



Gājējam draudzīgs
/ Hiker-friendly

CRITERIA FOR TOURISM SERVICE PROVIDERS

www.baltictrails.eu/lv/forest/hikerfriendly
www.baltictrails.eu/lv/coastal/hikerfriendly

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The label

LATVIA



ESTONIA



LITHUANIA



What is the “Hiker-Friendly” label

Hiking tourists are in close contact with the region in which they are and find it particularly important to feel that they are welcome and understood. This emotion is primarily created by visual information such as information stands, directional signs, appropriate information materials, thematic books and guidebooks. Hikers are expecting to find necessary products at local shops, as well as knowledgeable and helpful people who want to assist them.

In many places where hikes are popular, there are signs or stickers which read “*Hiker-Friendly*”. This may be a part of a certification programme, and the signs are only received by venues which meet the relevant criteria. The labels may also be used by responsible tourism organisations, with businesses being free to choose whether or not they want to post the label. In other cases, this can be the initiative of businesses as such.

The “*Hiker-Friendly*” sticker or label is an effective way of demonstrating that the target audience is welcome. The labels are well-known all over the world, and travellers who spot them clearly understand that their needs will be understood and that there will be someone who will be prepared to share valuable information.

If a tourism product is to be successful, involved parties must have the same hospitality quality principles. The criteria can help tourism companies to orient themselves. General criteria are appropriate for any tourism service provider, while criteria for accommodations only apply to accommodations.

Who can receive the label

The “*Hiker-Friendly*” label can be received by any private tourism service provider or Tourist Information Center (TIC) in the Baltic States that wishes to be friendly to hikers by offering services necessary for this target group. The label is not linked to any specific pathway or route.

The “*Hiker-Friendly*” criteria are guidelines for service providers. Some of them are mandatory, while others are recommended. A company which wants to get the sign must satisfy at least 75% of the mandatory criteria.

Who awards the label

The label is awarded by an established commission in each Baltic state. Decisions for each specific case are made as a result of discussions, based on the information provided by the candidate regarding its compliance with "Hiker-friendly" and specialization criteria. Decisions are taken at least 1-2 times per year or when needed.

Approved applicants are presented with the "Hiker-Friendly" label, and it must be posted somewhere where tourists can spot it. Applicants also receive an electronic version of the label for advertising and marketing purposes. During the course of the project, the label is free of charge.

Organisation responsible for issuing the label

in LATVIA

Latvian
Country Tourism
Association
"Lauku Ceļotājs"



Lauku Ceļotājs
www.celotajs.lv

in ESTONIA

Estonian
Rural Tourism NGO



www.maaturism.ee

in LITHUANIA

Lithuanian
countryside
tourism association



www.atostogoskaime.lt

Use and review of the label

The "Hiker-Friendly" label is awarded for a non-specific period of time. Cases in which a specific label recipient is reviewed and a decision is made regarding retaining or revoking the label:

- if negative guest reviews are received (they are checked);
- the service and/or service provider has changed.

If the offer has changed substantially and the quality and compliance with "Hiker-Friendly" criteria has been endangered, then a decision can be taken on annulling the label.

GENERAL CRITERIA:



1.	The topic of hiking is included in the service provider's advertising, with links to hiking routes that are in the neighbourhood.	RECOMMENDED
2.	There is visible and full information about the route (a map if it is a long distance, or a map of a specific part of the trail. The information should include the length of the route, the level of difficulty, the approximate time to cover the route, the road cover, starting and finishing points, obstacles, dangerous places, alternative phases, etc. There should also be information about available services such as accommodations, dining facilities, stores, rest areas, lavatories and tourism information centres). PS! If any of the trails is passing the protected area, where various restrictions may be present, there should be information available about this (both that there is protected area and that there are restrictions).	OBLIGATORY
3.	Information about routes and services is available in at least one foreign language (recommended in English).	OBLIGATORY
4.	The service provider speaks a foreign language	RECOMMENDED
5.	The service provider is familiar with local routes, but also the local area, interesting destinations, etc.	RECOMMENDED
6.	If the service provider has a dog, the dog must be kept behind a fence or kennel so that it does not threaten tourists (there should be a sign to say that there is a dog).	OBLIGATORY
7.	There is information about what to do if there are health problems (the closest medical institution, the closest pharmacy, etc.).	OBLIGATORY
8.	The service provider has a first-aid kit.	OBLIGATORY
9.	There is information about public transportation.	OBLIGATORY
10.	Wi-Fi Internet is available.	OBLIGATORY
11.	There is drinking water or a chance to purchase water or fill up existing water bottles.	OBLIGATORY
12.	There is an opportunity to charge up electronic devices.	OBLIGATORY
13.	There are possibilities for cleaning the footwear before entering the accommodation (special brushes or other solutions near the entrance).	RECOMMENDED

CRITERIA FOR ACCOMMODATION:



1.	The accommodation is available for hikers during the active tourism season (May to October) and during the weekends despite other possible events.	OBLIGATORY
2.	There is an opportunity to spend just one night at the accommodation.	OBLIGATORY
3.	There is an opportunity to clean and dry wet or dirty clothing, boots and other personal equipment (a separate room or a place in a room with brushes to clean clothing and footwear).	OBLIGATORY
4.	There is a possibility to launder apparel and wash dirty hiking boots.	RECOMMENDED
5.	There is a shower or bathtub with hot water.	OBLIGATORY
6.	It is possible to make a last-minute reservation (if there are vacancies) by ringing the service provider, besides a reservation system that requires the Internet.	OBLIGATORY
7.	It is possible to enter or leave the accommodation if the traveller plans to arrive later or leave earlier than the normal opening hours of the accommodation.	OBLIGATORY
8.	Bedrooms and other rooms in the building are heated when it is cold outside (if there is no central heating system, then there are electric heaters or other types of heating).	RECOMMENDED
9.	Personal property can be left safely while the tourist goes to a store or a tourism destination.	RECOMMENDED
10.	The accommodation offer dinner or can point to dining facilities that are nearby (10-15 minutes away on foot).	RECOMMENDED
11.	Breakfast is offered starting at 7:00 AM.	RECOMMENDED
12.	Breakfast and lunch can be packed so that the hikers can take them along with themselves.	RECOMMENDED
13.	There is possibility to boil water at any time (including before and after meals).	OBLIGATORY

14.	There is a kitchen or kitchenette to prepare meals, including dish-ware, pots and pans.	OBLIGATORY if dining is not offered, RECOMMENDED otherwise
15.	If there is leased inventory, the owner is familiar with its use.	RECOMMENDED
16.	There is information about local guides and other service providers.	OBLIGATORY
17.	There is additional information about environmental and cultural tourism opportunities if they are nearby and can be reached quickly on foot. PS! If any of the trails is passing the protected area, where various restrictions may be present, there should be information available about this (both that there is protected area and that there are restrictions).	OBLIGATORY
18.	There is an offer to transport travellers and baggage to the closest public transportation stop, or there is information about who can do so.	RECOMMENDED
19.	Help is offered in terms of reserving the next accommodations or services if necessary.	OBLIGATORY
20.	There is possibility to buy necessary items for hikers (garbage bags, water bottles, protein snacks, packed lunch, bandages, sunscreens, repellents, protective lotions for the footwear, matches, raincoats, gas for the stove, dining utensils etc.).	RECOMMENDED
21.	There are massage and/or sauna services, or the accommodations partner with nearby neighbours to offer such services.	RECOMMENDED
22.	Options available for luggage transfer.	RECOMMENDED
23.	There is a possibility to make fire or to use a grill.	RECOMMENDED
24.	Travelers with pets are welcomed.	RECOMMENDED

VISUALS

Info plate



Plastikāta plāksnīte
stiprināšanai pie sienas
17 x 16,5 cm



Additional specialisations



Wheelchair
accessib



Visually
accessible



Children-
Friendly

Info plate "Drinking water"



Size 15 x 18 cm

Stickers



Size 8 x 7,7 cm



ENVIRONMENTAL ACCESSIBILITY: WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE AND VISUALLY ACCESSIBLE

The “Hiker-Friendly” businesses can also obtain two additional accessibility specialisations:





















Wheelchair
accessible



Visually
accessible

ENVIRONMENTAL ACCESSIBILITY CRITERIA FOR THE “HIKER-FRIENDLY” SIGN

Here is a list of environmental accessibility criteria for the “Hiker-Friendly” sign. Each criterion includes symbols which depict the area or areas of specialisation to which it applies.

1.	The company’s ads and informational materials indicate that services are available for people with functional limitations.	 
2.	The venue has an appropriate car park with signs to indicate that it is accessible to people using a wheelchair.	
3.	The entrance to the building is wheelchair-accessible and also accessible for people with other functional limitations, including senior citizens. An entrance ramp can be installed, and thresholds can be kept low or adapted to people’s needs.	 
4.	Interior rooms and doorways are broad and without thresholds so that people with functional limitations can use them.	 
5.	Services for people with functional limitations are available on the ground floor of the building. A lift must be available if services are also offered on other floors.	 
6.	Hygienic facilities, lavatories and showers are adapted to the needs of people with functional limitations.	 
7.	Inventory and equipment are comfortable, functional, safe and accessible for people with functional limitations.	 
8.	Insofar as possible, the venue’s employees can help people with functional limitations with advice and assistance.	 
9.	Interior rooms can accommodate companion animals.	
10.	In the case of an emergency, people with functional limitations can safely evacuate the space themselves or with the help of employees.	 






Explanations about the environmental accessibility criteria for the “Hiker-Friendly” sign

Here you will find explanations about the application of the criteria. Each element includes symbols to indicate the areas of environmental accessibility to which it applies.

1. Information

The criterion: | The company’s ads and informational materials indicate that services are available for people with functional limitations.





Explanations:

-  | Use environmental access symbols and markings in your informational materials: homepage, guidebooks, brochures, social networks, etc.
-  | Provide Explanations: about the availability of services for people with functional limitations.
-  | Photographs of your building and its interior and exterior will help tourists to understand the extent to which environmental access is ensured and to prepare for their visit.
-  | A potential visitor who can more easily understand the information that you provide will be the one who will be more independent in accessing services which you offer.
-  | Make sure your homepage has an “Easy language” section or the option to change the size of letters and the light or darkness of the background in accordance with the time of day.

2. Car park

The criterion: | The venue has an appropriate car park with signs to indicate that it is accessible to people using a wheelchair.

Explanations:

-  | The car park that is meant for people in wheelchairs must be as close to the main entrance of your venue as possible.
-  | Make sure that the car park is at least 3.5 m wide and 5 m long so that people in wheelchairs can manoeuvre freely and get into or out of their motor vehicle.
-  | The car park must have posted information that includes internationally accepted accessibility symbols, thus indicating those areas of the territory which are appropriate for wheelchair users.
-  | Make sure that the surface of the car park is hard and even and without any change in levels, the alternative being slanted ramps.

The criterion:

The entrance to the building is wheelchair-accessible and also accessible for people with other functional limitations, including senior citizens. An entrance ramp can be installed, and thresholds can be kept low or adapted to people's needs.

Explanations:

There are no obstacles between the car park and the building, including raised objects such as signs on walls, poles, trees, hanging flower baskets and other items that could endanger people with movement and/or vision limitations.



The path from the access road or sidewalk to the front door must be free of any steps and obstacles. If there are steps, consider the installation of a ramp. An automatically opening door to your venue is also recommended.



From the driveway or pavement to the front door, there should be a clear path without steps or obstacles. If there are steps, consider installing a ramp or threshold ramp. If possible, install an automatic door opener.



Shallow ramps with a firm, non-slip surface suitable for all weather conditions or a ramp at the building entrance. Make sure that the area at the top and bottom of the ramp is large enough for people to manoeuvre around or rest for a bit. Ramps can also be of use when the service user wishes to transport large items of baggage or when suppliers need to deliver heavy items on a regular basis. Make sure that the building has low thresholds or none at all to prevent problems with movement. One possible solution could be portable ramps or removable metal structures, available as needed or upon the client's request.



Doors must be automatically open or their opening load must be below 2 kg unless there is support for the wheelchair user from an assistant or a staff member.



Doorways must be at least 0.9 m wide, and on both sides of a door there must be a free area for manoeuvring with a diameter of at least 1.5 m. Protect the front entrance from rain, snow and wind. It is important that thresholds are low or absent to avoid obstructing movement.



Ensure a doorbell or intercom at the front door so as to contact personnel.



Install handles, not knobs on your doors. If necessary remove all unnecessary doors or expand their doorways. Doors which lead to closed areas must open outward.



Make sure that stairs are not slippery. That is most likely if the user cannot put his or her full foot on the step.



People with vision problems, including senior citizens, are most likely to fall or lose their balance if they are unfamiliar with stairs or if the stairs are inappropriate. People will feel unsafe if the steps do not have contrasting marks.



Spiral staircases are not appropriate for people with movement or vision limitations.

4.

Interior rooms

The criterion: | Interior rooms and doorways are broad and without thresholds so that people with functional limitations can use them.

Explanations:

Hallways:



Hallways must be at least 0.9m wide and with no obstacles.



All doors and halls must be wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair.



Of essential importance are tactile and contrasting surfaces on stairwells.

Bedrooms:



Beds with adjustable height are recommended.



Electrical plugs must be at a height of 90-140 cm so that they are accessible to wheelchair users. Install a central light switch by the bed.



The room needs additional hooks and hangers at an appropriate height so that someone in a wheelchair can easily reach them.



Bars for hangers in the closet must be no more than 140 cm above the ground. If necessary, provide a stick with a hook to lift hangers from the bar. The doors of the closet must be sliding.



Make sure that there is room in the bedroom for someone to move around in a wheelchair.

The kitchen:



The kitchen must have lower work surfaces, shelves that can be pulled out, and cabinets with easily used handles.



Kitchen equipment must be at an appropriate height and easy to access.



Ensure free space under the lower work surfaces so that a person in a wheelchair can easily access the surface and use equipment or prepare food.



If the kitchen is small, then there will not be enough manoeuvring room for people in wheelchairs.



Kitchens with high work surfaces and storage shelves are not accessible to wheelchair users, and they will not be able to access them without help.

5.

Placement

The criterion: | Services for people with functional limitations are available on the ground floor of the building. A lift must be available if services are also offered on other floors.

Explanations:



People with functional limitations must have accommodation and relaxation facilities on the first floor of your building unless you have a lift or elevator to reach upper floors.

6.

Hygienic facilities

The criterion: | Hygienic facilities, lavatories and showers are adapted to the needs of people with functional limitations.

Explanations:



When organising or adapting hygienic facilities, please take into account the diversity of people's needs. People in wheelchairs and those who have an assistant will need larger hygienic facilities.



The lavatory and washrooms must be on the first floor and large enough to accommodate someone in a wheelchair.



The doors to the lavatory must open outward so as to ensure more room inside and safety if there is an accident.



Make sure that the toilet is at a height which can be accessed by someone in a wheelchair. It must be such that the toilet can be accessed from the sides, and it must have vertical and horizontal support rails.



The washroom needs support handles beside the toilet, the shower and the bathtub.



The height of the sink must be at least 70 cm so that the wheelchair fits underneath it. The sink, the faucet, mirror and other items must be placed within the reach of someone who is in a wheelchair.



Put a mirror above the sink, but avoid full-length mirrors which can create the illusion of an aperture in the wall.



Showers must be equipped with a seat and with support handles. We recommend a shower stall with an installed or foldable seat.



Shower stalls should not have a threshold.



Washroom doors must open outward so that there is more room for a wheelchair.



Things such as towels, soap and wastebaskets must be placed so that they can be easily reached and used from a seated position.



The doors to hygienic facilities must be openable from the outside if someone inside requires additional assistance.

7.

Inventory and equipment

The criterion: | Inventory and equipment are comfortable, functional, safe and accessible for people with functional limitations.

Explanations:

Inventory



Place indoor plants in places where they do not hinder movement.



Ceiling lamps and interior objects must not be too low so as to avoid threats against people with vision problems.



Kitchen equipment must be at a height that can be accessed and used both when sitting down and when standing up. The equipment must be easily understood and utilised.



Closets, hangers, desks and shelves must be at a height that is appropriate for someone in a wheelchair, or they must be adjustable.



Furniture, including the bed, must be accessible to wheelchair users.



Mirrors must be with a specific tilt (10-15° forward).



All buttons, switches and handles must be easily found and identifiable visually or by touch, and they must be easy to use for people who have limited motor skills.



Provide hooks for outdoor clothing or crutches at a height that can be used when standing up or sitting down.



Sockets and power switches must be at least 40-120 cm above the floor level.



Make sure that lights in the whole house are bright and uniform, particularly in hallways, stairwells and other areas with intensive human traffic.



Use automated lights with movement sensors so as to ensure good lighting in the zones.



Switches must be visible in the dark.

Surfaces:



Work surfaces must be appropriate for people with differing needs, thinking about how they will be used by people who are standing up or sitting down. The height of desks and similar surfaces must be at a height where wheelchair users can conveniently move around, access the surface, and have enough room for their chair.

Audio, visual and tactile information:



Help people with impaired vision to get around with the help of appropriate audio and tactile information (e.g., Braille text).



Equip rooms where clients will be with easily perceived, contrasting and well-lit signs and instructions placed 1.4 m above floor level.



Level changes, the start and end of ramps, as well as the first and last step of a stairwell should be marked with contrasting colours.



Numbers and other information should be replaced with symbols and informative designations. Appropriate symbols are of use not just to people with vision impairments, but also to most people who can thus perceive the information more readily. This will also help foreign guests to understand the content more easily.



Tactile texts in Braille must contrast with the background.



Audio guides about the surrounding environment and the services that are provided are an excellent way of facilitating accessibility.

8. Involvement and aid from personnel

The criterion: Insofar as possible, the venue's employees can help people with functional limitations with advice and assistance.

Explanations:



Staff should be trained to work with people with different abilities so as to ensure accessibility to all of those clients, including those who use crutches, walkers or wheelchairs, as well as people with vision or hearing problems. It should be noted that along with these customers, the number of accompanying travellers also increases.



Ask clients whether they need your assistance.



Be sure that you understand the desires and needs of clients, because not all people with different needs require the same help and adaptation.



Larger companies should train one of their employees to be a support person who can provide necessary aid and information to people with different abilities so that the services are more convenient and easy to use.



If possible offer technical and service resources such as additional raincoats if there is wind or rain as well as reflectors when it is darker outside.

9. Dogs, companion animals

The criterion: Interior rooms can accommodate companion animals.

Explanations:



Companion dogs usually accompany people with vision problems, but specially trained dogs can help people with various functional problems such as movement difficulties, epilepsy, autism, anxiety attacks, etc.



Companion dogs are specifically trained to reduce the functioning limitations of the person, thus improving his or her mobility and/or independence.



Companion dogs have a special certificate which confirms that they are right for the job. They have accessories such as leashes, harnesses or cloaks with reflecting elements and the text "Companion Dog".



If your client arrives with a companion dog, make sure that there is a place for food and water dishes so that this does not disturb other visitors and that they are not in front of doors or places where people walk.



People with companion dogs find it hard to use tourniquets and revolving doors.



Make sure that the companion dog has an opportunity to drink water, which must be clean and pure.



Companion dogs are not pets. They are at work, and they must not be disturbed. Strangers must not try to communicate with or pet the dog.

The criterion:

In the case of an emergency, people with functional limitations can safely evacuate the space themselves or with the help of employees.

Explanations:Evacuation:

The building evacuation plan must involve responsible people and methods for how to evacuate people with functional limitations quickly, safely and with dignity. Particularly focus on those people who rely on the help of others. Audio and visual emergency signals are essential so that during emergencies, everyone in the building is aware of what is happening and what to do to evacuate safely.



Do not try to lift someone in a wheelchair, which creates great risks to those who are lifting it and the person who is in the wheelchair (back injuries, loss of the management of the wheelchair and the person who is in it, or tripping and falling).



Wheelchairs have many movable parts that are not structured so as to survive being lifted up (the seat bar, foot supports, wheels, portable hand supports), so be very careful when moving someone in a wheelchair.



In order to help people with vision problems, tell them about the essence of emergency situations and offer to help them to evacuate.

Other aspects of safety:

Floor covers must be non-slippery so as to avoid falls.



In areas where moisture collects, non-slippery floor covers are mandatory. Carpeting must have non-sliding pads or be removed entirely.

References and useful information

- **Best of Bodø (2024)**

Universal design for active and social lives. The Northern Norwegian city of Bodø.

<https://www.ks.no/fagomrader/velferd/universell-utforming/best-of-bodo/>

(<https://www.ks.no/contentassets/611d263e8a5d43788b4d51ee76bf7987/UUhefteBodo.pdf>)

- **For a World with Zero Barriers**

Part 1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9uJr0uLF5u8>

Part 2 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jO-KoVp1IbQ>

- **Into the wild (2022)**

Universal design and outdoor recreation

<https://www.ks.no/contentassets/894de8ed84d246aab2d2699b0224288/IntoTheWild.pdf>

- **Keeping active (2022)**

Universal design of outdoor recreation close to urban areas and cultural heritage sites

<https://www.ks.no/contentassets/894de8ed84d246aab2d2699b0224288/KeepingActive.pdf>

- **KS films with English subtitles**

The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) is the organisation for all local governments in Norway.

<https://vimeo.com/user/2001023/folder/2836992>

- **Necessary for some, good for everyone (2018)**

Best practices of universal design in Norwegian municipalities and counties

<https://www.ks.no/fagomrader/velferd/universell-utforming/necessary-for-some-good-for-everyone/>

(<https://www.ks.no/contentassets/47b42e9d95424974bd7cfa7055519608/engks-universellutforming-web-1-.pdf>)

- **Norwegian Nature is for Everyone (2023)**

Universal Design and Outdoor Recreation

<https://www.ks.no/contentassets/894de8ed84d246aab2d2699b0224288/NorwegianNatureIsForEveryone.pdf>

<https://www.ks.no/om-ks/ks-in-english/norwegian-nature-is-for-everyone/>

- **Pushing boundaries together (2024)**

For 10 years, Norwegian municipalities and county authorities have exchanged ideas and solutions through a universal design network, to foster more inclusive local communities

<https://www.ks.no/fagomrader/velferd/universell-utforming/pushing-boundaries-together/>

(<https://www.ks.no/contentassets/92307d8aca5f4b07a69e8d15d6e457ea/UUhefteEngelskjubileumshefte.pdf>)

- **The Importance of Sharing (2021)**

<https://www.ks.no/globalassets/The-Importance-of-Sharing.pdf>








CHILDREN-FRIENDLY

The “Hiker-Friendly” businesses can also obtain an additional “Children-Friendly” specialisation:



Children-Friendly

CRITERIA FOR THE CHILDREN-FRIENDLY SIGN

1.	The company’s ads and information materials state that services are children-friendly.	
2.	The service provider has an appropriate car park with the sign “Customers with Child Parking” It is presumed that this car park is meant for cars with baby seats.	
3.	The entrance to the building is appropriate for baby carriages to be used. This presumes that there is an entrance ramp and that there are no high thresholds.	
4.	Hygienic facilities are adapted to small children with a child’s potty and a step to reach the sink.	
5.	Inventory and equipment: All rooms have safe electric plugs, furniture does not have sharp corners, there are bug screens on windows and doors, a cot for a small child or infant is available in the bedroom, the kitchen has a high chair for the child, and there are dishes in which to warm up food.	

Explanations about the “Children-Friendly” specialisation for the “Hiker-Friendly” sign

1. Information

The criterion:

The company’s ads and information materials state that services are child-ren-friendly.

Explanations:

Use environmental accessibility symbols in your information materials: homepage, travel guides, brochures, social networks, etc.

When reservations are made, it is important to provide information to say that the venue is friendly to customers with children.

Offer photographs of your building, entrance and exterior so that tourists can understand environmental accessibility and prepare for their visit.

The more independently people can understand information, the more independent they will be in using the services that are on offer.

Include the “Children-Friendly” option on your homepage to show that your venue is particularly adapted to customers with children, including baby cradles, a high chair, a children’s menu and an opportunity to warm up baby food.

2. Car park

The criterion:

The service provider has an appropriate car park with the sign “Customers with Child Parking” It is presumed that this car park is meant for cars with baby seats.

Explanations:

The car park that is meant for customers with children must be as close to the main entrance of your service provision building as possible.

The car park must have signs and markings to point to those areas which are meant for customers with small children.

The width of a parking spot must be at least 3.5 metres so that it is easy to lift a child and the child’s carriage from the car.

The cover of the car park must be hard and even without any level changes, or else you must have slanted ramps.

3. Building entrance

The criterion:

The entrance to the building is appropriate for baby carriages to be used. This presumes that there is an entrance ramp and that there are no high thresholds.

Explanations:

There are no freely standing obstacles or projecting objects such as signs on the wall, poles, trees, hanging flower baskets or other items that can endanger customers with baby carriages.

There must be a free path from the access road or sidewalk to the outer door with no steps or obstacles. If there are steps, think about installing a ramp. If possible install an automatic door opener.

The ramp or incline at the entrance to the building must be gentle, with a hard, non-slip surface in all weather conditions. Thresholds should be low or non-existent to avoid obstructing movement.

Door openings must be at least 0.9 m wide. On both sides of the door there must be manoeuvring areas that have a diameter of at least 1.5 metres. The main entrance must be protected against rain, snow and wind.

4. Hygienic facilities

The criterion:

Hygienic facilities are adapted to small children with a child's potty and a step to reach the sink.

Explanations:

The toilet must be appropriate for the child's height, or there must be a child's potty or a toilet seat on the toilet to fit the child. There must also be a step to reach the sink.

Accessories such as towels, soap and wastebaskets must be placed so that children can easily reach them and use them. There must be a step to climb a bit up.

There needs to be a place where the nappies of babies can be changed.

5. Inventory and equipment

The criterion:

Inventory and equipment: All rooms have safe electric plugs, furniture does not have sharp corners, there are bug screens on windows and doors, a cot for a small child or infant is available in the bedroom, the kitchen has a high chair for the child, and there are dishes in which to warm up food.

Explanations:

Living room, bedroom:

- | Surfaces with sharp corners must have protection elements.
- | Rods in closets to hang clothing should preferably be accessible to children. Rods that are one metre high are appropriate.
- | Bedrooms must have enough room for a baby cradle.
- | Electric switches and sockets must be safe for children.
- | There must be bug screens on doors and windows.

Kitchen:

- | The kitchen must have a kettle to heat water to prepare or warm up baby food.
- | The kitchen must have a high chair for small children.
- | Power sockets and switches must be safe for children.
- | Furniture must have protective elements on sharp corners.
- | The kitchen must have children's dishes - a plate and bowl with a non-sliding bottom, as well as small spoons for the kids.

Inventory:

- | Place houseplants so that small children cannot reach them, and avoid poisonous plants.

General safety requirements indoors:

- | Floors must not be slippery to avoid falls.
- | If places have moistures, non-slippery floors are mandatory.
- | Carpeting must have non-sliding pads or be non-existent.
- | All electrical equipment that is accessible to children must be safe.
- | Place fencing or warnings at the appropriate height at bodies of water or stairwells.

Evacuation:

- | Assign someone to be responsible for building evacuation, and have a way to quickly and safely for customers with small children to evacuate. Remind parents that they must first take care of themselves before caring for children.
- | The evacuation plan must have fire safety rules in the appropriate place and amount.

Equipment for services and hiking:

- | Leisure services must observe safety requirements and special rules for the target audience - customers with children. Use signs, symbols and informational graphics for this purpose.
- | We recommend that you prepare a list of the most important things. This will help you as service providers to prepare your target audience for safe hikes.

Preparations for hiking:

+	Make sure that the backpack is light, but sufficiently durable to carry along everything that is needed.
+	A soft backpack or a backpack with a frame is very important if one hikes with infants or toddlers.
+	Bottles of water are needed, because drinking water is particularly important, particularly during active, but short hikes.
+	Bring along various energy snacks to reduce hunger.
+	Protect yourself against the sun with a cap, sunglasses, suntan lotion and light clothes.
+	Bring along a first aid kit with bandages, dressing, antiseptic napkins, bug spray and necessary medications.
+	Hand sanitizer – keep your hands clean during breaks or meals.

Clothing:

+	Choose multi-layered and light clothing for yourself and our children. Dress children in breathing layers to adapt to changing weather conditions. Merino wool is an outstanding option.
+	Sturdy boots or well-protected shoes are necessary so as not to slip.
+	Water-resistant jackets and pants are needed if there are rainstorms so that the people don't get wet.
+	Bring along reserve clothing to change if the people do get wet.

Navigation:

+	Bring along a map and a compass even if you know the route. It is critical to have navigation tools and to know how to use them.
+	A GPS system may be useful, as will a smartphone with a trustworthy map application.

Entertainment:

+	Bring along binoculars to satisfy your curiosity and to see wild animals and lovely landscapes.
+	Bring along a nature guidebook to identify plants, animals and geological markings along the way.
+	Bring a journal and some pencils to facilitate creativity, encouraging children to document their hiking experience.
+	Bring along a small game or a deck of cards for pauses or picnics.

Safety when hiking:

+	Leave emergency contact information with a list of contact persons, and have contact information for nearby medical facilities.
+	Teach your children to use a whistle if they are separate from you or get lost.
+	Use a headlamp or flashlight if you are outdoors longer than you planned or if you find yourself in an unknown location.
+	Teach your children about safety if you encounter wild animals.
+	Don't leave trash behind. Teach your children about responsible ethics outdoors, including the right way to collect and deposit or destroy trash.

Sources of information

- **Design for Diversity - Universal Design in Schools and Kindergartens in Norway (2021)**
<https://www.ks.no/globalassets/Design-for-Diversity-Universal-Design-in-Schools-and-Kindergartens-in-Norway.pdf>
- **Hiking with Kids Checklist**
<https://www.mymountainsandme.com/blog/hikings-with-kids-checklist>
- **Preparing for hikes with children**
<https://www.austria.info/de/aktivitaeten/wandern-und-alpen/wandern-mit-kindern>

The additional specialisations are part of the project "Forest and Coastal Hiking Trails' accessibility improvement for different social groups" [EE-LV00013]. The project is being implemented with financial support from the European Union's Interreg Estonia-Latvia programme for 2021-2027.

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The contents of this paper are the sole responsibility of Latvian country tourism association „Lauku ceļotājs” and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.



ANNEX

Best practice accessibility guidelines in tourism and culture

BEST PRACTICE ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES IN TOURISM AND CULTURE



These guidelines are intended for tourism and catering businesses, cultural institutions, such as museums, theatres, cinemas, concert halls – to be used as a guide of good accessibility practices.

The guidelines cover main functional requirements, however, more detailed information is available in the national standards, i.e. in Latvia:

- LVS CEN/TR 17621:2021 “Accessibility and usability of the construction environment. Criteria and specifications of technical characteristics”
- LVS EN 17210:2021 L “Accessibility and usability of the construction environment. Functional requirements”

When planning the design of constructions, premises and services, the different functional requirements of people should be taken into account. The design must be created in a way to compensate for people’s sensory (visual, hearing), movement and cognitive (thinking) impairments, as well as limited mobility, such as pushing baby carriages, heavy bags.

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Design requirements

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

- Different ways of transferring information, using audios, tactiles.
- Tactile control options (e.g., buttons, remote controls with buttons etc., as people with visual impairment are unable to use touch screens).
- Compliance with appropriate size, contrast, shape, lighting and viewing distance while creating the environment, including signage, pictograms.
- In case when information transfer is based on colour recognition, colour should additionally be duplicated with the shape.
- Anti-glare options, installation of blinds and other solutions that prevent direct sunlight should be provided.
- Visual contrasts should be taken into account when creating the environment and colours of surfaces (like floors, ceilings, stairs), objects (furniture, handrails, benches etc) and dangerous obstacles need to be marked (like changes in surface levels and stair steps).
- Installation of tactile patterns on the floor – warning lanes, guideline for the blind.
- Introduction of assistive technologies.

PEOPLE WITH ALLERGIES

- Materials, colours, plants that do not cause allergies should be used.
- Avoiding accumulation of dust.
- Adequate ventilation should be provided.
- Areas should be provided where the chances of allergic reactions are reduced – non-smoking areas, areas where pets are not allowed.

HEARING DISORDERS

- Different ways of transferring information, using visuals – text, pictograms, subtitles (also for video materials).
- Sufficient space should be provided to allow the use of sign language.
- Background noise (e.g., commercials, music) should be limited as much as possible.
- The environment should be created in a way to suppress surrounding background noise to ensure clear reception of audio information, clear audibility, reduction of sound reflection.
- Introduction of assistive technologies, e.g. induction loops.

PEOPLE WITH COGNITIVE DISABILITIES

- A clear, logical path to the necessary premises, such as reception, toilet, elevator etc. Important points must be marked visually and with internationally well-know and easy-to-understand signs or pictograms.
- Easy, intuitively understandable movement and evacuation routes.
- Intuitively comprehensible use of doors and equipment should be provided, e.g., to clearly understand whether the door is hinged, sliding or opens automatically.
- Signs with pictograms, internationally well-know and easy-to-understand direction signs should be provided.
- Quiet waiting areas should be available, e.g., for people with autism spectrum disorders.

PEOPLE WITH MOVEMENT DISORDERS, LIMITED RANGE OF MOVEMENTS AND LIMITED MOBILITY

- A clear, logical path to the necessary premises, such as reception, toilet, elevator etc.
- Easy, intuitively understandable movement and evacuation routes.
- Sufficient turning radius should be provided for people using technical aids (e.g. wheelchair).
- Appropriate changing areas should be provided. E.g. a narrow corridor or sidewalk has a wider place to exchange when driving a baby carriage or a wheelchair.
- Adequate access to equipment (e.g. ticket machine, information screens) should be provided for people from a seating position or for short-statured people.
- Anti-glare in signs and screens should be ensured from different viewing angles, e.g., so that the screen is clearly visible from a sitting position.
- Access to equipment should be provided at two heights: from a sitting and standing position.
- Entrances and passageways should be provided without steps, stairs, e.g., by using ramps.
- The need to use effort should be reduced as much as possible, e.g., when opening a door.
- Easy-to-use switches, door locking and opening mechanisms should be provided so that they can be used by a person, e.g., without hands etc.
- Support handles and handrails should be provided, e.g., for stairs, ramps, toilets etc.
- Non-slip surfaces should be provided.

Access to the building - guest house, cafe etc.

Entrance into the building without obstacles, e.g., alternative path/route or lift, ramp (height-length proportion not more than 1:12 (8%), width 1,20m, railing at two heights 70cm and 90cm)

Parking lot for people with disabilities



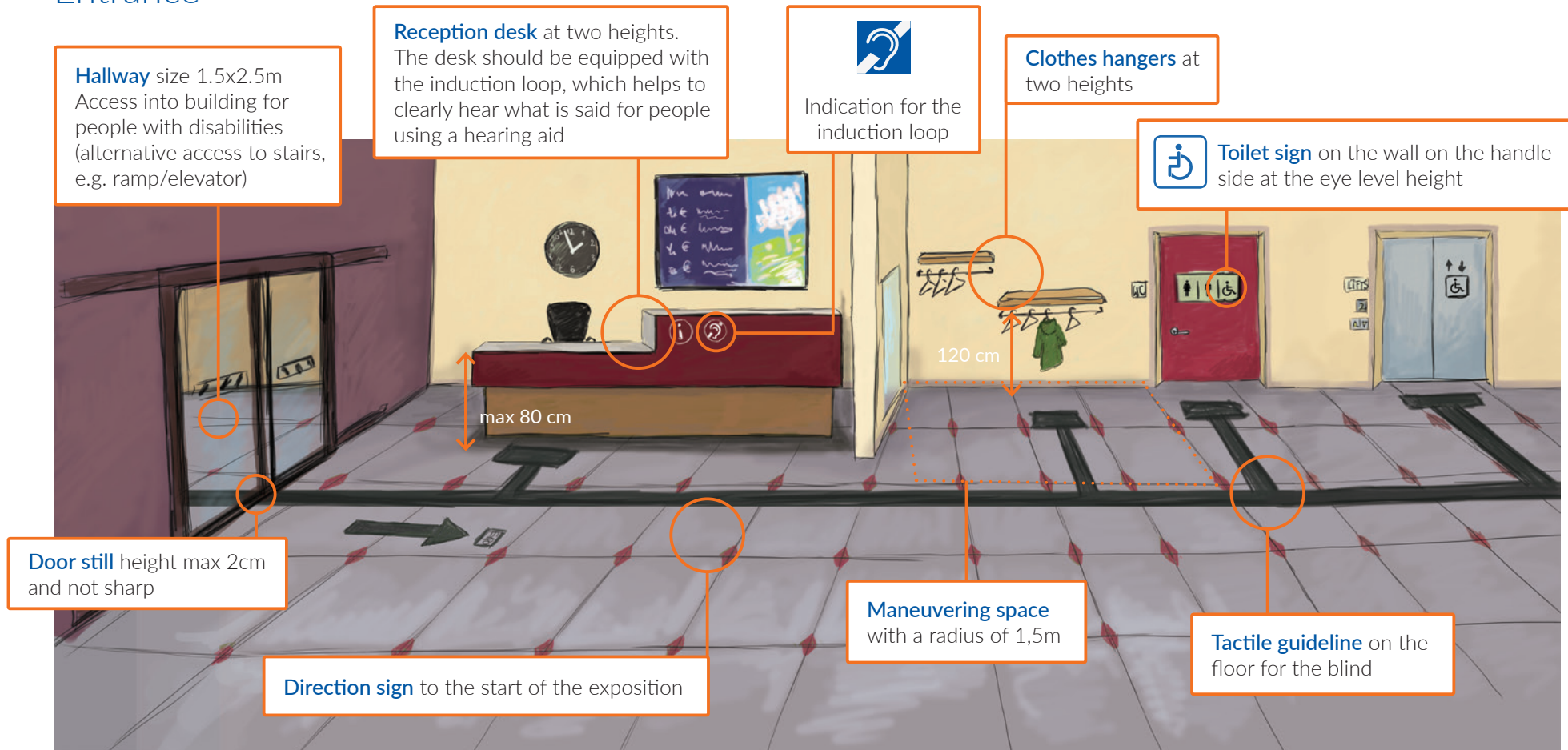
Easy orientation

Max distance from the ramp 50 m

Easy access road/path to the building

Interest objects - museums, science centres, exposition halls etc.

Entrance



Lighting

The light must not dazzle, it should be diffused or positioned so that the bulbs do not shine directly into the eyes.

- On the floor **100 lux**
- On the stairs, in places with a change of levels **150 lux**
- For reading texts **300 lux**
- In public spaces indoors **200 lux**



Contrasts

Exhibits, demarcating barriers, level changes, door stills should be visually noticeable, contrasting. Contrasts should be tonal dark on light, for example white and black. Poor contrast is, for example, light gray and yellow.



Signs

It is recommended to place direction signs near the object and in it - from the parking lot to the entrance, to the toilet, wardrobe, start of the exhibition etc.



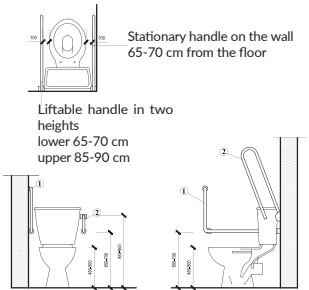
Website

It is recommended to create an accessibility section on the website with a description of what is accessible, partially accessible, not accessible at the object. A description is also suggested (including in audio format for people with visual impairments) on how to get to the object from the nearest public transport stop and parking lot.

Doors
Doors in toilets must open outwards and **have a free opening space of 90 cm**. The door lock handle should be easy to grip and turn. To close the door more easily, an additional handle is needed on the hinge side from the interior

Sink
The sink must be firmly fixed so that a person can lean on it. **The height of the sink should be 80 cm**, and there should be free space under it. The mirror should be placed so that a person can see himself while sitting. The lower edge of the mirror should be no higher than 90 cm from the floor

Handles
The handles on the toilet bowl must be well secured, **the load capacity of each handle must be at least 70 kg**. It is very important to follow the correct placement of the handles (see sketch)

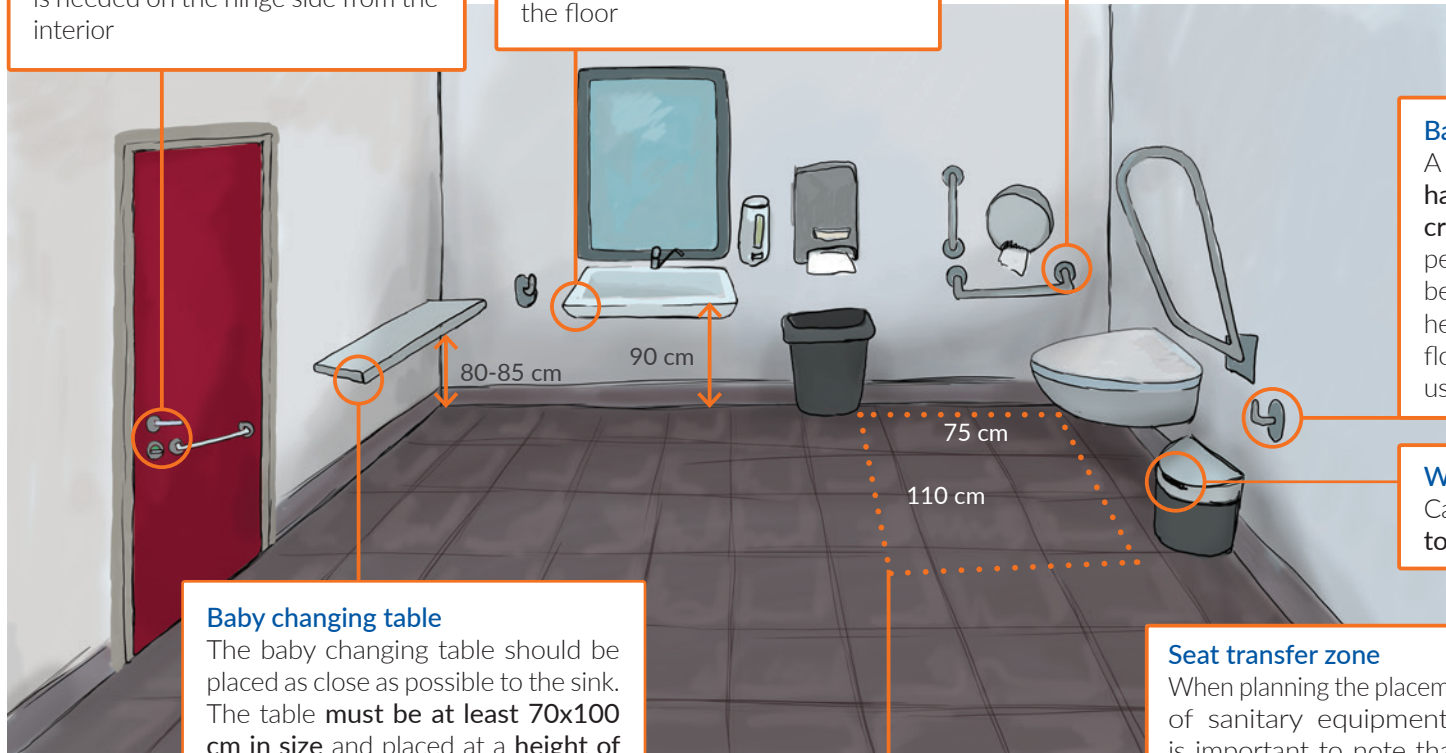
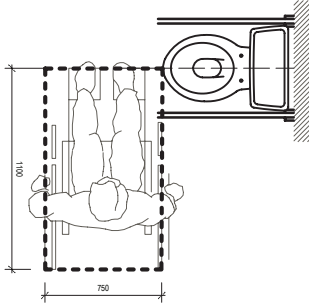


Bag hook
A hook **should be provided to hang a bag, jacket/coat, cane, crutch**. In order to be usable by people in wheelchairs, it should be placed lower than usual, at a height of 100 - 120 cm from the floor. Also it is recommended to use 2 hooks

Wastebin
Cannot be opened with foot, but **needs to be open top**

Baby changing table
The baby changing table should be placed as close as possible to the sink. The table **must be at least 70x100 cm in size** and placed at a **height of 80-85 cm from the floor**

Seat transfer zone
When planning the placement of sanitary equipment, it is important to note that a **seat transfer area should be provided near the toilet bowl**. This area must be free from other equipment, such as a sink, trash can, or any other obstacle



Low aisles (up to 210 cm) should be marked with a warning on the floor and the top of the aisle. The marking should be made in such a way that it stands out, but does not “jump out” from the overall design of the room

Paintings
Paintings, photographs and other images should be placed in such a way that a **person can come closer** to them and study the image. The image should be placed within 80 cm - 200 cm from the floor. It is preferable to place the descriptions next to the pictures, within 120-160 cm

Showcases
Exhibits should preferably be placed at a height of **80 cm - 200 cm from the floor**. It is desirable to provide a place - indentation - so that a wheelchair user can drive under and see the exhibits closer

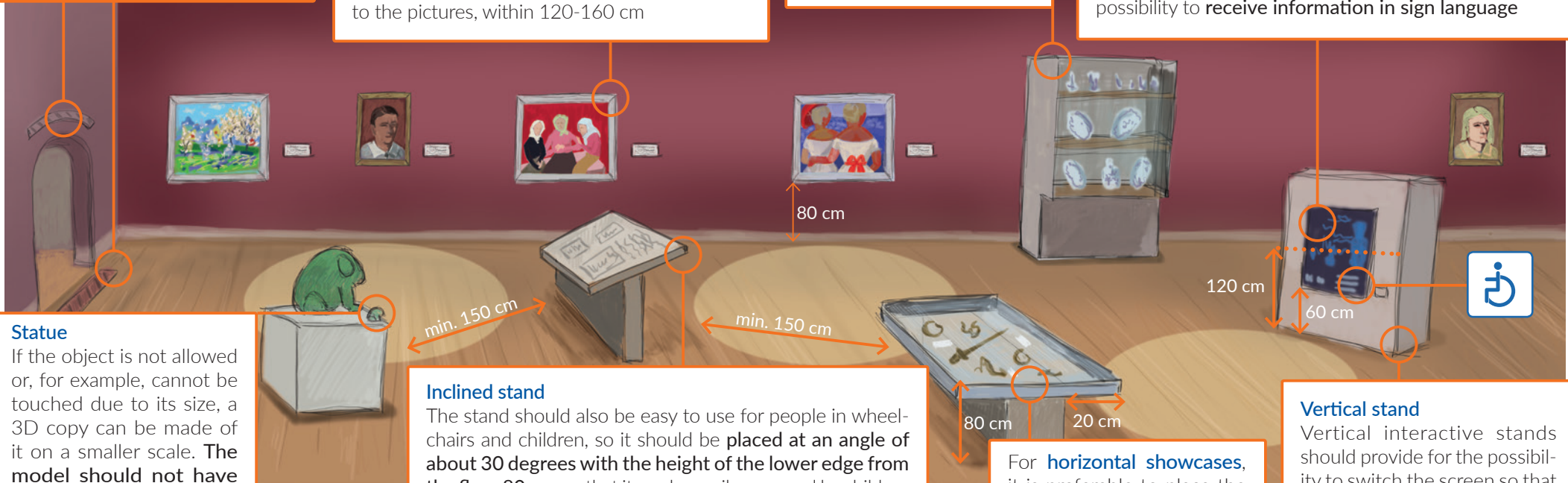
Interactive stand
It is easier for people with poor vision to perceive text in dark mode, i.e. dark background and light letters. The dark mode does not mean only black and white, it is necessary to use dark colors of different tonalities to group sections and make information easy to understand. It is also recommended to incorporate **the function of changing the font size and magnifying glass** to allow a more detailed view of the text and images. Blind people need to be provided with audio information. Deaf people should be provided with subtitles in video reels and the possibility to receive information in sign language


Statue
If the object is not allowed or, for example, cannot be touched due to its size, a 3D copy can be made of it on a smaller scale. **The model should not have sharp edges and should be made of durable, easy-to-clean material**

Inclined stand
The stand should also be easy to use for people in wheelchairs and children, so it should be **placed at an angle of about 30 degrees with the height of the lower edge from the floor 80 cm**, so that it can be easily accessed by children and people in wheelchairs, incl. driving under the stand (free space under the stand should be at 75 cm height from the floor and at 40 cm depth)

For **horizontal showcases**, it is preferable to place the exhibits at a depth of 60 cm. If the showcase is wider, access from both sides should be provided

Vertical stand
Vertical interactive stands should provide for the possibility to switch the screen so that its **control is also accessible to people from wheelchairs or children**. The reachable height is from 60 cm to 120 cm



 **Braille script**

Is different in each language, so it is recommended to duplicate the written text in audio format using, for example, a QR code

 **Use of accessible translations**


Subtitles, sign language, audio descriptions in video materials/events, easy to read, short texts

 **Printed materials**

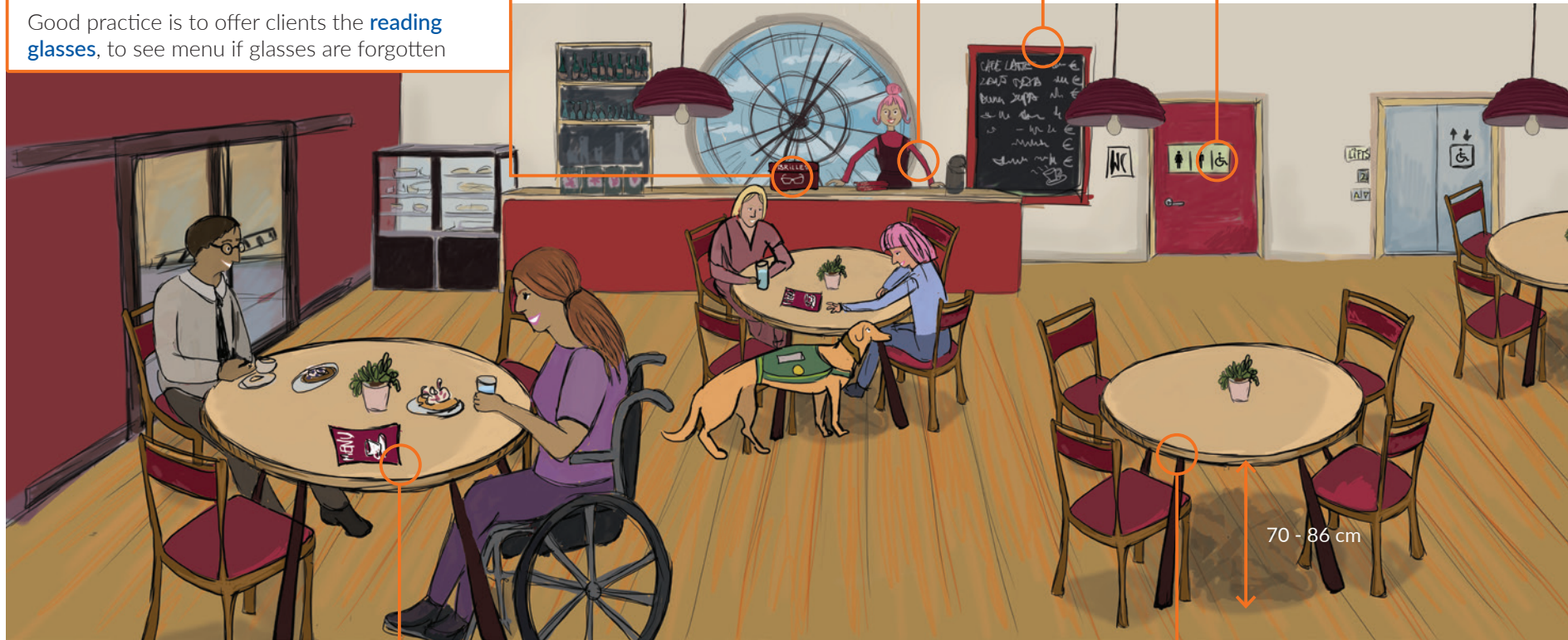
Should be at least of 14 font size, text should contrast on a non-reflective background material

Personnel is aware of disability needs, incl. different disability types, e.g. wheelchair users, people with visual impairment (white canes, **guide-dogs** (might also assist wheelchair users)), cognitive impairment, hearing impairment etc.

If **the menu** is posted on the wall, it **must be duplicated printed on a page** in at least one copy that can be taken in hand

 **Toilet** for people with disabilities


Good practice is to offer clients the **reading glasses**, to see menu if glasses are forgotten



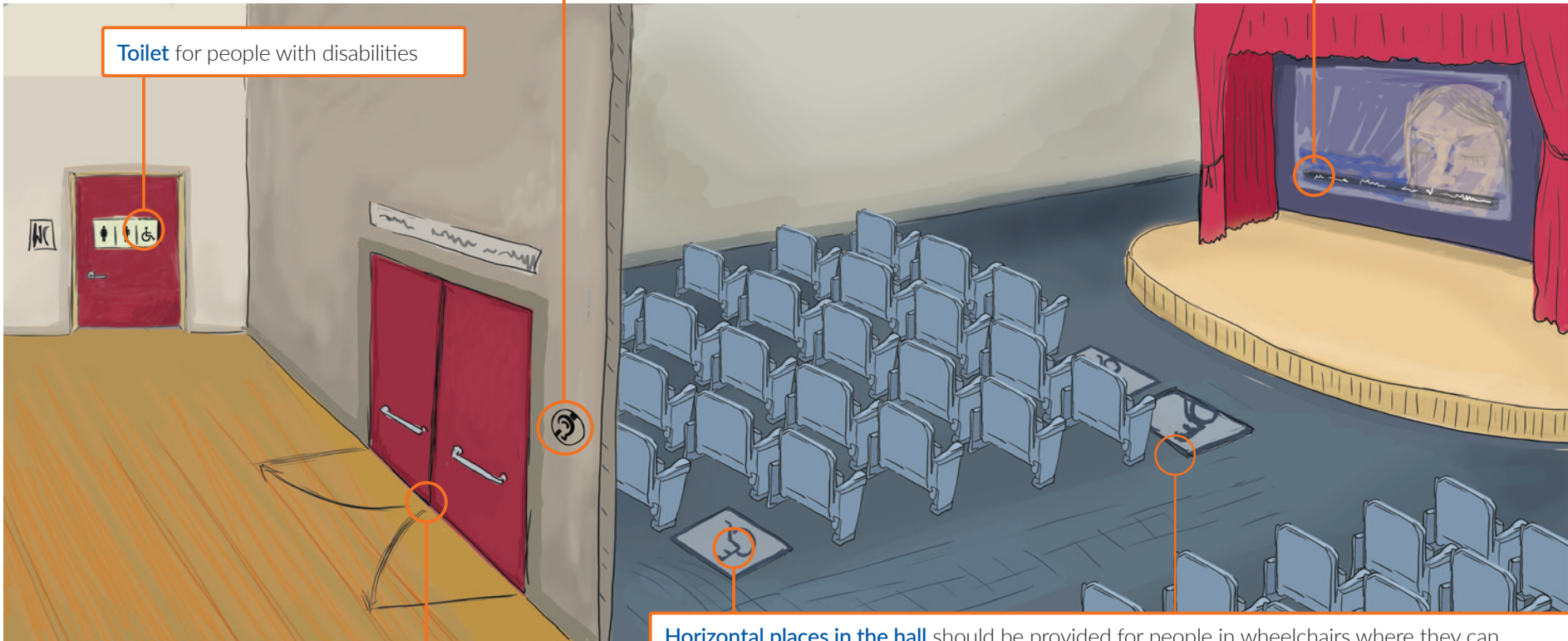
Accessible menu, flexibility regarding clients' dietary restrictions. One menu should be **provided in an enlarged print** with strong text contrast

Access to the service - in order for a person in a wheelchair to be able to easily access the table, it should have the **free space under the table of 70 cm from the floor**

Entertainment - concert hall, cinema, theater


Indication for the
induction loop

Access to services, e.g., subtitles, sign
language translator etc..

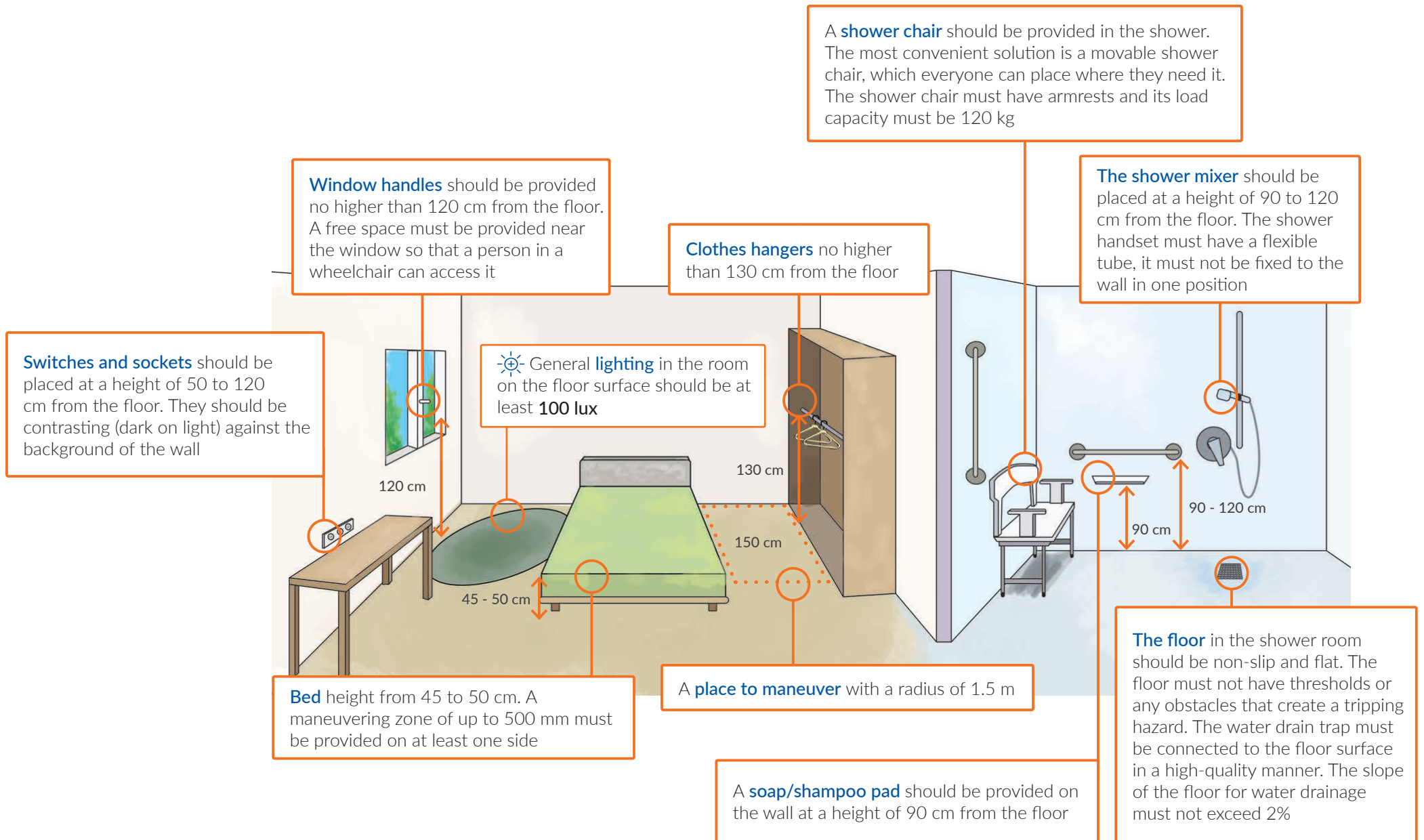


Toilet for people with disabilities

Easy access, door still height max 2 cm and not sharp. Marking
for the opening direction of the doors

Horizontal places in the hall should be provided for people in wheelchairs where they can comfortably settle down with their wheelchairs. **A person should be able to choose at what distance to sit from the stage or the screen**, therefore one place can be foreseen in the first row and one place in the last. Best practice is that the middle part of the hall has one row removed to provide more space for wheelchairs, guide-dogs etc., i.e. the seats are removable, so they can be removed or put back, depending on the need. It should be remembered that a person most often comes with someone and wants to sit next to each other, therefore a place in a wheelchair should be provided next to the seat.

Access to performance (content), vendatory machines, (e.g. coffee), services, e.g., wardrobe, toilet, personnel has knowledge about the needs of people with disabilities, incl. different disability types. The room has to be equipped with the induction loop and an indication sign of the induction loop should be provided





The Guidelines have been prepared with the support of the Interreg Estonia-Latvia Programme 2021-2027 under the Project No.EE-LV00043 “Development of Accessible Tourism Routes” (Access Routes).

The aim of the project is the development of tourist routes in Latvia and Estonia accessible to people with disabilities. The project is implemented by the Kurzeme Planning Region in cooperation with the Vidzeme Planning Region, Estonian Chamber of People with Disabilities, Development Centre of Võru County, Tartu County Tourism Foundation – Lõuna-Eesti DMO.

In addition to these Guidelines, over the 2,5 years project period the partners will carry out a number of accessibility inspections for nature trails, cultural heritage and other objects, record audios with QR codes for trails and objects, develop accessible routes and invest in the physical accessibility of objects (5 in Kurzeme, 7 in Vidzeme and 9 in Estonia) – by creating innovative tactile solutions, develop nature/culture interpretation solutions (e.g. chests of senses) for individual use by people with disabilities, organise accessibility days in Latvia and Estonia, publish accessible objects and routes on www.mapeirons.eu, create a “Disability friendly” brand, mark the route objects, issue a Travel Guide and organise a digital marketing campaign.

More about the project: www.kurzemesregions.lv/projects/

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