

Extending opportunities for European Rural Tourism

GreenWays4tour



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ASSOCIATION EUROPÉENNE DES VOIES VERTES
EUROPEAN GREENWAYS ASSOCIATION
ASOCIACIÓN EUROPEA DE VÍAS VERDES



What are Greenways?

European greenways are "*Communication routes reserved exclusively for non-motorized journeys, developed in an integrated manner which enhances both the environment and quality of life of the surrounding area. These routes should meet satisfactory standards of width, gradient, and surface condition to ensure that they are both user-friendly and low-risk for users of all abilities. In this respect, canal towpaths and disused railway lines are a highly suitable resource for the development of greenways*" (Declaration of Lille, September 2000).



Greenways – a new asset for rural tourism

For rural tourism, Greenways offer opportunities for existing or new services to be developed along their route due to their common characteristics:

- Ease of passage – slopes with either low or zero gradients allow their use by all types of users, especially mobility impaired people
- Adequate for multiple types of users: walking, long-distance trails, biking, horse riding, families with small kids, seniors, school excursions, nature and interpretation, night walks,
- Safety – they are separated from roads and traffic, count with services and signposting, and are adapted for human use.
- Respect for the environment - no impact through new construction, putting into value the infrastructure that is already available from the past and improving its state of conservation
- Usually located in areas of outstanding natural beauty and scenery, with low impact they allow for access to places that could not be reached under normal circumstances



What are the opportunities?

Greenways attract new visitors:

Any client that - for whatever reason - prefers an itinerary without steep slopes and away from normal traffic:

- Families with kids or babies
- Cyclists, hikers, horse riding
- Disabled or mobility impaired people
- Seniors
- School groups for nature excursions

The numbers of clients that belong to either of these groups is continuously growing: be it due to changing values and demand patterns for a more healthy type of holiday involving physical activities, or the demographic curve.

They may be visitors for one day, people that do a long-distance itinerary, or just holiday-makers that prefer open-air activities without too much physical effort: all of them love Greenways in their holiday destination.

Greenways users require new facilities and services

All the above require a wide range of services that can extend your existing business, or even create the opportunity for a new one. Some examples:

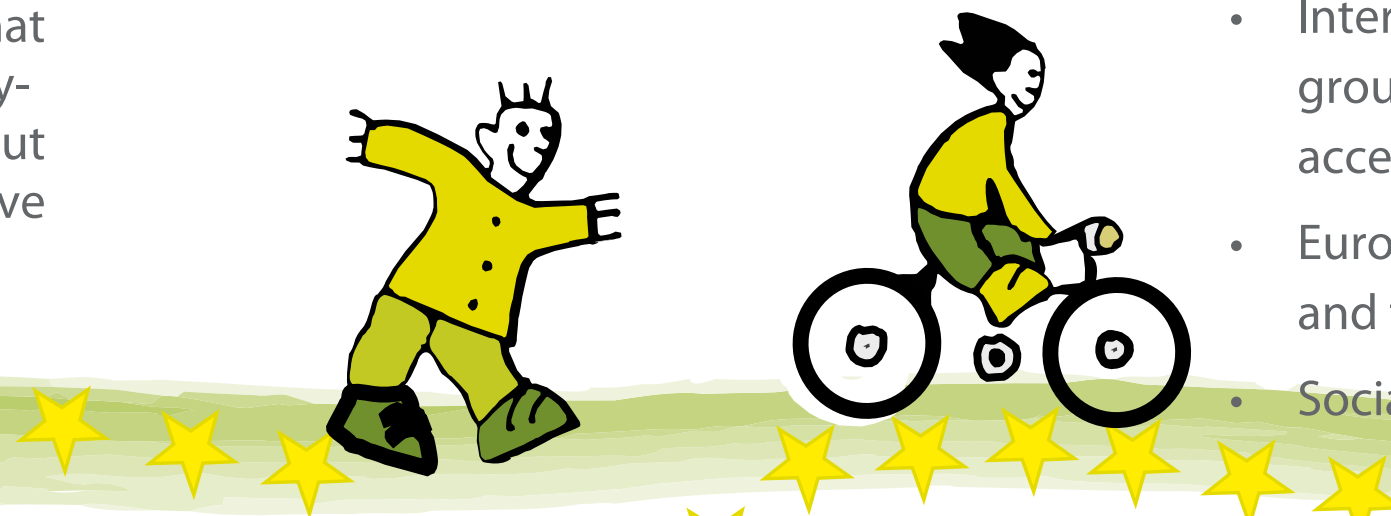
- Accommodation
- Catering and meals
- Storage and technical maintenance of equipment (bicycles) or similar facilities
- Accessibility to installations for impaired people
- Customer service and information
- Sanitary services

Greenways are popular and increase visibility of your service

Greenways are always an interesting resource that is included in the promotion of any destination that counts with this kind of infrastructure. Tourism services around the Greenways are critical for them being attractive, and therefore will always be mentioned and prominently featured in their promotion.

Having a service that is orientated to satisfy the demand and needs of Greenways users, you will receive promotion through:

- Local and regional tourist boards
- Internal communication of special interest groups and communities (senior travel, accessibility, cyclists,...)
- European Association of Greenways (EGWA) and their affiliated services
- Social Media platforms



What do I need to adapt?

This depends on the service that you want to offer. Most likely, for users without special needs or requirements (see below), you can just start working with your close-by Greenway, promoting it as an additional attraction or activity that your guests can enjoy when they lodge with you.

Adaptations and new services or infrastructures may be needed at your service if you want to attract Greenway users with special needs, such as cyclists, long-distance hikers, seniors, or people with impaired mobility.

You can find specific information about the requirements for the most frequent segments as follows:

- [Impaired mobility](#)
- [Cycling](#)
- [Walking](#)

Or you may even consider new services based on a nearby Greenway: rental of bicycles, guided tours at night, nature observation...

Watch the video Greenways4tour and get inspired for offering new services for different users. www.greenwayseurope.org

For further help, contact your regional or national association of rural tourism member of EuroGites (see the list at www.eurogites.org), or contact the European Greenways Association (EGWA) for specific information.



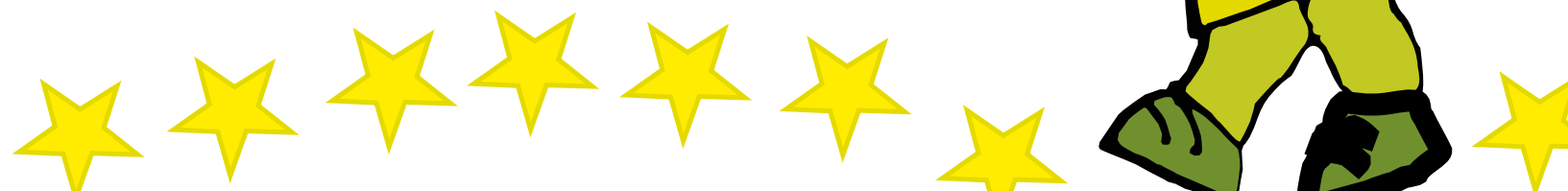
Is there any financial support?

Greenways are getting increasingly popular in many parts of Europe, because they attract visitors from the cities and from those market segments that will have highest growth in the coming years. All relevant authorities are aware of this, and will usually be supportive to your initiative.

Within the European Union, you should check the availability of financial resources from some of the following funds or programs:

- [Rural Development groups](#)
- [Regional development agencies](#)
- Destination Management Organisations (DMOs)
- Regional or national programs regarding [accessibility](#), [senior tourism](#), or any other program aiming at one of the specific target markets that are potential users of Greenways.

Either of the above may be able to provide financial support for creating or improving tourism services, or they can be used to create and accondition existing and new Greenways.



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(Declaration of Lille, September 2000)



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Please, visit our websites:

www.greenwayseurope.org

www.aevv-egwa.org

www.greenways4tour.org

This leaflet has been prepared by EuroGites in the framework of the Greenways4tour Project

Greenways: Discover and enjoy a different Europe.