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European Regional Development Fund



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UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

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LLI-10 Introducing nature tourism for all **UniGreen**

How Accessibility can Enhance Tourism?

Visitor-Friendly and Barrier-Free Service Environments for Customers with Special Needs

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A traveler with a disability or impairment can expect reliable information on the destination to meet his/her requirements

1. I have a dust allergy and am on wheelchair, where do I find accessible accommodation? Is information reliable?
2. Can I take my guide dog to the restaurant?
3. What busses / taxis are equipped with wheelchair lifts?
4. What precautions should I take when taking a plane? A helper perhaps? 48 hour rule?
5. Can my helper travel free / free entrance to a museum/ national park?
6. Are the routes safe in the national park? Our child is on a baby pram and granny is on a wheelchair.
7. Is there a SOS-service available in the forest?

Experience Experts Discuss Accessibility

- ▶ Watch movie attachment

Accessible Tourism Definition

Accessible tourism enables people with access requirements, including mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimension of access, to function independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universally designed tourism products, services and environments. This definition is inclusive of all people including those travelling with children in prams, people with disabilities and seniors. ”

(Darcy & Dickson 2009).

Accessible tourism adopts a whole of life approach where people through their lifespan benefit from accessible provision. These include people with permanent or temporary disabilities, seniors, obese, families with young children and those working in a safer and more socially sustainably designed environments. (Buhalis & Darcy 2011).

How about non-visible impairments, for example brain damages and cognitive/ learning problems (dyslexia, understanding guidance, disorientation)? (Kuosmanen).

Accessibility is a Quality that Belongs to Everyone

It means access to services, usability of equipment, comprehensibility of information and therefore participation in decision making in one's own life.

Accessibility is equality, security and quality. It is about physical, social and psychological wellbeing.

It is part of sustainable development. Easy Access (Helppo liikkua) is a concept encouraging people to pay attention to accessibility.

(The Accessibility Center ESKE Finland. Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities 2017)

Accessible Tourism Synonyms and Symbols

Tourism Marketing:

Visitor-Friendly and Special Needs (neutral)

Disability Organizations:

Barrier-Free Tourism and Inclusive Tourism (functionality)

City and Land Use Planning:

Universal Design

Democratic Infrastructure

- ▶ Design For All
- ▶ Culture For All



Travel Planning

- ▶ Watch movie attachment

- ▶ Accessible Tourism System
- ▶ Hospitality and Visitability /vieraanvaraisuus ja vierailtavuus
- ▶ Sustainable Development

Travel Planning
Disabled people /
tourist/ customer +
helper

Travel motivation and
form of tourism

Individual or organized
Customer Satisfaction

Disability Organizations
Legislation
Minimum level /standard

Transportation
Public, charter, taxi
Air, sea, rail, car

Accessible Tourism

Domestic and International
Service Environments and Chains
Daily visit or overnight

Destination Management;
Image, Marketing, Safety,
Health & Security

Tourism Suppliers,
Service Providers
Attractions and Cultural
Heritages

Resources
Infrastructure

Tour Operators
Travel Agents
Sales Channels

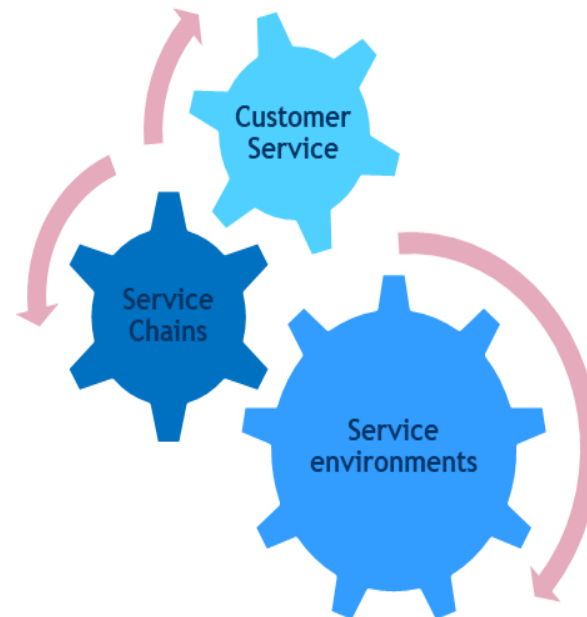
Accommodation
Hotel, hostel,
camping

Restaurant
Food
Catering

Hospitality and Visitability:

Standards for Accessibility and Mobility

Targeting the accessible tourism market and working in collaboration with others in the tourism destination area, accessible destination experiences can be promoted and branded to create a competitive advantage through a strategic approach to accessible tourism and infrastructure development.



Equality and Quality in Accessible Tourism

Understanding the relationship between accessibility and customer satisfaction / business

Service level compliance to meet requirements / marketing, branding promise

How can I help you? Respectful and customized service encounters.

Service is intangible, a moment of truth. Once in a lifetime experience.

Ways to Improve Equity of Access

Tourism services designed for people with high support needs

Mandating equal access: free entrance to companions, auditory and tactile safety features

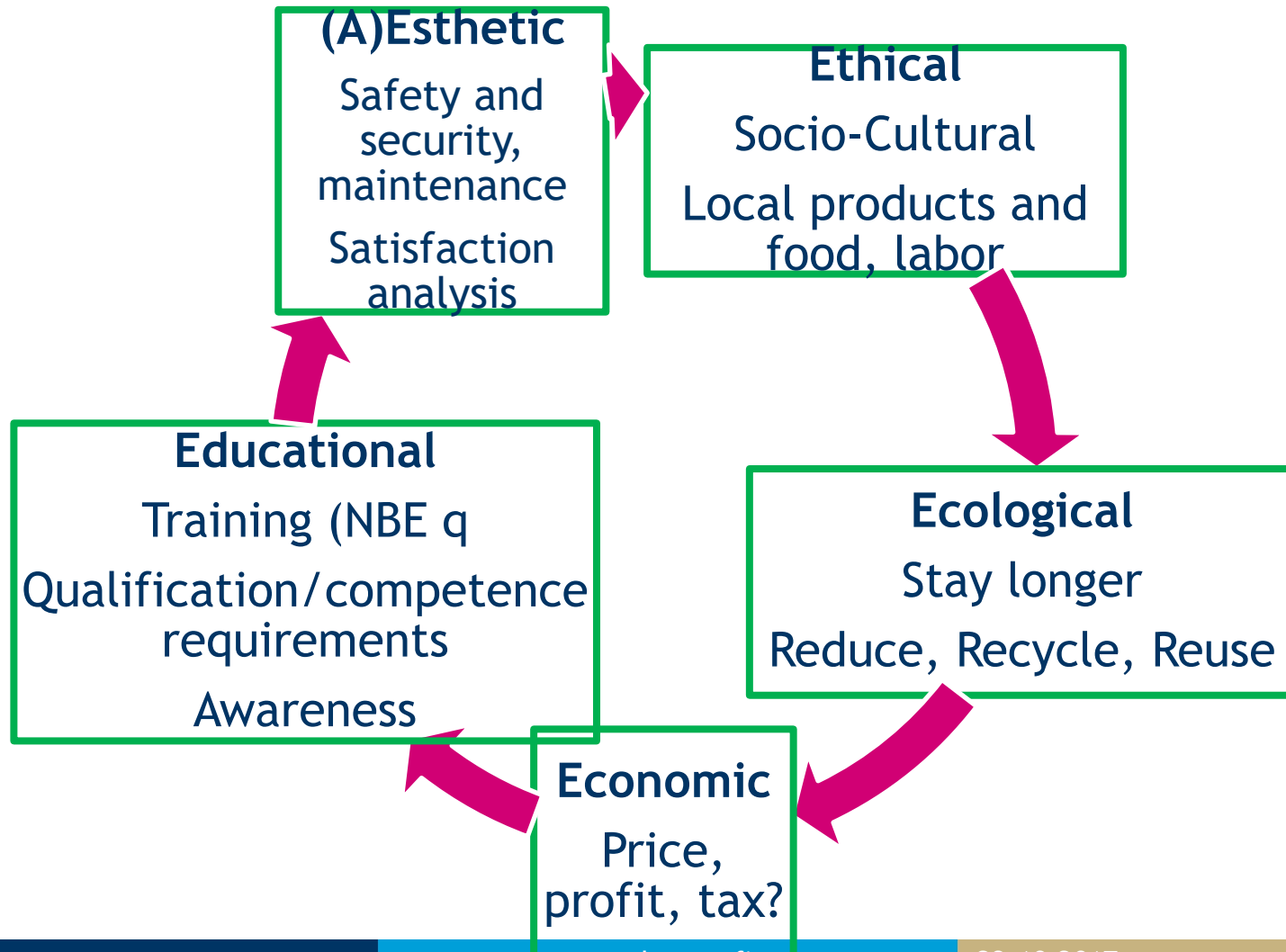
Functionality: safety, security and health (SSH)

Standards for accessibility and mobility

Accessibility in Nature

- ▶ Watch movie attachment

Accessible Tourism is Sustainable: E x 5



European Accessibility Act

(Proposal 2015)



Improving the accessibility of products and services in the single market

80 million people in the EU affected by a disability in some degree.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is the first international legally binding instrument setting minimum standards for rights for people with disabilities, and the first human rights convention to which the EU has become a party. All the EU countries have signed the Convention. 23 EU countries have also signed its Optional Protocol and 21 have ratified it.

EU Passenger Travel Rights

Accessible tourism is about making it easy/ comfortable / safe for all people to enjoy tourism experiences.

Many people have access needs, whether or not related to a physical condition: e.g. wheelchair users, visual, hearing impairment, food and other allergies, asthma.

For those people, travelling can be a real challenge, as finding the information on accessible services, checking luggage on a plane, booking a room with special access needs often prove to be difficult, costly and time consuming.

EU Passenger Right: 48 hrs Service Rule

Right to non-discrimination in access to transport.

Right to mobility:

Accessibility and assistance at no additional cost for disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility (PRM). At the airport, on the plain = service chain.

48 hrs / notification to get help / a helper from the company on public transportation

People and service providers are not aware of this rule!

Passanger Travel Rights

Air: Legislation in force since 2005

Rail: Legislation in force since December 2009

Maritime: Legislation in force since December 2012

Road: Legislation in force as from 1 March 2013
(long distance busses)

Travel Planning and Satisfaction

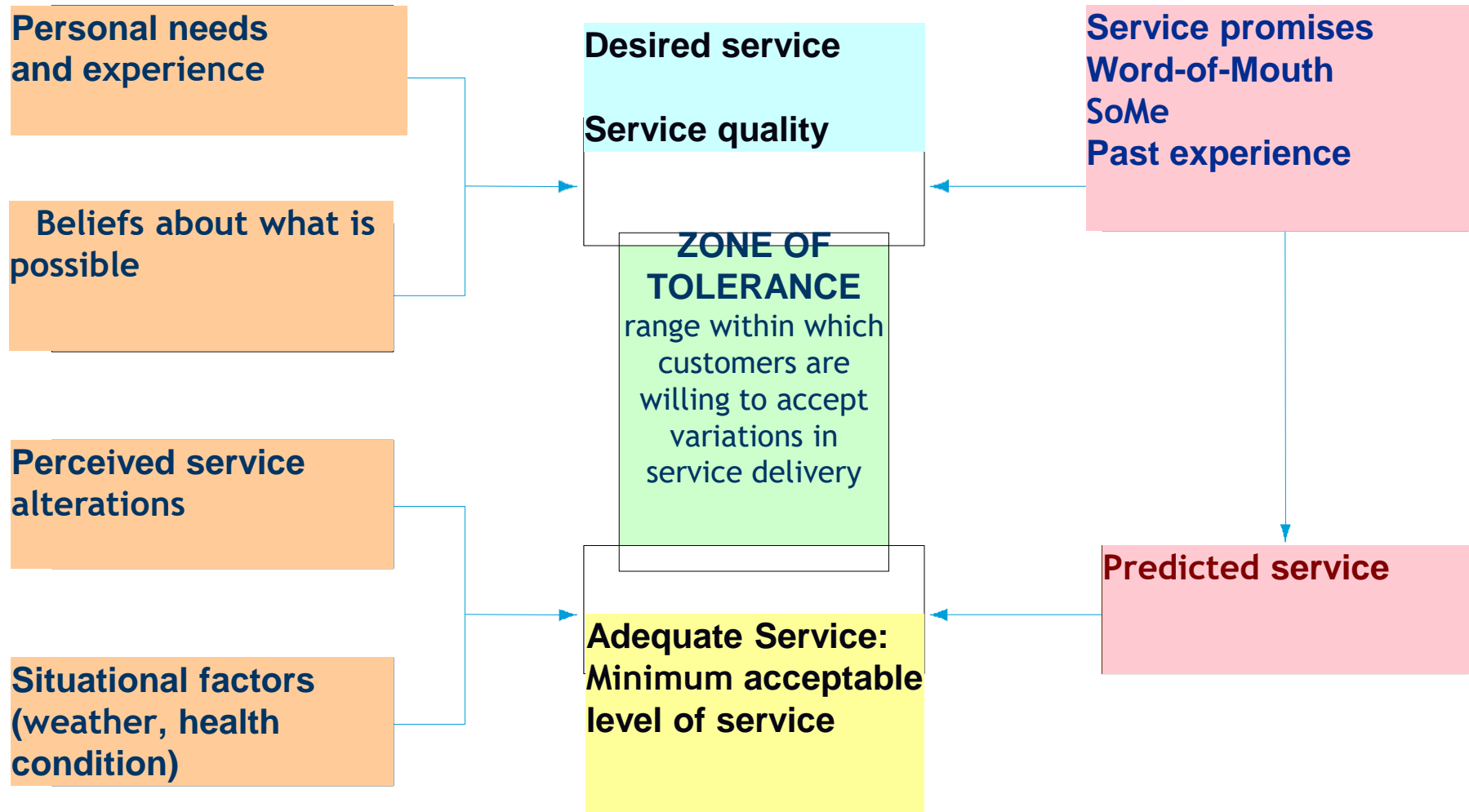
Personal Needs / Special Needs/ Individual

- Previous experiences
- Socio-economic circumstances
- Disability dimension of access
- Support needs

Limitation and restrictions can be

- Profound limitation
- Severe limitation
- Moderate limitation
- Mild limitation
- Helping equipment: cross-country, manual, electronic, light / heavy, cane, Nordic Fitness Walking sticks

Factors that Influence Customer Expectations of Services



Mobile Apps

- ▶ Watch movie attachment

- ▶ **Accessibility can Enhance Tourism**
- ▶ **Lots of potential and some challenges**
- ▶ **ENAT European Network for Accessible Tourism**

An Under-Served Market

Making tourism more accessible is a social responsibility, but also a compelling business case to boost the competitiveness of tourism in Europe. Especially tourists from Asia and USA, thanks to direct flights and reasonable price “good value for money”, and “good value of quality”

Many examples show that making basic adjustments to a facility, providing accurate information, and understanding the needs of disabled people can result in increased visitor numbers.

From five star level services to economic travel. Customer experience is always highly subjective.

Accessible Service Demand

- ▶ Watch movie attachment

A Growing Segment of People with Special Needs

The worldwide growth rate of persons with disabilities or with special needs is higher than population growth. This is due to

- Population ageing: 80+, 100+, impairments, restrictions, weakness
- The European population is aging: by 2050 the number of people over 65 will be 3 times what it was in 2003, and the over 80s will be 5 times greater in number. These figures represent a huge market potential which today remains vastly under-served.
- Worldwide, there are 600 - 900 million people with disabilities, representing a significant potential market for Europe.

Demand for Accessible Services

An emerging segment in terms of services demand. There is wide consensus that this demand is growing.

- Multi-customer, since each person with disability tends to be accompanied (helper, assistant, spouse, large family 3)
- Stay longer in a destination
- An image-booster for the destination
- Non-seasonal (cultural, gastro, nature tourism = attractions)
- Capable of generating higher income than the average for conventional tourism
- Seniors: time and money, capability to travel
- Health and wellness related in nature

Disabled and Older People will Benefit from:

- More accessible products and services in the market
- Accessible products and services at more competitive prices (socio-economic accessibility)
- Fewer barriers when accessing education and the open labor market
- More jobs available where accessibility expertise is needed
- Disabled and impaired people at tourism work

Businesses will Benefit from:

- ▶ •Common rules on accessibility in the EU leading to costs reduction
- ▶ •Easier cross-border trading
- ▶ •More market opportunities for their accessible products and services

Strengths / Challenges for the European Tourism Industry



- **Security and safety** - environmental, political, and social security; safety of food and accommodation; and socio-cultural sustainability
- **Economic competitiveness** - seasonality, regulatory and administrative burdens; tourism related taxation; difficulty of finding and keeping skilled staff
- **Technological** - keeping up to date with IT developments of information and advances in technology: IT tools for e-commerce and e-trackers, Apps, SOS, social media channels
- **Markets and competition** - growing demand for customized experiences, new products + packages, growing competition from other EU destinations.

Information Search from Different Sources

- ▶ Watch movie attachment

The European Network for Accessible Tourism ENAT



The European Network for Accessible Tourism ENAT is a non-profit association for organizations that aim to be 'frontrunners' in the **study, promotion and practice of accessible tourism.**

- ▶ “By leveraging the knowledge and experience of the network, the members are improving the accessibility of tourist information, transport, infrastructure, design and service for visitors with all kinds of access needs, providing models of excellence in accessible tourism for the whole of the tourism industry.”



ENAT Code of Conduct for Service Providers



1. Recognition of equal rights: We recognize that all people have the right to enjoy tourism, whatever their background or abilities, and we work to promote this right in our activities.

2. Personal attention: We welcome all customers and make it our priority to meet their individual needs.

3. Removing and preventing access barriers: We are committed to planning and carrying out improvements to our infrastructure, products, services and information, using a ‘design-for-all’ approach, in order to remove or minimize access barriers and contribute to sustainable and accessible tourism for all.

4. Improving our knowledge, competences and skills: We follow recognized “good practices” and guidance for tourism accessibility provided by ENAT, and we are committed to continual staff training which takes into account respect for human diversity and disability awareness, ensuring that all customers are welcomed and served appropriately.

ENAT Code of Conduct for Service Providers



5. Monitoring: Our organization ensures that customer services are monitored and access is improved as far as possible, within our financial means.

6. Our suppliers: Wherever possible, we work with suppliers who also recognize and respect the principles contained in the ENAT Code of Good Conduct.

7. Complaints handling: Our organization has a complaints procedure available to customers so that they may report their possible dissatisfaction with our advertising, information, facilities or services. All complaints are handled promptly and fully.

8. Management responsibility: We regard good access for all visitors as part of our wider Social Responsibility. Our management team includes a resource person who is responsible for accessibility matters and who can be contacted by staff and clients.

► Good Practices and Cases

Virtual Travel

- ▶ Watch movie attachment

Scandic Hotel: Accessibility at Scandic



Scandic Hotels shortlisted for European Diversity Award 2015. The European Diversity Awards are known as the “Oscars of Diversity” and they recognize organizations and individuals that have shown innovation, creativity and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion during the year. “**Accessibility Ambassador**”

- Accessibility Information at hotels
- Hotels for everyone: Scandic’s accessibility brochure (pdf)
- Scandic’s accessibility standards (pdf)
- Education: Take our online course on accessibility (free)

Visit Britain: Providing Access for all

Customer service and training - being disability aware with the right attitude and confidence to serve all customers

Information and marketing - providing specific information on the accessibility of your facilities and services and making this information easy to find

Physical facilities - making reasonable adjustments to buildings and facilities so they are easy for everyone to enter and move around

The National Park Service (NPS). Accessibility for Visitors (USA)

The National Park Service (NPS) is committed to making facilities, programs, services, and employment accessible for visitors and employees with disabilities through compliance. The accessibility of commercial services within national parks is also covered under all applicable federal, state, and local laws.

- Create a welcoming environment for visitors with disabilities
- Ensure that new facilities and programs are accessible
- Upgrade existing facilities to improve accessibility
- ▶ <https://www.nps.gov/aboutus/accessibilityforvisitors.htm>

Accessible Nature Tourism

The Norwegian Government has dedicated 2015 as the Year of Outdoor Recreation in Norway.

Special attention is given to sites made accessible for all.

- ▶ <http://www.accessibletourism.org/?i=enat.en.news.1813>

Naturally Accessible-project in Australia

- ▶ http://www.naturallyaccessible.org/?page_id=14

Ms Helen Smith testing national parks in Finland (Rokua and Hossa). Naturally Accessible -project (Australia)

”I love your forest. Listen to expert experiences and their stories: Don’t make the routes too easy for disabled.”

YLE News in Finland (Finnish Broadcasting Company 21.8.2017)



Conclusion: Ways to Enhance Accessible Tourism

- ▶ Disability Tourism Strategy and Action Plan
- ▶ Fact sheet / Easy Access Criteria
- ▶ Reality Check: Test users and customer satisfaction / Disability Organization
- ▶ Market and segmentation specific information
- ▶ Tourism Disability Research
- ▶ Acquire skills and give confidence
- ▶ Employment actions: targeting jobs in the tourism sector for people with disabilities; analysis of job profiles, requirements, recruitment

Opportunities: EU Access City Award - EU Access *Nature Award?*

The *Access Nature Award* recognises and celebrates a *national park's* willingness, capability and efforts to ensure accessibility in order to:

- ▶ •guarantee equal access to fundamental rights;
- ▶ •improve the quality of life of its population and ensure that everybody - regardless of age, mobility or ability - has equal access to all the resources and pleasures cities have to offer.

- ▶ Thank you for your attention!

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