

## **UNWTO and Partners Advance Shared Accessibility Agenda for Tourism**

*Madrid, Spain, 25 January 2023* - UNWTO, Fundación ONCE and the Spanish Association for Standardization UNE have advanced efforts to introduce a comprehensive international standard for accessibility across the whole of the tourism sector.

At a special session on **Seminar on Tourism for All**, held at the FITUR 2023 tourism trade fair in Madrid, the three organizations were joined by representatives of tourism administrations, destinations, companies and professional industry associations to put forward new tools geared towards the implementation of the standard **UNE-ISO 21902 on Accessible Tourism**, across the value chain. These tools include a new user-guide focused on **accommodation, food & beverage and MICE** companies, launched at FITUR. The guide will serve as a starting point for assessing their levels of accessibility, and for developing or adapting their services.

This new guide was produced in collaboration with leading civil society and industry organizations such as **Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, International Circle of Hospitality Directors (CIDH), as well as the European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT)**. It is a follow up to the guidelines published in December, focusing on **public administrations**; in case of the latter, the support of **Turismo de Portugal and Turismo de Argentina** was key in messaging governments and destinations, entrusted with tourism policies, strategies and marketing plans.

### **Accessibility for growth and resilience**

At the seminar, Miguel Carballada, President of the ONCE Social Group and Jose Manuel Huesa, Director of Servimedia, argued that there is no longer any excuse for any destination or leisure and tourism experience to be inaccessible to any tourist, regardless of their background or ability. UNWTO Executive Director, Zoritsa Urosevic, added that accessibility is key to achieving SDGs. It is also key to resilience, since it brings along new customers, improving the sector's economic performance. Javier García Díaz, Director General of UNE and Vice-President of ISO, concluded that accessibility standards should be taken as guidance tools in carrying out improvements, instead of obligatory sets of measures.

Also in Madrid, the **Ministry of Tourism of Ecuador** introduced its new policies planning at this event, while the **City Hall of Cordoba** (Spain) shared new actions at a local destination level, benefitting local communities and visitors. **RIU Hotel & Resorts** and **International Circle of Hospitality Directors** tackled the most pressing challenging in applying standards and the myriad of opportunities that universal accessibility entails.

The speakers proved once more why accessibility is a major social inclusion and business opportunity as tourism's recovery continues. UNWTO, its partners and new collaborating organizations remain committed to producing new policy guidance tools in the sphere of accessibility, throughout 2023, leading the change.

### **Related links:**

[Accessible Tourism](#)

[Tourism For All: How can tourism companies and destinations champion their accessibility agenda?](#)

[Publication of first international standard on accessible tourism for all, led by UNWTO, Fundación ONCE and UNE](#)