



INCLUSION MOMENT: Accessible Tourism in Malaysia

Promoting Inclusive Travel
Experiences for All

What is Accessible Tourism?

Ensuring tourism experiences are inclusive for all, including individuals with disabilities.

Improving physical accessibility in transportation, hotels, and attractions.

Providing information in accessible formats, such as braille, sign language, and audio guides.

Encouraging businesses to adopt universal design principles for tourism facilities.

WHY IS ACCESSIBLE TOURISM IMPORTANT?

Alongside ongoing efforts to make tourism more sustainable, there are also a number of activists fighting to make the industry more accessible. “People with disabilities have been discriminated against and excluded from many parts of society, especially things that are not essential for life, like leisure,” says Dimitrios Buhalis, professor of Management and Deputy Director of the International Centre for Tourism and Hospitality Research at Bournemouth University. Author of several books on accessible tourism management, he thinks people need to shift their attitude towards inclusivity. “Many people view it as black or white, accessible or not accessible...in reality, nothing is absolutely accessible to everyone.”

Source: Euronews.travel



Why is Accessible Tourism Important in Malaysia?

Malaysia's diverse cultural and natural attractions should be accessible to all.

Supports the rights of individuals with disabilities as per the Persons with Disabilities Act 2008.

Enhances Malaysia's reputation as a global tourist destination by catering to all travelers.

Economic benefits: Expanding tourism accessibility increases revenue from international and domestic visitors.

Examples of Accessible Tourism in Malaysia

- KLIA Airport – Wheelchair-accessible facilities, priority services for travelers with disabilities.
- Malaysian Railways (KTMB) – Dedicated wheelchair spaces and accessible ticketing services.
- Mass Rapid Transit (MRT), Light Rail Transit (LRT), and Monorail
 - Elevators, ramps, and tactile paving for visually impaired travelers.
 - Designated wheelchair spaces on trains.
 - Audible and visual announcements for better accessibility.
- Tourist Attractions – Accessible pathways in destinations
 - Example:
 - Batu Caves (A lift system installed in 2022 allows wheelchair users to access the main temple).
 - Penang Hill & The Habitat (Funicular train with wheelchair access).
- Tourism Services for People with Disabilities
 - Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC)- Provides medical tourism packages with accessible transport and accommodation.
 - Specialized care for travelers with mobility impairments.
- Tourism Malaysia's Accessible Travel Guides
 - Online guides with accessible hotel listings, transport options, and attraction information.
 - Maps showing wheelchair-friendly routes in KL, Penang, and Sabah.

How Can We Improve Accessible Tourism?

- Government policies to enforce accessibility in tourism infrastructure.
- Increased training for tourism staff on assisting travelers with disabilities.
- Expanding signage in braille and audio guides at tourist sites.
- Collaboration with advocacy groups to enhance inclusive travel policies.