



Title	Assisted bathing service in La Concha Beach.
Date	2018
Objective	The main objective of the tourism best practices program to improve accessibility at La Concha Beach in San Sebastián is to ensure that all people, regardless of their abilities, can fully enjoy this iconic beach and its surroundings. This involves implementing measures to facilitate access and mobility for people with disabilities, as well as providing assisted bathing services for those who require it. The program aims to create an inclusive and accessible environment that promotes equal opportunities and participation for all visitors, thus contributing to a more inclusive and enriching tourism experience in San Sebastián.
Location /geographical coverage	La Concha Beach, San Sebastián, Guipuzkoa, Vasque Country, Spain.
Organisation responsible for good practice	Hegalak – Zabalik Foundation in collaboration with Vasque Country Tourism Council
Stakeholders and Partners	<p>The main beneficiaries and users of this tourism best practices program to improve accessibility at La Concha Beach in San Sebastián would include:</p> <p>People with disabilities: They would be the direct beneficiaries of the program, as it would allow them to access and enjoy the beach and its surroundings more easily and comfortably. This would include individuals with physical, sensory, or cognitive disabilities, as well as older adults who may have mobility difficulties.</p> <p>Families with young children: Families visiting the beach with young children would also benefit from the program, as improvements in accessibility would facilitate the transportation of strollers and overall mobility.</p>

	<p>Tourists with special needs: Tourists visiting San Sebastián who have special needs, such as older adults or those with medical conditions affecting their mobility, would find the program useful for safely and comfortably enjoying the beach during their stay in the city.</p> <p>Local residents: Residents of San Sebastián, especially those who have mobility difficulties or who know someone with a disability, would also benefit from the program by having access to a more inclusive and accessible beach in their community.</p>
<p>Short summary</p>	<p>During the bathing season, La Concha beach offers two services to support the disabled, the elderly and/or people with reduced mobility.</p> <p>This services facilitates access to enjoy La Concha beach and make it possible for people with mobility problems to swim in the sea using an "amphibious vehicle" which, with the help of one or two monitors, allows mobility both on the sand and in the water.</p> <p>Fundación Hegalak – Zabalik offers a barrier-free bathing service at the Hegalak sports centre. The service is an escort programme on San Sebastián's La Concha beach for people with functional diversity or reduced mobility.</p> <p>It is provided by qualified personnel with specialist training in assisting disabled and elderly people, lifeguard services and physiotherapy.</p> <p>Also, It provides the necessary technical support to facilitate access: transfer cranes, buggies and assisted bathing accessories, special walking sticks for the sand, life vests, etc.</p>
<p>Impact</p>	<p>The implementation of the accessibility program at La Concha Beach has had a positive impact on tourism in San Sebastián, attracting more visitors and enhancing the tourist experience in the city, especially for those who wish to enjoy the beach in an accessible and equitable manner.</p>

	<p>The improvement of accessibility at La Concha Beach has attracted a greater number of visitors, including people with disabilities and their families, as well as tourists with special needs. The beach is now more accessible to a variety of people, which has increased its appeal as a tourist destination. Visitors who use the new accessibility facilities and services at La Concha Beach experience greater satisfaction during their visit. The ability to easily access the beach and enjoy the sea and the surroundings contributes to a more positive and rewarding tourist experience.</p> <p>The implementation of the program has enhanced San Sebastián's image as an inclusive and accessible tourist destination. This has led to greater visibility and recognition at both national and international levels, attracting more visitors interested in enjoying a truly inclusive tourist experience in the city.</p>
Innovation	<p>The implementation of the program includes the installation of climate-adapted infrastructures, such as umbrellas, shaded areas, and accessible drinking water fountains, providing relief from the heat and helping to prevent heat-related illnesses among visitors.</p> <p>Furthermore, by improving accessibility at the beach and its surroundings, the program ensures that all people, including those most vulnerable to heatwaves, have quick access to shaded areas where they can seek refuge and cool down during periods of extreme heat, as well as better access for emergency services if needed.</p>
Lessons learned	<p>The accessibility program at La Concha Beach highlights the importance of inclusion, collaboration, adaptability, and shared benefits in promoting accessible and welcoming tourist destinations for all.</p> <p>The inclusion of people with disabilities in tourism policies and practices is essential to ensure that</p>

	<p>all members of society have equal access and opportunities to enjoy tourist destinations.</p> <p>Additionally, accessibility programs must be adaptable and flexible to adjust to the changing needs of people with disabilities and environmental conditions, ensuring their relevance and effectiveness over time.</p>
<p>Tools</p>	<p>To implement a tourism best practices program to improve accessibility at a beach like La Concha Beach in San Sebastián, several tools and resources are required:</p> <p>Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the current accessibility of the beach and its surroundings, identifying physical, communicative, and sensory barriers that may hinder access for people with disabilities.</p> <p>Involve the local community, including people with disabilities and their families, in all stages of the process, from planning to implementation and evaluation of the program.</p> <p>Use accessible technology, such as mobile applications and accessible websites, to provide information about the accessibility of the beach and its services.</p> <p>Provide training to tourism staff, lifeguards, and volunteers on how to provide inclusive and respectful service to all people, regardless of their abilities, conducting periodic evaluations to monitor the progress of the program, gather feedback from users, and make adjustments as necessary to improve accessibility and the user experience.</p>
<p>Sustainability</p>	<p>For the described program to be sustainable, the following elements are needed:</p> <p>Institutional commitment: It is crucial to have the support and allocation of resources from local authorities to ensure the continuity of the program.</p>

	<p>Integration into policies and development plans: The program must be an integral part of tourism and urban development policies and plans to ensure its consideration in all future decisions.</p> <p>Participation and ongoing collaboration: Active collaboration among all stakeholders, including local authorities, tourism businesses, and the community, is essential to coordinate efforts and resources effectively.</p> <p>Monitoring and evaluation: Establishing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to measure the progress of the program and make adjustments as necessary to ensure its effectiveness and efficiency over time.</p>
<p>Replicability and/or up-scaling</p>	<p>The possibilities of replicating the tourism best practices program to improve accessibility at La Concha Beach in other cities and regions are promising.</p> <p>The approach and strategies used in the San Sebastián program are easily adaptable to other locations. Improvements in accessibility, the installation of climate-adapted infrastructures, and the promotion of health awareness can be applied in different geographical and cultural contexts.</p> <p>Also, accessibility is a universal need in all communities, especially in popular tourist destinations. Other cities and regions also face similar challenges in ensuring that their beaches are accessible to all people, making the program relevant and pertinent elsewhere.</p> <p>Furthermore, improving accessibility at beaches can have multiple economic and social benefits, including an increase in tourist influx, higher customer satisfaction, and a better reputation as an inclusive tourist destination. These benefits are appealing to other cities and regions looking to boost their tourism industry and improve the quality of life for their residents.</p>
<p>Contact details</p>	<p>Information Office: Boulevard, 8, San Sebastián</p>

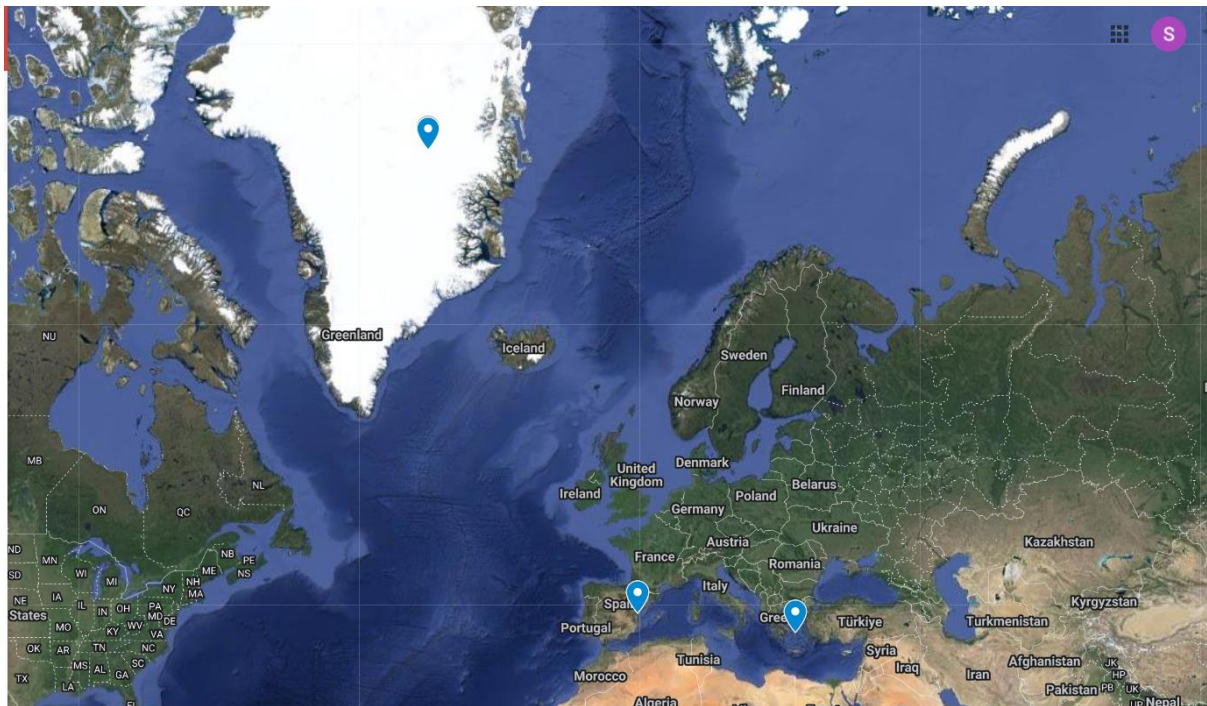
	<p>Telephone: +34 943 48 11 66</p> <p>E-mail: sansebastianturismoa@donostia.eus</p>
Related Web site(s)	<p>https://accessibility.sansebastianturismoa.eus/en/what-to-visit/beaches/la-concha-beach#assited-bathing</p>
Related resources that have been developed	<p>A full touristic guide has been published on San Sebastian's Council web, where anyone can check what services are available, and directly book them online.</p> <p>Apart from that, a complete compendium of remarkable palces through San Sebastián can be also consulted, each one with a full list of its facilities to Access for disabled tourists.</p>

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