



**visits4u case studies:
Town Hall of Rhodes
Rhodes, Greece**

Town Hall of Rhodes

Rhodes, Greece

Title: Small changes-Big impact

Description

The Town Hall of Rhodes is situated at the northern end of 7th March Avenue, in today's Liberty sq. It is the building of Casa Littoria, built by architect Armando Bernabiti, in 1937-1939, during the Italian Occupation, to host the club of fascism in Rhodes. Upon the "Imperial Square", in front of Casa Littoria, the statues of Octavianos and Julius Caesar were erected, gifts by Mussolini to Rhodes.

In 1947, the integration of the Dodecanese to Greece was decided. On the 7th of March of the following year, in front of the Town Hall, with the symbols of fascism and the statues extracted and the square filled with people kneeling on their knees, the Greek flag, carried by women in traditional costumes of the islands of the Dodecanese, rose on its pole, after six centuries of foreign rule.



Becoming inclusive:

1. Description

The main entrance has a 16-step staircase. The two side entrances have a 12-step staircase each. There is a short accessible ramp that leads to the lift in the back side of the building.

The ramp is almost 3.00m long and 2.00m wide and has a 5% gradient. No handrails.

The ramp leads to the lift that gives access to all floors. The information on the buttons in the lift are also written in Braille.





The venue has three floors -corridors and office spaces accessible. There are three 25-step staircases, one central and two on the sides, leading from the 1st to the 2nd floor. The side staircases lead to the basement. The pavement is homogeneous and without gaps.

The main door is a glass and iron door, always open during visiting hours with a 2.20m wide passage. The side doors are always open during visiting hours with a 1.80m wide passage.

The information desk is next to the main entrance, on the left side. It is 1.20m high and does not allow frontal approximation of wheelchair users. No signs indicating the offices or the location of the WC.

Guide dogs are allowed.

The staff does not speak the sign language.

Lighting homogenous.

Toilets

WC: two available for visitors in the basement. Not signed but suitably equipped.





2. Description of steps taken, changes and progress

Due to its historical significance, there was a major project that was taken place back in 2005 by the Mayor Mr Giorgos Yiannopoulos, in order to adjust elevator to make the building disabled friendly. Minor constructions were taken place at the back side of the building.

Furthermore, special designated areas were transformed to accessible parking lots at the front and back yard of the building.



So, after the engineering and architectural study, the elevator implemented to the surface of the building. One significant thing that has to be mentioned is the fact that the width of the corridors inside are more than 2 meters, so anyone can move easily.

Furthermore, WC for disabled citizens constructed at the ground floor of the historical building.

Finally, after the improvements of the building, all areas and offices of the building are accessible by disabled citizens.

Two departments of the municipality cooperated in order to carry out the project towards the accessibility of the building, the department of technical constructions and the department responsible for the heritage monuments.

3. Main stakeholders

Municipality of Rhodes is responsible for Citizen Service, dissemination activities and funds for improvements.

Results and Impact

Improvements made in the building help many people with disabilities to visit it, increase the attendance and makes it accessible to all citizens. Disabled citizens since then, there is no need to them to have any assistance in order to carry out all bureaucratic issues concerning the municipality of Rhodes. Also, these practices and changes to buildings, prove that a top European tourism destination, as Rhodes, with more than 2 million visitors per year, is a disable friendly destination with easy access to all buildings all around the island.

Lessons learnt

With good planning and cooperation among public service sector departments, every building (even the preserved) can be redesigned, transformed and serve disabled citizens.

Further information

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