done to communicate the benefits of accessibility to the industry, and this requires further in-depth case studies. Businesses also need to understand what they can do to achieve accessibility.

In recent years, Hungary has seen the emergence of a number of initiatives and organisations that specifically assist people with disabilities, including support for travelling. There is a data base of specifically accessible accommodation, catering facilities and tourist attractions (validated by people with disabilities), examples of people with disabilities being involved in the provision of tourism services, for example in city management, and examples of the inclusion of skills to help organise and support tourism for people with disabilities in higher education curricula. There are also examples of other advocacy and civil society organisations taking up the cause of supporting people with disabilities and setting up (even qualified) fishing sites, so that those whose disability did not previously allow them to participate in the outdoor activities that attract the largest crowds in Hungary can also get involved.

The organisers of the Hungarian CheckINN Tourism Innovation Competition 2023, which collects and evaluates innovation ideas aimed at boosting tourism in Hungary, assessed that there was a noticeable increase in the number of sensemaking projects among the applications, which is part of a process that has already started. The first prize in one of the two categories last year was awarded to a team whose innovative project (“Blind Date with Nature”) was, among other things, aimed at creating tourism opportunities for visually impaired people by developing unique technical solutions.

Based on an analysis of a number of recent initiatives and experiences, the following expectations of good practice have been formulated:

“Good practice” means a method or activity that includes ideas and procedures that promote the development of a given business or organisation, in our case the provision of accessible tourism services, the development of high-quality service practices.

Accordingly, a good practice should

- be successful;
- be innovative;
- be applicable in other areas;
- be sustainable; and
- serve as a positive example to others.

The following ten practices are a collection of practices that all fully meet the above principles.

1. Access4you trademark

Good practice name:

Access4you international trademark and certification system

Implemented by Access4you Ltd., Balázs Berecz

Type (You must select the appropriate one. There can be more than one choice):

Sensitisation, education, attraction access, **mobility improvement, information provision, other**

Universal (i.e. it benefits all types of disability) or specific (i.e. it only serves the needs of a specific target group):

It is universal, as it benefits people with all types of disabilities and their relatives, as well as property owners and companies, as it effectively supports business and sustainability objectives.

Relevance:

The Access4you trademark provides detailed and reliable information on accessibility in the built environment for people with special needs in mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive areas.

Practical benefits, efficiency:

The Access4you database and mobile app, with detailed datasheets of more than 700 international locations, is available free of charge to everyone. The site profiles are based on a 1,000-point system of criteria, compiled from the criteria of 8 stakeholder groups, and provide information filtered by respective stakeholder groups, with accurate dimensions and lots of useful photos.

Innovative nature:

To keep the service up-to-date in terms of content and technology, the aim is to continuously learn and innovate; to provide measurable data for the social (S) leg of ESG reports. Wider accessibility attracts more customers, clients and tenants.

It adds value to the brand by making a real social contribution.

Sustainability:

The business model was designed with sustainability in mind: sustainable is what creates value for all stakeholder groups in the long term. It provides a solution to labour shortages and helps to retain the workforce. It is an app downloadable free of charge.

Applicability elsewhere, adaptability (whether it can be taken over elsewhere without change or only after adaptation to local conditions):

The free downloadable app can be downloaded anywhere in the world, it is available to those affected. The company has developed a business model to obtain the certificate. The basis is that the property owner pays for the accreditation, which can be obtained for 3 years. In addition, a monthly fee is charged for the use of the logo. The international dissemination of the certification is underway, and a start-up company has been organised to do this, with the task of networking and training certification partners. The certification criteria developed can be easily applied anywhere, even without modification.

2. BeFogadó: Independent living centre in Pécs

Good practice name:

Aktion Mensch – BeFogadó: Independent living centre in Pécs
Establishing an independent living centre for people with disabilities in Pécs

Implementer:

Aktion Mensch, People First Association, VSBI

Type (You must select the appropriate one. There may be more than one choice):

Sensitisation, education, attraction, improving mobility, information, other, advice

Universal (i.e. benefiting all types of disability) or specific (i.e. serving the needs of a specific target group):

It is specific, as the target group includes people with different disabilities living in Pécs, as well as public and private actors.

Relevance:

In the framework of the German Aktion Mensch project, the People First Association – Pécs and its German partner VSBI are jointly setting up a centre for independent living in Pécs. The centre will provide a barrier-free counselling and meeting point for people with disabilities, their relatives and cooperating partners. Based on VSBI's concept and several years of experience, the centre provides training, information and counselling for the target group.

Practical benefits, effectiveness:

- Creating a barrier-free meeting point in cooperation with the House of Civil Communities in its separate building in the courtyard
- Provision of independent living advice and training by peer counsellors
- Building a support network for independent living and establishing a peer counselling system
- Providing general information and holding public events with cooperation partners
- Providing advice on independent living, accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities and their relatives
- Developing a person-centred independent living model, networking with other actors and self-advocacy organisations in Hungary
- Organising a regional conference on the results

Innovative character:

The project is unique inasmuch as it includes a new barrier-free meeting point, independent living advice and training.

Sustainability:

Applicability elsewhere, adaptability (whether it can be taken over elsewhere without change or only after adaptation to local conditions):
Fully applicable elsewhere, with other local organisations.

3. Hidden City Tor-Tour

Good practice name:
Hidden City Tor-Tour

Implementer:
People First Association (in cooperation with the Pécs TourInform office)

Type (You must select the appropriate one. There can be more than one choice):
Sensitisation, education, **attraction**, improving mobility, **information provision**, other,
inclusion

Universal (i.e. benefiting all types of disability) or specific (i.e. serving the needs of a specific target group)
It is universal, as it benefits both people with and without disabilities.

Relevance:
The People First Association, with the support of the Strengthening Civil Communities, developed a special, attention-grabbing, barrier-free guided tour as a novelty in 2019, and introduced it as a permanent city themed tour in 2021 in cooperation with the Pécs TourInform office. Its aim is to sensitise and involve society. People with disabilities want to participate in tourism together with their non-disabled peers, not separately.

Practical benefit, effectiveness:
The Hidden City guided tour gives a different perspective to the participants, showing how people with disabilities can get to a particular sight in Pécs. Participants can try the tour in a wheelchair, get glasses modelling visual impairment, be introduced to hearing impairment with earplugs, use white canes to feel kerbs and guide rails, and walk with a guide dog.

Innovativeness:
Novelty for tourists – a different approach to tourism, innovative tourism offer in Pécs, which can be used in city marketing.

Sustainability
Creating job opportunities for disabled locals in accessible tourism. Building a broad network of partners is a long-term guarantee of sustainability.

Applicability elsewhere, adaptability (whether it can be adopted elsewhere without change or only after adaptation to local conditions):
It can be applied elsewhere, taking into account local conditions (different cities, different destinations, different attractions).

4. “Stickers project” 1-2-3 – with the support of the people of Pécs

Good practice name:
“Stickers project” 1-2-3 – with the support of the inhabitants of Pécs!

Implementer:
Pécs residents, companies from Pécs, the Pécs Community Foundation “Live Programme” community fundraising event and the National Disability and Social Policy Centre (Nemzeti Fogytékosságügyi- és Szociálpolitikai Központ Közhasznú Nonprofit Kft, NFSZK).

Type (You must select the appropriate one. There may be more than one choice):
Sensitisation, education, attraction access, mobility improvement, information provision, other

Universal (i.e. benefiting all types of disability) or specific (i.e. serving the needs of a specific target group)
It is universal, benefiting almost all people with disabilities, including people pushing prams, the elderly, the temporarily disabled, and people pulling rolling luggage.

Relevance:
The members of the People First Association – Pécs, in pairs (always one disabled and one able-bodied member without any disability), tour the restaurants, cafés, hotels, shops, tourist attractions of Pécs, sports and cultural institutions, or even public institutions, and personally map out which premises are barrier-free, and then talk to the owner(s) about whether they can put the sticker they have designed and made on the glass of the entrance door.

Practical utility, efficiency:
It is a 10×10 sticker that can be applied from the inside, similar to Visa, Mastercard, etc. stickers. Not too fancy, not too colourful, not distracting, but it draws attention to the fact that the premises are barrier-free. If the facility has a truly accessible toilet, a toilet will appear in the bottom right-hand corner of the sticker.



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Innovative nature:

It is an easy-to-use, searchable database in Hungarian and English, where one can find all the accessible sites of Pécs, with maps. The sites can be found on the wheelmap.org website, helping prospective visitors to make their choice and enhancing the tourist attraction of the (inner) city of Pécs.

Sustainability:

The Association does not expect any financial compensation from the restaurants/cafés/shops/hotels, but the additional consumption of guests who have not yet consumed at the establishment due to lack of information could generate additional income for the establishment.

Applicability elsewhere, adaptability (whether it can be adopted elsewhere without changes or only after modification, adaptation to local conditions):

It can be easily and appropriately applied in any other accessible destinations or locations.

5. European Peer Counselling Training on Accessible Tourism (Peer Act Project)

Good practice name:

European Neighbourhood Counsellor Training in the field of Accessible Tourism

Implementer:

People First Association, Green-Active Social Cooperative

Type (You must select the appropriate one. There can be more than one choice):

Sensitisation, education, attraction access, mobility improvement, information provision, other

Universal (i.e. benefiting all types of disability) or specific (i.e. serving the needs of a specific target group)

Universal, as trainers can help people with all types of disabilities.



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Relevance:

The main objective of the project is to train Peer Counsellor trainers for people with special needs and disabilities in the field of inclusion and equal opportunities.

Practical utility, effectiveness:

Three groups of adult educators, future trainers with disabilities and tourism professionals are working together to develop the training methodology. The project will enable trainers with disabilities to provide advice and training on accessible tourism to the whole range of tourism services (transport, accommodation, gastronomy, leisure, guiding, urban decision-makers and planners). In the future, they will be able to work as trainers and consultants in the tourism sector.

Innovative nature:

People with disabilities have typically received help from someone who were not disabled themselves, so they were less credible and less accepted by the people concerned. This has been a particular problem when someone is newly included in the disability segment, for example after an accident, and has not yet come to terms with the trauma of this. A peer support in such cases is, in our experience, more readily accepted. The help of a peer trainer is an innovative, modern solution.

Sustainability:

The project will create jobs. The project eliminates or minimises fluctuation.

Applicability elsewhere, adaptability (whether it can be taken over elsewhere without change or only after adaptation to local conditions):

They are present in 5 countries (besides Hungary, they are also available in Germany, Italy, Spain and Croatia), and can be used anywhere else in the world.

6. Sensitising tours with Bio Bia

Good practice name:

Sensitising tours with Bio Bia

Implementer:
Mecsek Green Route Association

Type (You must select the appropriate one. There may be more than one choice):
Sensitisation, education, attraction access, mobility improvement, information provision,
other

Universal (i.e. benefiting all types of disability) or specific (i.e. serving the needs of a
specific target group)
Wheelchair users, blind people and people with mild intellectual disabilities participate in
the programme, as well as healthy people without disabilities who are open to volunteering.

Relevance:
It is a unique initiative of the Mecsek Green Route and has been a practice for 7 years to
organise a hike in the Mecsek every full moon night. The hike starts at daylight, so in the
first 1-2 hours Dr. Ibolya Németh (Bio Bia) will hold an environmental education
programme and introduce the participants to the wild edible plants that can be found along
the way. The tour will take place every full moon, regardless of the weather and the number
of participants. As Bio Bia is a committed activist to ensure that people with disabilities
have access to as many nature-based experiences as possible, she is constantly looking for
ways to involve them and to sensitise fellow hikers.

Practical utility, effectiveness:
3 programmes from the last almost a decade are worth mentioning, which can be seen to be
useful.

1. Day of Birds and Trees on Jakabhegy (Jakab Hill)
The Jakab Hill and its doll-shaped sandstone formations are among the most inaccessible
parts of the Mecsek Mountains. That is why it was a special idea in 2015 to celebrate the
Day of Birds and Trees together with people with and without disabilities on the top of the
hill. The disabled were taken up the mountain by volunteers in four-wheel-drive off-road
vehicles, while the blind and mentally handicapped were accompanied by assistants. The
event was an experience of a lifetime for the disabled participants.
2. Full moon tours with Bio Bia
In 2016, Bio Bia initiated the full moon tours. The aim of the programme, in addition to
environmental education, was to maintain community life among the active members of the
Mecsek Green Route. The programme is attended by different numbers of participants,
sometimes only two people, but there have been occasions with more than 50 participants as
well. Once or twice a year, the tour is organised with the aim of sensitisation. A route is
chosen that can be followed in a wheelchair, taking into account the needs of the target
group. Of course, it is not a problem if physical assistance is needed at one point or two (e.g.
helping a wheelchair up a few steps), as this is also part of the sensitisation. In addition to



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including people with reduced mobility, there have also been programmes for blind and partially sighted people. As a result of the programmes, many fellow hikers volunteer to help make the Orfű Accessible Tourism Day a success.

3. Inclusive tour in Orfű

In 2017, the first Accessible Tourism Day was held in Orfű. The event takes place every year on the first Saturday of September. The event is traditionally accompanied by an inclusive tour on Sunday. Participants walk over relatively difficult terrain from Orfű to Husztót. The programme is also open to blind people. For them, continuous assistance is provided alternately by the participants of the hike, voluntarily and spontaneously. Wheelchair users are welcome to participate in the first part of the tour, but once the cycle path ends, the terrain becomes difficult for them and they have to turn back. From 2024, the infrastructure will be much improved, as the forest cycle path between Orfű and Kovácsszénája will be completed, making it the most beautiful accessible route in the Mecsek.

Innovative nature:

The programme, while providing an experience for people with disabilities, enriches the knowledge of the participants with information about nature and sensitises healthy participants

Sustainability:

The full moon tour has been run on a voluntary basis for 7 years. One or two occasions each year, people with disabilities are included in the programme.

Applicability elsewhere, adaptability (whether it can be adopted elsewhere without change or only after adaptation to local conditions):

The method is also well applicable elsewhere.

7. Accessible Tourism Day Orfű

Good practice name:

Accessible Tourism Day Orfű

Implementer:

Gyeregyalog.hu Association, People First Association, Orfű Tourism Association, Orfű Municipality



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Type (You must select the appropriate one. There may be more than one choice):
Sensitisation, education, **attraction access**, mobility improvement, information provision,
other

Universal (i.e. benefiting all types of disability) or specific (i.e. serving the needs of a
specific target group)
The event is universal, meaning that people with a wide range of disabilities are welcome.

Relevance:

Since 2017, Orfű has been the venue of the Accessible Tourism Day, held every year on the first Saturday of September. The main aim of the festival-style event is to provide people with disabilities with experiences that they would otherwise not be able to experience, or only with difficulty, but which are popular and self-evident services for non-disabled tourists. The event is a fun for everyone, disabled and able-bodied alike, to have fun, allowing them to have a good time while discovering that their disabled peers are just as human as those without disabilities. An important goal is inclusion, to sensitise society and to make the able-bodied society aware of the abilities and opportunities of people with disabilities and how to help them. The lasting impact of the event has been an increase in the number of accessible accommodations in Orfű, and tourism service providers and local government staff are more empathetic and professional about accessible tourism than they used to be.

Practical benefits, efficiency:

Year after year, the services offered free of charge and with the participation of volunteers include kite sailing, sailing, motor boating, motorcycling, horse riding, horse-drawn carriage rides, angling. A special and lasting experience for the blind is the experience of driving a car, which is provided by a professional driving instructor every year, also offered as a donation.

Innovative nature:

The event will allow stakeholders to experience tourism in a way that is otherwise not available to them, with the help of almost 100 volunteers. Wheelchair users can be lifted into a kite boat or sailing boat, severely disabled people can be harnessed to ride a motorbike, and people who are completely blind or severely disabled due to brain damage can try driving a car. By offering a range of experiences, the organisers hope to demonstrate that, with the right will and good intentions, physical barriers can be overcome and a range of experiences can be made available to people with disabilities.

Sustainability:

1. Financial sustainability: almost every year, the organisers start organising the event with a lack of resources. Fortunately, there are 5 NGOs who are very keen to make the event happen. Of these, those who manage to raise funds directly or who can provide a large part

of the funding for other projects are always in the lead. Funding for the event is based on 4 pillars: grant funding, corporate sponsorship, micro-donations, and donations of labour and experience from volunteers.

2. Environmental sustainability: the event traditionally places a strong emphasis on environmental education and awareness-raising. The Hungarian Ornithological Society and the Orfű Speleological Association have an interactive stand at the event, while the Gyeregyalog Association organises a workshop on the use of wild plants, led by Bio Bia.

Applicability elsewhere, adaptability (whether it can be adopted elsewhere without change or only after adaptation to local conditions):

The method is also well applicable elsewhere.

8. Creation of accessible angling venues

Good practice name:

Accessible angling sites for people with disabilities

Implemented by:

Hungarian National Angling Federation; angling associations

Type (you must select the appropriate one. There may be more than one choice):

Sensitisation, education, **attraction access**, **mobility improvement**, **information provision**, other

Universal (i.e. benefiting all types of disability) or specific (i.e. serving the needs of a specific target group)

The initiative appears to be specific, seemingly addressing the needs of only one specific target group, but this target group includes tens of thousands of people in Hungary, if the proportion of people with disabilities in the angling community of nearly 800,000 is comparable to the proportion within the total population. As a significant proportion of people with disabilities can only travel with an escort and therefore cannot access the angling sites, family members and escorts are an additional indirect target group.



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Relevance:

The angling community is the largest civil society organisation in Hungary, with around 800,000 registered members. With a so-called tourist licence it is possible to fish without a valid state licence for (even disabled) anglers, i.e. the target group exceeds the 800,000 disabled people. Accessible angling is not only important for disabled tourists visiting Hungary for the primary motivation of fishing, but also for the purpose of diversifying and broadening the range of activities available to guests with other motivations, thus providing a higher quality experience.

Practical benefits, efficiency:

Angling is one of the most popular, if not the most popular hobby in Hungary, and it has a significant multiplier effect. The Hungarian National Angling Federation is a supporting partner in this. Interactions with people with disabilities can contribute to the sensitisation of the “healthy” angling community.

Innovative nature:

According to the National Angling Tourism Strategy adopted at the end of 2023, there are currently very few places in Hungary where thousands of disabled anglers can fish safely and without barriers in natural waters, and the number of accessible fishing sites is less than 100 in the whole country, which is very low for the number of anglers and taking into account the equal opportunities guidelines and the Hungarian and international efforts. Today, without claiming completeness, we can find such angling venues for disabled people at the Velence Lake, Lake Tisza, the angling lakes of Vas County, the Ráckeve Danube Branch and Kaposvár, but only one fishing site has an official “Access4you” certificate, a trademark, and that is the fishing site of Csepel Angling Club on the Ráckeve Danube Branch. According to the audit, this angling site is suitable for wheelchair users, mothers pushing prams, elderly people and people with reduced mobility.

Sustainability:

1. Financial sustainability: angling is one of the most popular, if not the most popular hobby in Hungary, and although the easement of financial burden of disabled people related to fishing is minimal (they do not have to pay certain fees), they significantly increase the tourism income of the host area through the purchase of angling venue licenses, angling equipment and the amounts spent in the traditional tourism sector. The maintenance costs of the accessible fishing sites are minimal, the main problem being vandalism and the replacement of broken or stolen signboards.
2. Environmental sustainability: the development of accessible fishing sites will result in minimal environmental modification and no environmental damage; the environmental awareness and awareness-raising associated with angling tourism will result in social/environmental benefits in the long term.

Applicability elsewhere, adaptability (whether it can be taken over elsewhere without changes or only after modification and adaptation to local conditions):

Existing initiatives, especially the “Access4you” certified angling site, can serve as an example for other regions; some of the organisational, communication and technical solutions can be adapted to other outdoor sports (e.g. archery, hunting).

9. Optional university BSc course “Accessible Tourism” at the Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Pécs

Good practice name:
“Accessible Tourism” course in Tourism and Hospitality BSc programme

Implementer:
University of Pécs, Faculty of Business and Economics, Institute of Marketing and Tourism

Type (You must select the appropriate one. There may be more than one choice):
Sensitisation, education, attraction access, mobility improvement, **information provision**,
other

Universal (i.e. benefiting all types of disability) or specific (i.e. serving the needs of a
specific target group)
The initiative is universal and can be relevant for all people with disabilities, because
tourism is as much an integral part of their lives as it is for their ‘able-bodied’ counterparts,
and tourism contributes to their sense of happiness. By sensitising and professionally
educating the tourism professionals of the future, it is possible to improve the quality of the
tourism experience of people with disabilities and thus raise their quality of life.

Relevance:
People with disabilities make up around one seventh of the world’s population and although
their needs, expectations and motivations for travel are almost identical to those of their
non-disabled counterparts, their participation in tourism is still limited by a number of
factors, including the lack of suitably trained professionals. Students who complete the
training will be more receptive and sensitive to the specific needs of people with disabilities
and will have a higher level of knowledge to meet these needs. The businesses and
organisations that employ them or are set up by them will improve the competitiveness of
the destinations concerned in the tourism market.

Practical benefits, efficiency:
The effectiveness of the tourism sector as a whole and the individual success and
competitiveness of destinations and tourism service providers are positively influenced by
professional solutions and a sensitive approach to the special needs of the special target

group of disabled guests. Students and future tourism professionals who have completed the course will be able to provide a higher level of service and experience to disabled travellers.

Innovative character:

In Hungary, accessible tourism has not yet been integrated into the basic tourism and hospitality education, despite the fact that around 10% of the population in Hungary is affected by this issue and that many of them face serious barriers to their participation in tourism due to disability.

Sustainability:

1. Financial sustainability: as the tourism and catering bachelor's degree is popular in Hungary, the target group seems to be secured in the long term. The long-term objective is to include tourism for people with disabilities at least as a specialisation in all tourism and catering courses.
2. Environmental sustainability: the training does not create any additional environmental burden.

Applicability elsewhere, adaptability (can the course be transferred elsewhere without change or only after adaptation to local conditions):

The course can be adapted to all tourism and catering courses without change, and initiatives of local NGOs or other organisations to support people with disabilities can be included in the course curriculum as a case study, or can be learned in the context of a field trip.

10. Image film promoting domestic accessible tourism

Good practice name:

Accessible tourism image film

Implementer:

Hungary4All Nonprofit Ltd.

Type (You must select the appropriate one. There may be more than one choice):

Sensitisation, education, **attraction access**, **mobility improvement**, **information provision**, other

Universal (i.e. benefiting all types of disability) or specific (i.e. serving the needs of a specific target group)
The event is universal, meaning that people with a wide range of disabilities are welcome. They also highlight that the venues and attractions featured in the film offer real accessibility not only for people with mobility impairments, but also for people with visual and hearing impairments.

Relevance:

One of the most serious barriers to disabled people's participation in tourism is the lack of credible information about truly accessible destinations (attractions and tourist services), which is one of the main reasons why this segment does not travel.

Practical benefits, effectiveness:

On the demand side, information on truly accessible destinations, and on the supply side, information on the problems and needs of disabled people travelling. The link to the film, which can be viewed on the popular social media channel YouTube, can be easily and simply shared on other social media platforms and other information channels, so that the message can be delivered to many stakeholders at relatively low cost.

Innovative character:

Most image films of this kind (and accessibility in general) do not go beyond building ramps and accommodating wheelchair users. The image film in question shows services and attractions that can be enjoyed by visually impaired and deaf people, as well as the hearing impaired.

Sustainability:

1. Financial sustainability: the project sponsor, HUNGARY4ALL Nonprofit Ltd. (a Danish-Hungarian owned travel agency) used to be engaged only in the travel of disabled guests, and as a diversification of their activities they have undertaken the new service of organising domestic tourism for people with disabilities. As it is a travel agency activity, the amounts paid by disabled travellers ensure the financial sustainability of the project.
2. Environmental sustainability: the travel agency film shows tourists travelling in groups, with a lower per capita environmental footprint than individual trips.

Applicability elsewhere, adaptability (whether it can be transferred elsewhere without changes or only after adaptation to local conditions):

The film is fully adaptable, but only a small fraction of Hungary's several tourist destinations were covered in 26 minutes. The style of the image film, its aesthetic value, the way in which people with different disabilities are addressed, can be adapted elsewhere, as can specific solutions such as the presentation of mobile ramps, the promotion of sign language theatre performances.



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