



## GREEN CARE TOURISM

### case study



# SANO TOURING

Sano Touring is a Romanian tour-operator, specialized in inbound tourism and promoting accessible tourism for all by offering opportunities to discover Romania.

*“As we strongly believe in ‘tourism for all’ rights, we are here to enhance accessible travel and promote the concept. Our offer is adapted especially for senior citizens and, to a certain extent given by infrastructure limitations, we designed holiday packages and tours, accessible to travellers with special needs. We have all the resources to make it happen in Romania, we just need a political attention on the topic”*

Cristina Caluianu

## MODEL IN A NUTSHELL

<p>— <b>Website</b> <a href="http://www.sanotouring.eu">www.sanotouring.eu</a></p>	<p>— <b>Main sector</b> Private</p>
<p>— <b>Social channels</b> <a href="https://linkedin.com/company/sano-touring">linkedin.com/company/sano-touring</a> <a href="https://instagram.com/sanotouring">instagram.com/sanotouring</a> <a href="https://facebook.com/sanotouring.eu">facebook.com/sanotouring.eu</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/sano-touring">twitter.com/sano-touring</a> <a href="https://youtube.com/sano-touring">youtube.com/sano-touring</a></p>	<p>— <b>Specific sector</b> Tourism, Social care, Local development</p>
<p>— <b>Country</b> Romania</p>	<p>— <b>Stage of development</b> Incorporated</p>
	<p>— <b>Our work in SDGs</b></p> <div style="display: flex; gap: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p> </div> </div>



## FROM FEW TO MANY

After working for 8 years in travel industry, Cristina Caluianu embraced entrepreneurship and founded a company in 2004 in the field of consulting for EU funds. At the end of 2013, she was doing some research on tourism and travel for seniors and found out about accessible tourism. Cristina looked further and decided to open an **accessible tourism receptor agency** – and this is how **Sano Touring** appeared. She found out that before Sano Touring there was another Romanian company promoting accessible tourism, which closed in 2014, after only 1 year of activity so she contacted the owner of that company, who was very supportive and joined our team of 6 as external consultant.

In 2015, Cristina Caluianu hired some travel professionals that were attracted by the idea of promoting accessible tourism in Romania. The sector was new, they were dedicated to the idea and were supportive from the beginning. ENAT- the European Network for Accessible Tourism provides all the members, Sano Touring included, with the latest updates on accessible travel industry. By participating to EU projects Sano Touring is able to increase its knowledge about accessible tourism, enlarge its network and gain visibility.

**Accessible Romania**, an NGO, that promotes accessible places in Romania for the people with disabilities is working closely with Sano Touring. Sano Touring is also part of **accessible tourism regional networks**; such as platforms in Belgium, Spain, Netherlands and many other countries.

**99% of beneficiaries are represented by foreign tourists**, also with disabilities and special needs, willing to visit Romania.



## FROM IDEA TO ACTION

In 2013, while doing some research about travel for senior citizens, Cristina realized that accessible tourism offers were missing in Romania, considering the growing population of senior citizens and the increasing number of people with disabilities. In December 2014, Sano Touring got the **licence as tour operator** according to Romanian law and have been running operations since 2015.

Sano Touring is a second business line of **MARKETING DEVELOPMENT S.R.L.**, which is a private SME. The business model is sustained by the revenues deriving from organizing the tourist packages, associated services and from EU projects consulting.

Sano Touring's main activities include **a range of tourism activities** including;

- Tour-operating specialized in accessible and senior travel with special needs holidays in Romania
- Destination Travel Management activities offering fully integrated territorial services for accessible travel
- More classical tourism management activities aimed at offers of traditional Romania

Other activities include communication and online media.

The impact of our initiative can be quantified through **the number of tourists using our services and purchasing the packages**. On much larger scale, we are **promoting the concept of accessible tourism** and preparing the local tourist venues to paying attention to the topic and invest in necessary infrastructure to be able to receive tourists needing adapted services.

## FROM OLD TO NEW

Accessible tourism is itself a new concept in Romania. A further element of innovation is represented by the fact that by providing accessible tourism services in Romania we also **educate owners of tourist facilities**; we make them think about how to be more inclusive and take actual steps.

**Nature** is an important part of our touristic offer: mineral water, lakes, muds, sulphurous water from lakes or salt in salt mines. You can enjoy different experiences in Romania. We consume natural resources, but contribute to regenerate them, and to reuse them. This is a way of **taking advantage of the local natural resources, trying to preserve them** at the same time. We promote also **rural tourism**: you go to rural areas to get to know local traditions and learn how natural landscapes are preserved. You eat organic products, and you do a green use of nature.



## FROM NOW TO THEN

The survival of Sano Touring as a business in accessible tourism is not certain as Romanian society is still not fully prepared for the concept. But Sano Touring never closed in pandemic circumstances and it is still open, offering its services with determined and dedicated staff despite the financial difficulties. We have a big market opportunity because **the market share is growing and will grow**. We have a competitive advantage compared to any other future competitor: **we have the knowledge**.

We would like to create an **Accessible Tourism Training Centre**, that would train hotels, administrators, owners of any kind of tourism venues, restaurants, bars about how to make Romania a touristic destination accessible for all.

We need to expand our potential clients, increase online presence and marketing; be active in groups and formal associations, to gain visibility. We have to diversify our accessible tourism products, but this is possible only if providers in the Romanian market want to engage closely.

Currently there is a huge necessity for **funding and financial sustainability**, as the current situation with Covid-19 substantially reduced the number of bookings. Government engagement in promoting Romania as an accessible tourism destination is also very important. The proper implementation of the law on accessible tourism from 2012 needs to be guaranteed. The local hotel owners and all tourist venues need to receive training on the importance of accessible tourism.