D 2.3.2 - OMNIS tourism suppliers online community setup and animation

Online Community

31/12/2024

Document Control Sheet

Project number:	ITHR0400285
Project acronym	OMNIS
Project Title	Co-creatiOn of inclusive sustainable tourism itiNeraries and packages from coastal to Inner areaS
Start of the project	July 2023
Duration	18 months

Related activity:	Act. 2.3 - Creation of an OMNIS online community for tourism suppliers
Deliverable name:	D 2.3.2 - OMNIS tourism suppliers online community setup and animation
Type of deliverable	Community setup and animation report
Language	English
Work Package Title	Set-up of the distribution channels and material for the itineraries and packages
Work Package number	WP2
Work Package Leader	LP1 CNMU - CNMU

Status	Final
Author (s)	Gianluca Cespuglio - LP1 CNMU CNMU Marco Ramazzotti - Technical expert
Version	1
Due date of deliverable	31/12/2024
Delivery date	31/12/2024

Contenido

INTRODUCTION

The OMNIS community has been created to foster a collaborative and dynamic space for tourism suppliers to share ideas, exchange best practices, and develop innovative solutions that enhance accessibility and sustainability in tourism. Understanding the significance of meaningful dialogue among stakeholders, this community offers a platform for members to engage in discussions, access valuable resources, and work together to advance inclusive tourism practices.

To promote interaction, the community utilizes a dedicated WhatsApp group. WhatsApp was chosen for its widespread popularity, ease of use, and familiarity among stakeholders in the project areas. Its user-friendly design and strong features, such as group messaging and multimedia sharing, make it an excellent tool for facilitating active and efficient communication. By using this digital platform, the OMNIS community ensures that members can connect no matter where they are, allowing for broad participation and collaboration.

The active engagement of all project partners is vital to the community's success. Partners are tasked with creating an engaging atmosphere by starting discussions, sharing important updates, and motivating participation from all members. Their dedication to nurturing a lively and inclusive environment guarantees that the community remains a valuable resource for its stakeholders, continually advancing the goals of the OMNIS project.

Through this collaborative effort, the OMNIS community seeks to strengthen connections among tourism suppliers and stakeholders, fostering opportunities for co-creation and innovation.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

PLATFORM SELECTION

To facilitate effective communication and collaboration among members, WhatsApp was selected as the platform for the online community. This decision was based on its widespread usage in both project areas, ease of access, and robust features that support easy interaction. Below are the key factors that influenced this choice:

1. **Accessibility:** WhatsApp is a globally recognized platform with high user adoption across diverse demographics. Its availability on both mobile and desktop devices ensures that participants can access the group easily, regardless of their location or technological expertise.

2. **Familiarity:** most participants are already familiar with WhatsApp's interface and functionality. This reduces the need for extensive onboarding or technical support, allowing the group to start with minimal barriers to entry.

3. **Key features:** WhatsApp offers a user-friendly interface that simplifies participation The platform provides essential functionalities to support the objectives of the group:

    a. Group messaging: facilitates open discussions and idea sharing among all members.

    b. Multimedia sharing: allows easy exchange of images, documents, and videos to support collaborative efforts.

    c. Notifications: ensures participants remain updated on ongoing conversations and key developments.

    d. Encryption: offers end-to-end encryption, ensuring that communication remains secure and private.

4. **Cost efficiency:** WhatsApp is free to use, making it a cost-effective solution for all participants. Its accessibility across different devices further supports its inclusion as the platform of choice.

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GROUP SETUP

The WhatsApp group has been successfully established on December 23rd 2024 to facilitate collaboration and idea-sharing among local stakeholders and project partners.

The group is accessible through the direct link: https://chat.whatsapp.com/HlRE4VLqlPh0xBxjcHBaOd

The following actions were undertaken to ensure the group's smooth setup and functionality:

1. Group Name

The group was named "OMNIS Community – Inclusive and sustainable tourism" to align with the project's objectives and encourage active participation.

2. Welcome Message

A welcoming message was posted to introduce the group, its purpose, and the expectations for engagement:

🌍 Benvenuti nella Community OMNIS! 🌿
Questo gruppo è uno spazio dedicato agli operatori locali per condividere idee, discutere e collaborare su tutto ciò che riguarda il turismo accessibile e sostenibile.
🔗 Qui puoi:
- Condividere buone pratiche e ispirazioni.
- Discutere soluzioni innovative per rendere il turismo più inclusivo e rispettoso dell'ambiente.
- Creare collaborazioni che generano un impatto positivo.
📌 Importante:
Prima di iniziare, assicurati di leggere le linee guida della community nella descrizione del gruppo e a questo link: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gsjOwAESsRngn8Wb2UTaqb0kvr2cp33PRuCB7iAPy1c/edit?usp=sharing

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☀️ Siamo qui per fare la differenza! Grazie per essere parte di questa community. Insieme, possiamo rendere il turismo più sostenibile e accessibile per tutti.

🌐 Non dimenticare di visitare il nostro sito: www.omnistourism.it

Buona partecipazione!

— Team OMNIS

The English version of the Welcome Message has been added to the group description.

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Interactions up to 31.12.2024:

27/12/2025 – External expert of LP

📣 Cari amici di OMNIS,

Vi segnaliamo questo nuovo articolo di Cristina De Stefani dedicato allo stato del turismo inclusivo in Europa, con un focus sul progetto OMNIS all'interno dell'ultima edizione di Le Pagine di Risposte Turismo.

🔍 Nell'articolo si parla di sfide, opportunità e del grande potenziale economico del turismo accessibile, capace di generare oltre 130 miliardi di euro all'anno. OMNIS spicca come esempio di innovazione, con itinerari pensati per non vedenti e turisti con cani, promuovendo inclusività in Italia e Croazia.

📖 Leggi l'articolo completo e scopri le buone pratiche:
https://9qpyh.r.ag.d.sendibm3.com/mk/cl/f/sh/1t6Af4OiGsDg0mBE73lymgzQb8lvWf/dcS_neLfcRxL

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📣 Dear OMNIS friends,

We would like to share this new article by Cristina De Stefani, dedicated to the state of inclusive tourism in Europe, with a focus on the OMNIS project featured in the latest edition of Le Pagine di Risposte Turismo.

🔍 The article discusses challenges, opportunities, and the vast economic potential of accessible tourism, with an estimated value of €130 billion annually. OMNIS stands out as an innovative example, offering itineraries designed for visually impaired travelers and tourists with dogs, fostering inclusivity in Italy and Croatia.

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📖 Read the full article and discover best practices here:

https://9qpyh.r.ag.d.sendibm3.com/mk/cl/f/sh/1t6Af4OiGsDg0mBE73lymgzQb8lvWf/dcS_neLfcRxL

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<u>**Interactions from 01.01.2025 to 31.03.2025:**</u>

03/02/2025 – Italian stakeholder Cooperativa La Macina

A representative from Cooperativa La Macina invited members of the community to an event in Pesaro, sharing its agenda, focused on disabilities and technology. AIC Marche confirmed their participation, and the event sparked a fruitful discussion among partners and stakeholders about the future of the OMNIS project.

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05/02/2025 – Italian stakeholder Confesercenti Pesaro Urbino

A representative from Confesercenti Pesaro Urbino shared a news of an event held in December focused on the 'Marche For All' project and its impact on sustainable tourism in the Marche Region. This provided another opportunity for community members to reflect on the future of the OMNIS project and explore potential synergies and collaborations with other accessible tourism initiatives.

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In addition to these valuable interactions, project partners continued the dialogue by regularly sharing updates on relevant events and initiatives related to sustainable tourism. This ongoing exchange of information helped to strengthen the network among stakeholders, foster mutual learning, and identify opportunities for future collaboration and alignment with similar projects.

GROUP GUIDELINES

To promote a productive and respectful environment, a set of group guidelines was established and pinned at the top of the chat for easy reference. The guidelines include:

1. **Respectful communication**: engage in respectful and courteous communication at all times, avoiding insults, harassment, or demeaning language.
2. **No hate speech or discrimination**: content promoting hate or discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or disability is strictly prohibited.
3. **Privacy**: everyone must respect the privacy of others and not share personal information without consent.
4. **No spam**: excessive posting of self-promotional material, spam, or irrelevant content is prohibited.
5. **Content relevance**: posts and discussions must focus on accessible and sustainable tourism. Contributions that are off-topic may be reported and could result in removal from the group.
6. **No illegal activities**: discussions or content promoting illegal activities, including piracy, illicit drug use, or other unlawful conduct, are forbidden.
7. **Source crediting:** wehen sharing information or content from other sources, you should credit the original source.
8. **No explicit content**: sharing explicit, adult, or NSFW (not safe for work) content is strictly prohibited.
9. **Constructive criticism**: when offering criticism, it should be constructive and aimed at helping and improving, rather than disparaging or belittling.

10. **Report rule violations**: you should report any content or behavior that violates the community guidelines.

Failing to adhere to the guidelines will result in the expulsion from the groupchat.

The translation of the guidelines in Italian and Croatian as well as the database of all the news have been collected in a shared document accessible through the group description for new members to access at any time.

To ensure the success of the WhatsApp group from the outset, targeted efforts were made to recruit the first members. Direct invitations were sent to a total of 13 key stakeholders that have participated in previous events such as the focus groups, and the two events held in Cagli to present the project. These invitations were delivered through direct communication channels, including 8 emails and 5 personalized outreach efforts. A total of 6 contacts accepted the invitation and joined the group - Appendix 1 contains the list of the first stakeholders to enter the community. LP1 CNMU identified relevant participants, leveraging their existing networks to ensure a strong representation of stakeholders. Personalized messages emphasized the group's purpose and potential benefits, resulting in prompt and enthusiastic responses from the initial members.

INITIAL ENGAGEMENT

To kick-start the discussions, LP1 CNMU sent the first message, inviting participants to read an article about the OMNIS project written by PP2 RISTUR.

📣 Cari amici di OMNIS,
Vi segnaliamo questo nuovo articolo di Cristina De Stefani dedicato allo stato del turismo inclusivo in Europa, con un focus sul progetto OMNIS all'interno dell'ultima edizione di Le Pagine di Risposte Turismo.
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GROUP MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERS ROLES

The management and success of the WhatsApp group rely on a collaborative effort where all partners play a pivotal role, with LP1 CNMU taking the lead in ensuring the group's smooth operation and active participation.

As the lead partner, LP1 CNMU has taken on the central responsibility of managing the group. This involves overseeing all administrative tasks, such as maintaining the group settings, managing participant additions, and ensuring that the group guidelines are upheld. LP1 CNMU also acts as the primary facilitator of engagement, regularly sharing updates, initiating discussions, and posting relevant resources to encourage interaction among the members.

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However, the success of the group extends beyond LP1 CNMU's role. All partners are actively involved in sustaining the momentum of discussions and fostering a collaborative environment. Their participation ensures that the group remains vibrant and dynamic, with regular contributions that stimulate dialogue and exchange of ideas. By engaging actively, they not only bring diverse expertise to the discussions but also ensure that the group's purpose of fostering innovation and collaboration is consistently upheld.

Based on the articles developed for the D 2.2.1. OMNIS Distribution Kit, the partners have compiled a list of messages designed to spark dialogue among the community's members. Each partner is responsible for sending a set of messages, ensuring that one message is shared at least biweekly to maintain ongoing engagement. The list of messages is available in the Annex 2. The messages are provided in English; however, each partner is encouraged to translate them when necessary to better connect with their audience.

The partners also play an important role in supporting the members. They provide constructive feedback on shared ideas, answer questions, and create an atmosphere where every contribution is valued. To further enrich the discussions, they share practical resources, including relevant case studies, best practices, and other materials aligned with the project's objectives.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

To maximize the impact and reach of the OMNIS community, all project partners will leverage their existing networks and communication channels. Each partner will add a direct link to the OMNIS website and the community WhatsApp group on their respective organizational websites, ensuring visibility to a wide audience. Additionally, partners will actively promote the community through their social media platforms, using targeted posts to attract new members and raise awareness about the benefits of joining.

Efforts will focus on maintaining an active and engaging environment within the community. Partners will strive to foster meaningful discussions by sharing relevant updates, posing questions, and encouraging members to participate in conversations. To support
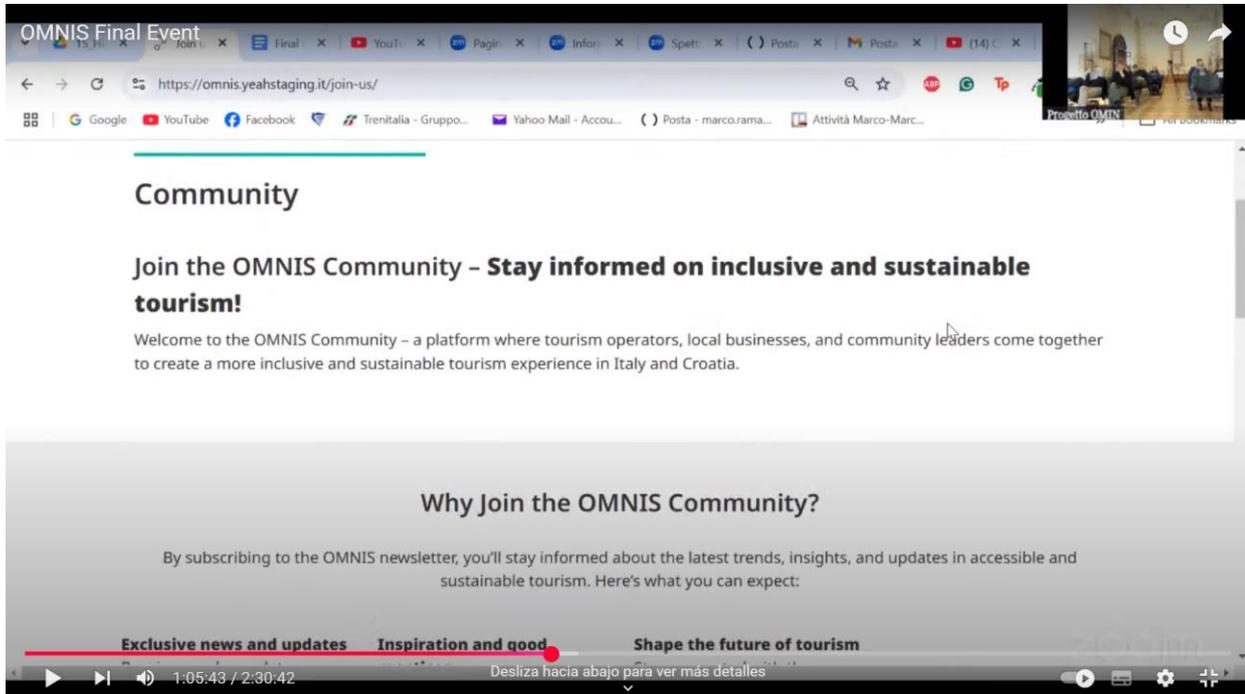
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promotional efforts, members and partners will have access to the OMNIS Distribution Kit (D 2.2.1), which includes digital materials designed to facilitate the promotion of OMNIS within their professional networks. This kit will enable them to attract new members from the tourism industry, further enriching the group with diverse perspectives and expertise. The link to the shared folder with the distribution kit will be available in the group description.

The topics discussed within the group will be carefully curated to appeal to tourism stakeholders, making participation both valuable and compelling. These topics will include news, best practices, tips, and funding opportunities related to accessibility in tourism, ensuring that the group remains relevant and useful to its members.

ONLINE COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND PROMOTION

This section outlines the actions undertaken to support the take-up and upscale of the OMNIS online community, ensuring its growth, visibility, and long-term engagement.

The community was officially presented and promoted during the project's final event on December 3rd. This moment of public recognition increased awareness about the group and its function as a long-term resource for discussion and collaboration among stakeholders. Attendees were invited to join, and the community's role in supporting continued knowledge exchange was clearly emphasized. The livestream of the event (including the presentation of the online community) can be found in the OMNIS oficial Youtube channel: https://www.youtube.com/@OMNISINTERREGIT-HR/streams

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To ensure visibility, a direct link to the community WhatsApp group has already been published on the institutional website of PP3 SHU, with the remaining partners in the process of adding it to their own websites. PP3 SHU also shared the direct link through their oficial Facebook page. This coordinated effort aims to widen access to the community and attract new stakeholders through each partner's communication channels.

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UNIONE MONTANA CATRIA e NERONE   RISPOSTE TURISMO   HUTTLE

Visit the OMNIS website: → www.omnistourism.it

Join the OMNIS Community - a place for local stakeholders to share, talk and discuss everything around accessible and sustainable tourism. Here, you can connect, exchange ideas, and collaborate on initiatives that make tourism more inclusive and environmentally friendly. Share best practices, discuss innovative solutions, and build partnerships that drive positive change. **Together, we make tourism better!**

→ OMNIS Whatsapp Chat

< Shuttle Travel Agency Q

Post   Informazioni   Foto   Menzioni

Post di Shuttle Travel Agency

Shuttle Travel Agency
14 gen · ⏱ · 🌐

🗣 Join the OMNIS WhatsApp Community - a place for local stakeholders to share, talk, and discuss everything around accessible and sustainable tourism.

chat.whatsapp.com
chat.whatsapp.com

👍 Mi piace   💬 Commenta   ↪ Condividi

Shuttle Travel Agency
13 gen · 🌐

Visit the OMNIS project's official website to learn about the collaboration between coastal and inland regions of Italy and Croatia to promote sust... Altro...

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INCLUSIVE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

To maintain the quality of interactions and avoid spam, an access request mechanism was implemented. New members are required to submit a join request, which is reviewed by LP1 CNMU before approval. This ensures that participation is relevant and purposeful, strengthening the group's identity as a professional space for tourism operators committed to accessibility and sustainability.

To ensure the long-term development and visibility of the community, all project partners have committed to promoting it within their professional networks and during any occasion where accessible tourism is discussed. This shared responsibility will help broaden the reach of the WhatsApp group, which is intended to become a vibrant space for co-creation, knowledge exchange, and peer support.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The OMNIS WhatsApp group is anticipated to generate significant benefits for its members. One key outcome is the increased interaction among tourism suppliers, fostering connections and facilitating the exchange of knowledge and expertise. This interaction will create opportunities for stakeholders to collaborate more effectively and explore new approaches to accessibility in tourism.

The group will also serve as a platform for sharing innovative ideas and best practices, enabling members to learn from one another and adopt solutions that enhance the inclusivity and sustainability of their offerings. By showcasing real-world examples and actionable insights, the community will inspire its members to implement improvements and drive innovation in their respective fields.

Additionally, the strengthened collaboration among project stakeholders will lay the foundation for developing new tourism products within the project areas. By bringing together diverse perspectives and expertise, the group will encourage the co-creation of offerings tailored to the unique characteristics of these regions. This collaboration will not

only enrich the tourism experiences available but also contribute to the long-term growth and sustainability of the local tourism industry.

CONCLUSION

The OMNIS community is a key part of the project's mission to enhance accessibility and sustainability in tourism. By creating a collaborative environment for tourism suppliers and stakeholders, the community encourages valuable exchanges of ideas, best practices, and innovative strategies for inclusivity. Choosing WhatsApp as the communication platform makes it easy for participants to engage and contribute, no matter where they are located.

The active involvement of all project partners is crucial for keeping the community dynamic and relevant. By promoting discussions, sharing resources, and motivating member participation, the partners help the community evolve into a significant center for collaboration and learning. This joint effort not only advances the project's immediate goals but also lays the groundwork for enduring partnerships and innovations in accessible tourism.

In the end, the OMNIS community is anticipated to produce meaningful results, such as enhanced interaction among suppliers, the exchange of creative ideas, and the co-development of new tourism products in the project areas. By promoting collaboration and empowering stakeholders, the community ensures that inclusivity and sustainability remain at the forefront of tourism development. This initiative aims to create a lasting impact, highlighting the importance of accessible tourism and encouraging ongoing advancements in the industry.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1 - LIST OF GROUP MEMBERS

Other than representatives of the three project partners and external consultants the group counts the representatives of the following local organisations:

Organization / Business	Sector	Location	Reached by
Tuquitour	Tour operator	Fano (PU)	Personal outreach
AIC - Associazione Italiana Celiachia	Non-profit organisation	Urbino (PU)	Personal outreach
Confesercenti	Local trade and business association	Fano (PU)	Personal Outreach
La Macina (two members)	Local cooperative working in tourism	Acqualagna (PU)	Personal outreach
Municipality of Cagli	Public administration	Cagli (PU)	Email communication

Representatives from the following organisations that participated in the OMNIS final event were also contacted by email:
- Hotel Sun Resort and SPA
- Ristorante Pineta
- Marche and Bike
- Confesercenti
- Tripdoggy
- Ancona Polytechnic University

APPENDIX 2 - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MESSAGES

PP Responsible: LP1 CNMU

🟣 **Bandiera Lilla: The "Purple Flag" for Accessibility!**
In Italy, towns that prioritize accessibility receive the Bandiera Lilla certification. This encourages municipalities to improve infrastructure and services for all.
👉 More details: Bandiera Lilla website
💬 *Do you think your town should invest in an accessibility certification?*

PP Responsible: PP3 SHU

🦯 **Pula's Inclusive Tourism Project!**
Croatia is leading the way in accessible tourism with trained guides, audio maps, and tech-driven solutions for blind visitors. Their approach ensures a richer experience for everyone.
👉 Read more: Pula Guides website
💬 *What role could technology play in making tourism more inclusive in your area?*

PP Responsible: PP2 RISTUR

🌍 **CE-Spaces4All: Making Tourism More Inclusive!**
A game-changing project is reshaping Central Europe by improving accessibility in public spaces and tourism. It brings authorities, businesses, and people with disabilities together to create truly inclusive environments.
👉 Learn more: CE-Spaces4All website
💬 *What's the biggest challenge in making public spaces in your area more accessible?*

PP Responsible: LP1 CNMU

🏛 **Making the Acropolis Accessible!**
Did you know that Athens' iconic Acropolis is now more accessible for blind and partially sighted visitors? A tactile route, Braille guides, and 3D models allow visitors to "see" history through touch. This sets a new benchmark for cultural inclusivity.
👉 Read more here: AccessibleEU website
💬 *What other historical sites in your areas do you think should follow this example?*

PP Responsible: PP2 RISTUR

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🍀 Ireland Leads in Accessible Tourism!

Killarney and Tralee are shining examples of universal design, with Braille signage, improved mobility access, and inclusive tourism training. Their approach proves that accessibility is both a social and economic advantage.

👉 Read more: [Next Tourism Generation website](#)

💬 *Have you ever faced accessibility challenges while traveling? Share your experiences!*

PP Responsible: LP1 CNMU

🇮🇹 Village for All: Italy's Accessible Tourism Platform!

This Italian initiative helps travelers with disabilities find accommodations and services that fit their needs. It promotes transparency so visitors can make informed choices.

👉 Discover more: [Village for All website](#)

💬 *Would you use an accessibility certification when choosing a travel destination? Why or why not?*

PP Responsible: PP3 SHU

📖 The Inclusive Tourist Guiding Handbook!

A new handbook equips tourism professionals with the tools to create accessible travel experiences. From communication strategies to empathy training, it's all about making tourism barrier-free.

👉 Access the handbook here: [Handbook link](#)

💬 *What's the most important quality in a good tour guide?*

PP Responsible: LP1 CNMU

🏙️ Madrid's Inclusive Tourist Office!

Madrid has taken accessibility to the next level with services like tactile maps, sign language support, and trained staff at its tourist office. This reflects the city's commitment to welcoming all visitors.

👉 More info: [Madrid Destino](#)

💬 *What do you think it's the role of public administrations to make a destination more accessible?*

PP Responsible: PP3 SHU

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🌍 **UNWTO's Manual on Accessible Tourism!**

The UN's guide on inclusive tourism is a game-changer for policymakers and businesses, promoting accessibility as a fundamental right and economic opportunity.

👉 Read the manual: UNWTO link

💬 *Should accessibility be a legal requirement for all tourism services?*

PP Responsible: PP2 RISTUR

🍷 **HeritAccess: Inclusive Wine Tourism!**

An exciting new initiative is making wineries and rural cultural sites more accessible through Braille descriptions, tactile maps, and even augmented reality. Because everyone should enjoy a good wine tour!

👉 Read more: HeritAccess Guidelines (in Italian)

💬 *What's one simple change that tourism service providers in your area could make to be more inclusive?*

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