

## ACCESSIBILITY TO HERITAGE

University of Thessaly



Laboratory of Tourism Planning  
Research and Policy



**European Union**  
European Regional Development Fund

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# I. Introduction

(1/2)

## Objectives

- to create concepts related to the central motif of accessibility, promoting the relevant problematic
- to investigate the bidirectional relationship between cultural heritage and tourism
- to make recommendations and suggestions aiming to the amelioration of accessibility

## Target Groups

- public and private organisations and stakeholders acting in the field of cultural tourism
- tourism destination managers
- cultural event organisers
- city planners and designers
- web site designers
- researchers, students

# I. Introduction

(2/2)

## User's Guide

- First Part
  - theoretical background of the terms 'accessibility' and 'cultural heritage'
  - key knowledge
- Second Part
  - policy implications and practices
  - European institutional framework
- Third Part
  - suggestions and recommendations



## II. Accessibility to Heritage: Background to the Issues (1/7)

**Accessibility** → the ability of everyone to use a service or a product, regardless of specificity (disability, age) or context of use. In other words, accessibility is, by definition, a matter of usability.

Accessibility should apply in all fields (e.g. culture, environmental and urban planning, transport and travel, health and welfare, research and technological development, education, labour, health and safety) and at all levels (local, regional, national, European, global) so as to ensure its generic effectiveness.

### **Universal Design**

→ originated in the 1970s in architecture

→ the needs of people with disabilities should be taken into account in the design of buildings and other public structures

## The Moments of Accessibility

(2/7)

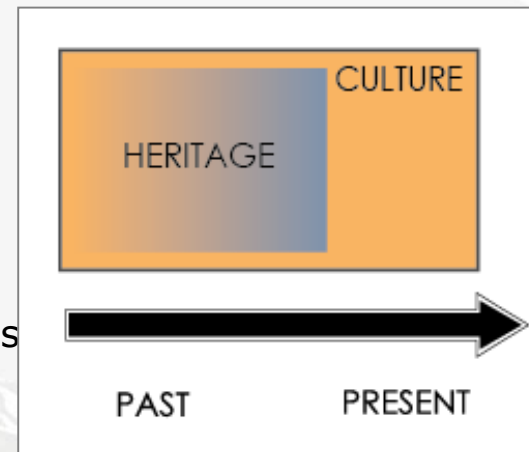
“Accessibility” is usually examined under the prism of physical disability.

Although it refers to various groups of people, such as:

- people with mental disabilities
- the elderly
- young children
- people suffering from chronic diseases
- marginalized social groups

**CULTURE:** the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively (through the time span)

**HERITAGE:** the valued objects and qualities, such as historic buildings and cultural traditions, that have been passed down from previous generations



(3/7)

## Physical Accessibility

use of body structure & function  
→ collection of stimuli/experiences



## Perceptual Accessibility

mind in function  
→ understanding culture and heritage

- Face possible exclusion because of:
  - physical disability
  - low income

- Face possible exclusion because of:
  - indifference about culture/heritage
  - mental and learning disabilities



## Appropriational Accessibility

emotional attachment

connection to the products of culture/heritage → "exoikeiosis"

intertwinement of the adopted experience and knowledge with each person's individual story (narrational production)

(4/7)

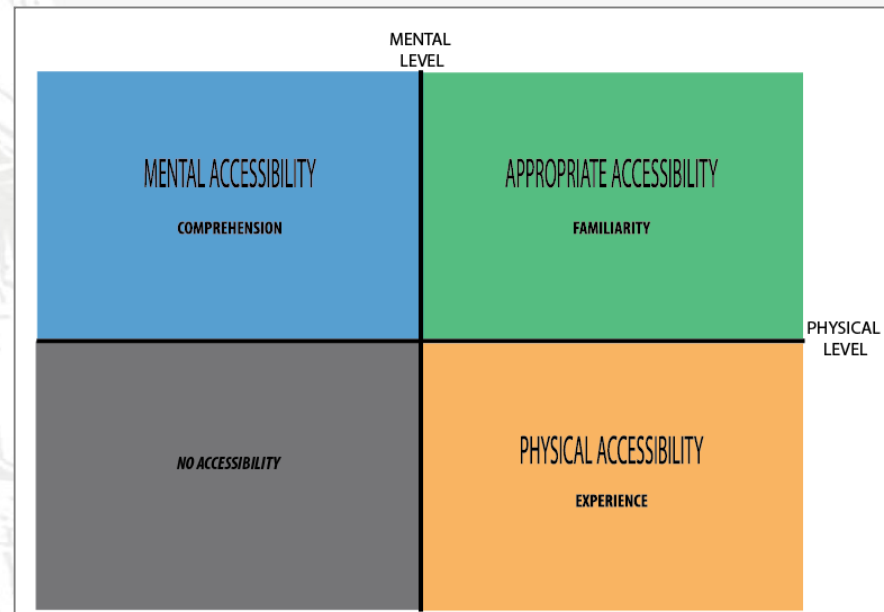
Using the *Bourdiesian syllogism*,

Physical Accessibility: accessing collective cultural capital (practical access)

Perceptual Accessibility: developing individual cultural capital (theoretical access)

Appropriational Accessibility: continuous interaction between collective and individual cultural capital (exercise of '*praxis*' )

Combining the physical and mental level of accessibility for tracing the ultimate level of accessibility, quadrants can be used to depict the three moments of accessibility and the fourth state of no accessibility:





# High/Good Accessibility → Positive Impacts on Tourism (5/7)

<p><b><u>+ Economic Impacts</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributes to further tourism development</li> <li>• Tones up local economy (zooms at investment and infrastructure development)</li> <li>• Improves public utilities and transport infrastructure</li> <li>• Creates new employment opportunities</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>+ Social Impacts</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotes social cohesion</li> <li>• Improves quality of life</li> <li>• Offers greater tolerance to social differences</li> <li>• Annihilates the feeling of social exclusion</li> <li>• Satisfies psychological needs</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>+ Cultural Impacts</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offers the opportunity of gaining experience and knowledge concerning culture and heritage</li> <li>• Broadens one's horizons</li> <li>• Offers the feeling of being part of the collective cultural capital</li> <li>• Increases the individual cultural capital</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>+ Environmental Impacts</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proper access for all to spaces of high natural and cultural importance (preservation of natural and built heritage)</li> <li>• Visual aesthetic improvement of cultural spaces (archaeological sites, libraries, museums etc.)</li> </ul>

# Low/No Accessibility → Negative Impacts on Tourism (6/7)

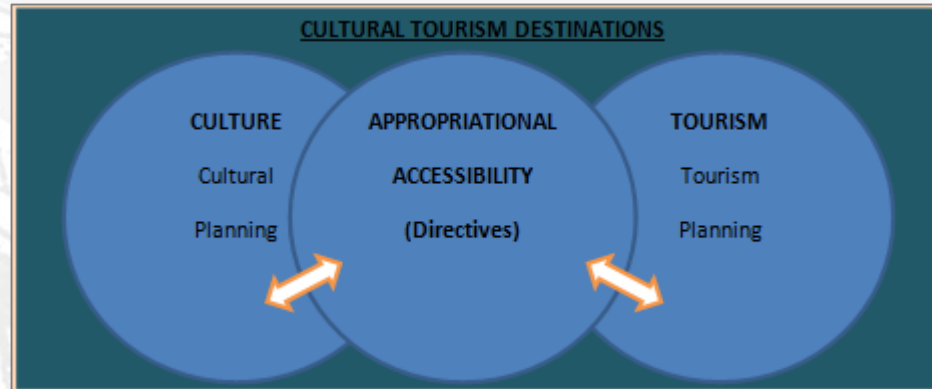
<p><b><u>-Economic Impacts</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elides a crucial part of potential tourists (special group of people)</li> <li>• Tourism economy does not develop homogenously and refers to specific target groups</li> <li>• Limiting of the target group and possible loss of revenues</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>-Social Impacts</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treats people in a different way without supporting social cohesion</li> <li>• Stresses social differences</li> <li>• Promotes the feeling of social exclusion to certain groups</li> <li>• Creates unfulfilled psychological needs</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>-Cultural Impacts</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Puts barriers to expanding one's individual cultural capital</li> <li>• Cannot help oneself feel part of the collective cultural capital</li> <li>• Cultivates indifference to cultural matters</li> <li>• Drives people away from creativity</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>-Environmental Impacts</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improper access to spaces of high cultural importance downgrades them aesthetically</li> <li>• No carefully designed accessibility can cause accidents</li> </ul>

# Contribution of Tourism to Accessibility (7/7)

## Accessible Tourism Includes

- barrier-free destinations
- transport
- high quality services
- activities, exhibits, attractions
- marketing, booking systems, web sites & services

# III. Key Knowledge related to Cultural Tourism Destinations



## Cultural Planning

- protecting culture / heritage
- organizing cultural industries' services
- providing entertainment choices

## Tourism Planning

- defining the characteristics of the target group (tourists)
- stressing the comparative advantage
- promoting the tourism product



# IV. Policy in Practice

(1/12)

The selected examples are listed below:

1. Access City Award
2. Pantou.org
3. ACA-Accessible Culture for All
4. T-Guide
5. TD-Database for Access to Public
6. CadW-Cad Wales
7. CLEAR- Cultural Values and Leisure Environments
8. Tivoli Gardens
9. Athens Metro
10. National Museums of the United Kingdom



# Access City Award

(2/12)



- European cities responding to the accessibility needs of ALL citizens
- An innovative competition between European cities which was launched in 2010 to promote accessibility in the urban environment for persons with disabilities.
- The 2014 Winner of the Award was Gothenburg (Sweden), Grenoble (France) took the second prize and Poznań (Poland) the third prize.

## The goal is:

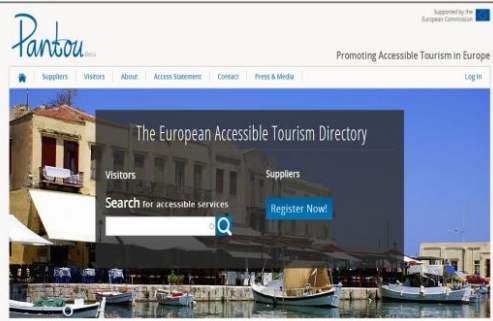
- highlighting the importance of developing and implementing policies and practices in cities that recognise the needs of the large and growing number of people with disabilities and older people.

The award covers 4 key areas of accessibility:

- the built environment and public spaces
  - transport and related infrastructure
  - information and communication, including new technologies (ICTs)
  - public facilities and services.
- The Access City Award is open to all EU cities of over 50 000 inhabitants.

# Pantou.org

(3/12)



- Located in Athens
- Developed by ENAT
- Funded by the European Commission

Pantou Means :

- 'Everywhere' in Greek
- Promoting Accessible Tourism in Europe



## Aim:

- the connection, free-of-charge, between suppliers of accessible tourism and Europe-inbound visitors.

## Goals:

- to make it easier for tourists with any kind of access needs to find what they are looking for when planning a visit
- to promote European accessible tourism suppliers, showing places to go and things to do – in safety and with convenience and comfort.

## Target groups:

- Tourism Suppliers
- Tourists:
  - with mobility/vision/hearing impairments,
  - with learning difficulties,
  - with allergies,
  - families with small children etc.



# ACA–Accessible Culture for All (4/12)



- Located in Valletta, Malta
- Partners :
  - Malta Tourism Authority, Malta
  - Kainuu ETU/Snowpolis, Finland
  - National Commission People with Disabilities, Malta
  - Ministry for Tourism , Croatia



“Tourism is a leisure experience that should be offered and enabled to all”

## Aim:

- develop a culture which will facilitate social tourism and accessibility for people with disabilities.

## The ACA project involves the following activities:

- to set up a team to promote social tourism and strengthen collaboration between tourism investors.
- to enhance collaboration between Project partners.
- to implement relevant studies that will improve the knowledge base
- to create a web portal
- to disseminate of information amongst tourists and local citizens who may be interested to travel and who fall under the category of social tourists

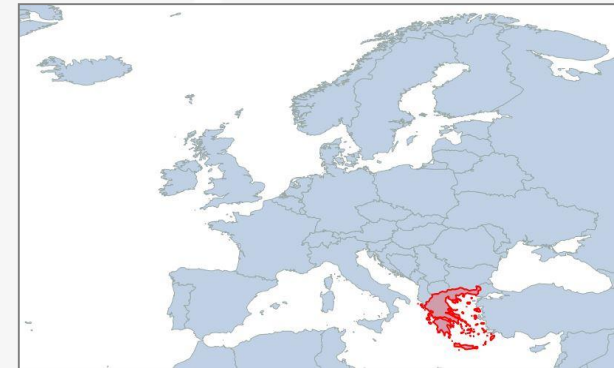


# T-Guide

(5/12)



- Located in Athens, Greece
- Is an initiative of nine organisations supported by the European Union's Lifelong Learning Programme 'Leonardo Da Vinci'.



What it is: Tourist Guides for People with Learning and Intellectual Difficulties in Europe.

## The idea is :

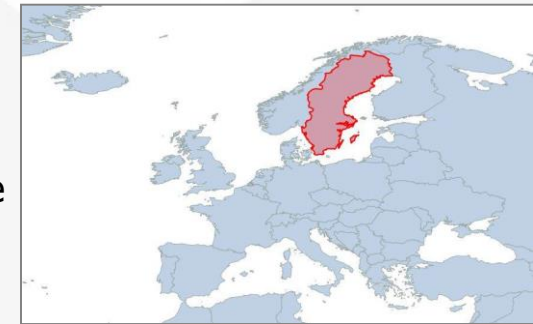
- to give Tourist Guides an awareness of the requirements of persons with learning difficulties and intellectual impairments and to equip them with the skills to extend their guiding work to these groups of visitors
- to promote the integration of people with intellectual and learning difficulties in Europe by enabling them to enjoy tourism experiences
- to enhance the role of the third sector (organisations of people with disabilities and their families) in developing learning programmes and tools for professionals in the tourism industry

# TD-Database for Access to Public Institutions

(6/12)



- Located in Västra Götaland, Sweden
- Cooperation between the region of Västra Götaland, the tourism organization of West Sweden and the disability organizations in the region.



## Tillgänglighets Databasen:

- Informs the public about accessibility in different environments.
- The TD is also providing different stakeholders with valuable information

## TD's three pillars:

- Citizen information and consumer empowerment
- Point out obstacles and impediments and explain/motivate what measures should be taken
- Follow up and detail the level of accessibility

## Target Groups:

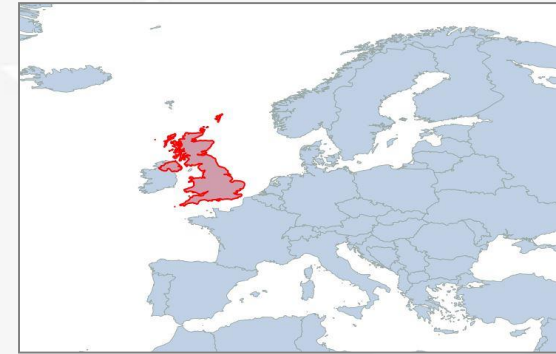
- Disability (vision/hearing/mobility problems, allergy problems related to certain substances, processing, interpreting and communicating information problems )
- Children
- Elderly
- Sexual Orientation
- Language (sign language)
- Religion

# CadW- Cad Wales

(7/12)



- Is Located in Cardiff, Wales, U.K.
- Partners:
  - Amgueddfa Cymru / National Museum Wales
  - Arts Council for Wales
  - History Research Wales
  - Cultural Tourism Steering Group
  - Dehongli Cymru
  - The Civic Trust for Wales



CadW is a Welsh word meaning 'to keep' or 'to protect'.

## Goals:

- conservation of Wales's heritage
- help people understand and care about history
- help in sustaining the distinctive character of Wales

## Process:

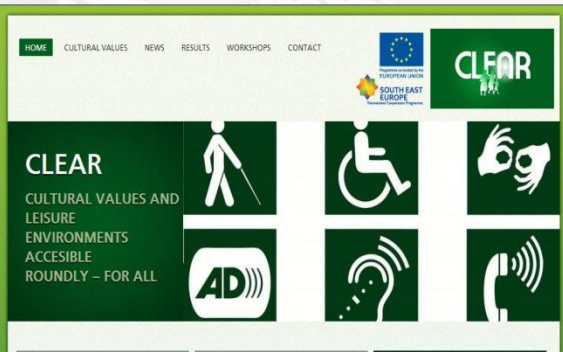
- identifying places of special historic significance
- providing advice to planning authorities, to other public bodies on environmental assessments and to property owners and occupiers.
- providing grants for conservation and repair to the owners of the very best historic buildings, buildings in designated conservation areas and listed ancient monuments.



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# CLEAR-Cultural Values and Leisure Environments Accessible Roundly for All (8/12)



- Located in Rimini, Italy, and Kranj, Slovenia
- Developed by public institutions, NGOs and research centres from 7 different countries, 12 partners.



“The Project serves as a kick-start mechanism for generating a better attitude towards Cultural Values (CVs), making them accessible to all”

## Different players relating to cultural values accessibility themes:

- Regional/Local Authorities
- Development Agencies
- Non Profit Organisations
- A Research Centre

## Types of accessibility:

- Physical accessibility
- Accessibility to knowledge & information
- Economic accessibility
- Psycho-social accessibility
- Socio-cultural accessibility



# CLEAR-Cultural Values and Leisure Environments Accessible Roundly for All (9/12)

Cultural Values are a real asset to global competition

## Objectives:

- give to marketing experts and those working in the tourist industry operational tools upon which to build activities
- discover new jobs linked to opening markets
- create new labeling, communication strategies & marketing tools
- inspire decision & policy makers and local government, by collected best practices so as to practically enhance accessibility to local Cultural Values
- raise public awareness on places committed to accessibility

# Tivoli Gardens

(10/12)



- Located in Copenhagen, Denmark
- Amusement park and pleasure garden
- In 2005 has received the "Accessibility Label"



Tivoli Gardens provides ramps for easier access in all of the entrances, disabled parking spaces, wheelchairs without extra charge, charging points for electric wheelchairs, 'show consideration' cards for children or adults with mental disabilities and also includes a Family Amenity Centre.

However, there is an entrance fee that may be a reason for **economic exclusion**.

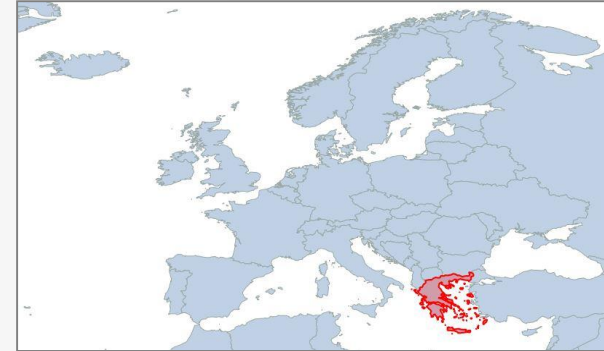


# Athens Metro

(11/12)



- Located in Athens, Greece
- State company
- Persons with Special Needs (PSNs) friendly
- Display of Archeological Findings in six Metro stations located in the Historic Center of the city of Athens: Acropolis, Evangelismos, Keramikos, Monastiraki, Panepistimio and Syntagma, Stations



## Concerning Physical Accessibility:

Provided Facilities in the Stations of Lines 2 and 3 for:

- Semi-Ambulant Users
- Wheelchair Users

## Concerning Perceptual Accessibility:

In the framework of the Metro construction, the greatest archaeological excavation in the Athens area was carried out (spanning over an area of 79000m<sup>2</sup>), which revealed more than 50000 ancient articles.

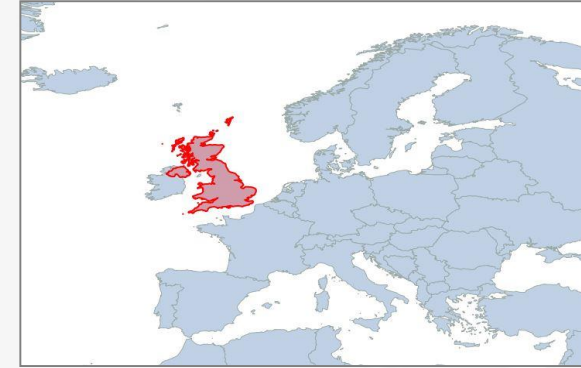
Today, the ancient articles are in public display for the first time in six Metro Stations, inviting every passenger to examine and admire them.



# National Museums in The United Kingdom (12/12)



- Located in the United Kingdom
- Owned & Operated by the state
- Funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) of the United Kingdom government.



"In all UK National Museums free entrance is a standard practice, although some exhibits do require an admission fee to view. That practice facilitates accessibility in economic terms".

## **The National Museum Directors' Council (NMDC), representing the leaders of the UK's national collections and major regional museum, aims:**

- to act as an advocate on behalf of NMDC members and their collective priorities
- to act as a voice for NMDC members to Government and other strategic bodies
- to be proactive in setting and leading the museums and cultural policy agendas
- to gather, interpret, present and share data and evidence of members' activity
- to undertake horizon-scanning and facilitate discussion on issues affecting UK museums
- to provide a forum for members to discuss issues of common concern and provide opportunities for advice, support and collaboration and for sharing good practice, information and benchmarking



# V. Recommendations

	DO'S	DON'TS
PHYSICAL	Ensuring connection to all cultural activity premises with disability friendly public transport networks as well as proper road signage	Establishing transport services exclusively for the cultural sites, unconnected to the broader urban network
	Ensuring full physical access for all to and within every cultural activity and exhibition premises	Obtruding aesthetic aspects of spaces and buildings
	Offering free or price-accessible entry for all	Depending the realization of cultural activities on private/sponsorship funds
PERCEPTUAL	Ensuring diffusion of information regarding cultural sites and activities	Providing either meager, out of date information or turgid and user-unfriendly material
	Providing audio-visual information in situ in all relevant languages	Undermining the significance of exhibits with off-scale information boards
	Providing different material for different types of audiences / visitors	Imposing visitor-alienating information overdoses
APPROPRI- -ATIONAL	Developing interactive, comprehensive and user-friendly supporting initiatives enabling the user's involvement	Developing supporting initiatives imposing dominant or conventional narratives

# VI. Accessibility to Heritage:

## Transfer Process

- different kinds of target groups
- governance structures appear in need of reform
  - awareness of variety of visitor publics and their needs
  - application of successful practices by city planners
  - actions for participation and cooperation
- creation of networks
- know-how exchange
- re-branding of the tourism product
- participation of local people
- competitiveness
- accessibility referring to economic availability



Thank you



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