



## BEST PRACTICE: BORDEAUX, FRANCE



### Key Challenge

Accessibility and inclusivity of services and facilities.

### Type of Solution

Adoption of a tourism strategy and monitoring framework; Stakeholder participation and management; Certification; Promotional campaigns; Digital solutions; Investments in infrastructure and product development.

### Case Classification

**Type of Destination** | Urban

**Territorial Level** | < NUTS 3

**Size of the Tourist Area** | 578.27 km<sup>2</sup>

**Population** | 831,534 in 2021

**Type of Tourism** | Cultural; City; MICE; Gastronomy.

**Tourism Organisation** | Local Destination Management Organisation (DMO) is a Public-private partnership.

**Main Stakeholders Affected** | Local residents; Tourists; ALL tourism service providers; Transport companies.

**Additional Challenges Covered** | Changing consumer preferences towards more sustainability; Appropriate local tourism strategies and policies to accelerate the transition to sustainable tourism; Lack of community participation in tourism activities.

### Context & Background

Tourism in Bordeaux currently represents around 7.5% of GDP and 10% of employment and has grown steadily over the last decade. In 2023, around 1.75 million arrivals, a third of which in the MICE segment, and 7 million overnight stays were registered. To make this growth as sustainable as possible, the DMO has launched a participatory community forum ([Agora Forum](#)) involving many stakeholders, including local residents and social organisations.

### Key Challenge

Ensuring that the growing demand for tourism in Bordeaux did not overlook the needs of people with disabilities and the ageing population, while promoting inclusion and equality in a city where accessibility was becoming increasingly important.

**Implementation of Solutions:** Bordeaux has a comprehensive approach to accessibility and inclusivity that considers different perspectives. The [Agora Forum](#) plays a central role in the planning and implementation of accessibility measures.

## SOLUTIONS

- The [Bordeaux Accessible Guide](#) for people with disabilities, published in 2022, contains information on accommodation, restaurants and other tourism services, travel routes and guided tours, practical information (e.g. transport, beaches), and contacts for people with disabilities. It includes some innovative offers such as:
  - Raised relief maps of three touristic areas that allow visually impaired visitors to discover the architecture of the most important monuments by touch.
  - Museums and attractions in Bordeaux that involve different senses, such as the [Cité du Vin Museum](#), which offers tactile exhibitions and audio guides for visually impaired visitors.
  - ["Mono-Pousseur" or tandem bicycles](#) for blind, visually impaired people and wheelchair users.
- To enable *barrier-free mobility*, since 2003, the city has built four barrier-free tram lines with a 66 km long network. The trams are 100% barrier-free thanks to large sliding doors and step-free access. The river shuttle and buses are also fully barrier-free and have specially reserved spaces for wheelchair users.
- The ["Destination for All" label](#), created by the French Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Solidarity and Social Cohesion, was awarded to Bordeaux for the first time in 2014 due to its commitment to accessible and inclusive tourism offers and services. In addition, many establishments are certified with the national ["Tourisme & Handicap"](#) quality label, which certifies the accessibility of holiday, leisure and cultural facilities for people with disabilities (learning disabilities, motor, visual and hearing impairments).
- [Bordeaux Solid'AIR](#), is a local tourism initiative aimed at providing leisure opportunities to those in precarious situations, such as offering hotel stays for victims of domestic violence and holidays for low-income families. It connects tourism professionals, cultural institutions, and social workers to promote social equality within the city.
- Bordeaux has implemented an *enhanced communication strategy* targeting multiple senses, including visual, auditory and tactile channels, such as videos on social media, to ensure comprehensive and inclusive access to information. These tools include:
  - The ["Bordeaux Accessible" section](#) of the Bordeaux Métropole Tourist Office website;
  - [TOOLIB](#), a shared mobility app for services for people with disabilities;
  - [Mobalink](#), a website and app for finding, recommending and sharing, including a live chat function.

**Replicability potential:** High (requires political will and stakeholder cooperation).

**Cost & funding source:** Not available.

## Success Factors & Barriers

Success factors: The Agora Forum as a key driver for sustainable tourism in Bordeaux; The city administration, which is strongly committed to making the city accessible to all; Positive feedback from people with disabilities.

Barriers: The long time needed for the establishment of the Agora Forum and the many debates and discussions; The difficulties in making people aware of the inclusive offers.

## Results and Impacts

- Improved accessibility of (tourism) infrastructure and services in the city and surrounding area.
- Inclusive tours are well attended, and guides are happy and proud to have additional guests (in terms of income and doing something good at the same time).
- The Solid'Air programme was launched in 2023, and 600 beneficiaries and 20 local providers are already involved (museums, hotels, restaurants, etc.).
- Increased positive reputation of the city.

## Recommendations by the Destinations

- To get a holistic picture, it is recommended to link the tourism office with other sectors and areas (social, environmental, etc.) of the city, as tourism is a typical cross-sectoral industry that involves more than just the direct stakeholders.
- Regular meetings with other administrative units of the city are useful for collaboration.
- It is crucial to understand the different needs of stakeholders, and in this case especially the needs of people with disabilities.
- Accessibility and inclusion are important to create a fairer society.

## Useful Links

[Tourism and Disability Guide](#) | [The Bordeaux Tourism Road Map 2022-2026](#)

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