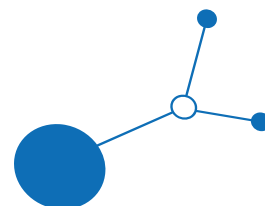


D.3.2.3 Action Plan for Improving the Accessibility of Rural Tourism (PL)



February 2026

Final version



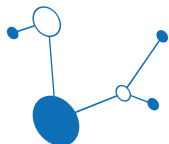
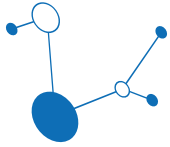


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1. Introduction and scope of the Action Plan

This Action Plan has been developed within the CE-Spaces4All project for the rural pilot region of the Podkarpackie Region (Poland).

This Action Plan operationalises the CE-Spaces4All Joint Strategy at local, regional or national level. It translates the strategic objectives, priorities, and recommendations of the Joint Strategy into concrete, region-specific actions for improving the accessibility of tourism. The overall aim of the activity is to build future new partnerships and prepare follow-up projects for long term cooperation of cross sectoral stakeholders in the Podkarpackie Region for further joint development of accessible tourism.

The Action Plan builds on the accessibility barriers identified in the CE-Spaces4All Accessibility Catalogue.

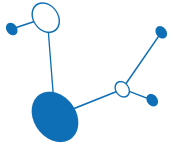
The Action Plan will be implemented by the Rzeszów Regional Development Agency in cooperation with regional stakeholders. Its implementation will support the further development of accessible tourism in the Podkarpackie Region and contribute to the integration of accessibility principles into future regional and local initiatives.

The Action Plan was developed through a participatory, bottom-up process carried out throughout the implementation of the CE-Spaces4All project, involving:

- persons with disabilities and their representative organisations,
- local and regional authorities,
- tourism organisations and service providers,
- development agencies and sectoral stakeholders.

The participatory methodology was designed to ensure that Action Plans are grounded in real needs, local capacities, and institutional responsibilities. The process combined structured stakeholder workshops, targeted consultations with persons with disabilities and service providers, and iterative feedback loops to co-design measures that are both inclusive and implementable. By aligning lived experience with policy and planning perspectives, the methodology aimed to translate accessibility principles into concrete, territorially adapted actions.

The Action Plan was also developed through interregional cooperation within the CE-Spaces4All partnership. It builds on the exchange of experiences, knowledge and good practices between project partners from different Central European regions during joint workshops, study visits and project meetings. The collaborative process enabled the identification of common accessibility challenges and the adaptation of successful approaches to the specific regional context of the Podkarpackie Region, ensuring that the proposed actions reflect both local needs and transnational experience.



This approach ensures:

- meaningful involvement of people with disabilities as **drivers of change**,
- cross-sectoral integration of accessibility into **territorial development planning**, and
- strengthened **multi-level and cross-border governance**.

The Action Plan provides a **practical roadmap** for integrating accessibility into tourism and territorial development in the Podkarpackie rural area. By strengthening governance, fostering inclusive participation, and leveraging tourism as a driver of accessibility investments, the Action Plan contributes to **balanced, sustainable, and inclusive development** of Central European rural border regions.

2. List of Actions

2.1. Poland

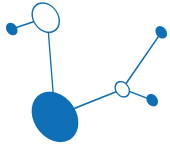
The Action Plan for the Podkarpackie Region consists of a set of complementary actions aimed at strengthening the long-term development of accessible tourism. The proposed actions build on the experience gained during the CE-Spaces4All project, including the pilot activities implemented in the region, and respond to the accessibility barriers identified during the project. Together, they create a coherent framework for improving institutional cooperation, increasing awareness, promoting accessible tourism solutions, integrating accessibility into regional tourism planning and preparing future initiatives beyond the project's lifetime.

Main target group(s)

- Regional and local public authorities responsible for tourism development and social policies (Marshal's Office, local self-government units),
- Regional development institutions and business support organisations (e.g. RRDA),
- Tourism and cultural service providers, in particular museums and heritage institutions,
- Non-governmental organisations and organisations representing persons with disabilities (e.g. the Polish Association of the Blind),
- Persons with disabilities as end beneficiaries of the action and experts by experience.

Stakeholders involved

- Rzeszów Regional Development Agency;



- Regional Centre for Social Policy in Rzeszów;
- Marshal's Office of the Podkarpackie Region;
- Podkarpackie Regional Tourist Organization;
- Polish Association of the Blind;
- "Dobry dom" Association;
- Tourist service providers - museums, etc.

Alignment with existing strategies and policies

The proposed actions are aligned with the Podkarpackie Region Development Strategy "Podkarpackie 2030", which promotes sustainable regional development, social cohesion, improved quality of public services and strengthened cross-sectoral cooperation. They are also consistent with regional strategic documents related to tourism development, which support improving the quality and accessibility of the regional tourism offer and promoting cultural heritage.

Furthermore, the Action Plan supports regional social policy objectives related to equal opportunities and the inclusion of persons with disabilities by encouraging cooperation between tourism stakeholders and organisations representing persons with disabilities. It also reflects the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and broader European policies promoting accessibility, social inclusion and universal design.

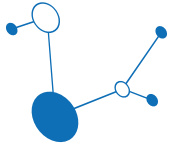
The Action Plan is intended to support the implementation and future development of regional tourism and social policy objectives. Recommendations and good practices developed through its implementation will be shared with the Marshal's Office of the Podkarpackie Region, municipalities and other relevant regional stakeholders to facilitate the gradual integration of accessibility principles into future strategic and operational documents.

Timeframe

2026-2027

Estimated cost

Implementation of the proposed actions requires limited financial resources. Most activities are based on existing institutional capacities, staff involvement and cooperation between stakeholders. Direct costs are expected to remain low and relate mainly to meeting organisation, dissemination activities and small promotional or training



materials. The estimated annual budget is approximately EUR 0-500, depending on the scope of activities undertaken.

Potential funding sources

Implementation of the Action Plan will primarily rely on the own resources of participating institutions and their regular operational activities. Where appropriate, individual actions may also be supported through regional budgets and future national or European funding programmes dedicated to tourism development, accessibility, social inclusion and territorial cooperation.

Action 1. Establishment of the Regional Cooperation Platform for Accessible Tourism

Description

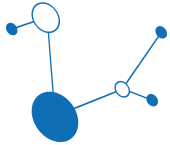
This action aims to establish a permanent Regional Cooperation Platform for Accessible Tourism in the Podkarpackie Region as a mechanism for long-term dialogue and cooperation among key regional stakeholders. The platform will bring together representatives of public authorities, regional development institutions, tourism organisations, cultural institutions, organisations representing persons with disabilities and other relevant stakeholders involved in tourism development and accessibility.

The platform will operate through quarterly working meetings organised during the period 2026-2027 at the premises of the Rzeszów Regional Development Agency or the Marshal's Office of the Podkarpackie Region, using existing facilities and institutional resources. Meetings will provide a regular forum for exchanging information, discussing common challenges, coordinating initiatives and identifying opportunities for improving the accessibility of tourism services and destinations in the region.

The establishment of the platform will ensure continuity of the cooperation initiated during the CE-Spaces4All project and create favourable conditions for coordinated implementation of the subsequent actions included in this Action Plan. It will also strengthen cooperation between tourism and social policy stakeholders, encourage the active participation of organisations representing persons with disabilities in regional decision-making processes and support the development of future accessibility initiatives beyond the project's lifetime.

Expected impacts

The action will establish a stable framework for regional cooperation on accessible tourism and improve coordination between institutions responsible for tourism, regional development and social inclusion. It is expected to strengthen stakeholder engagement, facilitate regular exchange of knowledge and contribute to more consistent planning and implementation of accessibility-related initiatives across the Podkarpackie Region.



Monitoring and evaluation

Implementation of the action will be monitored through the number of meetings organised, the diversity and number of participating organisations, and the follow-up activities initiated as a result of the platform's work. Meeting summaries and participants' feedback will be used to assess whether the platform effectively supports long-term cooperation and contributes to the implementation of the Action

Action 2. Dissemination of Pilot Solutions and Good Practices

Description

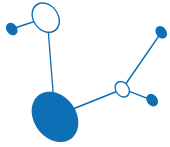
This action focuses on the dissemination and wider uptake of the solutions and experience gained through the CE-Spaces4All pilot activities implemented in the Podkarpackie Region. Particular emphasis will be placed on promoting the accessibility solutions tested during the project, including the use of VR technology with 360° content and Tour Guide systems supporting visitors with disabilities in museums and cultural institutions.

The Regional Cooperation Platform established under Action 1 will serve as the main mechanism for presenting pilot results, exchanging experiences among stakeholders and encouraging other tourism service providers to consider similar accessibility improvements. Meetings will include presentations of good practices, discussion of implementation challenges and opportunities, and sharing of practical recommendations developed during the project.

The action will also promote cooperation between institutions that participated in the pilot activities and organisations interested in introducing accessible tourism solutions in other locations across the region. By facilitating the exchange of practical knowledge and tested approaches, the action will contribute to the gradual replication of successful accessibility measures and increase awareness of available solutions among tourism stakeholders.

Expected impacts

The action will increase the visibility and practical use of the solutions developed within CE-Spaces4All, encourage other tourism providers to introduce accessibility improvements based on proven experiences, and strengthen knowledge transfer between institutions involved in tourism development. It will also contribute to the wider dissemination of good practices supporting accessible tourism in the Podkarpackie Region.



Monitoring and evaluation

Progress will be monitored through the number of dissemination activities organised during stakeholder meetings, the number of institutions presenting or exchanging good practices, and the number of tourism stakeholders expressing interest in applying the solutions presented. Meeting reports and stakeholder feedback will be used to assess the effectiveness of knowledge transfer and dissemination activities.

Action 3. Improving Accessibility Information

Description

This action aims to improve the availability, quality and consistency of information on the accessibility of tourism attractions and cultural institutions in the Podkarpackie Region. Clear and reliable accessibility information is essential for persons with disabilities when planning their visits and is one of the key elements of accessible tourism.

Through the Regional Cooperation Platform, participating institutions will be encouraged to exchange experiences and good practices related to communicating accessibility features of their facilities and services. Particular attention will be given to presenting accessibility information in a clear, transparent and user-friendly manner, taking into account the needs of people with different types of disabilities.

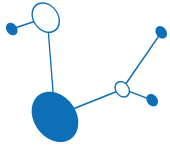
The action will also promote greater visibility of accessibility information through the websites and communication channels of tourism organisations, museums and local authorities. Although each institution will remain responsible for its own communication, the exchange of experience and common recommendations developed within the platform will contribute to a more coherent approach across the region.

Expected impacts

The action is expected to improve the quality and consistency of accessibility information provided by tourism stakeholders, making it easier for persons with disabilities to plan and enjoy tourism experiences. It will also increase awareness among tourism providers of the importance of reliable accessibility information as an integral part of service quality and visitor experience.

Monitoring and evaluation

Progress will be monitored through examples of accessibility information shared by participating institutions, the number of organisations discussing or applying good communication practices, and feedback collected during stakeholder meetings. The annual review of platform activities will assess how recommendations contribute to improving accessibility communication across the region.



Action 4. Capacity Building for Tourism Stakeholders

Description

This action aims to strengthen the knowledge and capacities of tourism stakeholders in the Podkarpackie Region regarding accessibility and inclusive tourism. Building on the experience gained through the CE-Spaces4All project, the action will support the exchange of practical knowledge and promote a better understanding of the needs of persons with disabilities among tourism service providers, cultural institutions and public authorities.

Capacity-building activities will be integrated into the meetings of the Regional Cooperation Platform and will include presentations of practical accessibility solutions, discussions on challenges encountered by tourism providers, and the exchange of experiences between institutions and organisations representing persons with disabilities. Particular emphasis will be placed on promoting practical and cost-effective measures that can be implemented by tourism stakeholders to improve the accessibility of their services.

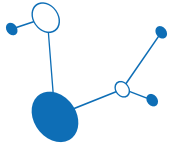
The action will encourage continuous learning and cooperation between different sectors, helping tourism providers to better understand accessibility as an essential element of service quality and sustainable tourism development rather than solely a legal obligation.

Expected impacts

The action will increase the knowledge and awareness of tourism stakeholders regarding accessible tourism and universal design principles. It is expected to strengthen cooperation between tourism providers and organisations representing persons with disabilities, support the adoption of practical accessibility solutions and contribute to a more inclusive approach to tourism development across the region.

Monitoring and evaluation

Progress will be monitored through the number of capacity-building sessions incorporated into stakeholder meetings, participation of different stakeholder groups and feedback collected from participants. Evaluation will focus on the perceived usefulness of the exchanged knowledge and the extent to which participants identify opportunities to improve accessibility within their own organisations.



Action 5. Integration of Accessibility into Regional Tourism Planning

Description

This action aims to promote the systematic integration of accessibility principles into regional and local tourism planning and development processes in the Podkarpackie Region. Building on the experience and recommendations developed through the CE-Spaces4All project, accessibility will be promoted as an integral element of tourism policy, destination management and future investment planning.

The Regional Cooperation Platform will provide a forum for discussing how accessibility can be better reflected in regional and local strategic documents, tourism development plans and public initiatives. Recommendations developed through stakeholder cooperation will be shared with public authorities, municipalities and regional institutions responsible for tourism, social policy and regional development, supporting the gradual incorporation of accessibility considerations into future planning processes.

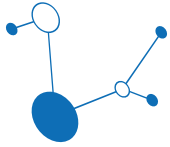
The action will also encourage cooperation between institutions responsible for tourism development and organisations representing persons with disabilities, ensuring that accessibility is considered from the early stages of planning and decision-making. Rather than introducing new policy obligations, the action seeks to strengthen coordination, promote good governance and support evidence-based decision-making based on the experience gained during the project.

Expected impacts

The action is expected to increase the consideration of accessibility in regional and local tourism planning processes and strengthen cooperation between institutions responsible for tourism, regional development and social inclusion. In the longer term, it will support the gradual integration of accessibility principles into future strategic and operational documents and contribute to more inclusive tourism development across the Podkarpackie Region.

Monitoring and evaluation

Progress will be monitored through the number of recommendations developed and shared with relevant public institutions, references to accessibility discussed within stakeholder meetings and examples of accessibility considerations reflected in future planning activities. Annual reviews of the Action Plan implementation will assess how the recommendations contribute to strengthening regional cooperation and strategic planning.



Action 6. Preparation of Follow-up Initiatives and Funding Opportunities

Description

This action aims to ensure the long-term sustainability of the results achieved through the CE-Spaces4All project by supporting the preparation of follow-up initiatives and strengthening cooperation among regional stakeholders. Building on the Regional Cooperation Platform and the experience gained during the implementation of the previous actions, stakeholders will be encouraged to identify common priorities and develop new project ideas addressing accessibility in tourism.

Particular attention will be given to exploring funding opportunities available through European, national and regional programmes supporting tourism, accessibility, social inclusion and territorial cooperation. The action will promote joint project development involving public authorities, regional development institutions, tourism organisations, cultural institutions and organisations representing persons with disabilities.

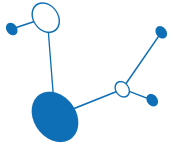
The preparation of follow-up initiatives will also contribute to maintaining the partnerships established during the project and ensuring that accessibility remains an important element of regional tourism development beyond the lifetime of CE-Spaces4All. Cooperation with former project partners and other interested regions will be encouraged whenever opportunities for knowledge exchange or joint project development arise.

Expected impacts

The action is expected to strengthen the long-term sustainability of the CE-Spaces4All results by maintaining regional partnerships and creating favourable conditions for future cooperation. It will increase the readiness of stakeholders to participate in new projects and support the continued development of accessible tourism through external funding opportunities and joint initiatives.

Monitoring and evaluation

Progress will be monitored through the number of follow-up project concepts discussed by the Regional Cooperation Platform, the identification of relevant funding opportunities and the continuation of cooperation between participating institutions after the completion of the project. Annual implementation reviews will assess how the Action Plan contributes to maintaining partnerships and preparing future accessibility-related initiatives.



3. Integration of results

This chapter outlines how the regional Action Plans developed within the CE-Spaces4All project may complement each other beyond the project lifetime and how the achieved results could be further utilised through voluntary cooperation among partners and stakeholders.

Rather than introducing new obligations, the following elements describe recommended forms of coordination that could support continuity, mutual learning and gradual harmonisation of approaches to accessible tourism development in the pilot region.

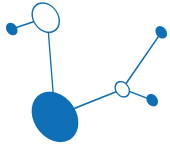
3.1. Common priorities across regions

Rural regions such as Podkarpackie face structural and governance-related challenges that require systemic responses in the field of accessible tourism. Accessibility is influenced not only by physical infrastructure conditions, but also by institutional coordination, availability of reliable information, and the level of awareness among tourism stakeholders.

Key shared priorities emerging from the regional process include the need to establish structured and continuous cooperation mechanisms among public authorities, tourism actors and organisations representing persons with disabilities; to strengthen institutional dialogue between tourism development and social inclusion policies; and to improve the quality, consistency and transparency of accessibility-related information.

Further priorities involve building the capacities of service providers and cultural institutions, integrating accessibility principles into regional strategic and planning documents, and ensuring that accessibility considerations become a regular element of decision-making processes. The region also recognises the importance of translating pilot experiences, tested tools and the actions proposed in this Action Plan into broader systemic practice, enabling gradual but sustainable uptake across the tourism sector.

Overall, the regional approach emphasises embedding accessibility into governance frameworks and territorial development mechanisms, ensuring that improvements are coordinated, participatory and aligned with long-term regional development objectives.



3.2. Expected impacts

The implementation of the Action Plan in Podkarpackie is expected to generate the following impacts:

Governance level

The Action Plan will establish a permanent regional dialogue platform on accessible tourism, strengthen institutional cooperation between tourism authorities and social policy actors, and increase the integration of accessibility and disability perspectives into regional tourism development.

Capacity-building level

Implementation of the proposed actions will increase knowledge and awareness among tourism providers and cultural institutions, strengthen cooperation with organisations representing persons with disabilities and improve the readiness of regional stakeholders to develop future accessibility initiatives and investment projects..

Strategic level

The Action Plan will support the dissemination of the solutions developed within CE-Spaces4All, facilitate the preparation of follow-up projects at national and European level and contribute to the gradual improvement of the accessibility and inclusiveness of the regional tourism offer.

In the long term, the region is expected to strengthen its image as an inclusive rural tourism destination.

3.3. Long-term cooperation and follow-up actions

Long-term sustainability of the Action Plan will be ensured through the continuation of the Regional Cooperation Platform, regular cooperation with organisations representing persons with disabilities, promotion of accessibility within regional tourism planning, preparation of follow-up projects under national and European funding programmes and continued exchange of experience with other regions implementing accessible tourism initiatives. The Regional Cooperation Platform will serve as the primary mechanism for maintaining partnerships, transferring knowledge and supporting the implementation of future joint initiatives.