SESSION 12 – GOOD PRACTISES: PROJECTS

Moderator: Katerina Papamichail

Speakers: Maya Francione, Daniel Grancho (replaced by Santer Ambre), André Novak and Monika Tharann , Heidi Kjærnes and Christian Gyldenøhr

The session "Good Practises: Projects" presented four inspiring initiatives that demonstrated how accessibility can generate cultural, social, and economic impact when embedded in tourism design and governance. Moderated by **Katerina Papamichail, ENAT, Belgium**, the discussion moved from Mediterranean islands to Northern Europe, revealing the diversity and creativity of inclusive tourism approaches.

Maya Francione, from the Malta Tourism Authority, opened the session by presenting Rolling Through Malta and Gozo, an accessible travel documentary created in collaboration with Danilo and Luca, two travellers with disabilities. The project, promoted through national TV and Visit Malta's channels, showcased the emotional and practical dimensions of accessible travel, combining adventure, heritage, and human connection. Through handbiking, kayaking, and cultural visits, the initiative illustrated how accessibility enriches not only travelers' experiences but also the destination's authenticity and empathy.

Santer Ambre, representing Picto Access in France and replacing Daniel Grancho, introduced the innovative project Museums on Prescription, developed in collaboration with local authorities and health institutions. The initiative transforms museum visits into social and therapeutic experiences prescribed by doctors or social workers, fostering inclusion and well-being. The project created accessibility diagnostics, staff training, and co-design with people with disabilities across 14 museums, proving that accessibility can drive innovation and collaboration between the cultural and health sectors.

André Novak, from the German Disability Council, delivered an analytical perspective on policy and governance, calling for the full integration of accessibility into Germany's future national tourism strategy. He outlined the challenges faced by disability organisations in influencing tourism policy and the need for reliable accessibility data through systems such as Reisen für Alle (Travel for All). Novak emphasised that without legal requirements for accessible information and coordinated national leadership, progress remains fragmented despite the country's strong tourism sector.

Finally, **Heidi Kjærnes and Christian Gyldenøhr from the Sunnaas Foundation (Norway) presented Adapt2Explore**, a project that bridges rehabilitation and tourism through experiential learning and peer mentoring. Using real-life testing with travellers with disabilities, local businesses, and decision-makers, the project has improved accessibility across Northern Norway and inspired new national standards. Christian's testimony as a father and wheelchair user highlighted the emotional power of inclusion, while Heidi shared evidence of economic impact—over €20 million in additional annual revenue through improved accessibility.

The session concluded with a shared vision: accessibility is not an expense but an investment that connects people, strengthens communities, and transforms destinations into places of belonging for all.

Watch Session 12 on YouTube. (run time 1:22:44)