



## Accessible beaches ERMIS II project (Cyprus and Greece)

### 1.1. TITLE OF THE CASE STUDY:

Accessible beaches

ERMIS II project (Cyprus and Greece)

### 1.2. ONE LINER ON WHAT THE CASE STUDY IS ABOUT:

The Interreg project ERMIS II aims to make beaches in Cyprus and Greece accessible using the new infrastructure.

### CLASSIFICATION:

PHASES	X	IDEATION
	X	DESIGN
		MARKETING
		AFTER SALES SUPPORT
	X	COLLABORATION & NETWORKING
TYPE OF ORGANISATION		BUSINESS
	X	NGO
		OTHER
TYPE OF SPECIAL NEEDS		SENSORIAL DISABILITIES AND/OR BARRIERS
		INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES/barriers
	X	PHYSICAL DISABILITIES/barriers



		OTHER BARRIERS
<b>TYPE OF SPORTS/LEISURE</b>	X	SUMMER SPORTS/LEISURE
		WINTER SPORTS/LEISURE
		ALL YEAR AROUND SPORTS/LEISURE
		MOUNTAIN
	X	BEACH/WATER-RELATED ACTIVITIES
		OTHER
<b>TYPE OF SERVICE, PRODUCT, ACTIVITY</b>		SPORTS
	X	ACTIVE LEISURE
		BOTH
<b>TYPE OF ACTIVITY</b>	X	INDIVIDUAL
		GROUP
		BOTH

### 1.3. CASE STUDY DESCRIPTION:

Although swimming is among the main active leisure activities, especially in summer months in tourist destinations like Cyprus and Greece, it is still hardly accessible for people with mobility issues.

Cyprus Paraplegics Organisation (OPAK) a non-profit organization founded in 1980 by individuals with paraplegia and tetraplegia. Their mission is to represent and



improve people with spinal cord injuries living conditions, ensure respect for their human rights, and help their inclusion in society.

Cyprus Paraplegics Organisation was the lead partner of ERMIS II (2017-2019) – a project supported by Interreg Greece-Cyprus, that had as main beneficiaries the Municipality of Paramini (Cyprus) and Municipality of Syros-Ermoupolis (Greece).

ERMIS II developed infrastructure and communication material to make beaches in Cyprus and Greece increasingly accessible for persons with disabilities or anyone who due to his/her age or health status feels safer using the new infrastructure. For example, the project installed ramps, rest areas and remote controlled wheelchairs on rails to help people to get into the water unassisted.

According to the Project Manager, ““We live in a time where it's not disabilities that matter, but abilities. We have to offer infrastructure to people with disabilities, to make the most out of their abilities. They should participate in life because their taking part will help society get better.”

"We're glad that the infrastructure for people with severe mobility impairments is useful for the elderly, for pregnant women and for people with temporary injuries and we're glad to see people taking advantage of it and realizing that the infrastructure for people with disabilities enhances the quality of life of everyone."

“We think it's extremely important that with this machine a paraplegic person can go to the beach on their own, get out of the machine, if they wish, and get back home, without depending on anyone. Autonomy is very important for disabled persons.”

The main objective of ERMIS II was to serve people with mobility problems through the reinforcement of infrastructures and networks of communication and information in places of tourist interest. The objectives are:

- Combating all forms of discrimination and promoting equal opportunities.
- Upgrading the tourist product and improving the attractiveness of areas of natural and cultural interest.
- Elimination of social exclusion and promotion of social inclusion of vulnerable population groups (people with disabilities, senior citizens).
- Creating a plan for an ecosystem of services and information that can support people with disabilities, families with young children and the elderly.
- Attracting targeted audiences (such as disabled people) to tourist sites, contributing to the development of the two islands.
- Utilization of cultural spaces.



In addition to accessible beach infrastructure, the project developed an Accessibility Guide for people with mobility issues, to be distributed at airports and other entrance points of the participating municipalities in Cyprus and Greece, as well as through a website and app.

The project improved accessibility of a number of beaches in Cyprus and Greece, raised awareness of the importance of inclusive active leisure and tourism, and enhanced the competitiveness of the participating regions and their cross-border cooperation.

## 1.4. RESOURCES:

- Website:  
<http://pamepantou.eu/en/home/?fbclid=IwAR3IXSuCmPJbYPL06m35UWYJfvfyEV1aVvA41C0aX3prAhqUgUZI2EhOXbY>
- Pictures:



