

# LEAGUE OF HISTORICAL AND ACCESSIBLE CITIES

Established in 2010 within the European Consortium of Foundations on Human Rights and Disability, the League of Historical and Accessible Cities (LHAC) is a pilot project of the European Foundation Centre. Its main aim is to improve the accessibility of historical towns promoting at the same time sustainable tourism development and the protection of cultural heritage.

## Aims of the project

Our goal is not only to improve accessibility of historical towns for people with disabilities so that they and their families can enjoy a full day of leisure and a meaningful experience, but also to raise awareness and develop projects that can serve as inspiration for other foundations and local authorities. Our aim is to find innovative ways to reconcile cultural heritage protection and accessibility, which is one of the biggest challenges in Europe regarding accessibility and an important field for the foundation sector to engage in.

## Foundations and cities involved

The project is being simultaneously implemented by a group of foundations in countries across Europe, each of them in partnership with local authorities, disabilities groups, architects and city planning experts of the historical town of their choice. So far, **Fondazione Banca Monte di Lucca** is working with Lucca, Italy; **Fondazione CRT** with Torino, Italy; **Fondation Réunion** with Mulhouse, France; **Realdania, Bevica Foundation, the Labour Market Holiday Fund** and the **Danish Disability Foundation** with Viborg, Denmark; and **Fundación ONCE** with Avila, Spain, which has been the first-ever winner of the European Commission Award for Accessible Cities.



## How it works

A concrete pilot project is being developed in each member town, consisting of an accessible tourist itinerary of approximately one kilometre, which is feasible for people with reduced mobility, in the historical city centre. On these routes everyone will be able not only to walk around and visit interesting buildings, museums, parks, restaurants, shops, hotels and other key tourist attractions independently, but also to orient themselves and to interact with their surroundings, all in an effort to stimulate tourism among the 80 million people with disabilities living in Europe.

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The project will produce a best practice guide showcasing each individual project. A common methodology has been agreed, but the way in which each individual country is implementing and participating in the project varies enormously, bringing richness and depth to the initiative. For instance, some partners have benefited from significant and long-standing works made by the local authorities to make tourist attractions widely accessible, while others, founding themselves literally starting from scratch, have chosen to launch a design contest to find the best designed itinerary for the city of their choice. The League is thus an open platform, encouraging each of the participating projects to find the approach best suited to their city.

For more information about the League, please visit our website [www.lhac.eu](http://www.lhac.eu) or contact Ms Maria Orejas, EFC Disability Interest Group Coordinator, at [morejas@efc.be](mailto:morejas@efc.be).