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Study Guide

# Accessible Tourism

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## Tourism for All



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## Accessible Tourism: About this guide

This study guide is designed to give you a short, easy introduction to the topic. After working through the guide, you will have some background information and some ideas about solutions.

**This study guide should just be the beginning of your learning.**

You will still need to do a lot of research to find out about specific issues in your country and region. Try to become an expert on this issue so you can speak with confidence at the conference.

Remember to research:

- All five issues in your room
- Problems and solutions that directly affect your JEMUN country
- Problems and solutions that affect your region (learn about the situation in the countries in your Regional Committee)

### I. Introduction: Global Tourism

Let's start with a little quiz. Just use your best guess if you don't know. You might be surprised! Answers are on the final page.



1. Around the world, how many tourists travelled overseas in 2015?
  - A. 10,000,000
  - B. 350,000,000
  - C. 1,000,000,000
  
2. How much money was spent by international tourists in 2015?
  - A. \$1,000,000,000
  - B. \$120,000,000,000
  - C. \$1,200,000,000,000
  
3. What do you think were the most popular three countries to visit in 2015?

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_

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4. How many of the world's workers are employed in tourism?
- A. 1 in 11
  - B. 1 in 18
  - C. 1 in 27
5. World-wide, tourism is the \_\_\_\_\_ biggest industry.
- A. Third
  - B. Fifth
  - C. Seventh
6. About \_\_\_\_\_ of the world's population have a disability.
- A. 10%
  - B. 15%
  - C. 20%

### **Global Tourism is a Growing Industry**

International tourism is an industry that has developed rapidly over recent decades and which remains one of the fastest-growing parts of the global economy. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (2016), around 25 million people traveled internationally for leisure in 1950. In 2015, the number of tourist arrivals around the world exceeded 1.1 billion people, a 4.6% increase on 2014. These travellers spent \$1260 billion on their trips which is equivalent to 7% of world exports\*.



Although developed countries are still the most popular destinations, tourism is an important part of the economy of almost every country. In fact, for some countries, tourism may be one of the major industries - tourism accounted for 19.3% of Thailand's economy in 2014, for example. Some developing countries only have a small tourism

industry but have lots of potential for the future. However, while tourism is growing fastest in developing countries, these poor countries are also most vulnerable to challenges. Tourism in North Africa fell by around 8% in 2015, for example, probably because of worries about security in the region. Around the world, the jobs and lives of hundreds of millions of people depend on the money people spend on holidays. This means that protecting and developing tourism responsibly is a very important part of Sustainable Development Goals 8, 12 and 14.

*\* Note: International tourism is an export. Think about a Korean person who travels to Germany. She buys an experience of Germany with money that she earned in Korea. She returns to Korea with goods and memories of experiences that she bought in Germany.*

### Learning Task 1: Researching global Tourism

Let's think about the tourism industry for a moment. Work with a partner if you can. Complete the tasks below using the internet to research. All data comes from the publications of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation, although you might find information from other sources. The answers to (a) and (c) are on the final page.



(a) Which countries do you think were most popular for tourism in 2015?

World Ranking	Most Popular Destinations 2015	Number of International Arrivals		
1		84.5 million		
2		77.5 million		
4		56.9 million		
6	United Kingdom	39.5 million		
8		34.4 million		
15		19.7 million		
China	France	Turkey	Japan	USA

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(b) What are Sustainable Development Goals 8, 12 and 14.  
(SDG 8)

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(SDG 12)

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(SDG 14)

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How can tourism contribute to each of these goals? Write some ideas below.  
(SDG 8)

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(SDG 12)

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(SDG 14)

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*For more information on this, go to [www.icr.unwto.org/content/tourism-and-sdgs](http://www.icr.unwto.org/content/tourism-and-sdgs)*

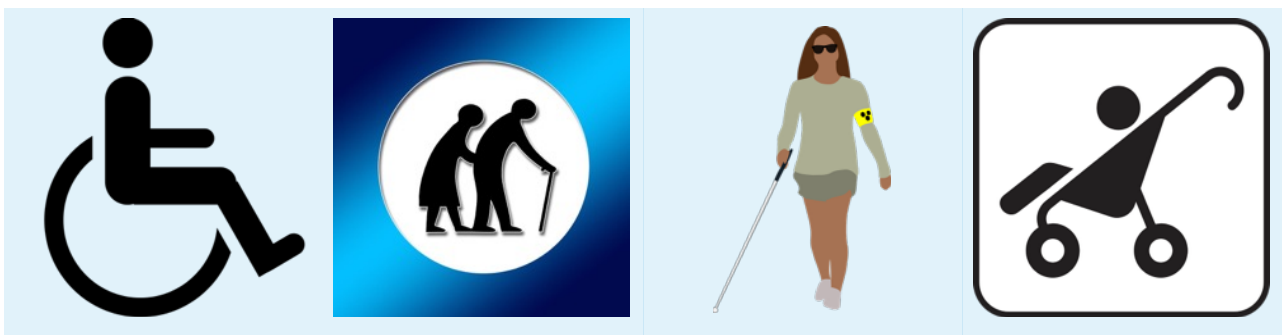


(c) Now read the paragraph about international tourism. Fill in the blanks using numbers and phrases from the box below.

In 2015, almost \_\_\_\_\_ people travelled for leisure, spending about \_\_\_\_\_ dollars. Tourism contributes \_\_\_\_\_ of global GDP, the \_\_\_\_\_ largest sector after fuels and chemicals. It represents \_\_\_\_\_ of world exports. This means that tourism has grown into one of the largest industries in the world which is estimated to employ \_\_\_\_\_ people. However, tourism is about much more than just numbers. Tourism has the potential to address some of the most important problems of our world. It can help lift people out of \_\_\_\_\_ and encourages us to use the \_\_\_\_\_ more responsibly. Moreover, by fostering greater \_\_\_\_\_ and understanding of different cultures, it can be one of the first steps to build \_\_\_\_\_ between communities and nations. Every tourist is important, therefore it is important that tourism is accessible to all.

A. communication	B. third	C. 1.2 billion	D. peace	E. 1 in 11
F. 1.3 trillion	G. environment	H. 10%	I. poverty	J. 7%

## II. What is Accessible Tourism?







Most of us are lucky. We can book a holiday without thinking too much about access. However, for many people, such a simple thing can be difficult and stressful. This may be because of a permanent physical or cognitive disability; it might be because of a serious illness; it might be because of old age; it may be because of a temporary disability such as a broken ankle; it may be because the traveller is pregnant or travelling with very young children.

## Learning Task 2

Think about each of the 4 people below. They are planning to take a trip overseas. What kind of things might be causing them stress?



name	Special needs	Worry 1	Worry 2
 Min and Sue	Min is a single parent traveling with her baby daughter		
 Alain	Alain lost a leg in a car accident when he was young. He needs a wheelchair to get around		
 Pedro	Pedro has vision impairment of almost 90%		
 Viktor and Elsa	Viktor and Elsa are in their 90s. Elsa has mild-moderate Alzheimers. Both have osteoarthritis of the knees		



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## Definitions

At the moment, there is no universal agreement on the meaning of the phrase 'accessible tourism'. However, generally the term 'accessible tourism' is used in connection with people with special needs. So far, it does not usually include the cultural differences that everyone faces, such as language barriers or different cultural and religious practices. Here is a definition from the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP):



" 'Accessible Tourism' refers to tourism that caters to the needs of a full range of consumers including persons with disabilities, older persons and cross-generational families. It entails removal of attitudinal and institutional barriers in society, and encompasses accessibility in the physical environment, in transportation, information and communications and other facilities and services. It encompasses publicly and privately owned tourist locations." (Takayama City and UNESCAP Conference - Press Release - Takayama, 2009)

For more definitions, see [www.accessibletourism.org/?i=enat.en.faq](http://www.accessibletourism.org/?i=enat.en.faq)

### Accessible Tourism as a Human Right

Since the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2007), there has been greater understanding of the fact that people with disabilities have the same rights to enjoy tourism as other people. This includes access to **independent travel, facilities, trained staff, reliable information** and **inclusive marketing** (UNWTO, 2013).



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## Accessible Tourism as a Business Opportunity

However, this is not just a moral issue. As more people are able to travel, the industry grows and more jobs are created. Accessible tourism helps everyone. It may be easier to persuade governments, local authorities and business people if we look on it as a business opportunity. Alen, Dominguez and Losada (2012) cite a German study into tourists with disabilities which found the following:



- More than 50% of respondents were over 65 years of age
- Savings and pensions were the main means of income
- The average income was € 2,250 / month (250,000yen)
- Over 50% of respondents had a degree of disability near to 100%
- The largest group was people with physical disabilities, (more than 60%)
- People with disabilities travel less compared to people without disabilities
- 37% of respondents had decided not to travel due to lack of accessible facilities
- 48% of respondents would travel more frequently if more accessible services were available

It is estimated by the World Health Organization (WHO) that over 1,000,000,000 have a disability, 15% of the world population. This number is increasing as people live longer. Already in Japan a third of the population is over 60 years old and, by 2060, it is estimated that 40% of the population will be aged over 65 with life expectancy estimated at 91 years for women (The Guardian, 2012). Many of these people have money to spend and the time to travel, especially outside of peak season. Improving services for special needs travellers is a huge business opportunity.

### Learning Task 3:

#### (a) Brainstorming

Work with a partner if possible. First, write down some of the problems that everyone experiences. Then think of some of the problems that people with special needs face when they wish to travel. If necessary write the special need you are talking about. Write at least three to five ideas in each column.

(i) **Everyday problems.** These are the kinds of problems that everyone might experience when they travel abroad. These may not need special consideration in your solutions.

*We cannot eat certain foods      We cannot speak the language (N.B.)*



*N.B. Language access is a big part of tourism. You don't need to think of language assistance for everyone, but you should still consider the issue for special needs travellers. They may have different problems to others.*

(ii) Special needs. Try to think of specific concerns travellers might have

Independent travel	Facilities	Trained Staff	Information	Inclusive marketing
Getting onto subway trains in a wheelchair?	Disabled toilets? Baby changing facilities?	Tourism staff can offer advice on access?  Welcoming to all people?	Websites are accessible for vision impaired?	Advertising has pictures of disabled people?

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## In Summary

For long years, little attention was paid to special-needs travellers. Buildings were poorly designed and managed. Transport systems and infrastructure did not consider the needs of everyone. This has resulted in many problems of access that are difficult to solve today. Even now, although many developments are better, the needs of some travellers are not considered deeply enough in many countries. This may be due to a lack of knowledge and expertise, or because of a lack of commitment from government.



As well as design problems, untrained staff and a lack of access to information are issues that may be easier to solve. Websites may not be fully accessible or may not cover important information. Imagine you are in a wheelchair. You need to know if the World Heritage building you wish to visit has an elevator and a toilet that you can use. Imagine your child is autistic. You want to be sure that staff will be welcoming and the facilities safe. Everyone should be able to enjoy travel. Sadly, disabled people are sometimes treated with great hostility by untrained staff and even by other customers, particularly people who suffer with psychological conditions.

Here are some of the most common problems that travellers with disabilities have reported experiencing while travelling (Disabled World, 2016).

- Lack of well-adapted hotel rooms
- Lack of accessible airport transfer
- Lack of wheelchair accessible vehicles
- Lack of accessible restaurants, bars, etc
- Inaccessible, or only partly accessible, web sites
- Lack of adapted toilets in restaurants and public places
- Inaccessible streets (cars parking on the sidewalk etc)
- Lack of professional staff capable of advising about accessibility issues
- Lack of disability equipment (wheelchairs, bath chairs, toilet raisers, electric scooters)
- Lack of reliable information about a specific attraction's level of accessibility (church, castle, exhibition, etc)

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Many more issues exist, and are likely to increase as the world ages. Remember that one day, all of us will be elderly and perhaps frail. Changes that we make now to infrastructure and services will be of benefit to all of us.

#### Learning Task 4 (optional)



(A) Take a trip to a spot which is popular with tourists. Build a report on the accessibility of the attraction and the surrounding area. Take some pictures and ask questions to staff about access for people with special needs. Prepare a PowerPoint Presentation giving details about the strengths and weaknesses of the attraction, access and the surrounding businesses. Make recommendations for improvements.

(B) Create a survey of literature and media advertising on travel in your country. Consider the target market. Are people with special needs included and made to feel welcome? Are facilities and activities accessible to families, elderly or disabled people? Also consider different kinds of holidays. Are there options to take part in water or mountain sports, for example? Rank companies according to a scorecard for the level of access they offer.



(Answers to quiz: C; C; France/USA/Spain; A; A ; B)

(Answers to learning task: (a) Most popular destinations in 2015: France; USA; China; Turkey; Japan; (c) C ;F; H ;B ;J ;E ;I ;G ;A ;D)

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