

How to apply ISO Standard 21902 *Accessible tourism for all*¹

**Recommendations for
accommodation, food &
beverage and MICE² sectors**



Recommendations for accommodation, food & beverage and MICE sectors



Tourism plays a key role in economic development and delivers a series of benefits. However, tourism must be sustainable and inclusive, of all people. **By including accessibility and Universal Design principles from the beginning, investment costs can be kept to a minimum;** by committing to equality, tourism companies become more **sustainable, attract new audiences, and can employ people with functional diversity, generating business opportunities and greater product differentiation.**

Inclusive policies make it possible to create a supply of accessible tourism offerings. Moreover, entrepreneurs who apply a 'design for all' approach offer quality services that position them better in the market.

The absence of globally agreed regulatory and guidance tools still makes it impossible to benchmark destinations in terms of their level of accessibility. ISO Standard 21902 establishes a comprehensive set of guidelines for key players in the tourism value chain to support their efforts in making their infrastructure, products and services accessible.

The "How to apply ISO Standard 21902" collection of guides highlights the key aspects of this tool for administrations, accommodation and hospitality establishments, transport facilities and tourism resources and its implementation in companies and services.

Accommodation, food & beverage and MICE companies, that wish to ensure that their offerings are designed in an accessible manner, can use this international guidance tool as a starting point for assessing, developing or adapting their services.

¹ ISO 21902:2021 Tourism and related services — Accessible tourism for all — Requirements and recommendations (English original), <https://www.iso.org/standard/72126.html>. UNE-ISO 21902:2021 Turismo y servicios relacionados. Turismo accesible para todos. Requisitos y recomendaciones. (Spanish translation), <https://www.une.org/encuentra-tu-norma/busca-tu-norma/norma?c=N0066245>.

² Meetings, Incentives, Conference and Exhibitions

**As a company in the accommodation, food & beverage and MICE sectors, what are my areas of action according to ISO 21902?
We should act in 11 different areas:**

	AREAS³	ACTIONS
I MARKET RESEARCH	The systematic collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data on accessible tourism supply and demand; developing knowledge and fostering innovation with regards to accessibility for all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commission researchers with disabilities to map obstacles that people with disabilities confront ● Analyze the common concerns of customers with disabilities when looking for accommodation or food and beverage services ● Identify business-led initiatives and best practices in accessibility ● Fund research on system change as a consequence of inclusive training and jobs ● Understand the contribution of accessibility to sustainability and competitiveness
II STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	Creating a corporate vision and public commitment to ensure quality services for all people; formalizing executive support for systemic action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prioritize accessibility as a fundamental requirement for all tourism developments and a key driver of quality ● Define the business advantages of better access for customers and employees, based on data ● Update policies to incorporate disability inclusion and accessibility ● Integrate accessibility into operations and performance ● Nominate a senior executive as accessibility champion across the company ● Estimate how many customers you lose for not being accessible enough ● Allocate budget to implement accessibility improvements
III ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT	Providing data on the current levels of accessibility and benchmarking against competitors; identifying areas for improvement across the value chain.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct an accessibility audit with the help of technical experts and organizations of persons with disabilities ● Decide which environments, services and business activities should be prioritized for accessibility improvements ● Appoint an expert committee with disabilities hired to advise on new product development and quality customer experience ● Assess staff sourcing, hiring, training and development for inclusion of people with disabilities

³ The brief descriptions of the areas do not include official definitions approved by UNWTO, but rather tourism concepts in the context of universal accessibility and accommodation

AREAS³

ACTIONS

<p>IV PLANNING</p>	<p>Developing a set of actions based on agreed objectives; defining specific steps for different departments to improve companies' accessibility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Take into consideration accessibility when designing any new product or redesigning existing ones ● Define objectives, targets, and metrics to monitor progress ● Identify departments that need to participate and collaborate ● Develop an implementation plan for undertaking specific actions ● Elaborate tailored-made department implementation plans ● Forecast costs and benefits in the short, medium and long term
<p>V COMMON AREAS</p>	<p>A wide spectrum of spaces for common-use and accessible routes that customers need to transit or spend their time in, to be able to enjoy all the facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide conditions of autonomy, comfort and safety for all customers ● Create accessible routes in the busiest and most frequently used spaces ● Undertake accessibility improvements in areas used by both front and back of house staff ● Implement maintenance, evacuation, and safety plans
<p>VI GUEST ROOMS AND CATERING FACILITIES</p>	<p>Core services of the hospitality business and tourism experience; many accessibility interventions follow common standards for built environments while others are specific to hospitality services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply Universal Design principles for the layout of and functioning of facilities and services in guest rooms and catering establishments ● Design appealing and comfortable accessible rooms and catering areas that can be enjoyed by any customer ● Locate accessible rooms and dining areas as close as possible to accessible routes ● Provide information on allergens in menus, in accessible formats
<p>VII MEETING AND CONFERENCE VENUES</p>	<p>Accessibility elements in the provision of conference services, including access to the physical environment and full and equal participation, enable accessible MICE for all. These facilities may be integrated into hospitality establishments or function separately.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply accessibility principles when setting up and selecting conference venues ● Develop checklists to ensure access to conference infrastructure for physical disabilities and specific features in place for sensory and intellectual impairments ● Make registration forms simple and include access requirements or dietary restrictions ● Ensure a satisfactory meeting experience for end-users, by booking accessible rooms, catering, transport and leisure services

AREAS³

ACTIONS

<p>VIII PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT</p>	<p>Responding to needs of a wide range of customers, with or without disabilities; Engaging in co-design dynamics with multiple stakeholders in order to provide customers with experiences that guarantee comfort, quality and desire to return.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish protocols to remove barriers impacting both customers and staff ● Apply Universal Design principles in construction and renovation works, as well as the design and procurement of products, communication and other services ● Design accessible experiences in collaboration with end-users, destination management organizations, local attractions and transport services ● Encourage innovation to reflect up-to-date market trends and accessibility solutions ● Request economic and tax incentives from public administrations
<p>IX LABOUR INCLUSION</p>	<p>A key process in achieving decent working conditions, economic independence and self-realization through employment in hospitality. Labour inclusion should be seen as a right and a profitable advantage, rather than a charitable act</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hire staff and suppliers with disabilities ● Develop an intern programme with career development prospects ● Consider reasonable accommodation to offer equitable opportunities ● Commission disability experts to review hiring processes for inclusion ● Organize volunteering opportunities for staff to work with persons with disabilities
<p>X COMMERCIALIZATION</p>	<p>Distribution channels to sell accommodation, food & beverage and MICE offerings and the accompanying services; enhancing the possibility to book and purchase accessible experiences directly or indirectly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do not discriminate against customers with disabilities by setting higher prices ● Provide direct booking options for accessible services ● Work with online booking platforms and travel agencies to familiarize them with the offerings ● Incorporate accessible offerings into overall marketing strategy ● Feature people of different ages and abilities to reflect diversity in your market positioning and product portfolio promotion ● Stand up for the accessibility cause within business or professional associations
<p>XI FEEDBACK AND REVIEW</p>	<p>Set of processes that ensure feedback from customers, suppliers and staff; implementing plans and adjustments for quality control.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set up opportunities to learn directly from your staff and customers ● Engage consultants with disabilities to test and feedback on accessibility of different environments, facilities, communications and support services ● Review progress against objectives and revise activities to improve outcomes ● Measure and communicate concrete achievements

