

Visits4u

By Foteini Galanopoulou for CAE

Strengthening inclusive tourism provision in European destinations

July marked the launch of 'visits4u', an 18 month project that aims to improve user experience and sustain inclusive design in tourism provision across seven European partners. CAE proudly represents the UK and is the leading partner of the consortium. Here we briefly introduce the project and its vision.

Increased awareness leads to better business and user experience

The rationale behind the project derives from relevant researches and ongoing developments in the UK and across Europe* showing that 'staff attitude is ranked as the main barrier (or indicator of) an enjoyable experience'. Quality and availability of the right information to visitors is considered equally important. Visits4u will, therefore, aim to address better customer satisfaction under the inclusive tourism narrative, focusing on enhancing staff skills and improving information accessibility. This will be implemented through training, seminars for local tourism companies, case studies - demonstrating that access means good business - and toolkits to help embed inclusive practices in the field.

By the end of the project in each partnering country there will be a stronger network of tourism businesses with increased confidence, knowledge and commitment to make their service more accessible and eventually more profitable.

Consortium

Visits4u comprises seven partners from six countries: Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Spain and the UK. The consortium provides a good practice model as it brings together stakeholders and SME's (Small and Medium Sized Enterprises) from the broader tourism sector, organisations with expertise in inclusive

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environments and a public authority. This model offers an example for a sustainable and cost-effective support mechanism for the sector, where community and disability organisations can offer ongoing engagement with tourism businesses and advice on potential barriers; at the same time public authorities can actively help standardise the provision of inclusive tourism services in their region.

The partners

- **Asklipiades South Aegean Regional Social Protection & Solidarity Network, Greece:** www.pwdservices.gr
- **Domspain Consulting LTD, Spain:** www.domspain.com
- **Istituto dei Sordi di Torino, Italy:** www.istitutosorditorino.org
- **Municipality of Rhodes, Greece:** www.rhodes.gr
- **Nikanor LTD, Bulgaria:** www.nikanor.bg
- **Nodibinajums Invalidu un Vinu Draugu Apvieniba Apeirons, Latvia:** www.apeirons.lv

Following the introductory two months, the partners visited London in September to attend a training course and hold the first partnership meeting. We look forward to sharing our project news in the coming months.

For further details go to:

www.cae.org.uk/projects/visits4u

CAE would like to thank Ross Calladine from Visit England and Barry Ginley from the Victoria and Albert Museum for sharing their invaluable experience with our partners.

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*Including: Visit Scotland Consultation (2012), Civil Aviation Authority (2015)