

UNWTO and Italy advance accessibility in Tourism

Ensuring that tourism facilities and sites meet the needs of persons with disabilities, both as a key means of promoting tourism for all and as an engine for market growth, were the main focus of the International Conference on "Accessibility in tourism: an ethical value, a business opportunity" (14 February 2013, BIT Milan, Italy).

The event, organized by the Permanent Secretariat of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics hosted by the Italian Presidency of the Council of Ministers at the Office for Tourism Policies of the Department of Regional Affairs, Tourism and Sport in Rome, was held with the support of UNWTO and constitutes another significant step in the Organization's endeavours in the area of accessibility. Participants included representatives from hotels, tourism companies, disabled persons organizations and students from three higher tourism education centres in Italy.

"Accessibility in tourism is a right and an ethical obligation, but it is also an important business opportunity," said UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, opening the event. "Accessibility should be an integral part of all tourism facilities, products and services, ideally from their very inception, or through the adaptation of existing tourism supply," he added.

"As underlined by Secretary-General Rifai, the element which we intend to highlight today is that full accessibility in tourism, besides being an ethical responsibility, is also a development opportunity for the whole sector. For this reason, the Italian government, and I as Minister, have advanced numerous actions that have given a strong impulse to accessibility, with the involvement of all stakeholders. Today's initiative is part of these efforts", said the Minister for Regional Affairs, Tourism and Sport of Italy, Piero Gnudi.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), one billion people worldwide – 15% of the global population – suffer from some form of disability. This number is expected to continue rising as a result of demographic changes, particularly the rapid ageing of the global population. Accessibility is one of the key areas of UNWTO's work in sustainable tourism development.

Article 7 of the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism – a guide for the promotion of sustainable, responsible and accessible tourism endorsed by the United Nations in 2001 - calls for the facilitation of tourism by all persons.

The International Conference on Accessibility in Tourism: an Ethical Value, a Business Opportunity was held in the framework of the Italian tourism fair, BIT Milan. On this occasion, the UNWTO Secretary-General joined Minister Gnudi in the presentation of Italy's Strategic Tourism Plan, "Italy 2020", and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Italy regarding the Permanent Secretariat of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics, established in Rome in November 2008.

Useful links:

UNWTO Global Code of Ethics:

<http://ethics.unwto.org/en/content/global-code-ethics-tourism>

UNWTO Resolutions and Recommendations on Accessible Tourism:

<http://ethics.unwto.org/en/content/resolutions-and-recommendations-tourism-accessibility>

Consultez la source sur Veille info tourisme: [LOMT et l'Italie mettent en avant l'accessibilité dans le tourisme](#)