ASSISTING PASSENGERS WITH NON-VISIBLE DISABILITIES

ACI
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AIRPORTS COUNCIL
INTERNATIONAL

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FOREWORD

I am extremely pleased to introduce this new ACI EUROPE guidance, *"Assisting Passengers with Non-Visible Disabilities"*, the first ever comprehensive guidance of its kind, which reflects our steadfast commitment to promoting the rights and well-being of passengers with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility.

European airports have a long-standing track record of caring for their most vulnerable passengers and visitors. Amongst this group, individuals with non-visible or less visible disabilities have historically been included within the broader category of passengers requiring assistance. However, with the growing need to further advance both inclusivity and psychobiological well-being as part of the air travel experience, we very much felt compelled to dedicate a separate guidance for passengers with invisible disabilities. This also reflects the fact that in the post-pandemic world, *accessibility* has gained a new momentum, calling for the needs and expectations of all passengers to be met with utmost consideration.

ACI EUROPE has consistently championed the cause of accessible and inclusive travel, working in collaboration with various stakeholders – in particular with the European Disability Forum (EDF)[1], the umbrella organisation of persons with disabilities in Europe. Our Memorandum of Understanding with the EDF stipulates our commitment to these principles, notably through our annual Accessible Airport Award, granted jointly with the Forum, and recognising airports across Europe with the most advanced accessibility practices. Winners of this important award over the past years have included Alicante, Istanbul, Copenhagen, London-Gatwick and Paphos airports. Furthermore, our collaborative efforts with the ECAC[2], the EU Institutions and States across our continent also underscore our dedication to advancing the rights of all travellers, regardless of their abilities.

In this pursuit, knowledge-sharing plays a pivotal role. Beyond this new guidance produced by our *Facilitation and Customer Services Committee*, ACI EUROPE has fostered a community of like-minded airport managing bodies and World Business Partners, all eager to exchange best practices and innovative solutions to ensure that passengers with non-visible disabilities are provided the support they deserve, while safeguarding their privacy and dignity.

Mobility is a fundamental right for all, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure that airports across Europe are accessible to everyone. I hope that this document will serve as a guiding light for all airport managing bodies and their stakeholders, offering practical guidance on how to assist passengers with non-visible disabilities in an empathetic and respectful manner.

Together, we can make air travel more inclusive, ensuring that every passenger's journey is marked by dignity, respect, and equal access to the wonders of our world.

Olivier Jankovec
ACI EUROPE Director General

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[1] European Disability Forum
[2] European Civil Aviation Conference

OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

Due to the diverse nature of the needs and expectations of persons with non-visible disabilities, and the fact that these types of disabilities may not be immediately obvious, careful consideration is needed to ensure that the correct decisions are made regarding the best approach to the provision of assistance.

It is important to remember that the aim of Regulation EC 1107/2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility (PRM) when travelling by air is to ensure that they have the same opportunities for air travel as people who do not have a disability of any kind. In particular, and to be more specific, these passengers should have the same rights to free movement, freedom of choice and non-discrimination.

In the context of this Regulation, the purpose of this guidance is to support airport managing bodies and their stakeholders in relation to assisting persons with non-visible disabilities, sharing best practices and practical information on how to deal with the specific needs and expectations that arise for these passengers.

Our guidance will support you in the following ways:

- Becoming more disability aware
- Communicating on a wider platform, raising awareness of, and fostering a deeper understanding of, non-visible disabilities
- Understanding the potential range of non-visible disabilities and the associated barriers to travel
- Respecting diverse needs and expectations
- Determining, in cooperation with the passenger or any accompanying persons, how best dealing with and processing sensitive information from the passenger regarding their needs and expectations

INTRODUCTION

The statistical office of the European Union, Eurostat, shows that 27% of the EU population over 16 years of age might have some form of disability[3]. That equals 101 million people, or 1 in 4 adults in the EU. As approximately 80% of disabilities are non-visible, we estimate that there are close to 80.8 million adults living with a condition that is not apparent to others. These figures increase considerably if we also include children, although no data are available.

Unfortunately for people with non-visible disabilities, misunderstanding or insufficient knowledge can lead to discrimination and a lack of support when critically needed[4]. Furthermore, passengers with non-visible disabilities may face challenges in communicating their needs and expectations due to societal stigma and the fear of being misunderstood or judged.

The main objective of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) is to "promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity."

At European level, the legal framework for the protection of persons with disabilities and/or reduced mobility (PRM) when travelling by air is based on Regulation 1107/2006, the Interpretative Guidelines on the application of Regulation 1107/2006, ECAC DOC 30 and the European Accessibility Act.

Regulation EC 1107/2006 aims to ensure that disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility (PRM) are not discriminated against and have equal opportunities for air travel as non-disabled individuals.

ECAC DOC 30, Part 1, Section 5 provides guidance on how to assist persons with a disability and/or reduced mobility and disability, including persons with non-visible disabilities.

The European Accessibility Act consists of a Directive aimed at harmonising the accessibility requirements for certain products and services. This ensures that the EU's internal market operates smoothly by eliminating and preventing any free-movement barriers that may exist because of divergent national legislation. It includes certain elements of air, bus, rail and water transport services such as websites, mobile services, electronic tickets and information.

We strongly encourage airport managing bodies, their stakeholders and their staff and to follow the principles established by the international and European legislation mentioned above and the guidance, standards and tools provided by the European Disability Forum (EDF) and the different European associations of persons with disabilities that you will find throughout this document.

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[3] Eurostat: Self -perceived long-standing limitations in usual activities due to health problems
[4] According to the Italian Civil Aviation Authority (ENAC), 13,000 passengers were assisted in Italy in 2022 under the code DPNA, representing 1,3% of the total. At Athens International Airport, these passengers represented 0.2% the same year. It is highly likely that these low figures do not reflect the reality, due to the barriers to travel and the lack of adequate communication to promote the travel of persons with non-visible disabilities.

TERMINOLOGY

The UNCRPD recognises that 'disability is an evolving concept'[5], and defines persons with disabilities as those who have 'long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others'[6]. A guiding idea is that the focus should not be on the disability per se but rather on the barriers that society creates.

Disabilities occur in many different forms[7]. Some people will experience a disability that is outwardly visible to others, others will experience a disability that has no, or little, outward visible signs and some others may experience a combination of these.

Several countries and/or businesses are choosing different terminology for non-visible disabilities. Although there is no agreed standard on this matter, non-visible disabilities can be referred to as hidden, invisible or less visible. Each of these descriptors can be problematic in terms of its interpretation as follows:

- hidden disability: can be interpreted as meaning the purposeful hiding of a disability
- invisible disability: can be interpreted as an imagined disability, i.e. it does not really exist
- less visible disability: may imply that the disability is partially visible or visible with some effort on the part of the observer, whereas in most cases, the disability is wholly not visible

For the purposes of this document, the more comprehensive term of non-visible disabilities is used. However, it is acknowledged that no strict delineation exists between visible and non-visible disabilities.

Non-visible disabilities **may indicatively** include:

- mental health conditions – for example, anxiety, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), schizophrenia, personality disorders
- autism spectrum disorders (ASD)
- attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), (ADD)
- sensory processing difficulties
- cognitive impairment, such as dementia, traumatic brain injury, learning disabilities
- physical health conditions, such as chronic pain, respiratory conditions, diabetes, incontinence, Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD), stoma patients, heart diseases
- hearing loss
- vision impairments
- dexterity loss

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[5] United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Preamble, literal e
[6] United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Article 1
[7] Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme Limited recently published that there are more than 350,000 different conditions which can be classed as non-visible disabilities

ASSISTING PASSENGERS WITH NON-VISIBLE DISABILITIES

Needs and expectations

Besides legislation setting minimum requirements for a safe, secure and timely journey, passengers request an experience that is hassle-free, provides smooth processes, the possibility to control the different stages of the journey, tailor-made services and differentiated products to meet their needs and expectations[8].

Like any other passenger, a passenger with non-visible disabilities has needs and expectations. However, unlike other passengers, they may find it difficult to express and communicate these needs and expectations. As one passenger with non-visible disability stated,

"Everything hinges on understanding. If people understand, then they can more easily see why changes are worthwhile and deserved. If they understand, they judge less. If they understand, then I am not so alone".

Most passengers with disabilities have lived with their conditions for a prolonged time and are fully clear about the support they need. However, unfamiliar elements arising in the Premises (long walking distances, airport building refurbishment) and the Processes (for instance, new sanitary requirements, aviation security or border control) can be confusing or require unexpected actions from the passenger. For passengers with certain conditions, this aspect of travel can be extremely distressing leading to panic attacks, a loss of control (sometimes referred to as 'meltdowns') and seizures.

Listen	Observe	Trust	Care

As far as is practicable, airports should publish all current potential barriers or limitations to travel, changes in environment and adjustments to passenger related processes, on their websites and/or any other means of informative channels, including social media.

In certain cases, airport familiarisation tours can be incredibly beneficial. Some passengers may need more than just video, text, or pictures to prepare for their visit, and a familiarisation tour can help to provide a more comprehensive and immersive experience. By allowing passengers to experience the Premises and the Processes in a controlled and safe manner, they can better prepare their journey, thus reducing any stress and anxiety they may feel ahead of and during their trip.

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[8] ACI EUROPE Guidelines for Passenger services at European Airports. Second edition

Besides complying with the required legislation, understanding the needs and expectations of passengers with non-visible disabilities has a number of benefits for the airport managing body and its stakeholders:

- Optimisation of passenger throughput
- Enhanced passenger experience
- Possibility to adapt services
- Enhanced passenger trust and loyalty
- Staff well-being
- Increase in commercial revenues
- Support initiatives benefiting all the travelling public (those who are first time travellers, nervous flyers, elderly, tired/stressed passengers, families, travellers not speaking the local language)

On the other hand, not understanding needs and expectations may lead to communication breakdown and potential delays or disruptions due to the creation of anxiety attacks, distress triggered physical body reactions as freezing ability to move, etc.; a negative passenger experience; discrimination; increasing negative judgement or attitude towards people with disabilities from fellow passengers.

Athens International Airport / ATH

Pre-travel, Premises, Processes and People

PRE-TRAVEL

Information

Information on the assistance should be accessible, available, reliable, clear and predictable.

Accessibility of the information is paramount, so that it can be accessed by people with different disabilities and using assistive devices.

This information should be easy to find on airport websites (advisably maximum one click away from home page) and easy to navigate to the right content. Information to be written in easy, plain language giving opportunity to all passengers with varying conditions to comprehend crucial messages.

The website should also include information about means to contact airport staff for information on assistance and information for persons with disabilities (mail, phone free of charge, in person…)[9].

Providing detailed information about the assistance available can help people with non-visible disabilities to make informed decisions about their travel plans. It can also help them to prepare for the assistance they will receive and ensure that their specific needs are met.

In addition, providing clear and easily accessible information can help to build trust and confidence between the service providers and the individuals with non-visible disabilities. It will also allow service providers to deliver a more personalised and tailored assistance service.

Information about Premises is essential and it must include:
- location of quiet rooms
- location of sensory rooms
- location of toilets, e.g. adapted toilets for people with stoma bags
- availability of bins for sharps, e.g. for people with diabetes
- location of changing places
- locations of designated points for the notification of Assisted Travel as established in Regulation 1107/2006 (some bigger airports may have several meeting points).

For people with cognitive impairments, information should be easy to read. More information on the **Easy to Read** Initiative may be found in the Inclusion Europe webpage.

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[9] The Web Accessibility Initiative provides useful information on how to achieve this.

PRE-TRAVEL

Booking assistance

Air carriers and travel agents should provide accessible tools to book assistance. Communication amongst the different stakeholders is therefore essential to guarantee the correct assistance needed.

Sometimes a physical assistance or one-to-one escort is not needed, but supporting mechanisms may be put in place, including alternative routes or voluntary schemes like the sunflower lanyard[10] (or similar).

Alicante - Elche Miguel Hernández Airport / ALC

[10] Hidden Disabilities Sunflower

PREMISES

Overwhelming stimuli

Assistance providers must be aware that there are passengers with hypersensitivity to external environmental stimuli – noise, e.g. hand dryers in toilet facilities, crowded departure halls; intense lights; smells, e.g. perfumes; intense patterns, e.g. on flooring or carpets.

Availability of quiet rooms or alternative routes

Some passengers may need a silent place to reduce their stress, away from the overwhelming stimuli of the airport environment to prepare themselves for the next step of travel. For example, these can be placed after security screening as it is considered as one of the most stress-inducing and triggering touchpoint at an airport for passengers with disabilities.

Seating

Some passengers can walk certain distances and do not want to request assistance but require seating. These can be passengers with chronic pain, fatigue, breathing conditions or vertigo. The provision of seats will support customer self-independence and freedom of movement.

Toileting facilities

Passengers with stoma bags or Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) need to know where toilets are located landside and airside in order to pre-plan their way within the Premises and think-through the different Processes.

The following are the essential features of a Stoma Friendly Toilet:

- Hook on door to hang clothing, handbags and luggage while changing stoma bags
- Shelf space to enable to spread out items easily and avoid having to use unsanitary surfaces
- Mirror to enable users to see stoma while changing appliances
- Disposal bin in every cubicle to avoid embarrassment for having to dispose of their stoma bag in public view
- Accessible toilet signage to highlight the adjustments made people with stomas

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London Gatwick / LGW

Cork Airport / ORK

Assistance dogs/relief area

Passengers with service animals such as blind guidance or hearing dogs, need relief areas at the Premises landside and airside. If the airport does not have one, this information should be published on the website. Locations should be marked on the Premises layout maps and relevant signs placed in the terminal building.

Sensory maps and paths

These are used to prepare for, and identify, areas with intense sensory stimuli, such as light, sounds, smells, and crowds such as security area, duty free area. They should be created in cooperation with qualified specialists, ideally associations representing people with disabilities, to ensure that the information is reliable and up to date for the users.

Sensory paths and play areas for children require little effort and minimum space requirements as the playground can be comprised of stickers on the floor. This keeps children busy, happy and calm.

Signage and Wayfinding[11]

Providing clear and accurate signage is crucial for passengers with disabilities to navigate the airport environment. It is important to strike a balance between providing sufficient information, and avoiding overwhelming them with too many signs or too much visual clutter.

Providing an alternative route can also be helpful for passengers with disabilities and their families. By providing multiple options for navigating the airport, passengers can choose the route that works best for their needs and preferences. This can help to reduce stress and anxiety and make the airport experience more manageable.

In addition to the benefits for passengers, providing alternative routes can also be a smart business strategy for airports. By encouraging passengers to explore different areas of the airport, including duty-free shopping areas, airports can increase sales and revenue.

Clear signage and alternative routes are an important part of making the airport environment more accessible and welcoming for passengers with disabilities.

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[11] ACI EUROPE Guidelines for passenger services at European airports. Chapter 5.1.2.2 Natural wayfinding

PROCESSES

Allowing time for response

Passengers can feel overwhelmed, confused, in need of more processing time to respond or act on our questions or requests, in areas like security, check-in and boarding. Tasks such as providing documentation, travel documents or explaining needs are especially difficult for passengers with speech impairments or for anxious, elderly passengers, persons on Autism spectrum, etc.

It is paramount to give those passengers more time to process information, reducing the stress of the fact that many other passengers are waiting behind them. The most effective way in which to put a passenger at ease is to say: "Please, take your time"; "Please do not worry, take it at your own pace". Encouragement like that reassures and calms passengers and enables them to concentrate on the process rather than time pressure.

Clear, precise, up to date and written in easy/plain language sequence of processes

People with disabilities, including passengers with non-visible disabilities or their travel companions are in crucial need of reliable information to make precise planning.

The information provided online must match reality when arriving at the airport.

Check in

Check-in is one of the Process stress points for passengers who have speech impairments, Dementia, hearing impairments, as well as for elderly travellers and passengers with anxiety.

If possible, assign one check- in desk for a flight and in the case of a domestic carrier, a fixed, designated desk for assisted travel, adding several icons under the text, for a wheelchair user, deaf and blind. This will make it easier for passengers to recognise.

Circle vital information like gate number on the boarding pass if applicable.

Show direction towards security/departure gates to give assurance for a passenger to go in the right direction.

Be naturally friendly.

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Security

Publish a video on airport website, preferably animated, showing how to prepare for the security screening process. Include information that demonstrates how the metal arch and scanner can make noise and/or flash with a red light and that an agent may perform a manual search.

Inform passengers that they are entitled for a manual search if they have, for example, a pacemaker, metal implants, prosthetic limb(s) or prosthetic breast, post mastectomy.

Inform passengers what is involved with secondary search if applicable.

For passengers with conditions such as Dementia, ASD or those related to their mental health, explain that personal belongings will be returned to the owner at the other side of the screening.

Allow carers of blind passengers go first via scanner, they will know how to lead and communicate with a passenger to go through the scanner or stand in the scanner.

Explain simply why passengers have to go through security screening and what should be separated from hand baggage when preparing for security screening.

Provide advice as follows:

- Alternative methods that can be used for alternative screening process
- Ability to request a private search
- Information on random searches
- What secondary search means and entails e.g. opening their bag and going through the passenger's belongings
- The fact that security agents can at times make direct physical contact with them
- That headphones need to be removed for screening (advising to use small in ear sound reducing solutions if required)
- What to do with medication – any doctors letters needed
- When travelling with specific medical equipment, direct them to contact the airline they are travelling with
- Approach for specific food types and packaging, e.g. child with Autism is reliant on only specific type of the food and will be unable to tolerate any alterations even of the packaging, etc.

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Boarding

Passengers with certain non-visible disabilities may ask air carriers for pre-boarding. For example, passengers with Autism may need to settle down before other passengers are boarding.

Passengers may need to know if there are announcements made at the airport, including whether there are local gate announcements. If the airport is a silent airport, it should be emphasised that passengers will need to follow visual information on the screens or apps of airlines, etc.

Rome Fiumicino Airport / FCO

PEOPLE

Empathy

It is not the task of airport managing body to find out the nature of any particular condition a passenger has. At any rate, there are no two people who will be exactly the same, even if they have the same diagnosis. The primary task is to ask: "What type of support do you need today?", "How can we help you?", "How can we assist you?"

If a customer's condition limits them when providing this information, the staff may address their travelling party and find out more about the support level needed. However, care should be taken that the passenger does not feel belittled or patronised in this scenario.

Discretion

Some passengers who have diabetes, stoma bags or inflammatory bowel disease, travel with specific medical equipment. People (staff) should be discreet in assisting, screening passengers and never publicly announce their condition, or openly checking their carry-on baggage contents in a secondary search.

If a customer shares this information, staff should engage with this discreetly and share the relevant information only if necessary and using complete discretion.

Patience

In general, within an airport environment and in the journey, time is usually the biggest pressure. In many cases passengers with non-visible disabilities will ask People (staff) to repeat certain messages, wait for a passenger to explain their needs, ensure that they do not fill in parts of conversations for them, not rush and say that there are other passengers waiting to be served/assisted. Some passengers need to progress in their own time and cannot function under pressure, nor breach their own schedule.

Reassurance

Some passengers will need to receive reassurance that they have understood things correctly. Please ask and repeat some information to double check that the message is understood. Some passengers may feel unable to ask for confirmation or for People (staff) to repeat information because they feel they are responsible for missing it and that the staff are too busy and should not be further disrupted. This can include those passengers who may be dyslexic, elderly, autistic or ADHD, among others. Care should be taken not to repeat questions too quickly as this can act as a reset to the thought process.

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Language and body language

Passengers with autism spectrum disorder can be very literal, and may not understand widely used expressions and be unable to read facial expressions or other body language. If you feel or know that it can be applicable to your passenger, please keep the communication clear and direct and be aware that not everything might be understood.

Personal space

Passengers with several conditions will not appreciate having to come into close contact with other people, including staff members. Please observe their body language to detect when to stop or step back. It is important to introduce yourself and explain your role, so the passenger can understand why you are approaching them.

Some passengers may not allow or appreciate physical touch. Given the nature of the screening process, it presents the most likely situation in which complexities regarding physical contact can arise. Not respecting a passenger's personal space can cause a loss of control (meltdown) or seizure, resulting in the complete blocking of that lane. In addition, many people with Autism Spectrum Disorder will not understand the authority of someone in a uniform and may disregard their requests/queries/directions.

On the other hand, there may also be passengers who will disregard your personal space and will prefer to be in very close proximity to you and other staff members or passengers.

"Changing the face" concept

Passengers with several conditions can feel highly stressed and confused in an airport environment. Stress levels can influence and dictate behavioural changes in certain situations. In order to protect themselves in such cases, some passengers can become argumentative and defensive, which can be misunderstood as aggression. If you assume that you are in such a situation, it is advisable to step back and seek support, such as asking another colleague to take over the conversation.

Delays, disruptions and cancellations

Most of the time assistance staff are the ones who know where their passengers are. A simple gesture as an update will put the passenger at ease and remove a lot of anxiety. In these cases and when possible, Assistant providers should liaise with air carriers' staff in order to prioritise PRM and passengers with disabilities for care, accommodation, re-routing under Regulation 261/2004.

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Concept of personal belongings

Some passengers on the Autism spectrum can be very protective of their belongings. This requires care and flexibility in handling situations when the passenger has to hand over items like a passport or boarding pass to check-in, gate staff. This can be especially difficult for a passenger on the Autism Spectrum with a special comfort toy or headphones that they must relinquish to be scanned at security.

Training

Involving persons with disabilities and their representative organisations and all People (staff) from all stakeholders -including assistance teams, front-line staff, managers, etc. - is critical to the success of any project related to passengers with disabilities. These stakeholders have different perspectives, experiences, and expertise, and they can provide valuable feedback, insights, and ideas that can help shape the project and make it more inclusive, accessible, and user-friendly.

It is essential to provide tailored training and support to each stakeholder group based on their roles and responsibilities. For instance, assistance teams may require more technical and practical training on how to use new equipment or procedures, while front-line staff may need more customer service and communication skills to interact effectively with disabled passengers. Moreover, training should be interactive, engaging, and relevant to the stakeholders' needs and interests, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

By involving persons with disabilities and their representative organisations, all stakeholders and providing regular training and support, airports can create a culture of inclusion and accessibility that benefits everyone, not just disabled passengers. This approach can also help to address potential resistance or reluctance to change and create ambassadors who can advocate for the project and encourage others to embrace it. Ultimately, involving stakeholders from the beginning and providing them with appropriate training and support can enhance the success and sustainability of any project related to disabled passengers.

Understanding non-visible disabilities

Although a voluntary scheme may be put in place, it is not the airport managing bodies' responsibility to identify passengers and visitors with non-visible disabilities and create specific programmes on their behalf. This may not be feasible for some airports and furthermore, some passengers may not wish to be identified or singled out and may dislike additional attention of any kind. The responsibility of airports is to create the most inclusive and accessible environment that they can so passengers and visitors with various disabilities or conditions can feel welcome.

For this reason, it is beneficial to understand needs, expectations and certain behaviours that people with non-visible disabilities may display. This will help the airport and teams on the ground to assist or simply give a helping hand to passengers, to find the right method of communication and to support a smooth passenger experience.

Non exhaustive list and description of the most common non-visible disabilities

There is no single way to interact and support passengers and visitors with non-visible disabilities. Needs and expectations vary from individual to individual, mirroring the situation with any passenger who travels through the airport.

We have created a short and non-exhaustive list of some most common non-visible disabilities, and those which are particularly relevant in the context of the passenger experience. As mentioned previously, it would be impossible to list and describe all disabilities and their impact/effect on individuals as needs will vary from individual to individual, even in those who have the same condition. View this as a list of the most common needs, effects and behaviours, but not as an exhaustive list.

London Gatwick / LGW

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)[12]

People on the autism spectrum experience persistent difficulties with social communication and social interaction, and might display restricted and repetitive patterns of behaviours, activities or interests.

Although autism was once believed to be rare, epidemiological studies have now demonstrated that autism affects around 1 in 100 people.

The main effects of autism on a person, are:

- Deficits in social communication and social interaction
- Restricted, repetitive patterns of behaviour, interests or activities
- Sensory difficulties, such as increased or reduced sensitivity to light, sound, colour, smell, taste or touch

Autism is a 'spectrum' condition, which means that the symptoms vary between individuals, ranging from mild to severe. Autistic people can have significant intellectual disabilities and require a high level of support in their daily lives but very many autistic people require little or no support, other than awareness and understanding of how and why challenges may arise in their airport journey.

Communication

Autistic people can have difficulties interpreting both verbal and non-verbal language. Non-verbal aspects of language include tone of voice or gestures. Some autistic people are unable to speak or have limited speech, while others have very good language skills. Other challenges can include:

- interpreting in a very literal way and not understanding abstract concepts or non-literal expression such as sarcasm
- needing extra time to process information or answer questions
- repeating what others say to them (echolalia)

Interaction

Autistic people can have difficulty 'reading' other people - recognising or understanding the feelings and intentions of others - and expressing their own emotions. This can make it very hard to navigate the social world.

Autistic people may:

- appear to be insensitive
- seek 'time out' alone when feeling overwhelmed by the situation, crowds
- not seek comfort from other people
- appear to behave 'strangely' or in a way thought to be socially inappropriate

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[12] Autism Europe

Autistic people may experience over- or under-sensitivity to sounds, touch, tastes, smells, light, colours, temperature or pain. For example, whilst other people can ignore or block out background sound such as music, people on the spectrum may find the noise unbearably loud or distracting. This can cause anxiety or even physical pain. For an autistic person, the sound of an air conditioner humming may make it extremely difficult to remain in that location. These are the types of considerations that must be taken into account if a quiet room is to be created. Avoiding noisy environments or reducing the feeling of being overwhelmed can cause some autistic passengers to miss the announcement of a last-minute gate change, in a similar way that deaf and hearing-impaired people may experience.

Many autistic people avoid everyday situations because of their sensitivity issues. Airport Premises can be particularly overwhelming and cause sensory overload. There are many simple adjustments that can be made to make environments more autism-friendly.

When everything becomes too much for an autistic person, they can go into meltdown or shut-down. These are very intense and exhausting experiences for them.

A meltdown happens when someone becomes completely overwhelmed by their current situation and temporarily loses behavioural control. This loss of control can be verbal, e.g., shouting, scream-ing, crying or physical, e.g., kicking, lashing out, biting or both. Meltdowns in children are often mistaken for temper tantrums meaning that parents and their autistic children often experience hurtful comments and judgmental stares from less understanding members of the public.

A shutdown appears less intense to the outside world but can be equally debilitating for the person. Shutdowns are also a response to being overwhelmed, but may appear more passive, e.g., an autistic person going quiet or 'switching off'. One autistic woman described having a shutdown as, 'just as frustrating as a meltdown, because of not being able to figure out how to react how I want to, or not being able to react at all; there isn't any 'figuring out' because the mind feels like it is past a state of being able to interpret.'

Dementia[13]

We are living in time when our population is getting older, life expectancy extension and people travelling more into their older years than in the past. Statistics still show that majority of people who have dementia tend to be 65+, but that has changing dynamics. Younger people are diag-nosed with this condition.

The number of people living with dementia in the European Union (EU27) is estimated to be around 8 million. These numbers are expected to double by 2050.

While Alzheimer's is the most common form of dementia, there are many other types. These include Vascular dementia, Dementia with Lewy bodies (DLB), Frontotemporal dementia or a person may present with a mix of them. Dementia is not only about memory loss; it can also affect the way people speak, think, feel and behave. It is also important to remember that dementia is not a natural part of ageing.

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[13] Alzheimer Europe

Dementia symptoms may include problems with:

- memory
- thinking speed
- mental sharpness and quickness
- language, such as using words incorrectly, or trouble speaking
- understanding
- judgement
- mood
- movement
- difficulties doing daily activities.
- aggression, e.g. biting people, which may be due to speech loss and overwhelming fear
- unruly behaviour due to factors such as dehydration or other dietary issues

Dementia can cause a person to lose their understanding of what is going on or why and they can feel that they are not in control of what is happening around them or to them. All of this can affect their behaviour. Dementia can have a significant impact on the person; they may fear their loss of memory and thinking skills, but they also fear the loss of who they are.

Communication

Try to start conversations with the person you are dealing with or looking after, especially if you notice that they are not initiating communication. It can help to:

- speak clearly and at a steady pace, using short sentences
- make eye contact with the person when they are talking or asking questions
- give them time to respond, because they may feel pressured if you try to speed up their answers
- let them speak for themselves
- try not to patronise them, or ridicule what they say
- acknowledge what they have said, even if they do not answer your question, or what they say seems out of context – show that you have heard them and encourage them to say more about their answer
- give a smile and show positive emotion, because an understanding of this may remain, even when understanding of verbal or written communication may have gone
- show empathy by walking in that person's shoes; if the destination printed on the boarding pass doesn't match the one mentioned by the passenger, let him or her tell you the story and still accompany the guest to the right gate
- give them simple choices – use yes or no questions – avoid creating complicated choices or options for them
- use other ways to communicate – such as rephrasing questions because they cannot answer in a more traditional way

Interaction

There are several reasons that can trigger change in behaviour. Reactions can occur to the following types of events or incidences:

- their awareness that they can no longer do something they used to enjoy
- something unpleasant happening
- something they dislike or are scared of, happens or is threatened
- change, for example a new carer or living environment
- a memory
- being provoked, or a conflict with someone's personality

Mental health conditions[14]

Experiencing a mental health problem is often upsetting, confusing and frightening – particularly at first. Mental health problems are a common human experience and take many forms. However, mental health issues remain a subject that is difficult to talk about, understand or even relate to, for many. Historically, mental health conditions have been seen as taboo, but luckily this is slowly changing as people become more open and accepting of mental health challenges.

Some most known and talked about mental health conditions are:

- depression
- seasonal affective disorder
- anxiety
- phobias
- post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- schizophrenia
- obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD)
- personality disorders
- bipolar disorders.

Travelling can be stressful. The stressors of travel can cause preexisting psychiatric disorders to recur, latent or undiagnosed problems to become apparent, and new problems to arise. In addition, jet lag, fatigue, travel during a pandemic or other type of emergency/crisis situation, and work or family pressures can trigger anxiety and aggravate depressive symptoms.

People having mental health problems can experience panic attacks in stressful environments. Panic attacks are a type of fear response and are an exaggeration of the body's normal response to danger, stress or excitement, emotions that can feature strongly in the airport experience.

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[14] Mental Health Europe

During a panic attack physical symptoms can build up very quickly, including:

- a pounding heartbeat or chest pains
- sweating and nausea (feeling sick)
- feeling faint and unable to breathe
- shaky limbs, or feeling like your legs are turning to jelly
- feeling as if you are not connected to your body

Stomas[15]

Travelling is usually an exciting experience. However, flying inevitably raise concerns for most ostomates, especially when it is the first time boarding after surgery. The most common concerns include what to do with security checks; whether the pouch will inflate or explode under cabin pressure; what to do if luggage gets separated from the passenger.

All stoma products are considered medical essentials, so are permitted through security. It is important to let airport staff know that the passenger requires discretion with handling of equipment through security so the passenger can avoid the embarrassment of decanting into clear bags.[16]

Vision impairments[17,18]

Navigating through the airport Premises can be intimidating; crowds with multiple conversations at once coupled with rows of flickering, fluorescent flight boards can be overwhelming. But what about those passengers and visitors that do not, or cannot experience these things? There are estimated to be over 30 million blind and partially sighted persons in geographical Europe, and an average of 1 in 30 Europeans experience sight loss. A common misconception is that blind persons cannot see anything at all. This is of course true for some, while many have some perception of light and shadow, see everything in a vague blur, have tunnel vision, or lack central vision. There are many different eye conditions, and they all produce a different form of vision distortion.

For those with visual impairment, knowing which signs to look out for can be a struggle as it is not always made clear which ones are important, i.e. which ones display changes to flight information, and which ones are for general airport information purposes only. This again leads to confusion and sometimes anxiety. Travelling through airports was often described as "stressful" and that many people with visual impairment, actively avoid doing so. People (staff) were said to be "rude" and that the non-visible nature of their disability meant that they were overlooked and their needs not considered, "They seem to prioritise those in wheelchairs... People who need help aren't always in a wheelchair!"[19]

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[15] European Ostomy Association
[16] OakMed. Air travel and stomas – what you need to know
[17] European Blind Union
[18] European airports and visually impaired passengers
[19] Airport Parking Shop. What is like to use airports with a sensory impairment

It is important to recognise the diverse needs and capabilities of people with visual impairments and to provide appropriate assistance and accommodations. For those who use supportive aids such as white canes or service animals, they must be provided with sufficient space to move around and care must be taken to avoid obstructing their path. There are many helpful components to consider within the built environment:

- tactile paths
- tactile maps
- high contrast signage (approximately 10% are complete blind from all people who are registered blind)
- braille used for buttons of elevator
- high visibility markings on big glass surfaces, notably, glass doors.

Providing materials in accessible formats[20] such as large print, braille, or audio is also helpful.

Hearing impairments[21]

Air travel can be challenging for individuals with hearing loss, as it can be difficult for them to hear announcements and other communication during the entire journey. They may miss important information about gate changes, boarding times, and other updates, which can cause frustration and anxiety.

Additionally, the loud noises and an overwhelming amount of people can make it even more challenging for individuals with hearing loss to communicate effectively. Some airports offer assistive technologies such as captioning services and online sign interpreter services to assist passengers with hearing loss and mitigate the negative impacts in the environment.

One of the main needs for persons with hearing impairments is that information is provided through different sensory means, not only via audio. This can be done through screens, for example. For hard of hearing people, the placement of induction loops is also important.

Measures to improve comprehension and communication in an airport for those with hearing loss include:

- clear speaking in moderate speed, the speaker's face visible
- good acoustics
- good lighting
- induction loops
- desktop loops
- equivalent visual information
- subtitling and captioning
- safety equipment with vibrating alarms and/or flashing (strobe) lights
- training courses for lip reading and sign support

The European Federation of Hard of Hearing People published their Guidelines for accessibility, that we encourage you to follow.

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[20] European Blind Union Toolkit for Implementing standards for Low Vision Services in Europe
[21] EFHOH | European Federation of Hard of Hearing People

CONCLUSIONS

The passenger is at the heart of the airport business and airport managing bodies have a long tradition of taking care of their most vulnerable passengers and visitors. International conventions, European and national legislation clearly establish that passengers with disabilities and passengers with reduced mobility are entitled to travel without discrimination.

While significant progress has been made in supporting passengers with visible disabilities or mobility challenges, this progress has not been as deep or consistent for those passengers with non-visible disabilities. It is believed that 80% of disabilities are non-visible. Misunderstanding or insufficient knowledge about the needs of these passengers, may lead to discrimination and non-assistance, creating poor experiences. This can also cause additional stress or challenge for staff on the ground who are trying to support the passenger but who may be unsure how best to proceed in the best interest of the passenger.

In order to guarantee that all passengers are equally treated and enjoy the rights they are entitled to, we have seen that airport managing bodies and their stakeholders must:

- Strictly follow the international, European and national legislation and recommended practices
- Understand the needs, expectations and barriers to travel of all passengers, notably their most vulnerable ones, respecting their privacy
- Be aware of the most common non-visible disabilities and how to communicate with these passengers and visitors
- Make Pre-travel, Premises and Process accessible
- Train People (Staff), including drawing on the experience of staff who may also have non visible disabilities
- Liaise with the local association of people with disabilities for additional support and advice
- Get inspiration from the best practices on this matter
- Assist, Listen, Observe, provide Trust and Care

Travelling is a right for all. Go the extra mile and create the best passenger experience. With empathy.

CASE STUDIES

ACI
EUROPE
AIRPORTS COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL

ASSISTING PASSENGERS WITH NON-VISIBLE DISABILITIES

AENA: Invisible Disabilities Badge

Main topic / disability / condition

Passengers with any invisible disability, physical or intellectual (i.e. Autism, ostomy…).

Touchpoint

Any airport place likely to be a pain point such as security control, check in process, boarding gates…

Objective / Reason for change

Help people with hidden disabilities, such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD), for whom, although they do not need the PRM service, or prefer to transit through the airport independently, it is essential to try and reduce, as far as possible, the stress and anxiety they may suffer during the departures and arrivals processes.

Complete Airport staff training, improve passenger treatment, be able to assist in specific necessities of people with invisible disabilities, aiming to get over the barriers such as lack of communication or comprehension.

Overview / Description

General guidelines of treatment in terms of communication, anticipation or language comprehension have been established to improve the passenger experience.

Description of the initiative: In order to avoid people with invisible disabilities coming across barriers like lack of understanding or negative attitudes to their behaviour, Aena has created a badge so that airport personnel can identify the people carrying it and improve their experience in the airports.
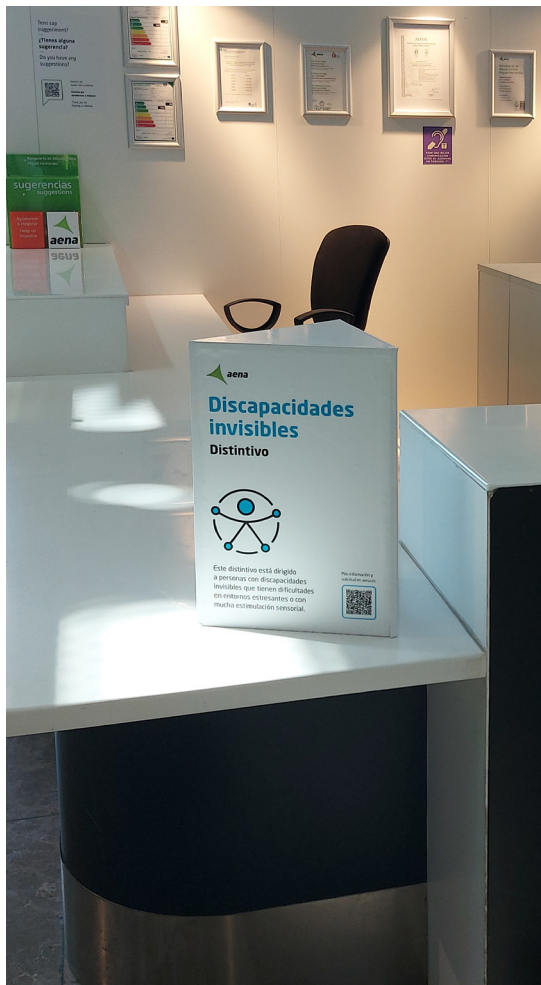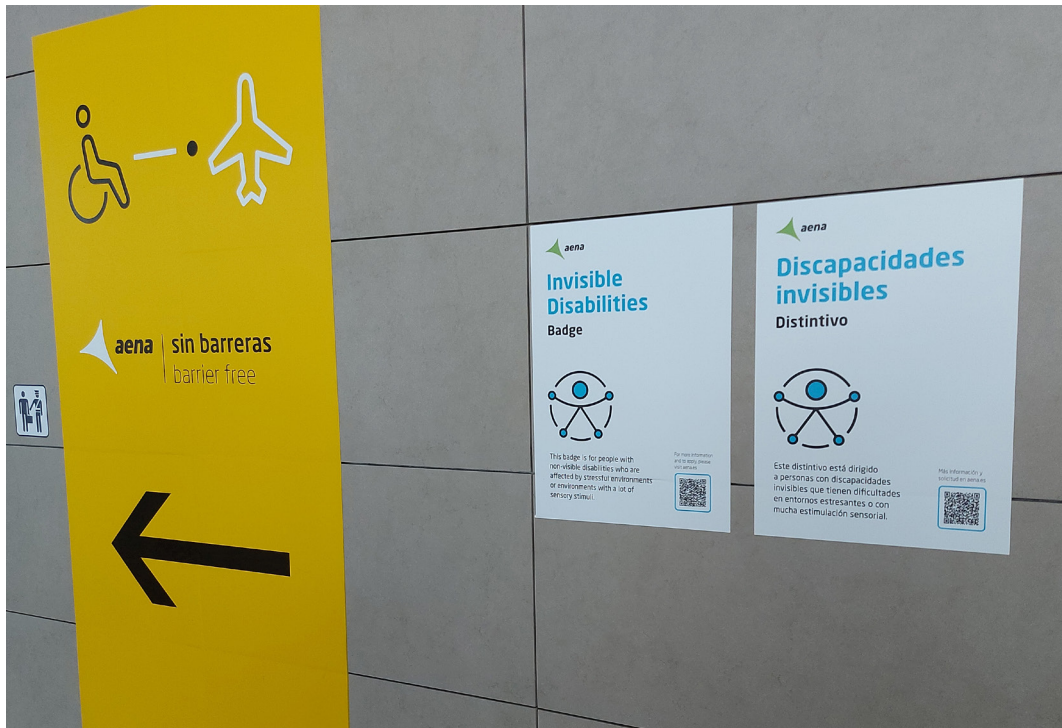
This badge, aimed at people with invisible disabilities who have difficulties in stressful environments, or those causing sensory stimulation, shows that the person may need support, help, or simply understanding, and a little more time for any activity at the airport. Showing this badge allows access to the airport's security checkpoint that is specifically for families and persons with reduced mobility (PRMs). Where the airport you are travelling from does not have a specific security checkpoint for families and PRMs, as far as possible, access to the general security checkpoint is made easier.

Stakeholders involved

Aena employees, PRM staff, Airlines, ground handlers.

Main results

Almost 200 requests per month
Pax profile: well informed and notify in advanced (more than 24h prior to the flight departure). Main reason to get the badge, help in security checkpoint.

Aena: Invisible Disabilities Badge

Contact: Daniel de La Hoz Doblado | Head of Accessibility Department in Aena | dddoblado@aena.es

aena

For more information
and to apply, please
visit aena.es

Invisible
Disabilities

Badge

aena

Invisible
Disabilities

Badge

This badge is for people with
non-visible disabilities who are
affected by stressful environments
or environments with a lot of
sensory stimuli.

For more information
and to apply, please
visit aena.es

Athens International Airport: Boarding Pass to Autism

The educational programme was created by the Onassis Foundation in association with Athens International Airport under the academic aegis of Athens University and with the generous support of Aegean Airlines.

Main topic / disability / condition

Flight desensitization program for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD)

Touchpoint

Passenger's flow at the airport including check in area, security control, border control, gate, aircraft embarkation/disembarkation, baggage reclaim area

Objective / Reason for change

Intent on enabling children with ASD to spread their wings and prepare to fly, the Onassis Foundation has created an innovative educational programme, "Boarding Pass to Autism", which consists of the following elements: 1) anair procedures simulation for children with autism, 2) an educational resource for therapists and parents of children with ASD which consists of social stories, 3) a training course delivered to staff at Athens International Airport, and 4) a leaflet created to raise air travellers' awareness of autism.

Overview / Description

Desensitization program for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The project included children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD, their families and also awareness training of personnel in direct contact with the travelling public.

Stakeholders involved

Airport personnel in direct contact with travelling public i.e. PRM assistance services personnel, police, ground handling personnel, food and beverage personnel, security staff personnel, retail personnel, Airline's personnel.

Main results

The children with ASD and their families were familiarised with the airport procedures, processes and infrastructure aiming at being prepared for future air travel. The personnel acquainted the respective awareness in relation to people with ASD.

Flight procedures desensitization program for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
Flying With Autism
Contact: Maria Kapralou | Assistance Services & Accessibility Expert | Kapraloum@aia.gr

Flight procedures desensitization program for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

boarding pass ✈ to autism

We leave the house.

ONASSIS SPECIAL EDUCATION

Story for a a-year-old with ASD who needs support

4th Social Story —
"Travelling from the house to the airport"

It's the day of the flight!

Today, we are going to .... by plane.

I feel:

A lot of people without ASD have a fear of flying. Nonetheless, the sensory sensitivities and higher susceptibility to stress that typify people with ASD can lead to a particular aversion to air travel.

Dublin Airport: Important Flyer Programme

Main topic / disability / condition

Autistic passengers

Touchpoint

Predominantly security screening

Objective / Reason for change

Surrendering personal belongings can be very stressful and the environment can be overwhelming for someone with sensory challenges (queuing, congestion, noise, lights) .

Overview / Description

Wristband or lanyard to help staff members be aware of the fact that the wearer has a non-visible disability such as autism and will therefore be as efficient and careful as they can be when dealing with the passenger.

Stakeholders involved

Airport personnel in direct contact with travelling public i.e. PRM assistance services personnel, police, ground handling personnel, food and beverage personnel, security staff personnel, retail personnel, Airline's personnel.

Main results

Achieves very positive feedback from passengers who are autistic or their families/travelling companions.

Provides reassurance and confidence to travel; reduces stress levels and helps create a more supportive environment to enable passengers with additional and specific needs to travel more comfortably.

Travelling with Autism
Contact: Lorraine Kearney | Reduced Mobility Coordinator | lorraine.kearney@dublinairport.com

Dublin Airport: Sensory room

Main topic / disability / condition

Passengers who have sensory challenges, who are autistic or have dementia or who have anxiety when travelling

Touchpoint

Airside, pre gate

Objective / Reason for change

The airport journey requires queuing, interacting with people and processes, all while within an environment that can be overwhelming for someone with sensory challenges (congestion, noise, lights)

Overview / Description

A sensory room that provides a respite from the busy and noisy airport areas, where a passenger can relax or calm themselves after their airport journey.

The room is located after Security Screening and just before the 400 gates.

Created with the help of a company that specialises in the design and installation of bespoke multi-sensory and soft-play rooms, this state-of-the-art facility includes relaxing music, mood lighting, bean bags, comfortable seating, digital display panels, tactile panels, textured flooring and a game to improve memory and motor skills.

The room is free to passengers departing from the airport, with 60-minute sessions available through a booking system.

Stakeholders involved

Dublin Airport team members, Reduced Mobility Team and OCS, our assistance partner

Main results

Offers respite for passengers with autism, dementia, cognitive impairment or other special needs, and their travelling companions.

Provides an opportunity for these passengers to step away from what might be very busy and unfamiliar areas, into an area of calm. This helps prepare passengers to go from the airport journey and on to the aircraft in a more relaxed frame of mind, improving the overall travel experience.

Dublin Airport Sensory Room

Contact: Lorraine Kearney | Reduced Mobility Coordinator | lorraine.kearney@dublinairport.com
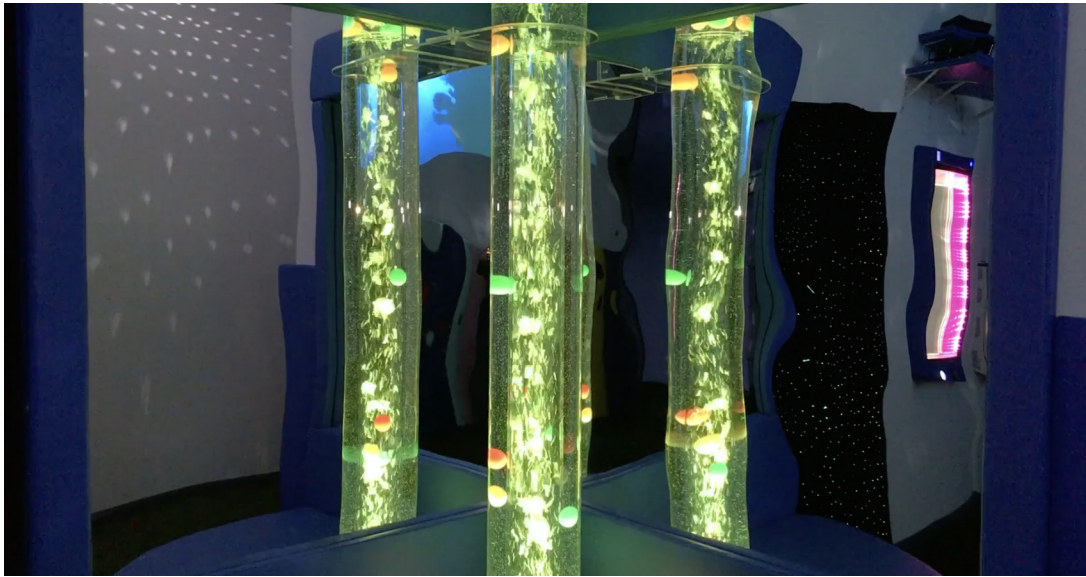
London Gatwick: North Terminal Sensory Room

Main topic / disability / condition

Children with learning disabilities, autism, ADHD, etc.

Touchpoint

International Departure Lounge

Objective / Reason for change

The airport journey requires queuing, interacting with people and processes, all while within an environment that can be overwhelming for someone with sensory challenges (congestion, noise, lights)

Overview / Description

Sensory room which is pre-bookable in advance of travel. The equipment includes:

• Catherine Wheel Panel
Displays of colour and sound, including firework effects.

• Abstract Tactile Panels
Raised panels and recessed fluid shapes in contrasting textures.

• Colour Match Panel
Uses classical music, mood lighting, and games to improve memory.

• Sound to Light Show
Converts sounds into a dazzling light show of colour.

• Waterless Rainbow Tube
A calming and stimulating colour wheel.

• Interactive Giant Causeway
Segments that activate colourful lights as you step on them.

• Activity Board
A range of activities encouraging motor movement and coordination.

• Infinity and Beyond Panel
Visual and auditory effects using a range of shapes and sounds.

Stakeholders involved

• Gatwick Accessibility Community Forum
• Crawley Autism Support
• National Autistic Society

Main results

Positive feedback from passengers and disability organisations as well as being awarded the Autism Friendly Award by the National Autistic Society.

London Gatwick Sensory Room

Contact: Anna-Ruth Cockerham | Accessibility Manager | annaruth.cockerham@gatwickairport.com

ENAC: Autism, travelling through the airport and onboard

Main topic / disability / condition

Autistic children and adults

Touchpoint

The initiative focuses on enhancing the passenger experience of persons with Autism. All touchpoints of the entire journey (from airport to aircraft and destination) are included.

Objective / Reason for change

To provide advice to accompanying persons to help autistic children and adults to experience their journey with greater confidence, by allowing them to visit the airport in advance, with a procedure developed by ENAC in coordination with all the airport managing bodies.

The objective is that air travel becomes more inclusive, possible, accessible, and always available for all passengers.

Overview / Description

First launched as a pilot project on 23 November 2015 at Bari airport with the support of the Airport Management Body "Società di Gestione Aeroporti di Puglia", it was extended to all Italian airports through Assaeroporti (the Italian association of airport managing bodies).

In 2022, the Italian airline, ITA Airways, joined the project "Autism, travelling through the airport and onboard" as the first and perhaps the only airline in the world to have implemented such a program for autistic passengers. ITA Airways allows autistic people to experience a real flight simulation in a simulator at Rome Fiumicino Airport enabling them to test in advance the feeling of the flight.

The autism protocol consists of an official standard procedure adopted and shared by all stakeholders and offers:

- An early visit of the airport, dedicated assistance the day of the flight, specific communication on the website, and the guarantee that People (staff) have the sensitivity and skills to deploy the right attitude to them and make their journey as smooth and pleasant as possible

Bologna Airport | Autism – A journey across the airport

Milano Malpensa Airport | Autism Project – Our initiatives to ensure a smooth experience

ADR Assistance

Progetto Enac Autismo - Anche io volo

Contact: Mark de Laurentiis | Protection of Passengers Rights at E.N.A.C. - Ente Nazionale per l'Aviazione Civile (Italian Civil Aviation Authority) | m.delaurentiis@enac.gov.it

- Dedicated "waiting rooms" where autistic passengers and their families can wait for the flight in a comfortable environment decorated with furnishings and colours suitable for autistic people
- A leaflet providing full information and guidance

Stakeholders involved

ENAC, Italian Airport Management Bodies, airlines (in particular ITA Airways)

Main results

As an example, at Milan Malpensa airport 18 preliminary visits have been organized in year 2022, in collaboration with families and therapists. The visit day, the PRM assistance staff meet the families, offer gifts - agreed previously with them - and tell about the airport, showing the apron and the aircrafts from the window and arriving till the security control. All that happens the D day of travel is duly explained. SEA recommends to ask for assistance the travel day.

Families having taken part in preliminary visits were very enthusiastic and gave positive feedback on both the visit and the travel.

In the future, specific customer surveys will be developed in order to gather suggestions and improve the procedure.

The visits within the autism protocol should increase in the future through additional information to raise awareness on these opportunities to travel.

Manchester Airport: Sensory Support Kits

Main topic / disability / condition

Autism, ADHD, Anxiety
Children predominantly

Touchpoint

Outbound security & terminals

Objective / Reason for change

Offers security and terminal staff additional tools to help deescalate or distract overwhelmed customers in stressful areas.

Overview / Description

Sensory kits have been created that include a number of commonly used fidget toys and activities. We've also included spare Sunflower Lanyards for staff to issue, ear muffs and reading material.

Each terminal has a kit located centrally in each security area, available to any airport employee or third party stakeholders. The PRM service provider also holds a kit.

Customer feedback has identified the security process as one of the most stressful so these areas have immediate access to the kits.

Stakeholders involved

Airport, Airline & Ground Handling Agent

Main results

Reduction in number of customers becoming significantly overwhelmed, improving the experience of those individuals, groups and families.

Invisible Disabilities | Manchester Airport

Contact: Andy Clarke | Head of Corporate Affairs |andrew.clarke@magairports.com

Manchester Airport: Quiet Rooms

Main topic / disability / condition

Autism, ADHD, Anxiety, PTSD

Touchpoint

Departures area

Objective / Reason for change

Engagement through our disability forum and in response to customer feedback, the airport created an airside quiet space.

Overview / Description

The quiet room is located airside close to the main departures lounge area. Access is unrestricted, customers can use the facility at their leisure and without pre-booking.

We consulted with our disability forum members during the design phase and it was agreed that this space should not contain sensory equipment.

There is a choice of seating, neutral colours and dimmable lighting. There are no flight announcements in the room, only emergency broadcasts.

The facility is named the Sunflower Room. We wanted this space to be recognisable by customers who require it most and not be used by other non-disabled customers. By aligning the facility name with the established Sunflower Lanyard scheme, customers using the Sunflower Lanyards are aware of the room's purpose.

Stakeholders involved

Customers

Main results

The facility is very popular and is greatly appreciated, we often receive positive feedback from customers who've used the room. It offers a discreet space where individuals and groups can better manage the stresses of the airport experience.

AIRPORTS COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL

ACI EUROPE is the European region of Airports Council International (ACI), the only worldwide professional association of airport operators. ACI EUROPE represents over 500 airports in 55 countries.

Our members facilitate over 90% of commercial air traffic in Europe. Air transport supports 13.5 million jobs, generating €886 billion in European economic activity (4.4% of GDP). In response to the Climate Emergency, in June 2019 our members committed to achieving Net Zero carbon emissions for operations under their control by 2050, without offsetting.

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EVERY FLIGHT BEGINS AT THE AIRPORT.