



Public Report

One-Stop-Shop for Accessible Tourism in Europe (OSSATE)



www.ossate.org

**2nd Public Report, covering the period:
1 January 2006 to 30 April 2007**

OSSATE Final Public Report 2007

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1 Executive Summary

This second and final public report of the OSSATE project looks back over the activities and achievements during the second part of the implementation period (1st January 2006 to 30th April 2007) and looks forward to the further development of the “Europe for All” e-service, which was launched as a prototype, towards the end of the project at www.europeforall.com .

For the last 8 months of the project the OSSATE partnership was extended from its original 7 members with organisations from four new countries: Austria, Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Prior to joining OSSATE, each of these new partners managed a national or regional on-line accessibility information service, targetted towards tourists. Their efforts as part of the OSSATE consortium would help both to validate and develop the e-service prototype and extend the outreach of Europe for All to new regions and players.

A Contract Amendment was signed, extending the project implementation period by four months from the original end date of 31 December 2006; allowing for the entry of four new partners: and taking into account some modifications to the workplan and budget. New tasks and several high-profile dissemination events were included in the final 4 months of the project.

Work during the last 16-month period focussed on six main areas:

Workpackage 3: Building the Demonstrator

- Definition, design and development of the prototype e-service platform
- Database design and data transfer testing
- User interface improvements

Workpackage 4 “Live Run”:

- Refinement of tools for collection of accessibility data from tourist venues
- Data-collection and transfer of information to the Europe for All database

Workpackage 5: Assessment and Evaluation

- User evaluation and expert assessment of the prototype e-service

Workpackage 6: Market Analysis and Commercialisation Strategy

- Preparations for the commercialisation and deployment of the e-service.

Workpackage 7: Awareness-raising and Dissemination

- Events, publications, stakeholder involvement

Workpackage 8: e-Service Roll-out (- an additional WP with new partners)

- Detailed analysis of existing services in new markets/regions
- Demonstration of the e-service with new regional partners
- Plan for creation of the Europe for All Network Partnership.

The project has successfully completed its work. The following highlights refer especially to work completed in the last 16 months of the project.

In Workpackage 3, web platform and website design and development has led to the following achievements:

- ✓ Fully featured WAI-accessible website for data entry and presentation of venue accessibility data;
- ✓ On-line data entry to *Europe for All* relational database
- ✓ Data entry capability via XML feed and file-importing

In Workpackages 4 and 8, where work has focussed on collecting venue accessibility Data, and transferring this for presentation on the website:

- ✓ Database with Venue Accessibility data from over 900 registered venues in 6 European countries;
- ✓ Comprehensive, professionally audited accessibility data-sets for over 100 venues in the cities of Brussels and Oslo, covering accommodation, congress centres, attractions, cafés and restaurants, museums, etc.;
- ✓ Advanced venue search by geographical location and venue type;
- ✓ Advanced venue search by multiple accessibility categories:
 - General
 - Wheelchair user
 - Walking difficulties
 - Visual impairment
 - Hearing impairment
 - Asthma/Allergies
 - Diet restrictions
 - Language
 - Learning difficulties
 - Other requirements

In Workpackage 5, involving assessment and evaluation of features and content on customer-facing websites:

- ✓ On-line user surveys of OSSATE data conducted on regional tourism websites;
- ✓ Web usability and accessibility testing of the EuropeforAll website with diverse user groups;
- ✓ Analysis of the EuropeforAll website by tourism experts, leading to proposals for improvements in future editions.

In Workpackage 6, addressing market analysis and planning for commercialisation of the e-service:

- ✓ Stakeholder, Market and Value-Chain Analysis;
- ✓ Intellectual Property Rights and Europe for All Network Agreements;
- ✓ Development of the EfA Network Model for Commercial Roll-out of the e-service across Europe;

And Workpackage 7, awareness-raising and dissemination, has produced presentations of the OSSATE / EuropeforAll work at:

- ✓ 3 International OSSATE Workshops (2005-6) and 1 International European Commission/ OSSATE Tourism Flanders Conference (2007);
- ✓ 39 National and International Tourism and Destination Management Conferences (2005 – 2007);
- ✓ British Travel Trade Fair, Birmingham 2005 and 2006, World Travel Market London 2005 and 2006, IBT Berlin 2007, Philoxenia Travel Fair Greece 2006, Swedish Tourism Fair 2007;
- ✓ 45 published articles and conference presentations by 19 OSSATE team members;
- ✓ Reached over 7,500 people in live events; and

- ✓ Published articles and other publications printed in over 48,000 copies.

In the course of the work, some project milestones were unavoidably delayed due to some unanticipated difficulties. Notably, it was found that metadata formats in general usage for tourist venues were either not sufficiently developed or not suitable for the purposes of the Europe for All database. Also, a pan-European topological nomenclature for assigning the Europe for All venues to their geo-political locations was not readily available and required more resources and time than expected. There were some delays in the establishment of data transfer protocols between partners and the EfA database, which necessarily, in turn, put back the periods for delivery of venue data and user-testing of the website. However, all major tasks were completed and at the Final Review, a fully operational, tested and documented prototype was demonstrated.

Two issues could not be fully completed in the time available: a multilingual user interface for the e-service was not demonstrated, nor was the prototype e-service capable of being delivered via mobile devices. However, although these features were not present, the technical parameters necessary for their integration in the e-service have been well researched and are, accordingly, taken fully into account in the platform and system design. The European Commission has been informed of the work done, and of the approach taken by the OSSATE team to ensure the eventual delivery of multilingual content and mobile access to the Europe for All e-service. These features are being developed as part of the ongoing improvements and roll-out of the e-service.

At the end of the project implementation period all the OSSATE partners have expressed their willingness to continue their collaboration within the framework of the new “**Europe for All Network**” coordinated by EWORX S.A. The network model offers opportunities for many different types of players to take advantage of this new pan-European tourism information service.

The door is now open for new partners to join the **Europe for All Network**. **New agreements** are anticipated with national and regional tourist bodies, city tourism marketing offices, private tour operators and destination management teams. Europe for All is the service for all those who want to give their customers reliable and objective accessibility information on-line, within a reasonable budget and time-frame.

The Europe for All website may be visited at www.europeforall.com

OSSATE project information, presentations and downloads are available at: www.ossate.org

2 Project Description

2.1 Objectives

The OSSATE project, co-funded by the EC's eContent Programme, set out to implement a prototype multi-platform, multi-lingual, digital information service providing national and regional content on *Accessible Tourist Venues, Sites and Accommodation*, initially from 2 EU Member States: Greece and the UK. The ultimate goal, as stated in the project proposal, was to offer this e-service to additional National Tourist Boards and other market players, from 2007 onwards.

The intended e-service should:

- deliver information via an accessible (WAI-compliant) Web portal
- be demonstrated both as an independent service (at www.EuropeforAll.com) and
- as an integrated service which can be offered for use on third-party Web sites, as well as
- in information kiosks, travel agents and tourist bureaus.

The e-service should also deliver information direct to tourists on their mobile phones, using smart phone technologies (e.g. WAP, MMS, LBS, GPRS) and standard text messaging services.

2.2 Target Users for the e-Service

The e-service targets, especially, Europe's 50 million disabled citizens and their families, as well as the growing numbers older travellers who all can benefit from information about the accessibility of destinations and venues. Given the demographic ageing of populations in the world's industrialised countries, it is inevitable that the current demand for accessible venues and hotels is going to increase markedly over the next 30 years. Minor ailments, chronic health conditions and disabilities are often acquired later in life. But such difficulties need not stop older people from travelling and enjoying holidays in the countries and regions of Europe.

2.3 Getting Tourist Venues "On Board"

Owners and managers of tourist venues have a key role to play in the delivery of accessibility information to visitors. Recording the accessibility of places and services requires their understanding and a degree of active cooperation. The OSSATE project worked with these stakeholders to devise new, effective data-collection methods that would not be too time-consuming or complex to complete but which would still give visitors the specific detail they need to be sure that they can visit without problems.

The projected accessibility information service should ideally provide details of many well-designed, equipped and managed tourist venues and facilities across Europe that are ready to cater for people with particular access needs. But of course, many attractions, accommodations and tourist sites are not so well

prepared, and only few can truly cater for every kind of access need. For this reason, the e-service should be able to “capture” and deliver information about the accessibility features of ALL tourist venues, so that every user can gain a clear impression of the aspects of accessibility which interest them.

2.4 The OSSATE Partnership

OSSATE was developed by eleven key players in the European sectors dealing with tourism, IT and accessibility advisory services. Their logos appear below:

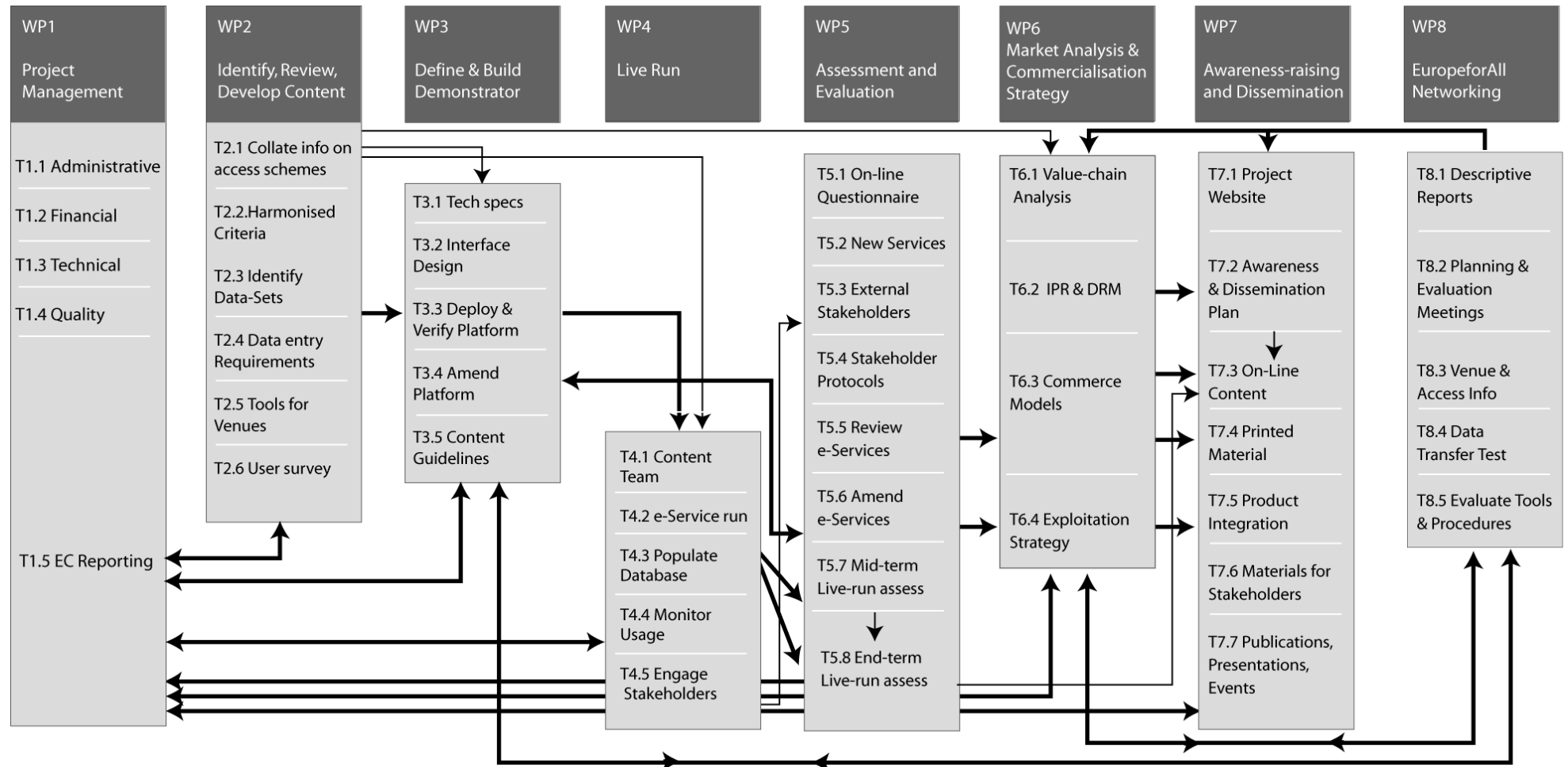


The OSSATE partners' respective profiles and areas of activity can be found by visiting their respective websites, as indicated below:

- EWORX S.A. (Coordinator), Greece www.eworx.gr
- Disability Now, Greece www.disabled.gr
- Ministry of Tourism, Greece www.mintour.gr
- British Tourist Authority (“VisitBritain”), UK www.visitbritain.org
- University of Surrey, School of Management, UK www.surrey.ac.uk
- Assoc. Nat. pour le Logement des personnes Handicapées asbl., Belgium www.anlh.be
- Toegankelijkheidsbureau vzw., Belgium www.toegankelijkheidsbureau.be
- Turism för alla i Sverige, Sweden www.turismforalla.se
- ProWorker IBFT - Infoplattform barrierefreier Tourismus, Austria www.ibft.at
- Foreningen Tilgængelighed for Alle, Denmark www.godadgang.dk
- VisitOSLO AS Norway www.visitoslo.com

Graphical Presentation of Project Components

Revised, with Workpackage 8 (WP8) added, October 2006



3 Summary of Activities

Project activities for the 16-month period are described, briefly, below. Please refer to the “Graphical Representation of Project Components” shown on the previous page.

3.1 Technical Progress – Summary

WP3 – Define and Build Demonstrator

Through the work of **WP3**, the prototype e-service website was developed and launched in January 2007 as www.europeforall.com. The site and its content are accessible (WAI Level-A compliant) to people with disabilities, who make up a large section of the target users, and it is hosted on its own dedicated EfA server, ensuring a fast, reliable service.

Venue accessibility data are entered either:

- *on-line* by registered venue owners; or
- by *XML feed* from other databases; or
- by *uploading from “flat-file” formats* such as MS Excel worksheets.

The site supports uploading of questionnaire data, free-text and photos, which are then presented to users via an advanced search tool. Venue information appears in English, with some details shown in Greek, French and German, but complete multi-linguality is not yet present. The service platform is designed to be adaptable to allow delivery of content via mobile devices such as mobile phones and PDAs.

WP4 – OSSATE Live Run

In **WP4** Live Run, the OSSATE partners made agreements with venues and Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) to deliver venue accessibility data to the EfA database. The database is populated with venue data from 6 countries: Austria, Belgium (Flemish, Wallonian and Brussels regions), Denmark, Greece, Sweden, UK and Norway. Over 900 venues are currently included in the database, covering accommodation, tourist information centres, attractions and public buildings.

More information about the Live Run appears in section 3.3 below.

3.2 User and Market Related Progress - Summary

WP5 Assessment and Evaluation

In **WP5** assessment tools were developed for eliciting user feedback on the delivery of venue access data. This was done by means of pop-up questionnaires placed on the customer-facing websites of the UK DMOs (Chester, Leicester and North Wales), as well as on the EfA prototype website. Usability and accessibility of the EfA Website was evaluated in test sessions with representative users, including disabled and elderly persons. Results of these surveys and tests were fed into design improvements, some of which were

implemented during the project's final weeks. Other improvements, suggested by tourism marketing experts, will be incorporated in future site upgrades. The EfA website will provide a (moderated) user-feedback function allowing site visitors to comment on the venues they have visited.

WP6 Market Analysis and Commercialisation Strategy

In **WP6**, building on the market analysis, a plan for organisation of the EfA e-service was elaborated, discussed and agreed with all the OSSATE partners.

Model contracts have been drawn up to cover the arrangements between EWORX (for EfA) and the Network Partners. The first two of these agreements will be signed shortly with Disability Now (Greece) and Tourism for All Sweden. Both these partners will also be certified as *EfA Level 2 Auditors* in their respective countries.

WP7 Awareness-Raising and Dissemination

In **WP7** the project results have been disseminated far and wide, all partners being actively engaged in this work. The following activities are highlighted, whilst further information is available at the OSSATE website at:

<http://www.ossate.org/events.jsp>

TGB organised the 3rd OSSATE International Workshop in Brussels on 12 May 2006. This event, which took place in the premises of Tourism Flanders, was attended by the OSSATE partners and a specially invited group of participants, representing organisations from 5 different countries: Austria, Denmark, Italy, Norway, Sweden and The Netherlands. The purpose of this workshop was to exchange experiences on issues concerning accessible tourism information schemes, including data-collection and the presentation of information via new media channels.

Results of the workshop are available at:

http://www.ossate.org/library_news_004.jsp

The European dissemination reached its height in 2007 with presentations of EfA at:

- the "Europe for All Stakeholders Conference on Tourism for All", organised the European Commission DG Enterprise, with the OSSATE team and Tourism Flanders, in Brussels on 18-19 January 2007. The event was attended by over 250 delegates from 13 countries, representing 86 organisations drawn from the tourism sector, consumer groups, research organisations and public authorities. Presentations from the Conference are available at:
http://www.ossate.org/events_conference.jsp
- an OSSATE-led seminar on accessible tourism and EfA at the *International Tourism Bourse*, Berlin, March 2007; and
- a presentation of EfA at the *European Cities Marketing Spring Meeting* in Barcelona, March 2007.

Throughout 2006–2007, Europe for All was presented by the OSSATE partners at other tourism marketing events in Austria, Greece, Sweden, Norway and the UK. The partner, UNIS, presented EfA at several international tourism conferences around the globe, and published articles about EfA in refereed academic journals on Tourism Management and Information Technology.

A Europe for All brochure targetting venue owners was produced by MINTOUR in 2006. The final 'OSSATE / Europe for All Project Showcase' has been produced by EWORX on CD-ROM, and as an on-line presentation.

WP8 Europe for All e-Service Roll-out

The additional **WP8** was added when four new partners joined the OSSATE project in September 2006. The new partners succeeded in delivering all their planned work as scheduled. Each of them prepared detailed descriptions of their existing services and went on to demonstrate the transfer of venue data from their respective countries to the the EfA database. VisitOSLO took the OSSATE project a step further by replacing its on-line accessibility information with the *EfA Level 2 auditing system*, making it a fully integrated part of the customer-facing website at www.visitoslo.com.

3.3 Major Achievements: January 2006 to April 2007

Data-Collection in Greek Tourist Accommodation

In Greece, there had been no nationwide survey of the accessibility of tourist accommodation before OSSATE. Towards the end of 2006, the Hellenic Ministry of Tourism, via a market analysis service provider, DATA RC, sent the '*Europe for All Self-assessment Hotel Questionnaire*' to a sample of about 1,200 hotels and self-catering accommodations. These establishments were registered in the Chamber of Hotels listings as being (simply) "accessible for people with disabilities". Over 640 venues responded to this survey and their data were entered into the Europe for All database..

The self-assessment survey was followed up by complete on-site audits of nine hotels in the Athens area by the accessibility auditors of DISABILITY NOW, using the '*Europe for All Auditing Checklist*'. These data were also entered and formed part of the e-service demonstrator.

Integration of Europe for All with UK Schemes

In accordance with the project workplan, the "Europe for All" LIVE RUN took place with data-collection from 3 regions of the UK: Cheshire and the North-West, Leicestershire and parts of Wales. This work has also been extended with:

- a). development work targeting the eventual incorporation of data from the UK National Accessibility Scheme into the Europe for All database, achieving interoperability between databases, and making this information viewable for customers across Europe; and
- b) preparing to add "Europe for All Level 1" data-fields in the UK National Quality Assurance Service for tourist accommodation.

This work by VisitBritain and EWORX has made a significant step towards full integration of the UK accommodation sector in the Europe for All e-service.

At the end of the project implementation period, VisitBritain has made good progress towards incorporating the OSSATE/EuropeforAll self assessment data fields in its 2008 Quality Assurance Service programme.

Extending the data collection and pilot e-service to include Belgium:

The OSSATE partners, TGB and ANLH come from the Flemish and Wallonian Communities of Belgium, respectively. These partners are “accessibility” specialists and contributed to the development and testing of tools and procedures for data collection (WP2, throughout 2005). Thanks to the OSSATE project’s dissemination activities, both TGB and ANLH have strengthened their contacts to the Flemish and Wallonian Regional Tourist Boards.

Using the OSSATE data-collection tools, these partners registered tourist accommodation in their respective communities, and transferred this data to the Europe for All service. ANLH also covered venues in the Region of Brussels. This constitutes a third EU Member State in the OSSATE/“Europe for All” network.

Pilot e-Service in the City of Oslo, Norway

One of the new partners to the consortium in 2006 was Oslo’s official on-line tourism information company, VisitOSLO A.S. This company sought to implement the EuropeforAll service as a pilot, by linking its own accommodation database to that of Europe for All. This process presented an interesting challenge, in that the EuropeforAll “Level 2” data fields were added to a successful public-facing information website. The Oslo team successfully implemented the new EfA system in time for the summer tourist season 2007, with advanced search possibilities, allowing visitors to make a range of personalised searches. From this activity, the project has learned valuable lessons for the future roll-out of the service to additional cities, regions and countries.

The project has delivered the *Europe for All e-Service*, with the following completed tasks:

WP2 - Research on accessibility information schemes, access standards and criteria for diverse user groups:

- ✓ Collected and analysed a diverse range of accessibility information schemes in Europe, identifying their scope, their strengths and their weaknesses;
- ✓ Conducted user surveys to identify information requirements of persons with extensive access needs;

WP2 - Development of an innovative accessibility measurement system:

- ✓ Established an innovative descriptive system of accessibility measurement which can be applied to all types of venues, in any legal jurisdiction, and covering all types of disabilities and access needs;
- ✓ Developed data-collection tools for self-assessment of venue accessibility by owners/managers;
- ✓ Developed data-collection tools for professional auditing of venue accessibility (on-site assessment);

WP3 - Web platform and website design and development:

- ✓ Fully featured WAI-accessible website for data entry and presentation of venue accessibility data;
- ✓ On-line data entry to *Europe for All* relational database
- ✓ Data entry capability via XML feed and file-importing

WP4 and WP8 - Venue Accessibility Data-collection, Transfer and Presentation:

- ✓ Database with Venue Accessibility data from over 900 registered venues in 6 European countries;
- ✓ Comprehensive, professionally audited accessibility data-sets for over 100 venues in the cities of Brussels and Oslo, covering accommodation, congress centres, attractions, cafés and restaurants, museums, etc.;
- ✓ Advanced venue search by geographical location and venue type;
- ✓ Advanced venue search by multiple accessibility categories:
 - General
 - Wheelchair user
 - Walking difficulties
 - Visual impairment
 - Hearing impairment
 - Asthma/Allergies
 - Diet restrictions
 - Language
 - Learning difficulties
 - Other requirements

WP5 - Assessment and Evaluation of Features and Content on Customer-facing Websites:

- ✓ On-line user surveys of OSSATE data delivered on regional tourism websites;
- ✓ Web usability and accessibility testing of the EuropeforAll website with diverse user groups;
- ✓ Analysis of the EuropeforAll website by tourism experts, leading to proposals for improvements in future editions.

WP6 - Market Analysis and Planning for e-Service Commercialisation:

- ✓ Stakeholder, Market and Value-Chain Analysis;
- ✓ Intellectual Property Rights and Europe for All Network Agreements;
- ✓ Development of the EfA Network Model for Commercial Roll-out of the e-service across Europe;

WP7 – Awareness-raising and Dissemination:

OSSATE / EuropeforAll presented at:

- ✓ 3 International OSSATE Workshops (2005-6) and 1 International European Commission/ OSSATE Tourism Flanders Conference (2007);
- ✓ 39 National and International Tourism and Destination Management Conferences (2005 – 2007);
- ✓ British Travel Trade Fair, Birmingham 2005 and 2006, World Travel Market London 2005 and 2006, IBT Berlin 2007, Philoxenia Travel Fair Greece 2006, Swedish Tourism Fair 2007;
- ✓ 45 published articles and conference presentations by 19 OSSATE team members;
- ✓ Reached over 7,500 people in live events;
- ✓ Published articles and other publications printed in over 48,000 copies.

4 Project Management

In addition to the regular project management tasks of planning, monitoring and reporting, the second half of the OSSATE project saw much activity dedicated to bringing in the four new partners from Austria, Denmark, Norway and Sweden and establishing a smooth workflow to complete WP8.

Prior to joining, each of the new partners had attended at least one OSSATE International Workshop and has made a presentation of its expertise and work to the seven 'original' OSSATE partners. The new partners are each well placed to assess the quality and potential value of EuropeforAll in their respective regions and countries, and each has expressed its interest to collaborate in the future e-service, under suitable terms.

Tourism för All in Sweden has worked since 1998 as a regional centre of expertise in tourism marketing and accessible tourism, based in the South of Sweden. TFAS manages its own database of tourist accessibility information under the EQUALITY registration scheme.

Pro Worker IBFT is an Austrian Non-Governmental Organisation supported by the Austrian Ministry of Economy and Labour. Under the IBFT logo, the organisation manages an on-line database of accessible tourism information, with categories including accommodation, gastronomy, transport, culture, sport, assistance and services in Austria.

Foreningen Tilgængelighed for Alle (Access for All Association in Denmark) was formed by 3 partners in 2003: the Danish Association of Organisations of Disabled People, the Danish Tourist Authority and HORESTA - the Danish employer and industry organisation of the Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Industry. The association seeks to promote accessibility in the tourism sector through, amongst other things, a labelling scheme for tourism providers and an on-line accessibility information system for customers.

VisitOSLO A.S. promotes the city of Oslo as a tourist destination. It has a strong commercial approach and maintains a content-rich tourist Website, which includes accessibility information that has been registered in collaboration with Norwegian national organisations of disabled people.

Within WP8 "e-Service Roll-out", each of these organisations has explored, with the OSSATE team, the managerial, technical and commercial possibilities for extending the OSSATE e-service to their sphere of operations. One of the incoming partners, VisitOSLO S.A. also undertook a larger pilot exercise by implementing a "Level 2 LIVE RUN", following the model established for Greece and Belgium (WP4).

It is a credit to the four incoming partners that they rapidly integrated into the OSSATE team and worked effectively to deliver their work within a very tight time schedule.

At the end of the project implementation period all the OSSATE partners expressed their willingness to continue their collaboration within the framework of the **Europe for All Network**.

5 Future Work and Exploitation Prospects

5.1 Self-Assessment Data

The Website at www.europeforall.com allows venue owners to join as “Members”, providing them with a user ID and password. Once they have logged in they are able to access a self-assessment questionnaire and fill the items on-line. When a request to publish is received by the EfA Administrator the contact details and answer fields of the questionnaire are checked and then the data is published.

Accommodation venues are the only ones that can be self-assessed at present. In autumn 2007 self assessment questionnaires for other venue types will be offered, including Tourist Information Centres, Retail outlets (shops), Cafés and Restaurants, and Attractions.

5.2 Synchronisation of Databases with EfA Network Partners

For organisations who may be considering to join the Europe for All (EfA) Network as suppliers of accessibility data for multiple venues, e.g. a hotel chain, a city tourism marketing office or a regional tourist office, it is worth outlining how EfA-synchronization can be established with other databases. The Java-based database synchronization tool is available for all Network Partners who accept the respective terms of use (to be specified in the *EfA Network Partner Agreement*).

Since the EfA system cannot cater for the structural intricacies of partner databases (each one is bound to have smaller or significant incompatibilities which would not be possible to be accommodated without significant effort), a few extensions to the Network Partner database are suggested. It is a decision of the Network Partner to create EfA-related fields directly into the main tables of their database or set up extra-tables that will serve for compatibility with the EfA database. The following suggestions are indicative of what is required to facilitate the Network Partner database export process.

- An important element that needs to be created in the Network Partner’s database is the EfA venue-ID to ensure a match between the partner venue entry and the respective venue entry in the EfA database.
- If the partner intends only to insert data into the EfA database then a “modified” flag should be created in the partner database. This flag should be set to 1 if new venues are to be created or existing ones should be modified. The synchronization tool should “put” all venues with “modified=1” to EfA and subsequently reset the flag to “modified=0”.
- If a Network Partner intends to both insert and update data into EfA system, it is important that some modification dates are stored in the Network Partner’s system for each venue. This feature will be valuable in the future so as to check if there has been any modification in order to perform an update. Additionally, in case it is agreed that a venue’s data can be edited by both the EfA portal and the Network Partner’s portal, it is essential to keep the last edited date, so as to maintain the integrity of the data.

5.3 EfA Services and “White-labelling”

It is clear that EfA’s Venue Searching and Presentation functionality are good candidates for a so called “white-label” export product (as in EfA offering this service on Websites managed by other organisations, e.g. tour operators or hotel chains).

Equally, venue booking services have been identified as a possible white labelling import product (as in EfA getting this service from an affiliate organisation. But the EfA portal encapsulates more services and they are also being investigated for future exploitation while at the same time market research provides us with White-Labelling niches that EFA might need to expand later on in its life.

5.4 Marketing EfA - Future Collaboration

One of the principal activities of EWORX and the OSSATE partners following the final review of the OSSATE project is to implement the Marketing Plan which was laid out in the (confidential) deliverable **D6.5**.

At EWORX, refinement of the marketing plan is being undertaken by identifying those organisations and enterprises that are suitable targets for dissemination.

The European Travel Commission, which markets Europe as a tourism destination has expressed its strong interest in collaborating with *EuropeforAll* for the provision of accessibility information on its customer-facing website at www.visiteurope.com. Their site already refers to the OSSATE project at their page directed towards visitors with disabilities:

http://www.visiteurope.com/ccm/experience/detail/?nav_cat=134%E2%8C%A9=en_US&item_url=/ETC/pan-european/europe-for-all---europe-for-people-with-disabilities-es

In autumn 2007, a first wave of *direct invitations* will be sent to national and regional tourist boards as well as city tourism promotional organisations in all EU-27 countries, seeking their collaboration as EfA Network partners.

Approaches will also be made to national and international or global players in the tourism sector to encourage them to adopt the EfA accessibility assessment tools in their business practices, and to seek their collaboration as partners within the EfA Network. These players include hotel chains, tour operators, destination marketing organisations and on-line tourism and travel booking agents. Other possible collaborators include advertisers, publishers in the travel and tourism fields and investors. With the expansion of EuropeforAll into new regions, it is also anticipated that professional accessibility auditors will be needed in increasing numbers in these areas to provide their services to those venues that require full on-site accessibility audits of their buildings and customer services.

6 Postscript

At the conclusion of this 28-month project, with its highly intensive work-rate, the Coordinator considers that, with only a few exceptions, OSSATE project has succeeded in reaching its objectives, and in so doing has delivered an innovative and effective European cross-border e-service for the provision of accessibility information to tourists.

Throughout the project strong interest has been shown in the OSSATE approach and the *Europe for All* service by the communities of potential users, especially disabled and senior citizens' organisations. It has also been exceptionally rewarding for the project partners to observe the growing recognition in the tourism sector that *accessibility information* has a vital role to play in the promotion and marketing of destinations and venues. We anticipate that this role will not diminish in the future, and visitors to "*Destination Europe*" will continue to demand ever higher quality accessibility information to guarantee the success of their visits.

As always, in development projects of this kind, a number of new avenues of exploration have opened up, which could offer the chance of challenging and worthwhile collaborative work with new partners in the future. The OSSATE / Europe for All team would welcome any suggestions from possible partners either in the tourism sector or in publishing, or from investors, for future joint activities building on the framework of the e-service we have established.

Lastly, the Project Coordinator, EWORX and all the OSSATE partners would like to thank the European Commission for its support for this venture; and especially the Commission's appointed Project Officer, Gudrun Stock, for her guidance and advice, as well as the interest she has shown in our work.

7 Further Information

OSSATE

Reports, studies, conference presentations and other material relating to the OSSATE project can be viewed and downloaded from:

www.ossate.org

EuropeforAll

www.europeforall.com

EuropeforAll.com Contact Point:

All enquiries about EuropeforAll should be directed to the coordinator at the following address:

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