



visits4u case studies:

Elli Beach

Rhodes, Greece

ELLI BEACH



RHODES, GREECE

Title: Accessibility of Elli Beach in the city centre of Rhodes

Description

Elli beach is a fully organized sandy beach next to the city centre of Rhodes, at the northern tip of the island just in front of the Aquarium and the legendary Casino of the Roses, beside the hotel district. In the southern area is the landmark of the beach, a five-metre high diving platform from where amazing dives into the turquoise sea are performed. It is one of the most popular beaches of the Dodecanese and according to Lawrence Durrell, the British novelist, the most beautiful beach in the Mediterranean.

Becoming inclusive:

1. Description

Being one of the most popular Greek beaches among photographers, the beach of Rhodes still offers something of its cosmopolitan aspect from the 70's, and is one of the most visited beaches on the island. Hundreds of tourists and locals visit the beach daily. Due to the high number of visitors a lifeguard service operates from June to October daily from 10 am to 6 pm. After several requests from the “Association of Disabled People in the Province of Rhodes” and in an effort to conform to the Greek legislation, adequate funding was secured to make provisions for people with moving disabilities.

2. Description of steps taken, changes and progress

The interventions applied to improve accessibility of Elli beach for people with moving disabilities are the following,

- A runway is set up to ensure vertical access to the shoreline for wheelchair users. The path has the following technical specifications:
 - it is a temporary construction that is removed and stored at the end of the tourist season to prevent damages due to severe winter weather conditions,
 - it has a smooth, non-slip and continuous surface and a width of 1.5 m,
 - it is placed on the sand surface with a pitch not greater than 8%, so as to have the international access symbol,
 - it is made of non-toxic materials friendly to the environment, suitable for outdoor use,
 - it is connected to the parking lot and WC.
- Two amphibious wheelchairs are located in the area to facilitate visitors with moving disabilities
- Accessible chemical WC and locker room are located within the public area of the beach and are accessed by the path.
- Accessible street parking area also connected to the accessible path.



3. Main stakeholders / actors

The project was implemented by the South Aegean Region and the Municipality of Rhodes. The “Association of Disabled People in the Province of Rhodes” assisted in the design and implementation of the project.

4. Costs of the changes

The project “Provision of accessibility systems for people with disabilities to beaches in the southern Aegean islands”, was financed by the Operational programme “Crete and Aegean Island 2007-2013”. The total budget for 20 beaches in 15 islands was up to 371.200,00 €. The project was completed by the year 2015.

Result and Impact

Rhodes is a popular international “Sea-Sun-Sand” tourist destination and a mass seasonal tourism model is applied on the island for several decades. That form of tourism is currently acknowledged to be environmentally damaging and leading into socio-cultural degradation of the area. It is within the Municipality’s strategy to develop alternative forms of tourism while capitalizing the comparative advantages of the island (natural and cultural recourses).

Interventions like the above mentioned, strengthen accessibility tourism in Rhodes meanwhile tackling issues of seasonality and improving the profile of the island.

Lessons Learnt

It’s important for the city to further implement actions relevant to improving accessibility in the island so as to engage successfully in the profitable market of accessible tourism and improve the quality of live for citizens.

Further information

Municipality of Rhodes

www.rhodes.gr

‘Askliades’ Cooperative Social Business, provision of accessible tourism services in Rhodes

www.pwdservices.gr



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