Accessible
digital
marketing
Toolkit

Empowering tourism SMEs to
create inclusive campaigns

ONAT4ALL – Outdoor activities and nature and adventure tourism for All

Contents

1. ACCESSIBLE DIGITAL MARKETING TOOLKIT

1.1 Introduction: the ONAT4All project

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities defines independence for people with disabilities as being self-sufficient, having the opportunity to actively participate in decision-making processes and to experience the physical, social, economic and cultural environment.

For a person with disability (PWD), **a sense of independence will help to gain self-confidence and to feel more autonomous, positive and fulfilled in life**. There is ample evidence that time spent in nature offers a range of physical, emotional and mental benefits and can strengthen a sense of belonging.
However, the people who need these benefits most - the community of people with disabilities - are often excluded from the outdoors.

It is not the abilities of PWD that are the main barriers to the outdoors, but rather the inaccessibility of built environments, the lack of accessible resources and information. There are many ways to create accessible and inclusive opportunities for outdoor recreation, and it starts by considering how people approach disability and the outdoors.

In the framework of ONAT4All project, a **series of practical tools** (all available in EN, FR, ES and IT) have been designed by the Consortium with the aim of **raising awareness on accessibility in the tourism sector and promoting the participation of PWD in outdoor activities:**
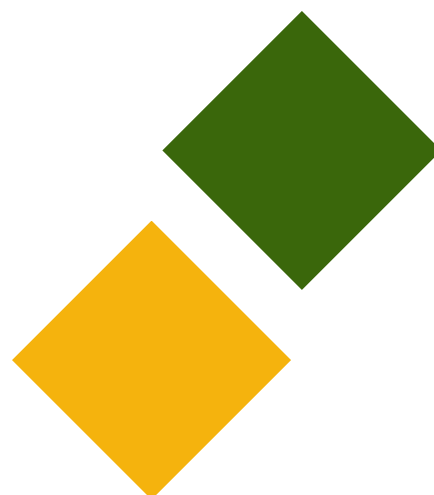
Self-Assessment Tool ⊕

The tool aims to support organisations in self-assessing their accessibility level by investigating some key areas in providing accessible services in outdoor and adventure tourism. Users will be asked to answer a set of closed questions that will help the tool in understanding where each organisation and the environment it operates is standing with regards to accessibility. For each of the answers that the users select, they will get a specific score: the SAT will calculate the overall score and will provide feedback and suggestions on how to improve in each of the areas. In addition, a set of useful resources are listed at the end of the SAT.

Guidebook ⊕

The "*Accessible horizons: a practical guide to outdoor tourism for all - Guidebook*" intends to support stakeholders active in the field of accessible and outdoor tourism. Inside the Guidebook, interested organisations can find the pillars and basic concepts that should be taken into account when designing and implementing outdoor activities with people with disabilities. The main objective of this document is to improve the personal autonomy of PWDs in nature/adventure tourism and outdoor activities. The Guidebook provides you with some tips you should consider when planning and implementing accessible outdoor activities. The ONAT4ALL Guidebook can be adapted, updated and expanded by interested users. Always consider your context and the target group you work with.

Online Training Course   ENROLL

The "*Training in Accessible Tourism and attention to clients with accessibility needs*" course is targeted at tourism professionals (employees or volunteers) to help them to improve **the reception and care of people with disabilities in outdoor, nature, and adventure activities.** This training course will provide knowledge on the needs of customers with disabilities, enabling tourism professionals to understand the importance of satisfying and maintaining adequate attention by addressing accessibility comprehensively and universally.

In each country, ONAT4All project partners interviewed a number of SMEs active in the nature-adventure tourism and outdoor activities sector, associations of people with disabilities, and training organisations, with the aim of highlighting solutions to improve accessibility to enable people with disabilities to enjoy recreational and cultural activities.

Accessible Digital Marketing Toolkit

This result is direct to SMEs in the tourism value chain that want to exploit new markets, and need to improve their knowledge, skills and competences in how to build an effective and accessible digital marketing campaign. Indeed, SMEs in the tourism value chain can make their content accessible by using **inclusive design practices**, to create a service/product/process with the target audience in-mind. Creating accessible content and web experiences is an ongoing process. When creating a content, such SMEs must ensure that it is being built for the largest addressable audience. When they are going to build a new website, produce a video, or create a new report it is necessary to keep accessibility in mind, because creating content and products that can be accessed by everyone will help to reach new audiences and new goals. Indeed, using **inclusive design** can help to **reach more potential customers and grow business** — plus, it demonstrates brands commitment to serving the needs of as many people as possible

This Toolkit aim at responding to:

◆ the lack of knowledge regarding how to attract tourists that need accessible resources, as PWDs, seniors, families with small children, persons that have temporarily reduced mobility;

◆ providing a tool that facilitates PWDs to know and find resources for adventure, nature tourism and outdoor activities;

◆ enhancing accessibility in digital marketing of the tourism value chain.

This Toolkit comes with a shorter version in "simplified language" and in an accessible format available on the project website.

◆ **ONAT4All learning package**

A set of tools for raising awareness of accessibility in the tourism sector and promoting the participation of PWDs in outdoor activities

Self-Assessment Tool

An online tool aimed at supporting organizations in **self-assessing their accessibility** level and providing feedback and suggestions on how to **improve it.**

01

Accessible horizons: a practical guide to outdoor tourism for all - Guidebook

A guide aimed to provide stakeholders active in the field of accessible and outdoor tourism with the **basic concepts** that they should consider when designing and implementing **outdoor activities addressed to PWDs.**

02

Training in Accessible Tourism and attention to clients with accessibility needs - Training Course

An online course aimed to develop tourism professionals's **skills and competencies needed to successfully involve PWDs** in outdoor, nature, and adventure activities. The content of the course was enriched by the interviews to the stakeholders in partner countries.

03

Accessible Digital Marketing Toolkit

A Toolkit for supporting SMEs in the tourism value chain in raising awareness on **inclusive design practices** and building accessible digital marketing campaigns aimed to **attract new customers** (including PWDs).
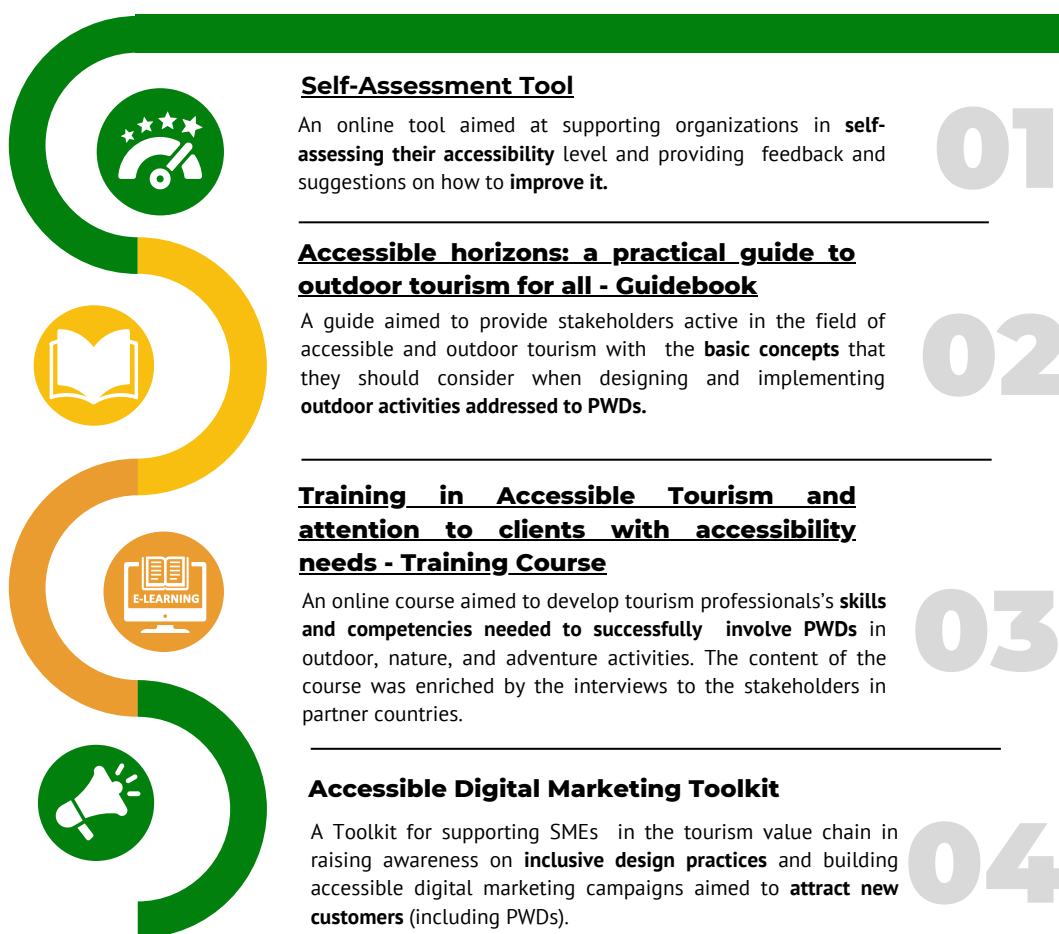
04

Figure 1: ONAT4All learning package

This Accessible Digital Marketing Toolkit represents a valuable **learning package** together with the other results of the ONAT4All project and as such it should be used: starting from the self-evaluation of one's own organisation through the ONAT4All SAT, the staff can move on and develop the staff's skills thanks to the Guidebook and the online course.

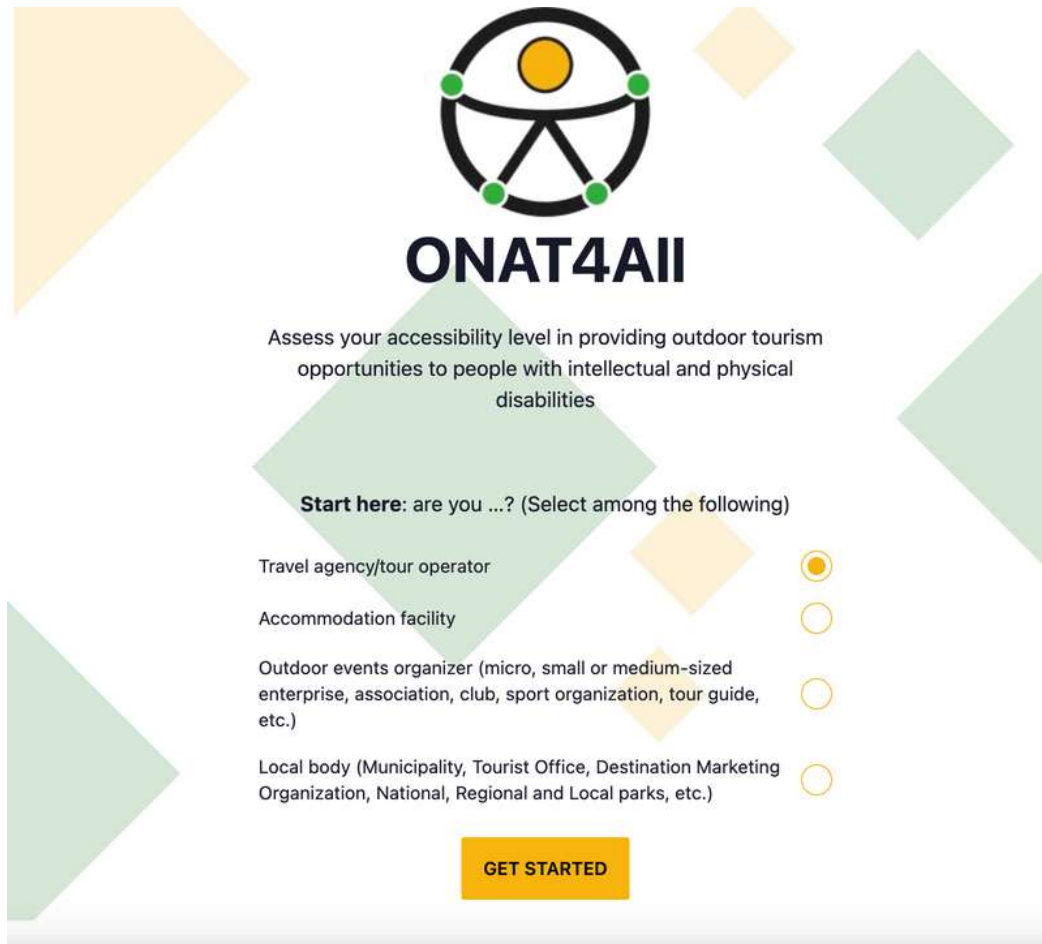**Figure 2: ONAT4All Self-Assessment Tool - SAT**

Finally, all users can access an Accessible Digital Marketing Toolkit to promote outdoor activities. We strongly invite the users to make the best use of all the resources combined.

The tourism industry has a huge market, let's make the best of the ONAT4All Accessible Digital Marketing Toolkit to ensure that the sector can be as accessible as possible!

1.2 Introduction to accessibility

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2023), an estimated 1.3 billion people - about 16% of the global population - currently experience significant disability. Based on data on disability in the EU it is estimated that 87 million Europeans have some forms of disability.

The WHO estimates over 1 billion people live with some form of disability, this corresponds to about 15% of the world's population. Between 110 million (2.2% of the world's population) and 190 million (3.8%) people 15 years and older have significant difficulties in functioning. In Member States of the WHO European Region, 6 to 10 out of every 100 people live with a disability. In total, an estimated 135 million people in Europe live with a disability.

Due especially to the demographic ageing in Europe, the number of people with a disability in the EU is only set to increase. It is therefore needed to take action and tackle the obstacles to a barrier-free Europe. This requires a genuine commitment to accessibility. Protecting the rights of PWDs is a priority for the European Union. The EU has taken several steps to improve the daily life of PWDs. However there are still many challenges to be overcome. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) requires the EU and member states to ensure accessibility.
Measures at EU level are needed to set **common accessibility requirements** for key products and services.
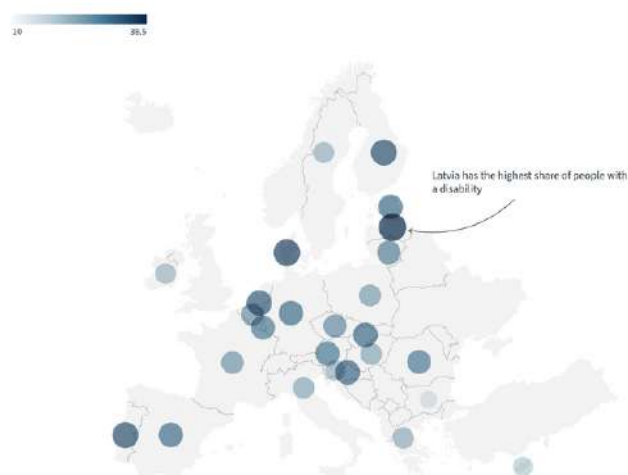

Image: Percentage of people with a disability per country

Equitas - International Centre for Human Rights Education states that **accessibility** refers to "ensuring the ability for everyone, regardless of disability, to have access, use, and benefit from their environment. It means making sure that people with disabilities have access to the physical environment, transportation, information and communications and to other facilities and services that are open or provided to the public, on an equal basis with others. Accessibility means having the necessary conditions to reduce or eliminate the barriers that hinder the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others".

The UNCRPD includes accessibility as one of its key underlying principles. In its Article 9 the Convention stresses that persons with disabilities should be able to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life. Article 9 UNCRPD deals specifically with **the right to accessibility**. States and their institutions have to guarantee that PWD have equal opportunities for participation in their societies and have to implement accessibility in all areas of public life, including "the physical environment, transportation, information and communication, including information and communications technologies and systems as well as facilities and services open or provided to the public".

1.3 Introduction to accessible tourism

Travel and tourism has become the world's largest and fastest growing industry, and its growth shows a consistent year to year increase. Countries are increasingly developing tourism as part of their national development strategies as an effective driver of economic growth and inclusive development, creating jobs and wellbeing for communities [...]. The provision of safe, convenient and economical transport and other tourism-related infrastructure (Recommendations on Accessible Tourism).

Although there is no universal definition of "accessible tourism", it can be defined as follows: "Accessible Tourism" refers to tourism that caters to the needs of a full range of consumers including persons with disabilities, older persons and cross-generational families. It entails removal of attitudinal and institutional barriers in society, and encompasses accessibility in the physical environment, in transportation, information and communications and other facilities and services. It encompasses publicly and privately owned tourist locations." (Takayama City and UNESCAP Conference - Press Release - Takayama, 2009). In particular, accessible tourism for all refers to a form of tourism that involves a collaborative process among stakeholders that enables people with access requirements, including mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimensions of access, to function independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universally designed tourism products, services and environments" (Recommendations on Accessible Tourism). Accessibility for all tourism facilities, products, and services should be a central part of any responsible and sustainable tourism policy(UNWTO). As highlighted in the paper Rights of Tourists with Disabilities in the European Union Framework by ENAT, **accessibility in tourism is a social right** that concerns all citizens in Europe.

Accessibility is not only necessary for people with disabilities but also for the elderly, for families with young children, for people with temporary or chronic diseases, among many others. Actually accessibility is a requirement from the environment that we all need, but we are only aware of it when we need it, when there are barriers that restrict it.

As highlighted by ENAT, "the demand for accessible tourism for all is growing, it is now seen as an **opportunity** rather than an obligation. If the tourism industry wants to maintain and develop quality, sustainability and competitiveness, it must support and develop tourism accessible for all, because accessible tourism benefits everyone. As more individuals enjoy the opportunity to travel, the tourism industry gets more visitors, longer seasons and **new incomes**. Society as a whole benefits from new job opportunities, more tax revenue and an accessible environment for both inhabitants and visitors" (Recommendations on Accessible Tourism).

To be able to speak of accessible tourism for all, the tourist industry as a whole should be accessible to everyone. A trip is nothing more than a service chain that begins with the information on the offers, events, destinations and the ways to reach them. Therefore, the information needs to be accessible. This means, among other things, for example, that the web pages of destinations and companies that make up the service chain must also be accessible for people with visual impairments. Another example within the service chain would be the improvement of accessibility in public and private transportation and of the different tourist resources of each destination. In recent years the rights of disabled people to travel and to participate in tourism, leisure, sport and other activities away from home have been strengthened in a number of areas by legislation and regulations at international, European and national levels (Rights of Tourists with Disabilities in the European Union Framework).

Accessible tourism generates

400 billion

revenues per annum and is expected to grow annually by 1% for the coming years

3%

of the total EU GDP

IT SUPPORTS

9 MILLION JOBS

a potential

44%

increase in demand per year for accessible tourism if appropriate services were put in place

AN ADDITIONAL
1.2 MILLION ENTERPRISES

need to provide accessible services to meet future demand.

Improvements could attract up to

75%

more international travellers

Table 1: EU Accessible tourism in figures

As highlighted in the previous section, accessible tourism for all is not only about providing access to people with disabilities, but also it addresses the creation of universally designed environments that can support people that may have temporary disabilities, families with young children, the ever increasing ageing population as well as creating a safer environment for employees to work.

As highlighted in the ONAT4All Guidebook: Accessible horizons: a practical guide to outdoor tourism for all, **"Universal Design"** is a concept that seeks to create products, environments, and services that are accessible, usable, and enjoyable for people of all abilities, regardless of their age, size, or disabilities. It goes beyond mere compliance with accessibility standards and focuses on accommodating the widest possible range of users from the outset. Indeed, Universal Design is a concept that extends beyond the issues of mere accessibility of buildings for people with disabilities and should become an integrated part of policies and planning in all aspects of society (NC State University, The Center for Universal Design, Principles of Universal Design).

According to Ron Mace, American architect, and creator of the term Universal Design, the term refers to "the design of products and environments that is usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design. It is a framework for the design of places, things, information, communication and policy to be usable by the widest range of people operating in the widest range of situations without special or separate design. It is not a design style but an orientation to any design process that starts with a responsibility to the experience of the user."

L'objectif final est d'atteindre cet objectif, tout en diminuant le besoin de solutions distinctes et de services spéciaux. Le design universel (également appelée "conception pour tous", "accessibilité intégrale", "conception accessible", "conception inclusive", "conception sans obstacles", "accessibilité pour tous", etc.) repose sur un ensemble de principes visant à favoriser au maximum l'accès de tous :
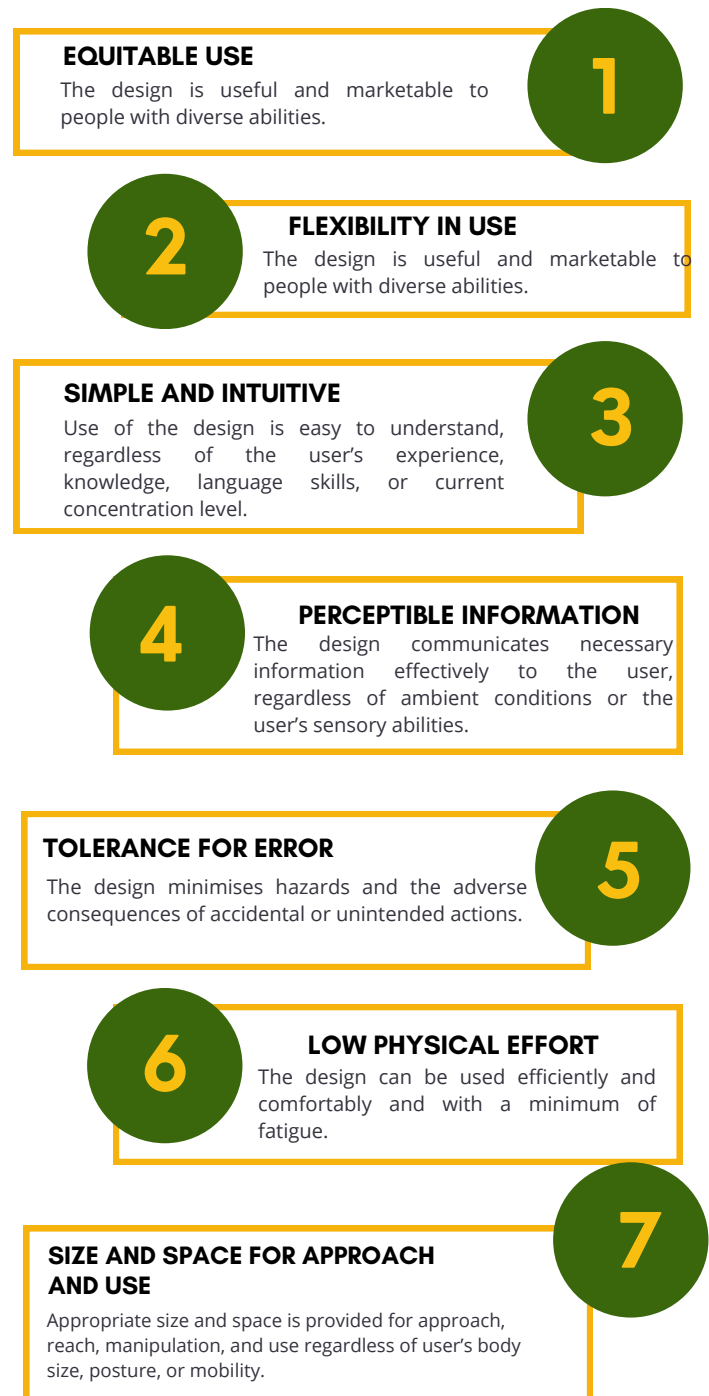
EQUITABLE USE
The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

1

2

FLEXIBILITY IN USE
The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

SIMPLE AND INTUITIVE
Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.

3

4

PERCEPTIBLE INFORMATION
The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

TOLERANCE FOR ERROR
The design minimises hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

5

6

LOW PHYSICAL EFFORT
The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

7

SIZE AND SPACE FOR APPROACH AND USE
Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

Figure 3: Universal Design (UD) Principles

When applied to accessible tourism, the principles of Universal Design ensure that travel destinations, facilities, and services are welcoming and accommodating for individuals with disabilities:

◆ **Equitable Use:** Ensure that all individuals, regardless of their abilities, can use and benefit from the tourism services and facilities. This principle involves eliminating barriers and providing equal access to information, transportation, accommodations, and attractions for everyone.

◆ **Flexibility in Use:** Offer a variety of options and choices to accommodate a wide range of preferences and abilities. Provide accessible features, amenities, and services that can be easily adjusted or customised to meet the specific needs of different individuals.

◆ **Simple and Intuitive Use:** Make the tourism experience user-friendly and easy to understand, regardless of a person's cognitive abilities or previous experience. Clear signage, intuitive layouts, and straightforward instructions can enhance accessibility and reduce confusion.

◆ **Perceptible Information:** Ensure that important information is effectively communicated to all individuals, including those with visual or hearing impairments. This can be achieved through multiple means, such as written, auditory, visual, and tactile cues, to accommodate different sensory needs.

◆ **Tolerance for Error:** Design the tourism environment in a way that minimises the negative consequences of mistakes or accidents. This principle involves creating forgiving and safe spaces, considering potential hazards, and providing clear emergency procedures for all visitors.

◆ **Low Physical Effort:** Minimise physical effort and fatigue required to access tourism facilities and services. Consider the needs of individuals with mobility challenges by providing accessible pathways, ramps, elevators, and other assistive devices.

◆ **Size and Space for Approach and Use:** Ensure that the physical spaces and layouts of tourism facilities allow for easy manoeuvrability and access for individuals with different mobility aids (e.g., wheelchairs, walkers) or assistive devices. Provide adequate space for approach, reach, and use of amenities and services.

As highlighted in the *ONAT4All Guidebook: Accessible horizons: a practical guide to outdoor tourism for all,* the application of such principles to accessible tourism can lead to **a wide set of benefits** to those actors (SMEs in the tourism value chain, organisations active in the field of outdoor/adventure sports etc.) interested in achieving full participation and attracting and reaching new customers:

	INCREASED MARKET POTENTIAL	Universal Design broadens the customer base for tourism destinations, as it attracts not only individuals with disabilities but also older adults, families with young children, and those seeking enhanced convenience and comfort.
	POSITIVE BRAND IMAGE	By prioritising accessibility and inclusivity, tourism businesses can cultivate a positive brand image. Word-of-mouth recommendations from satisfied customers will further boost their reputation and attract a diverse range of travellers.
	SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY	Embracing Universal Design aligns with the principles of social responsibility, promoting equality and eliminating discrimination. It demonstrates a commitment to creating a more inclusive society by breaking down barriers and providing equal opportunities for all.
	ENHANCED EXPERIENCES	Universal Design enhances the travel experience for everyone. Thoughtful design and inclusive practices create welcoming environments that allow all visitors to fully appreciate and enjoy the destination's offerings.

Figure 4: Benefits of UD

1.4 Accessible marketing

Accessibility is not only about human rights. It is a business opportunity for destinations and companies to embrace all visitors and enhance their revenues (UNWTO).Indeed, both from **a practical and ethical point of view**, SMEs should prioritise marketing to potential customers of all ability types.

Considering the **demand for accessible tourism is expected to increase in the coming years,** due especially to the demographic ageing in Europe, there is a continuing need for **SMEs to support access to tourism for all citizens and visitors to Europe.** Consequently, in the years ahead, greater efforts will also be required from the travel and tourism industries to deliver tourism products and services that are accessible for all.

Accessible market refers to the use of inclusive design practices that make it possible for users of all abilities to fully experience the brand, receive and understand communication/information, and benefit from opportunities to engage with and become fans of the services or products.

In conclusion, Universal Design is transforming the tourism industry, ushering in an era of inclusivity, accessibility, and equal opportunities. By implementing Universal Design principles, SMEs in the tourism value can create environments that cater to the diverse needs and preferences of all travellers.

Embracing accessibility is not only a **legal requirement** but also a moral and **ethical imperative.**

Let's begin this journey into accessible marketing and learn how to create accessible digital marketing campaigns for your SME!

1.5 Methodology

The purpose of this Toolkit is **to support SMEs in the tourism value chain to exploit new markets and reach new customers through the application of the Universal Design principles**.

We will look at Universal Design from a theoretical and practical point of view, exploring some practical examples and we will get started with the creation of accessible marketing campaigns.

Our dive into inclusive design is based on a key principle: **sustainability**.
Indeed, this Toolkit has been designed and developed to be easily adapted to other countries. It has been designed taking into account the needs of SMEs and the challenges they usually face during the implementation of an accessible digital marketing campaign.

The Toolkit can be easily used by all EU SMEs in the tourism value chain in general and by all interested people in exploiting resources for accessible digital marketing.

The ONAT4All Toolkit is structured into a few sections that will allow you to explore the **inclusive strategies for a truly accessible digital world**.
The sections of the Toolkit will support you to discover how to design accessible experiences, making the content, design, website and special media accessible, opening up your SME to a huge audience that may have previously been excluded.

We have also put together some **useful tips** to help you design an accessible market campaign and a set of additional resources that can support you to deepen your knowledge about inclusive design practices.

The Toolkit has also been uploaded in the training platform dedicated to tourism resources of IMPULSA IGUALDAD, and linked to the website of the project.

1.6 EQAVET & ECVET

This Toolkit has been developed according to main quality principles of the main EU VET instruments (EQAVET and ECVET), expressing the results of the learning process as learning outcomes.

The European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) emerged from the 2009 recommendation of the European Parliament and Council, as a European wide framework to support quality assurance in vocational education and training (VET) across Europe (EQAVET - European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training).

EQAVET is based on a quality assurance and improvement cycle (planning, implementation, evaluation/ assessment, and review/revision) and a selection of descriptors and indicators applicable to quality management at both VET system and VET provider levels.

Figure 5: The Quality Assurance Cycle

EQAVET does not prescribe a particular quality assurance system or approach but provides **a framework of common principles, indicative descriptors and indicators that may help in assessing and improving the quality of VET systems and VET provision.** EQAVET can therefore be regarded as a 'toolbox,' from which the various users may choose those descriptors and indicators that they consider most relevant to the requirements of their quality assurance system.

EQAVET supports the implementation of the 2020 recommendation on vocational education and training for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness, and resilience. The VET Recommendation describes how EQAVET can be used to strengthen the quality of initial and continuing VET and presents the complete EQAVET Framework.

The EQAVET Framework can be used by VET providers and in VET systems to support the quality assurance of:

- **Learning environments** (e.g., school-based provision, work-based learning, apprenticeships, formal, informal and non-formal provision)

- **All types of learning contexts** (e.g., digital, face-to-face and blended)

- **Public and private sector VET** providers

- **VET awards and qualifications** at all levels of the European Qualifications Framework.

EQAVET defines **10 indicators** to assess the quality of vocational education and training (the same indicators can be used to measure the quality of provision at the system and provider level):

INDICATOR **1**
Relevance of quality assurance systems for VET providers

INDICATOR **2**
Investment in training of teachers and trainers

INDICATOR **3**
Participation rate in VET programmes

INDICATOR **4**
Completion rate in VET programmes

INDICATOR **5**
Placement rate of graduates from VET programmes

INDICATOR **6**
Utilisation of acquired skills at the workplace

INDICATOR **7**
Unemployment rate in the country Indicator

INDICATOR **8**
Prevalence of vulnerable groups

INDICATOR **9**
Mechanisms to identify training needs in the labour market

INDICATOR **10**
Schemes used to promote better access to VET and provide guidance to (potential) VET learner.

For the adoption of the ONAT4ALL educational package (including the Toolkit) we suggest taking into account the EQAVET principles when adapting it at the national levels.

In addition, for helping individuals in transfer, recognition and accumulation of their assessed learning outcomes, to achieve a qualification or to take part in lifelong learning we referred to the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET).

This instrument uses flexible and individualised learning pathways, including transnational mobility (European credit system for vocational education and training - ECVET).

ECVET allows for the accumulation and transfer of **credits** gained through the recognition of learning outcomes in vocational education and training achievements in vocational education and training. Besides helping transfer and recognise learning that has taken place during a stay abroad (geographical mobility), ECVET aims to support lifelong learning, by allowing people to transfer and accumulate learning outcomes achieved in different contexts within their country to build up recognised qualifications, update or upgrade them.

As highlighted by Cedefop, ECVET allows learners to accumulate, transfer and use their learning in units as these units are achieved. This enables building a qualification at learners' own pace from learning outcomes acquired in formal, non-formal and informal contexts, in their own country and abroad. The system is based on units of learning outcomes as part of qualifications that can be assessed and validated. For the ONAT4All Tookit we defined a set of learning outcomes for each of the section and we then matched them with an estimation of ECVET credits:

Content → **1 ECVET credit**
Design → **1 ECVET credit**
Website → **1 ECVET credit**

The calculation has been made considering a C-VET training based on accessible marketing for a total duration of 60 hours and each hour is 0,05 ECVET credit. The Toolkit constitutes the educational support for developing the training.

2.CONTENT

2.1 Introduction

In an increasingly digital world, accessibility is a crucial component of any successful marketing strategy. Ensuring your content is accessible not only broadens your audience but also demonstrates your commitment to inclusivity and social responsibility.

Creating accessible content is important for several reasons, all of which contribute to fostering inclusivity and ensuring that information and services are available to everyone, regardless of their abilities or disabilities.

Whether a potential traveller has a visual impairment, a cognitive disability, or just prefers clear and concise information, structured content is the key to a positive user experience. In this section you will find some key principles and several tips on how to conceive 'accessible content', highlighting what is important to consider.

2.2 Structure

HOW SHOULD CONTENT BE STRUCTURED TO HELP USERS IDENTIFY KEY INFORMATION?

Make sure that users can get an idea of the nature of your content and quickly find specific sections.

Users read and interact with digital content very differently from printed material. Digital content must be presented in such a way that users can quickly read and understand the information you are communicating.

HELP USERS UNDERSTAND HOW APPROPRIATE THE CONTENT IS FOR THEM

Provide a short summary introduction - especially for longer pages - of 50 words or less, directly below the main header.
For longer pages, provide a 'table of contents' at the top of the page:
- Link each index entry to the title it refers to
- Ensure that the text of the link matches the text of the title it refers to.

PRIORITISE THE MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Use the inverted pyramid approach to structure the content:

- Start with the conclusion.
- Then follow with the details.
- Add the background and any minor details towards the end
- Place important elements at the top of the page to minimise the need to scroll:
  - ➔ this way, screen reader users will receive the information in advance.
  - ➔ this minimises the amount of scrolling that users of mobile devices have to do.
- Put the most important information first in links, headlines, and sentences:
  - ➔ this emphasises the uniqueness of the article and promotes quick comprehension.
- Screen reader users, who navigate by titles or links, will benefit from being able to quickly identify the purpose of a section.

Figure 6: The Inverted Pyramid Method

USE SHORT PARAGRAPHS AND SENTENCES

- If you are adapting existing content for digital use, divide larger paragraphs into smaller ones.
- Try to keep **sentences** under **21 words**
- Try to keep **paragraphs** under **65 words**
- Use lists instead of long sentences separated by commas.
- Always use the available list functionality, instead of using hyphens or asterisks to simulate lists.
- If appropriate, add tables and diagrams to break up large 'walls of text'.

USE HEADINGS TO CONVEY AN OUTLINE STRUCTURE OF YOUR CONTENT

Using headings to convey an outline structure is a fundamental practice for creating well-organized, accessible, and reader-friendly content. It benefits both content creators and consumers by improving navigation, readability, and overall user experience.

Headings help organize your content into logical sections and sub-sections, providing a clear and structured hierarchy. This organization makes it easier for readers to understand the flow of information. They can quickly scan the headings to get an overview of the content and decide which sections are most relevant to them.

This is particularly helpful for longer documents or web pages, enhancing the overall user experience.

A consistent heading structure throughout your content creates a professional and cohesive appearance. It also helps maintain a consistent style, making the content more visually appealing.

Screen readers and other assistive technologies rely on heading structures to provide context and navigation for users with visual impairments. Proper heading use ensures that content is accessible to individuals with disabilities.

This organization makes it easier for readers to understand the flow of information. They can quickly scan the headings to get an overview of the content and decide which sections are most relevant to them.
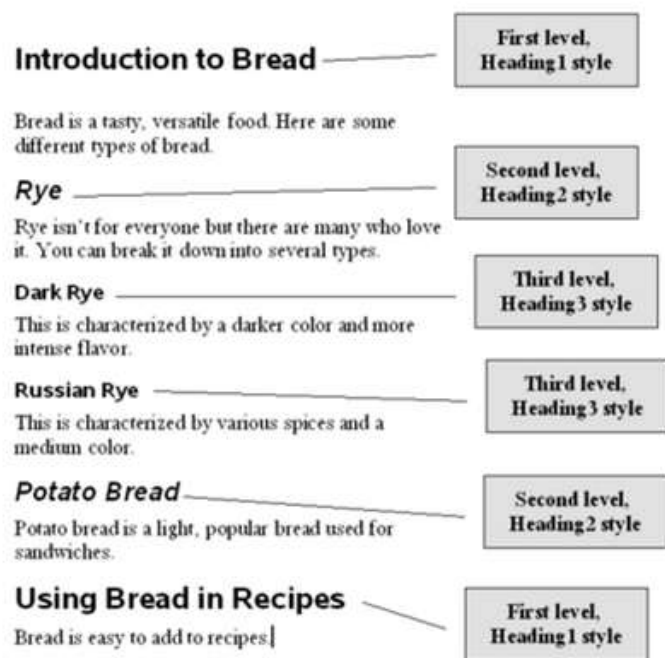
Figure 7: Heading structure

- Always have a main (level one) heading which describes the nature of the page.
- For each main section use a level two heading.
- Any sub-sections should have a level three heading; further sub-sections should have a level four heading, and so on.
- Web pages support heading levels from one to six <h1> - <h6> and Word supports up to five heading levels, however some accessibility organisations advocate for restricting content depth to just four headings.

- Avoid skipping heading levels – do not jump from <h1> to <h4>.
- Ensure all headings are descriptive, short and to the point.
- Always use the correct level heading. Your design team will have used Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) to style headings on your webpages, so that they are an appropriate font size (colour, weight, and so on).
- If you think the font size for a particular heading is too big or small, ask your design team for help, rather than using an inappropriate level heading that happens to be the right size.
- Never use headings for stylistic purposes. If you want to change the font size (or colour, weight) ask your design team to create a style for you, rather than using an inappropriate level heading that happens to be the right size.
- If you want big text in the middle of your page, ask your design team to create a style with big text, do not use an <h1>.

BREAK UP CONTENT WITH LISTS

Use lists instead of long, comma-separated sentences:

⊗ DO NOT WRITE...	✓ DO WRITE...
We offer the following services: cycling tourism, forest bathing, local activities, discovering the environment - hiking, cultural courses.	Our services: • Cycling tourism • Forest bathing • Local activities • Discovering the environment/Hiking • Cultural courses.

2.3 Readability

## USE CLEAR, SIMPLE LANGUAGE AND DO NOT ASSUME THAT EVERYONE KNOWS WHAT YOUR CONTENT IS ABOUT

Using clear and simple language in content is essential for accessibility because not everyone has the same level of familiarity with the topic being discussed.

Your audience may include people from various backgrounds, age groups, educational levels, and cultures. Using clear and simple language ensures that your content is accessible to a broad and diverse audience and helps prevent feelings of exclusion or confusion.Individuals with cognitive or learning disabilities may struggle with complex language or technical terminology. **Using plain language helps ensure that information is comprehensible and supports accessibility** for people with conditions such as dyslexia, or cognitive impairments.

By using clear and simple language, you prioritise inclusivity, making your content accessible to a broader range of individuals. This approach aligns with principles of universal design, ensuring that information is presented in a way that accommodates the diverse needs and abilities of your audience.

- Avoid technical jargon, colloquialisms, organisation, departmental language or 'big' words just for the sake of it: turn these terms into everyday language.
- Unless commonly recognised, provide the full word or phrase for acronyms, initials and abbreviations the first time they are used in a web page or document, for example 'International Social Tourism Organisation (ISTO)'.
- Avoid Latin and French expressions. Abbreviations such as e.g., i.e. and etc. can be confusing: instead, use the full English equivalents such as 'for example', 'that is' and 'and so on'. Include non-English terms for which an English term is available, such as vis-à-vis (in relation to).

Avoid Latin and French expressions
There can be confusion around words such as e.g.
Try to use the full English equivalent.
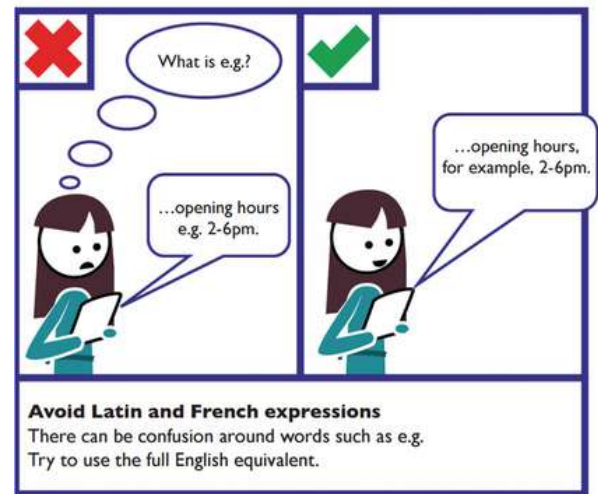
Be concise and cut out excess words and 'nonsense':

⊗ DO NOT SAY..	✓ DO SAY...
"One must endeavour to ensure that simplicity is stringently upheld in order to facilitate comprehension".	"Keep it simple"
"In order to come into possession of".	"To get"
"Submit" (on a call-back form button).	"Call me now"
"The decision was made by Tom".	"Tom made the decision"
"Links to resources should be provided"	"Provide links to resources"
"e.g."; "i.e."; "etc."	"for example"; "that is"; "and so on"

- Try to reduce the content to about half the size of an equivalent printed document.
- Only include content relevant to the topic and audience.
- Avoid contractions (don't, didn't, couldn't)
- Use simple sentence structures that avoid the need for extensive and complex punctuation.
- Be direct and use an active rather than passive voice. If users need to complete a task, tell them to do so - avoid subtlety - for example, instead of saying "you can download this page as a brochure", say "Consult the brochure section to download the PDF of this article" or, if possible, provide a direct link to the download.

USE SUPPORTING IMAGES AND GRAPHICS TO FACILITATE EXPLANATION

Some users may rely on icons or symbols to understand content.

Always ensure that icons are commonly used and easily identifiable: unfamiliar icons may create problems for some users with cognitive impairment.

Some users rely on clear, literal text and may not understand metaphors. For example, instead of saying 'Early bird price', say 'Early booking price'.

Always use a text label together with an icon, do not rely on iconography alone.

STYLE TO MAXIMISE READABILITY

Accessible text formatting is crucial for ensuring that content is readable and navigable by a diverse audience, including individuals with disabilities. As we have already seen, it is very important to use headings appropriately in order to create a hierarchical content structure following a logical order, with H1 as the main heading and subsequent headings in descending order of importance.

But there are also other aspects to take into account. For instance, here are some key principles for making text formatting more accessible:

FONT SIZE AND TYPE:

- Ensure that text is readable by using an easily legible font.
- Use an appropriate font size (usually 16px or larger for body text) for comfortable reading.

CONTRAST:

- Maintain sufficient contrast between text and background colors to enhance readability, especially for users with visual impairments.
- WCAG - Web content accessibility guidelines recommend a minimum contrast ratio of 4.5:1 for normal text and 3:1 for large text.

LINE SPACING:

- Provide adequate line spacing to prevent text from being too cramped. A line height of 1.5 is generally recommended.

USE BOLD AND ITALIC SPARINGLY:

- Use these styles solely to highlight key words and key phrases – do not attempt to convey any further meaning or information using these styles.
- Do not use bold or italics for whole paragraphs.

TEXT ALIGNMENT:

- Use left-aligned text, as it is the most readable for languages that read from left to right.
- Avoid justified text, as it may create uneven spacing that can be difficult to read.

AVOIDING ALL CAPS:

- Avoid using all capital letters for large blocks of text, as it can be harder to read. Use uppercase sparingly for emphasis.

COLOR CONSIDERATIONS:

- Do not rely solely on color to convey information. Ensure that important information is also distinguishable through other means (e.g., text labels, symbols).
- Be mindful of color choices for text and background to accommodate users with color blindness. You can check the contrast ratio of your text to background colours using WebAIM's contrast checker.

USE OF IMAGES:

- If using images with text, ensure that the text is legible and provides essential information. Additionally, provide alternative text (alt text) for images.

- Avoiding Text in Images: Avoid embedding important text within images. If text is necessary, provide an alternative in the HTML or use descriptive captions.
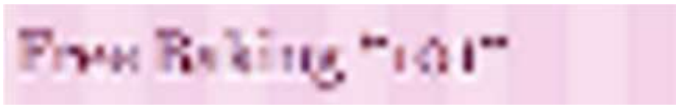
This heading is an image, which has been heavily compressed to reduce its file size, and then enlarged. It is very difficult to read.
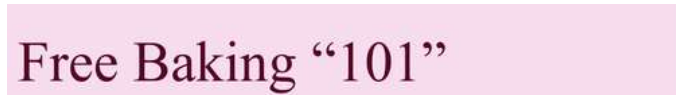
This heading is text so it can be enlarged without any reduction in quality.

RESPONSIVE DESIGN:

Ensure that your content is readable on various devices and screen sizes.

HYPERLINK STYLING:

- Clearly distinguish hyperlinks from regular text through underlining or a different color.
- Avoid using color alone to indicate links, as colorblind users may have difficulty distinguishing them.

CONSISTENT FORMATTING:

- Maintain a consistent formatting style throughout the document or website.
- Consistency helps users predict where to find information.

BULLET POINTS AND LISTS:

- Use bullet points and numbered lists to break down information into digestible chunks.
- Ensure proper indentation and spacing for easy comprehension.

ACCESSIBLE TABLES:

- If using tables, ensure they have clear headers and row/column labels.
- Use the table summary attribute to provide a brief description of the table's purpose.

By incorporating these style guidelines, you can create content that is not only visually appealing but also maximizes readability for a diverse audience, including individuals with different abilities and preferences.

Following accessibility best practices ensures that your content is inclusive and reaches the widest possible audience.
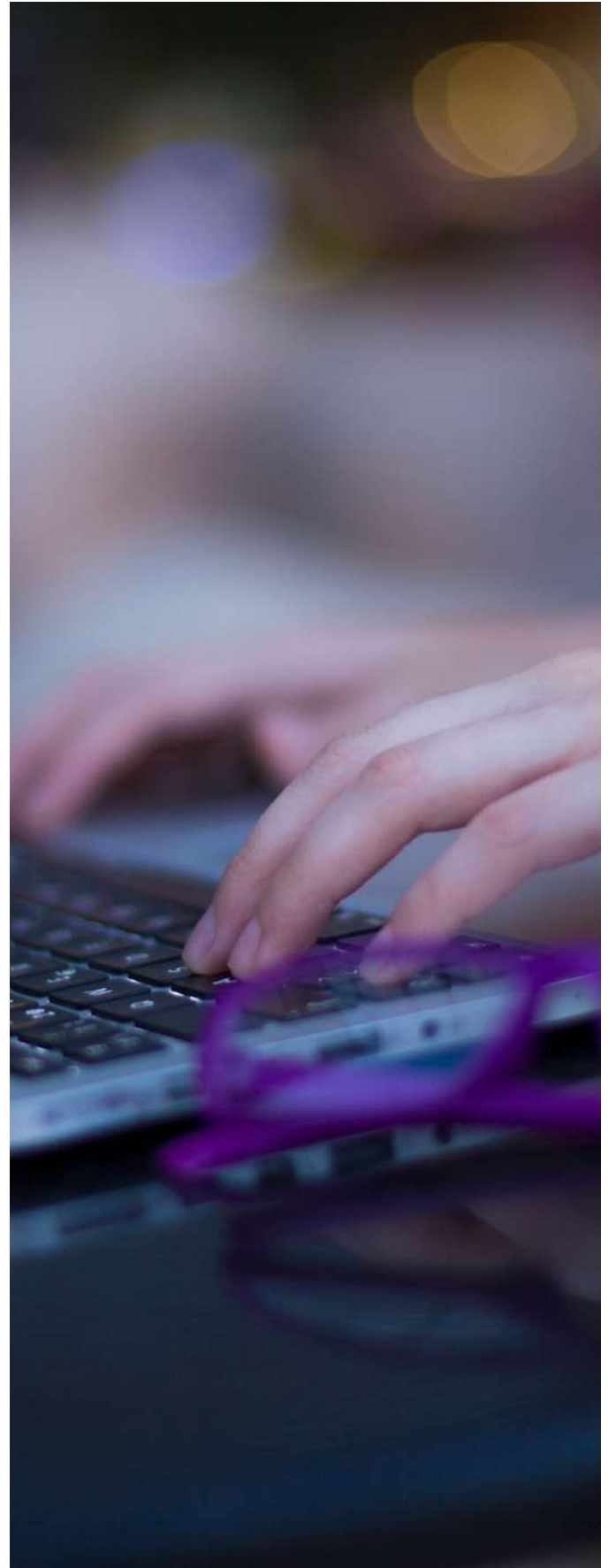
2.4 Link text

Providing significant links is a fundamental aspect of creating accessible content. It supports users with disabilities, enhances the overall user experience, and aligns with best practices for web accessibility and inclusive design.

Screen readers, which are assistive technologies used by individuals with visual impairments, rely on meaningful link text to provide context and navigation.

Most users scan content pages focusing on the information they need and the actions they can take. Whether visually scanning the page or using a screen reader to announce the different links on a page, the key to understanding where a link will lead is the text of the link itself.

SHORT AND DESCRIPTIVE LINKS

Descriptive links contribute to a better user experience for all users, not just those with disabilities. Clear and informative links help everyone quickly identify relevant content and understand the destination or action associated with the link, enabling them to navigate a document or web page more efficiently.

Therefore, meaningful links help avoid ambiguity, ensuring that users reduce cognitive load by conveying information concisely. Users can make informed decisions about whether to follow a link based on its descriptive text, saving time and effort.

Consistency in link design and behavior ensures that users can predict and understand how links work, making your content more user-friendly.

AVOIDING "CLICK HERE"

Bad examples:

- Vague or generic link text, such as "click here" or "read more," doesn't convey meaningful information and can be confusing.
- Avoid linking whole sentences.
- Do not link whole paragraphs.
- Avoid unnecessary prefixes, such as "link to…" or "click this to…" – links should be obvious by their appearance and the language you use in the link text.

PROVIDE USEFUL SUPPORTING INFORMATION IN THE LINK TEXT

- Specifying links to other sites, which open in a new window, which refer to a document in a different format (for example, a PDF) or which include information about the size of the download, is very useful information to convey to users before they decide to select it;
- Include this information in the link text, not just next to it, so that it is visible out of context.

PRESENT LISTS OF LINKS AS BULLET-POINT OR NUMBERED LISTS

Rather than cram lots of links into your content, use a separate section at the end that lists those links.

- Using list functionality to present lists avoids any confusion caused by links wrapping over multiple lines, which otherwise might look like several different links.
- Using list functionality also tells screen reader users that this content is a list of links, without you having to specify that in text.

KEYWORD OPTIMIZATION

Use relevant keywords in your anchor text (the clickable text of the link). This can improve Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and help users understand what the linked page is about. Search engines use link text to understand the content and context of a webpage. Meaningful links contribute to better SEO by providing search engines with relevant information about the linked content.

MOBILE ACCESSIBILITY

Meaningful links are particularly important for mobile users who may rely on touchscreens. Clear link text improves the touch target's usability, making navigation easier for individuals using smartphones or tablets.

LEGAL AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

Accessibility standards, such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), emphasize the importance of providing meaningful and programmatically determined link text.

Adhering to these standards helps organizations comply with legal and regulatory requirements related to web accessibility.

In conclusion, meaningful links align with principles of inclusive design, ensuring that content is accessible to individuals with diverse abilities and preferences. Providing clear links contributes to a more inclusive and universally usable digital environment.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD AND BAD PRACTICES

Descriptive link text and presentation: how to and how not to compose descriptive link text

⊗ DO NOT SAY..	✓ DO SAY...
• Homeowners click here • Tenants click here • Landlords click here	• Homeowners • Tenants • Landlords
To visit the location map,click here	Visit the location map for directions
Link to our contact us form	Contact us
Flowers, plants, pots, spades, forks, fertiliser, seeds, watering cans.	• Flowers • Plants • Pots • Spades • Forks

2.5 Accessible files

In this last section we will put into practice all the guidelines and tips mentioned in the previous sections in order to create accessible files.

Therefore, below, as a summary, you will find simple and clear instructions on how to develop accessible files, providing visual information in a non-visual format.

CREATING ACCESSIBLE WORD DOCUMENTS

HEADINGS AND STYLES:

- Use built-in heading styles (Heading 1, Heading 2, etc.) to structure your document.
- Ensure a clear hierarchy with proper heading order.

ALTERNATIVE TEXT FOR IMAGES:

- Right-click on images and select "Format Picture."
- Go to the "Alt Text" tab and provide a descriptive alternative text.

HYPERLINKS:

- Use meaningful hyperlink text.
- Avoid generic terms like "click here" or "read more."

LISTS:

- Use built-in list features (bulleted or numbered) for lists.
- Avoid creating lists manually with hyphens or asterisks.

TABLES:

- Use simple tables with clear headers.
- Provide row and column headers for data tables.

LANGUAGE AND FONTS:

- Set the document language.
- Choose readable fonts and maintain a sufficient font size.

DOCUMENT STRUCTURE:

- Ensure a logical reading order.
- Use the The Microsoft Accessibility Checker to find issues and get suggested solutions, or third-party tools to review.

CREATING ACCESSIBLE PDFS

HEADINGS AND TAGS:

- Use heading tags (H1, H2, etc.) for document structure.
- Add tags to images, tables, and other non-text elements.

ALTERNATIVE TEXT FOR IMAGES:

- Provide alternative text for images in image properties.
- Check for proper tagging and alternative text in PDF software.

HYPERLINKS:

- Use clear and descriptive link text.
- Avoid using raw URLs as link text

LISTS AND TABLES:

- Use clear and descriptive link text.
- Avoid using raw URLs as link text

LANGUAGE AND FONTS:

- Set the document language.
- Choose accessible fonts and maintain a readable font size.

CHECK ACCESSIBILITY:

- Use built-in accessibility checkers in PDF authoring tools.
- Manually review and test with screen readers and other assistive technologies.

PDF DOWNLOAD:

- When offering PDFs for download, clearly label them with descriptive filenames and mention the file format (for example, "TravelGuide.pdf").

CREATING ACCESSIBLE POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS

SLIDE STRUCTURE:

- Use built-in slide layouts.
- Assign meaningful slide titles.

TEXT AND FONTS:

- Use readable fonts and maintain a sufficient font size.
- Avoid overcrowding slides with text.

ALT TEXT FOR IMAGES:

- Provide alternative text for images in the Format Picture options.
- Check for proper alt text in PowerPoint.

HYPERLINKS:

- Use clear and descriptive link text.
- Avoid using raw URLs.

ANIMATIONS AND TRANSITIONS:

- Use animations and transitions sparingly.
- Avoid rapid or distracting effects.

CHECK ACCESSIBILITY:

- Use built-in accessibility checkers in PowerPoint.
- Manually review and test with screen readers.

CREATING ACCESSIBLE EXCEL SPREADSHEETS

HEADINGS AND DATA CELLS:

- Use clear and concise headings for columns and rows.
- Ensure a logical reading order for screen readers.

ALTERNATIVE TEXT FOR CHARTS:

- Provide alternative text for charts and graphs.
- Check for proper alt text in Excel.

DATA TABLES:

- Designate header rows and columns in data tables.
- Avoid merging cells that may disrupt the table structure.

FORMULAS AND FUNCTIONS:

- Use clear and simple formulas.
- Provide explanations for complex calculations.

CHECK ACCESSIBILITY:

- Use built-in accessibility features in spreadsheet software.
- Manually review and test with screen readers.

MAKING MULTIMEDIA ACCESSIBLE

1. **Alternative Text:** include descriptive alternative text (alt text) for images and graphics, allowing screen reader users to access the content of visual elements.
2. **Caption Videos:** add captions to videos to make them accessible to individuals with hearing impairments. Include audio descriptions when necessary.
3. **Transcripts:** provide transcripts for audio content like podcasts. This benefits both deaf and hard-of-hearing users and search engine optimization.

These steps provide a foundation for creating accessible files. However, it is important to stay informed about updates to accessibility standards and guidelines to ensure continued compliance with the latest best practices.

3.DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

Accessible design involves creating marketing materials and content that can be easily understood, navigated, and interacted with by individuals of varying abilities. This includes people with disabilities such as visual, auditory, motor, or cognitive impairments.

The following pages will highlight the key principles of accessible design, particularly focusing **on videos, images, the use of colours, contrasts and fonts** as accessible design in marketing is not only a legal and ethical obligation but also a strategic advantage. By prioritising accessibility, you can expand your audience, enhance your brand's image, and contribute to a more inclusive and equitable digital landscape.

3.2 Videos and audios

Providing captions and transcripts for audio and video content is a fundamental aspect of accessible design, ensuring that people with hearing disabilities or those in situations where sound cannot be played (e.g., in a noisy environment) can access and understand the content. Here's more information about the importance of captions and transcripts and how to implement them effectively.

Captions are text-based representations of the audio content in a video. They include not only spoken words but also relevant audio cues, such as music and sound effects. Captions are typically displayed at the bottom of the video screen, allowing viewers to read along as the video plays.

Captions make video content accessible to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. This is a crucial aspect of inclusive design.

Furthermore, captions can improve the comprehension of video content for all viewers, including those who may have difficulty understanding spoken language, non-native speakers, or those watching in noisy environments. Captions finally make video content more searchable, as search engines can index the text, improving SEO and discoverability.

HOW TO CREATE ACCESSIBLE CAPTIONS FOR YOUR VIDEOS

You can manually create captions by transcribing the spoken content and adding timecodes to synchronize the text with the video despite many video hosting platforms and services offering automatic caption generation, but these often require manual review and editing for accuracy. It is important to ensure that the captions are synchronized with the video, so the text matches the timing of the spoken words and relevant sounds. This synchronization is essential for a seamless viewing experience.

TRANSCRIPTS FOR AUDIO

Transcripts are essential for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and cannot access the audio content as they provide flexibility for all users.

Indeed, they allow people to read the content instead of listening, making it convenient for various situations, such as studying, reference, or for those who prefer reading. Including transcripts with audio content improves search engine optimization and search engine discoverability.

Transcribing audio content manually is a common approach. The transcript should include all spoken words and descriptions of relevant audio elements.

Best practices for the accessibility of transcripts:

- Ensure the accuracy of captions and transcripts
- Review and edit them to correct any errors or inaccuracies introduced during the transcription process.
- Use proper formatting and punctuation in captions and transcripts to make the content easier to read and understand.
- Offer the option for users to turn captions on or off, as some may prefer to watch or listen without them.
- Consider using closed captions (user-enabled) rather than open captions (always on) to give users control over their viewing experience.

By providing captions for video and transcripts for audio, you make your content more inclusive and accessible to a broader audience, while also improving its usability and search engine visibility.

This is a key step in embracing accessible design in your marketing materials and online content. Some free tools exist allowing you to create captions and transcripts.

YouTube It is versatile and simple to use, but you can only use it for videos that are uploaded to YouTube. For more information on this, please refer to chapter 5 of this toolkit.

amara It is a free open source platform for captions and subtitling which aims at greater accessibility for videos.

3PLAYMEDIA It offers captioning, transcription and audio description services. They focus on providing accurate and high quality accessible solutions.
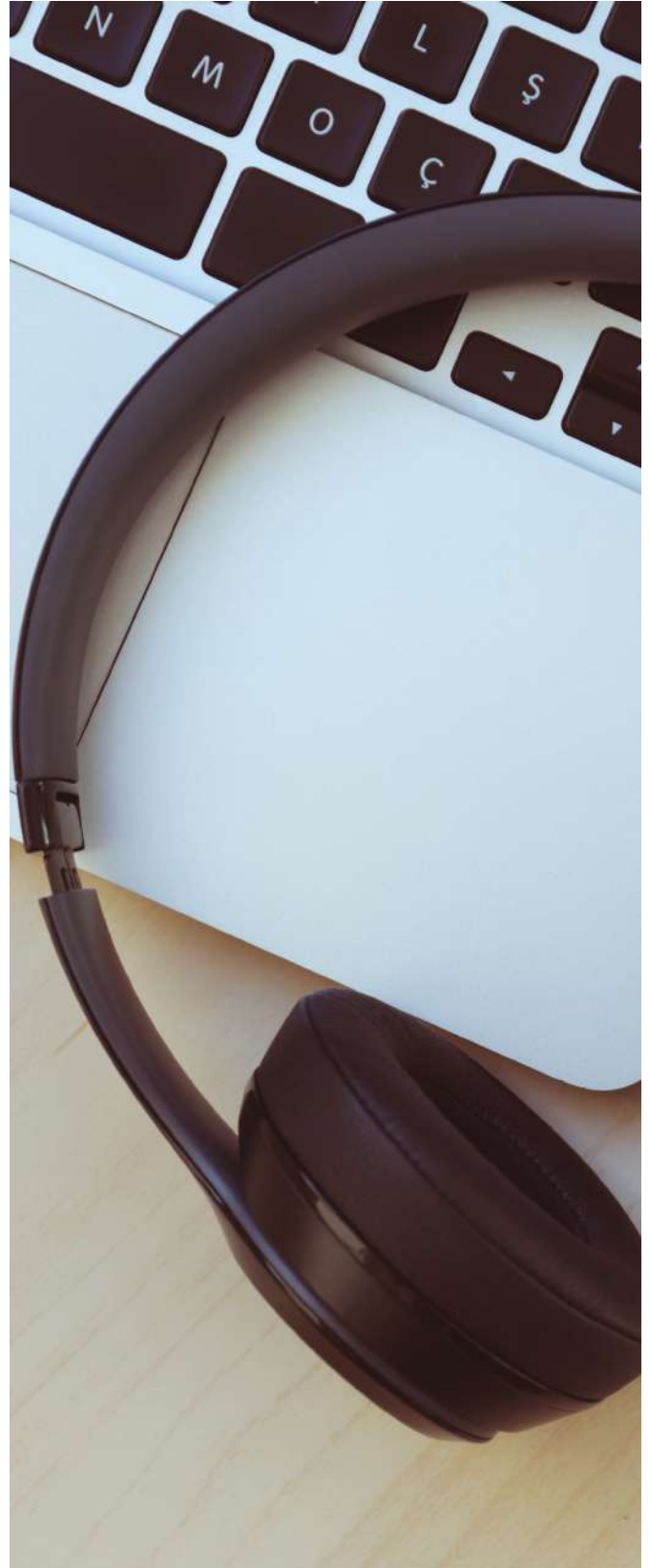
3.3 Images

Providing alternative text, often referred to as "alt text," for **images** is another essential aspect of **accessible design.**
Alt text is a brief description of an image that provides context and information about the visual content. Alt text is primarily designed to assist individuals with visual impairments, such as those who use screen readers. When an image lacks alt text, these users miss out on understanding the image's content and purpose. Alt text ensures that your content is inclusive and can be accessed and comprehended by all users, regardless of their abilities or disabilities.

Search engines use alt text to understand and index the content of images. Properly optimized alt text can improve your website's search engine ranking and make your content more discoverable.

Alt text should be concise but descriptive. It should convey the imag's content, purpose, and context. If the image contains essential information, make sure to include it in the alt text.
Remember that if the image is accompanied by adjacent text that conveys the same information, you should use a shorter alt text or leave it empty (null alt text) to prevent redundancy.

However, decorative or non-essential images should have empty alt text.
While it's essential to use keywords relevant to the image, **avoid keyword stuffing.**
Alt text should serve both accessibility and SEO purposes, so keep it natural and meaningful.

! THINK ABOUT THE CONTEXT IN WHICH THE IMAGE APPEARS AND THE AUDIENCE YOU ARE ADDRESSING

For complex images, diagrams, or infographics, you can provide a more detailed description within the surrounding text or offer a link to a separate page with a detailed explanation.

Ensure that your images are appropriately sized and compressed to improve page loading speed. Large image files can slow down your website, affecting the user experience.

If your image contains text, make sure the text is easy to read with high contrast between text and background and try to avoid using fonts or backgrounds that may be difficult to decipher (see the next section). Ensure that the colors used in your images have sufficient contrast to be visible to users with visual impairments. As mentioned in the previous section, you can use tools like WebAIM Contrast Checker to check colour contrast.

In addition to *alt text*, consider using **sensory characteristics** to provide context for your images. For example, you can include descriptions like "Image: A smiling person with a red shirt" or "Image: a chart showing sales data."
When sharing images on social media, add image descriptions (alt text) to the posts so that users with disabilities can access the content.

Don't forget to **test** your website or content with a screen reader or accessibility evaluation toolsto ensure that alt text is correctly implemented and provides a meaningful description.
By using alt text effectively, you make your website and content more inclusive and accessible to a broader audience while also enhancing your website's SEO and overall user experience. It is a crucial practice for ensuring your marketing materials and online presence are accessible to all users.

3.4 Colour and contrasts

Colour and contrast are pivotal elements in inclusive design, as they have a direct influence on how usable and accessible products, websites, and environments are for a diverse array of individuals, including those with disabilities.

Here are some key considerations to keep in mind when using colour and contrast in the context of inclusive design:

1 **Use sufficient contrast:** one of the most critical aspects of inclusive design is to maintain adequate contrast between text and its background to be easily readable and distinguishable. This is especially important for individuals with visual impairments, such as low vision or colour blindness.
Follow the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) for specific contrast ratios. WCAG provides detailed guidelines on colour and contrast for web content. It specifies minimum contrast ratios for text and background colours to ensure readability. For example, the minimum contrast ratio for normal text is 4.5:1, while for large text, it is 3:1.

2 **Use a text-background colour combination:** choose colour combinations for text and background that make reading content easy. For example, black text on a white background or white text on a black background is a classic and efficient choice.
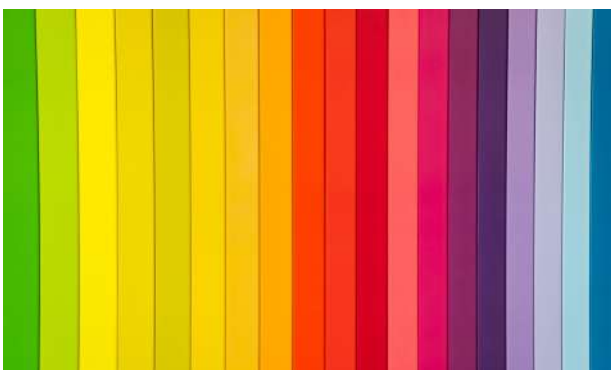
3 **Do not convey important information solely through colour,** as some users may not perceive or interpret colour accurately. Use multiple cues such as text labels, icons, patterns, or shapes to differentiate elements or convey meaning.

4 **Provide customizable colour schemes: consider the full spectrum.** Offer users the option to customise the colour scheme to suit their individual preferences and needs. This can include providing high-contrast themes or options for changing text and background colours. Keep in mind that not all users perceive colours the same way. Some may have difficulty distinguishing certain colours or shades, so choose colours that are distinguishable by the majority of your audience.

5 **Design for high visibility:** consider using bright, high-visibility colours for important elements, alerts, and calls to action to ensure they stand out.

6 **Avoid flashing or bright animation:** rapidly flashing or bright animations can trigger seizures in individuals with epilepsy. Ensure your design does not include such elements or provide an option to disable them.

7 **Consider cultural and contextual factors:** be aware of the cultural associations of colours and how they may affect the perception of your design in different regions. Additionally, consider the context in which your design will be used and adapt colour choices accordingly.

Lastly, **document and test with users.** Conduct usability testing with a diverse group of users, including those with disabilities, to gather feedback and identify any colour and contrast issues that may need adjustment.

3.5 Fonts

When selecting fonts for inclusive design, it is important to prioritise readability and clarity.

Here are some factors to think about when choosing fonts:

1. Type of font: select fonts that are easy to read, with clear and distinct letterforms. Avoid overly decorative or stylized fonts that may be difficult for some people to read. Sans-serif is recommended because it has a higher readability than others. Its appearance is more block-like and less decorative. These fonts are highly recommended because they are most likely to be accessible to all users:
- Verdana (sans serif)
- Tahoma (sans serif)
- Arial (sans serif)
- Georgia (serif)
- Palatino (serif)
- Lucida Sans (sans serif)
- Helvetica (sans serif).

2.Contrast: high contrast between text and background is crucial for readability. Make sure there is a clear distinction between the text colour and the background colour.

3.Font size: use fonts that can be easily resized without losing legibility. A font that works well at various sizes is essential for accommodating users with different visual needs.

4. Line spacing and letter spacing: adequate line and letter spacing can enhance readability. Make sure there is sufficient room between lines and letters to avoid text appearing overly cramped.

5. Font weight: use a variety of font styles (such as standard and bold) to emphasise important content. This can simplify the differentiation of headings and critical information for users.

6. Plain language: in addition to font choice, it is important to use plain and straightforward language in your content to improve comprehension for all users. If you plan to create materials in easy to read language using pictograms, you can find some indications and suggestions here.

7.Testing: regularly test your design with a diverse group of users, including those with different abilities, to gather feedback on font readability and overall accessibility.

8. Language support: ensure that the font supports the languages you intend to use on your website or in your design, as well as any special characters or symbols required for inclusivity.

The key to inclusive design is to prioritise user experience and ensure that your design choices make content accessible to a broad range of people.

4.WEBSITE

4.1 Introduction to web accesibility

In today's digital age, having an accessible website is not just a choice, it is an imperative. Ensuring that your website is accessible to people with disabilities is not only a matter of compliance with legal regulations but also a fundamental element of providing equal opportunities and a positive user experience for all.

Here, we outline the key reasons why having an accessible website is crucial:

1 INCLUSIVITY AND EQUAL ACCESS

An accessible website ensures that individuals with disabilities have the same opportunities to access and interact with your content as those without disabilities. It promotes a sense of inclusivity, allowing everyone to participate fully in the digital world, which is increasingly integral to everyday life. Providing access to the information for all is a fundamental right, as mentioned in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD). In fact, today the Web is an important resource for many aspects of life (education, employment, government, commerce, health care, recreation, and more).

2 LEGAL COMPLIANCE

Many countries have enacted laws and regulations that require websites to be accessible. Non-compliance may result in legal consequences, including lawsuits and fines. By making your website accessible, you not only mitigate legal risks but also demonstrate a commitment to social responsibility

3 BROADENING YOUR AUDIENCE

Making your website accessible broadens your potential audience. People with disabilities represent a significant market segment, and creating an inclusive online space can lead to increased engagement and business opportunities. It also enhances your brand's reputation for inclusivity. Plus, an accessible website benefits not only people with disabilities, but also other categories of people, such as the elderly or people with temporary limitations.

In addition, a website's accessibility can be useful to all users in some specific conditions (for example, in bright lighting conditions, or in a quiet room where audio cannot be played). For instance, accessible websites provide alternatives in terms of luminosity and they give several ways to perceive information (e.g. audio with subtitles or a transcript).

4 IMPROVED SEO AND USER EXPERIENCE

Accessible websites tend to perform better in search engine results. By implementing accessible design practices, you enhance your website's overall user experience, benefiting all visitors. This can lead to higher traffic, longer visit durations, and better conversion rates.

5 ENHANCED MOBILE COMPATIBILITY

Many accessibility features, such as text alternatives for images, benefit mobile users. With the increasing use of smartphones and tablets for web browsing, an accessible website is more likely to be mobile-friendly, ensuring that your content is easily accessible to a wide range of users.

6 FUTURE-PROOFING YOUR DIGITAL PRESENCE

As the digital landscape evolves, accessibility will become even more critical. By making your website accessible today, you future-proof your online presence, ensuring that it remains relevant and usable in the years to come.

**"THE POWER OF THE WEB IS IN ITS UNIVERSALITY.
ACCESS BY EVERYONE REGARDLESS OF DISABILITY IS AN ESSENTIAL ASPECT".**

TIM BERNERS-LEE, W3C DIRECTOR AND INVENTOR OF THE WORLD WIDE WEB

4.2 Test your website

Now that you know the positive impacts of having an accessible website, as a first step we encourage you to test the accessibility of yours.

You can do this in 2 ways:

1 **TESTING TOOLS**

The WAVE Chrome extension gives everyone a free and secure way to check the majority of web content for accessibility. WAVE is an extension you can install for free on Chrome, Firefox, or Edge. Then you just need to go on the webpage you wish to test and select the extension.

The axe DevTools browser extension is another valuable tool that helps you to discover the web accessibility issues of your website.

2 **USER TESTING**

Get feedback from people with disabilities. Consider involving real users with various impairments to test your site's accessibility and usability.

4.3 10 tips for getting started on web accessibility

In the previous pages, we covered aspects such as contrast, color, the importance of organising the structure of a text, and so on. In this section we are going to illustrate in a practical way how to implement changes on your website to improve accessibility.

The **accessibility of a website** is a vast subject that can require technical expertise. We have selected 10 easy-to-implement tips from the W3C Accessibility Standards Overview and the Accessibility Guidelines produced by Vox Media.

① PROVIDE SUFFICIENT CONTRAST BETWEEN FOREGROUND AND BACKGROUND

The first thing we need to check to ensure that the text is readable is the contrast. Foreground text needs to have sufficient contrast with background colors.

Example: Contrast ratio

✖ Insufficient	✔ Sufficient
Some people cannot read text if there is not sufficient contrast between the text and background. For others, bright colors (high luminance) are not readable; they need low luminance.	Some people cannot read text if there is not sufficient contrast between the text and background. For others, bright colors (high luminance) are not readable; they need low luminance.

Figure 8: Example of a good contrast (on the right side) and one of a bad contrast (on the left side)

Moreover, we should consider that some people with visual impairments need high contrast, while other people need low luminance.

Figure 9: Different types contrast. On the right the text is yellow on a black background. On the left the text is black on a white background.

Therefore it is possible to add a toggle button so that users can choose their color contrast.

Figure 10: 2 different views of the ONAT4ALL website showing 2 types of contrasts

2   DO NOT USE COLOR ALONE TO CONVEY INFORMATION

People do not perceive colors in the same way. As a consequence, information should not be provided using only the color. When using color to differentiate elements, also provide additional identification that does not rely on color perception. For example, use an asterisk in addition to color to indicate required form fields, and use labels to distinguish areas on graphs.

**Figure 11: On the right side is the good example in which the information is given by the color + *.
On the left side is the bad example in which the information is given only by red color.**

3   DON'T RELY ON SENSORY CHARACTERISTICS AS THE SOLE INDICATOR

You should not rely solely on images, shape, size, visual location, orientation, or sound to indicate important instructions for operating or understanding content. Instead, use a combination of positioning, color, and labelling to identify content.

4   PROVIDE EASILY IDENTIFIABLE FEEDBACK

Instructions should be easy to identify. Important feedback that requires user action should be presented in a prominent style. You should provide an error list and add appropriate icons. In fact, it can be frustrating to receive an error notification and not be able to interpret the error message. For example, imagine that you are a person with visual impairments and the error message only informs you to fill in a red field.

Figure 12: Example of an error message inside a form giving clear information on how to solve the problem.

5   USE HEADINGS AND SPACING TO GROUP RELATED CONTENT

When adding text content make sure to make it readable and understandable for all.
Avoid writing too much text without organizing it (headings, paragraphs, etc.). If you have some related content, such as images, videos, make sure to place them in an appropriate space close to the text.

Figure 13: On the right side : example of a correct organisation of items.
On the left : example of a bad organisation of items.

People with visual impairments use assistive technologies, such as screen readers, in order to have the content read aloud. Plus, people who cannot use a mouse will use keyboard navigation. That is why it is important that the content is well structured in headings. In this way you will facilitate the process of finding the information the user is looking for.

6   RESIZE TEXT

Some people need to enlarge web content in order to read it. Some need to change other aspects of text display: font, space between lines, and more.
You can check your website to make sure that when a zoom is applied the text doesn't overlap and the whole page displays correctly.

7   WRITE IN AN UNDERSTANDABLE LANGUAGE

Complex language can create barriers. People with cognitive disabilities may have difficulties in understanding it. To avoid this, you should write in a simple language and use pictograms and icons to better illustrate your content. However, do not use images alone in order to avoid ambiguity and make sure that these images have a sufficient contrast with the background.
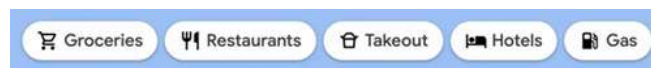
Figure14: Example of descriptive links accompanied by icons.

8 INCLUDE IMAGE AND MEDIA ALTERNATIVES IN YOUR DESIGN

Provide a place in your design for alternatives to your images and media.

For example, you might need:
- Visible links to transcripts of audio.
- Visible links to audio described versions of videos.
- Text along with icons and graphical buttons.
- Captions and descriptions for tables or complex graphs.

9 THE ACCESSIBILITY MENU

An accessibility menu is a function allowing users to open a menu where they can select different options to adjust the website on the basis of their individual needs.
With an accessibility menu, users can change the font size, contrast, and navigation options, among other things. This feature allows users with disabilities to interact with the website more easily, making it more inclusive and accessible.
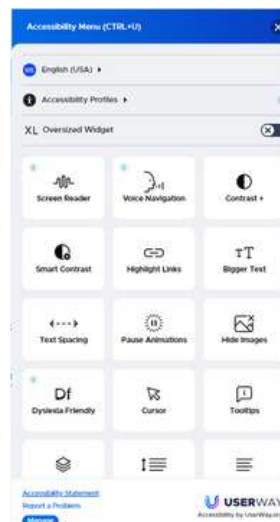
Figure 15: Accessibility menu from User way website

This example comes from the User Way website. It allows the user to select a large choice of options: language, type of impairment, adding a screen reader, voice navigation, choose the contrast, and so on. You can have a look at the website User way to get inspired.
To open the menu you need to click on the 'accessibility icon' as shown in the image below:

10 INTEGRATING ACCESSIBILITY FROM THE VERY BEGINNING

Try to integrate accessibility right from the creation of your site. Accessibility is not a checklist item that should only be considered in certain projects or at the end of a process. These practices must be incorporated every time a change is made to your website.

4.4 Keyboard navigation

WHAT IS KEYBOARD NAVIGATION?

Implementing keyboard navigation for accessible websites is a fundamental aspect of web accessibility. By ensuring that users can navigate and interact with your site using only a keyboard, you make your content accessible to people with various disabilities, including those who may not be able to use a mouse or other pointing devices.

For a website to be truly and fully keyboard-compatible, links, buttons, and forms should be ingrained into native HTML controls by default. These should also follow a logical order on the page to allow users to scan and jump to different content in keyboard focus on the webpage.

HOW TO NAVIGATE WITH A KEYBOARD INSTEAD OF A MOUSE ?

We will provide the basic information on how to navigate in a browser that supports keyboard navigation with the **Tab key** (for example, Firefox, IE, Chrome, and Safari). This will allow you to check if your website is accessible with a keyboard.

- Press the 'Tab' key to move through the elements on the page. You can press 'Shift+Tab' to go backwards.

Figure 16: Images of 'tab' and 'shift' keys

- To move within elements such as drop-down lists and menu bars, press the arrow keys.
- To select a specific item within a drop-down list: tab to the list box, use the arrow keys to move the focus to items, when an item has focus, press the Enter key or Spacebar to select that item.

BEST PRACTICES FOR A KEYBOARD ACCESSIBLE WEBSITE

1 ▸ **Use Semantic HTML**

Start by structuring your content using semantic HTML elements. Use headings, lists, and other structural elements to create a clear and meaningful page structure. This not only helps with keyboard navigation but also benefits screen reader users.

2. All Elements should be Findable & Usable on Keyboard

All of the interactive elements on your website should be able to be activated using only the keyboard. Interactions with elements using the keyboard should effectively have identical outcomes to if it was through a mouse or touch.

3. Clear and visible focus style

A focus indicator is useful to see where you are when navigating a web page in keyboard navigation mode. It is the equivalent of the mouse cursor that allows us to focus on specific elements of interest on a webpage.

If we want to facilitate the navigation inside a website, we have to make sure that elements are focusable. Ensure that all interactive elements, like links, buttons, and form fields, have visible and consistent focus styles. These focus indicators show users where the keyboard focus is, making navigation intuitive.

In the image below you have an example of a correct focus indicator and a wrong one. In the accessible example, there is a list of 3 buttons labeled "Morning, Afternoon, Evening." The focus is on "Afternoon" which is evident by the yellow outline. In the not accessible example, the focus is still on afternoon but all the buttons look the same.
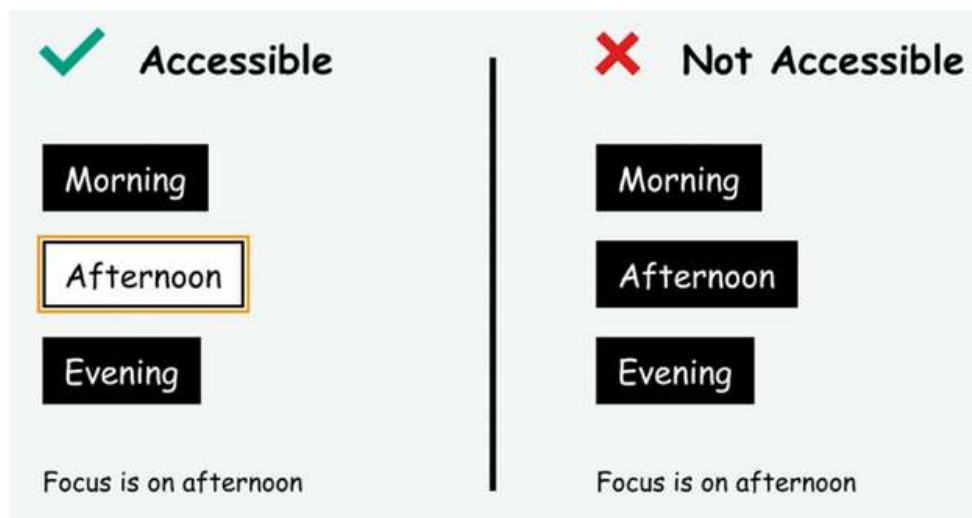
Figure 17: Example of one accessible and one not accessible focus

4. Easy-to-use & Logical Tab Order

Test and establish a logical tab order for your page. Elements should be navigated in a sequence that makes sense, following the visual layout and content flow.

The order of navigation for users on websites should be both intuitive and logical. Visually this focus order appears as navigation following a flow from left to right, top to bottom. When interacting with actual on page elements this would usually work by pages starting with header first, followed by the main navigation menu, page/content navigation and then navigation through the footer.

Remember to keep it simple. Strive for simplicity and consistency in your site's design and navigation. Complex keyboard interactions can be confusing for users, so aim for a straightforward and intuitive experience.

5 Skip to main content functionality

Include skip navigation links at the beginning of your page to allow users to jump directly to the main content, navigation menus, or other critical sections. This can save users time and reduce frustration.

Both images below are screenshots of the website Impulsa Igualdad. On the left you have the upper part of the home page with the logo. On the right you have the upper part of the home page with the logo and a complementary button: 'skip to main content'. This additional button appears when clicking on 'Tab key' on the home page and it allows users to skip to the most important items of the website

Figure 18: Screenshots from Impulsa Igualdad website showing an example of the function 'skip to main content'

6 Add a search engine easily accessible by pressing the tab key

This tool provides an alternative way of navigating by going directly to the page you are looking for without having to go through intermediate pages.

4.5 Form labels

Form labels play crucial roles in making a website accessible to individuals with disabilities, including those who rely on screen readers or other assistive technologies. In fact, form labels provide a text description or name for each input element within a form.

Password: ← Label

Must have at least 6 characters ← Form field
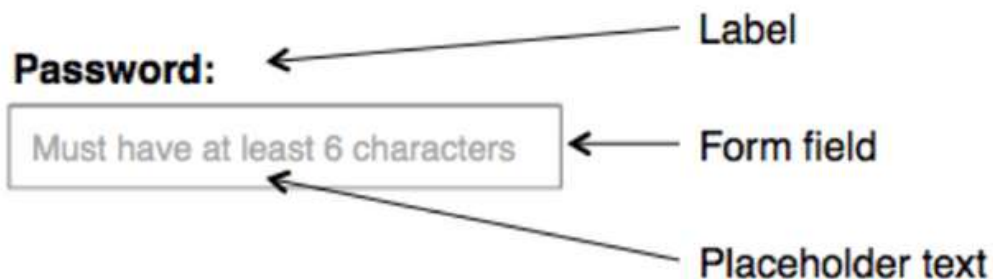
← Placeholder text

Figure 19: Image showing examples of what is a label, a form field and a placeholder text.

WHY FORM LABELS ARE IMPORTANT FOR WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY?

IMPROVED SCREEN READER COMPREHENSION

1

Screen readers read out the content of web pages to users, and when form elements have proper labels, they can convey the meaning and context of the input fields. Users hear the label when they navigate to an input field, making it clear what information or action is required.

ENHANCED KEYBOARD NAVIGATION

2

Labels are typically clickable, allowing users to select the associated input field by clicking the label. This feature improves keyboard navigation and usability for people with mobility impairments who rely on keyboard inputs.

ERROR IDENTIFICATION

3

Form labels can also assist in error identification. When a user submits a form with errors, the error message can reference the specific field with the issue by mentioning the label text. This makes it easier for users to locate and correct errors.

4.6 How to design accessible web forms

KEEP LABELS CLEAR AND DESCRIPTIVE

Make sure that your labels are clear, concise, and descriptive. They should convey the purpose or meaning of the associated form control. Avoid vague or ambiguous labels that could confuse users.

AVOID PLACEHOLDER TEXT AS LABELS

Placeholder text should not be used as a replacement for labels. While placeholders can provide additional information, they disappear when users start entering data, leaving no reference for users. Always use a separate <label> element in addition to placeholders if needed.

Figure 20: On the right bad example showing a description that disappear once the user start filling in the form. On the left good example showing labels that stay there also while the user is filling in the form.

ENSURE SUFFICIENT CONTRAST

Make sure that labels have sufficient contrast with the background to enhance readability. Proper contrast is important for users with low vision or color blindness.

KEYBOARD ACCESSIBILITY

Ensure that all form elements are keyboard accessible. Users should be able to navigate through the form using the "Tab" key and submit it with the "Enter" key

4.7 CTA buttons

WHAT IS A CTA BUTTON?

A CTA button is a marketing element in a website that encourages users to take action.
For example, traditional CTA buttons are "sign up now", "add to cart", "start a free trial", and so on.
CTA buttons are typically visually distinctive, using text, color, and design to make them stand out on a web page.

When designing CTA buttons with accessibility in mind, consider the following best practices to ensure that they are inclusive and usable by all visitors, including those with disabilities:

- ### USE ACTION-ORIENTED & DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

It is recommended to use active verbs to encourage the user to take action. A vague 'learn more' is not very compelling for users nor is it accessible as it does not provide enough context for users using assistive technology that looks at the links on a page.

By writing a specific and descriptive action, you can better capture the user's attention and more accurately set up users' expectations for what they will get by selecting your CTA.

- ### COLOR AND CONTRAST

Ensure that the CTA button's color has sufficient contrast with its background to make it easily distinguishable. Use color combinations that meet accessibility standards, as outlined in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

- ### BUTTON DESIGN

Make CTA buttons visually distinctive with a design that sets them apart from other elements on the page. Consider using a contrasting color, larger text, and clear borders to make them stand out.

- ### KEYBOARD ACCESSIBILITY

Ensure that CTA buttons are keyboard accessible. Users should be able to navigate to the button using the "Tab" key and activate it with the "Enter" key. Test to ensure that keyboard focus and interaction with the button work as expected.

- ### FOCUS INDICATION

Provide a clear and visible focus indicator for CTA buttons. When users navigate with a keyboard, they should be able to see which element has focus. Consider using a border, shadow, or change in color to indicate focus.

- ### SEMANTIC HTML

Use semantic HTML elements like the <button> element to create CTA buttons. This ensures that assistive technologies can identify and interpret the button's purpose correctly.

- ### CONSISTENT PLACEMENT

Maintain a consistent placement and layout for CTA buttons. Users with cognitive or learning disabilities may benefit from predictable button locations.

- ### TEXT SIZE AND READABILITY

Ensure that the text on CTA buttons is of an appropriate size and easily readable. It should not be too small or crowded, making it difficult for users with low vision to read.

- ### SCREEN READER COMPATIBILITY

Test CTA buttons with screen readers to ensure that the button's text and any associated content are announced correctly. The button's purpose should be conveyed clearly to screen reader users.

By implementing these best practices, you can create CTA buttons that are accessible and user-friendly for all visitors to your website, including those with disabilities.

This inclusive approach ensures that your website can effectively engage a broad and diverse audience.
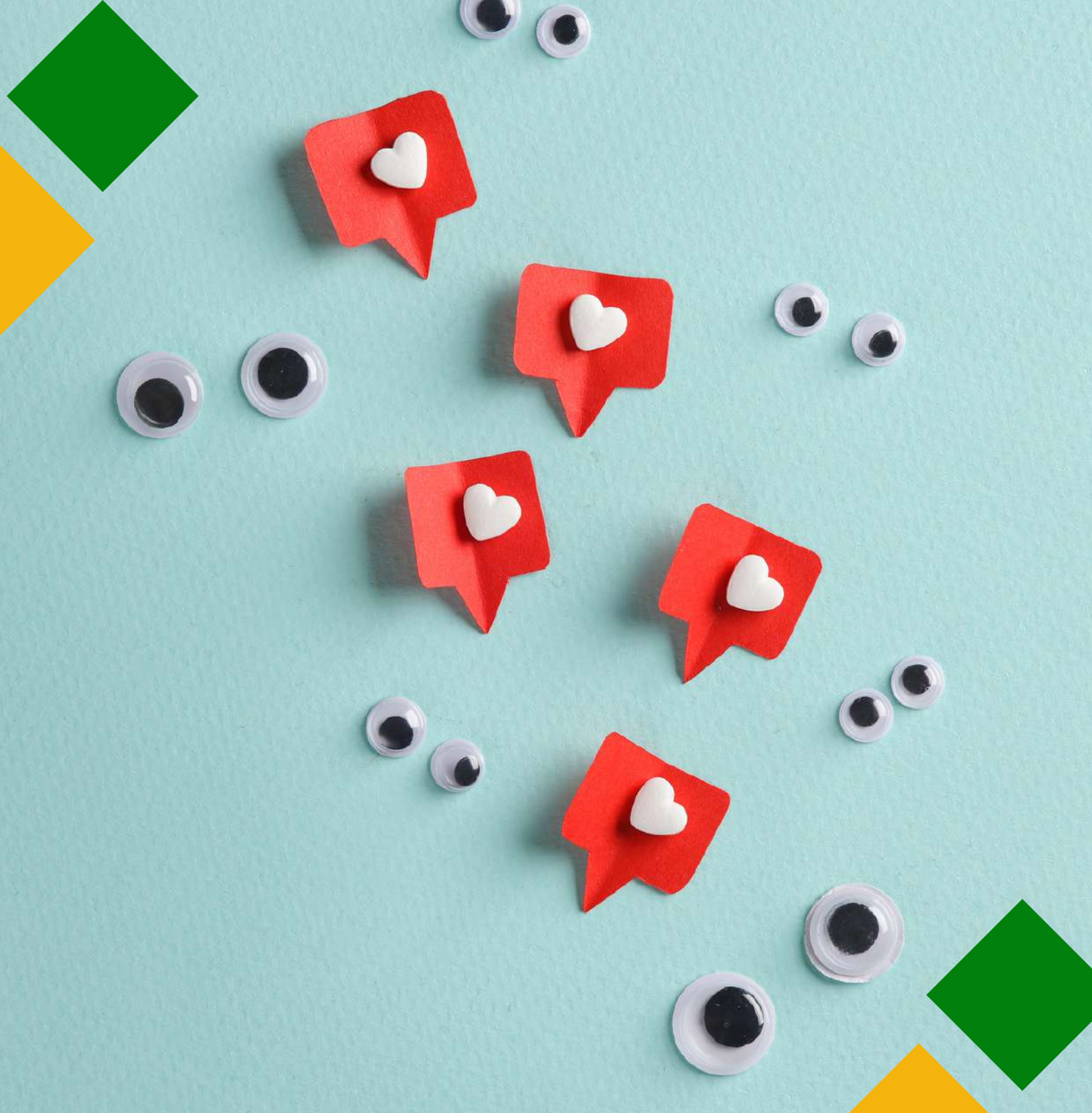
5.SOCIAL MEDIA

5.1 General tips

Social media platforms have become a daily fixture of our everyday lives, with almost 5 billion people having access and using these tools to communicate, socialise and exchange information. Among these users, there is also a relevant percentage that is composed of people with disabilities, elderly and people with temporary impairments. In this instance, accessibility means making your pages and content something that everyone, these categories included, can freely and independently use.

The following pages contain a series of techniques and tools that you can use to enhance your social media content and make it so that it can reach the widest audience possible. The general tips can be applied to every platform but you will also find specific sections dedicated to some specific features of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Youtube.
However, please keep in mind that these platforms are subject to frequent updates and that the information regarding them could have changed since the publication of this toolkit.

Writing a post

When writing an accessible post you should take into consideration several factors, from the content you wish to publish to its basic structure.
Let's start with the structure, in particular the formatting of your post.

First of all, you have to remember that it will be read left to right or right to left in a single column by assistive devices and programs. In general, it would be recommendable to try to keep the text left-aligned. You should also be careful in your use of accents, punctuation and capitalisation. Their use can make quite a difference for screen readers.

Once you decide how to distribute the text on your post, you need to think about the font. In general, it is better if you use easily readable fonts (see the list of fonts presented in part 3 of this document), preferably in bigger font sizes.
As for the colour of your text, be sure that there is high contrast between the background and your text and try not to convey any key message uniquely through colour.

Another useful tip is to **use both special characters and all caps with moderation**, especially the all caps because they are usually seen by screen readers

as acronyms.

Once the font and the structure have been selected and curated, it is time to write your post. When you write, try to be as clear and concise as possible, prioritising core information and using a plain and inclusive language.
To keep the layout clearer, put your hashtags (#) and @ tags at the end of your post and write them using either camelCase (for example #accessibleSocialMedia) or PascalCase (for example #AccessibleSocialMedia).
At first glance these two modalities may seem almost identical, however, if with the PascalCase you capitalise every word that constitutes the hashtag, with the camelCase you have to keep in lowercase the first letter of the first word that comprises your tag and capitalise only the initials of the ones that follow. Remember also not to exaggerate with the use of hashtags (it would be advisable to use a maximum of two).

Same discourse can be done in regard to the use of emojis. They should be used with moderation and never be interspaced within your sentences nor be used, if identical, in a row. In the case of emojis, it would also be advisable to check their meaning before adding them to your post (this can be done on sites such as Emojipedia).
Moreover, try not to change the colour on customizable **emoji** you use unless a specific skin tone is necessary for context (custom skin tones get extra descriptor information in addition to their base identifier and this could make things confusing for people using screen readers). And finally, **avoid the use of the American Standard Code** for Information Interchange (ASCII) art illustrations on your posts because they are not accessible for anyone using a screen reader or text-to-speech program.

Using links and Hypertext

If you need to include a link in your post, try to keep it short and understandable (to make things easier, you can use a URL shortener such as RB.GY or Bit.ly). Avoid using the "Click here" formula to signal a link, use descriptive call-to-action phrasing instead and try to also add a description of the content linked so that people know what to expect once they click to open the content (for instance [IMAGE], [VIDEO], [AUDIO], and so on).

Images & GIFs

The best tool you can use in order to make an image or a GIF accessible is to include an image description in the body of your post or an alternative text. If you are sharing an image posted by another user, you can add a brief description in the body of your own post or in the comments section. When you describe the image or the GIF, be sure to be accurate and concise.

Try to highlight only the elements of the picture that are relevant to your post and to use clear and concise language.

In the case of GIFs, you should also make sure that they stop playing after 5 seconds or that the user has the possibility to pause them themselves. Moreover, be sure that they do not contain rapid blinking or flashing because this could constitute a problem for certain audiences.

Alternative Text

As mentioned above, this is a key tool to post images on your pages. You have two possibilities:
- Use the AI automatically generated alt-text that can be found on the app of your choice, or
- Write it yourself.

In the former instance, be sure to always double check if it is appropriate for your purpose or correct and to edit it accordingly if it is not.

In the second case, you should provide clear, concise and objective descriptions (the common guideline is set at 120-125 characters) and prefer the use of the present tense and action verbs.

As for the content of the description itself, do not use this space for adding information that is not pertinent with the picture itself (marketing, credits, etc…) and be sure to provide a context for the picture.

Be also sure not to repeat information that is already written in some other part of the post as it would be redundant (but if there is some text in your picture, report it in the alt-text too).

And do not worry, starting your description with formulas such as: "This is an image/graphic of…" is not required.

Videos

The best tools to use when using a video on your social media account are captions, audio descriptions and transcriptions.

Captions are probably the most commonly used among the 3. If you decide to use them, be sure to use an appropriate font (for instance Sans Serif) and dimension (12-14). Put them in the lower-centre part of the screen and use a maximum of 32 characters per line and a maximum of two lines for each caption. Be also sure that they are not covered by platform content and to ensure that there is high contrast between them and the background (for example a white text on a black background).

If you use AI generated captions (for example on YouTube), be sure to check them because they can be wrong or inaccurate.

If you use an **audio description** instead, be sure to select what you include according to the context. Moreover, always remember that good timing and volume are key factors. The track must not overlap with the dialogue or other effects and it should be audible. Be also sure to describe the context of the scene.

As a general tip, always remember to include a warning at the beginning of your video if you used some lights or flashing effects that could be dangerous for some audiences.

5.2 Facebook f ⟫

When creating your page, remember to write all the information you can about your organisation so that you can be easily recognised by everyone. In general, when you create a post for Facebook, remember to follow the general tips listed above. But here are some indications on how to use some of the accessibility tools available on this specific platform.

If you are working from your desktop and have a professional account, you can activate the alternative text following these steps:

> ACCESS YOUR META BUSINESS SPACE AND GO TO "CREATE A POST" (FIG. 21.A - 21.B).

> ONCE THERE, PREPARE YOUR TEXT AND ALL THE OTHER ELEMENTS NECESSARY TO YOUR POST AND THEN ADD YOUR IMAGE (FIG.21.C).

> ONCE YOU HAVE UPLOADED YOUR FILE, CLICK ON "EDIT" (FIG. 21.D).

> AND THEN SELECT THE "ALT-TEXT" OPTION THAT WILL APPEAR ON THE LEFT SIDE MENU OF THE WINDOW (FIG. 21.E).

> NOW YOU CAN WRITE YOUR ALT-TEXT IN THE DEDICATED BOX AND CONCLUDE THE PROCESS BY CLICKING ON THE "APPLY" BUTTON (FIG. 21.F).

Just remember that if you are using a business profile, you cannot add the alt-text to an already published post by editing it on your Meta Business Space.

Figure 21.A
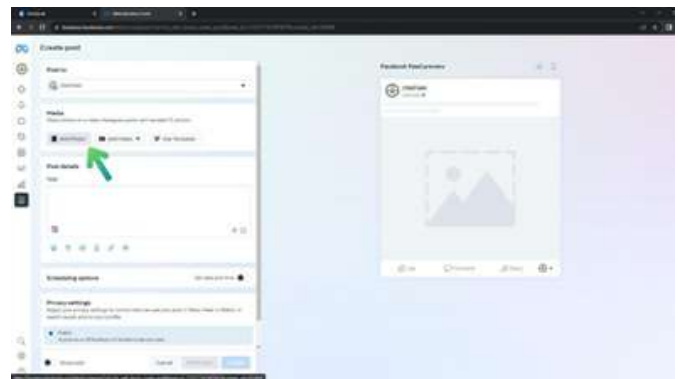
Figure 21.B

Figure 21.C
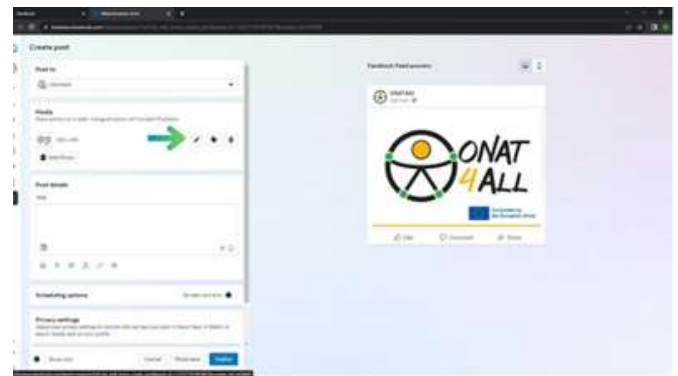
Figure 21.D
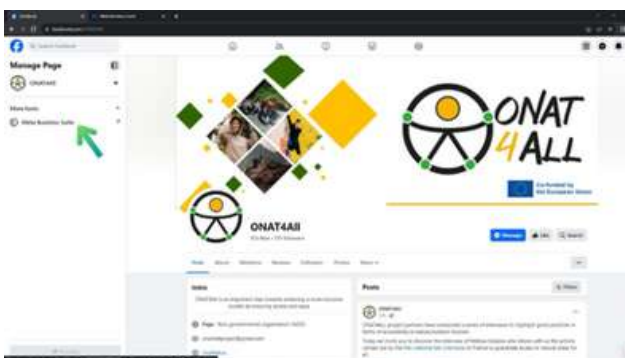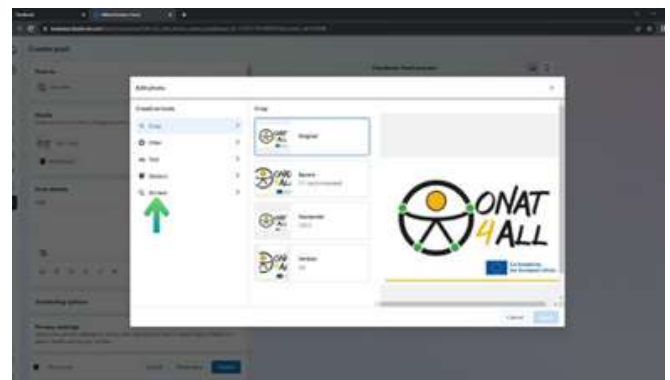
Figure 21.E
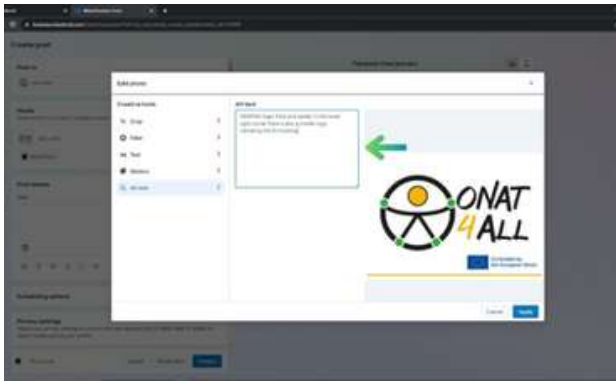
Figure 21.F

If, instead, you do not have a business account, you can add alt-text by clicking "Edit" in the upper left corner of an image before posting it to a Facebook page, profile, or group, then select the "Alternative text" that appears on the menu left-hand side.

On this same side you will notice the alt-text automatically generated by the app. You can either use that or write your own in the box directly below. In the mobile app, the alt text field is found under the three dots in the top right corner of an already uploaded image.

In regard to videos, in order to add captions (the platform supports SubRip > .srt file) or equip them with auto-generated ones:

- You will have to click on "Video options" on the video thumbnail once the video has been uploaded.
- Then, you will have to click "Add captions" on the left and then select which kind of captions you want
- When uploading SubRip files, be sure to respect their naming convention: "filename.[language code]_[country code].srt", with the language in lowercase and the country in uppercase.

5.3 Twitter/X

As for Facebook, you should start by paying attention to your username. In order for it to be easily accessible, avoid the use of emojis and creative fonts and always write all the information you can about your organisation when creating your page.
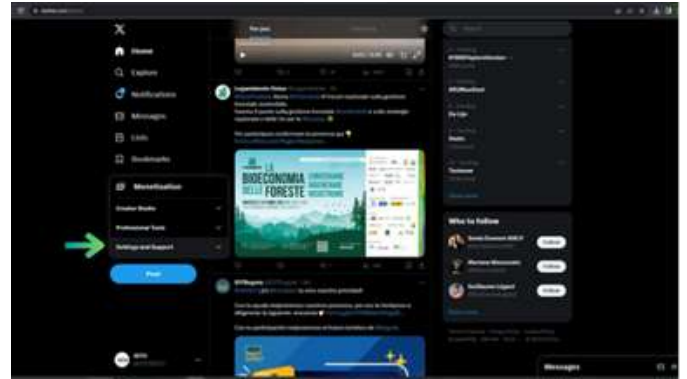
Once your page on the app is brought up to speed in regard to accessibility standards, it is time to talk about tweets. The textual part of your message should follow the general guidelines mentioned above, but there are some specificities regarding images and videos you should pay attention to.

As you probably already know, Twitter/X presents a character limit so, if the descriptive information about the image you are posting exceeds the available characters, it would be better to create a thread.

Moreover, if you post a series of pictures in a single tweet that transmit the same information, it would be more efficient to put the whole description in only one picture leaving the other ones to be simply read as decorative.

Just as Facebook does, Twitter/X is equipped with accessibility tools like the possibility to add alternative text to your pictures. In order to activate this feature, independently from the device you are using, you can click the "Add description" that can be found below an uploaded image or "Edit" (fig. 22 C). This same process can be used to add this feature to GIFs (but only if they use the ones already present in the build-in library of the platform).

Once this process is completed, the image will be accompanied by a visible alt-text badge that will appear on the lower left corner of the image itself. Once you click on this badge, you can read the image description.

Figure 22.A

Figure 22.B

Figure 23.A

Figure 22.C
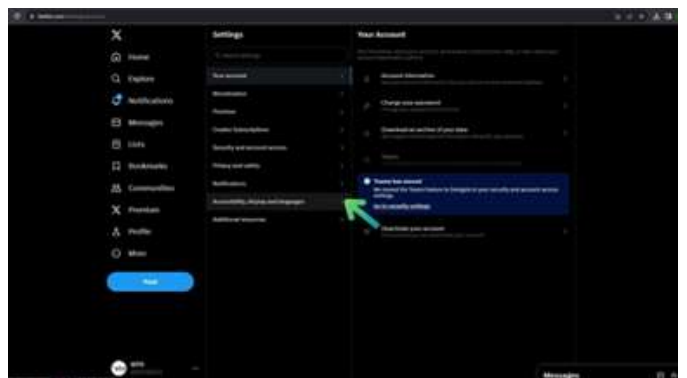
Figure 23.B

Figure 22.D

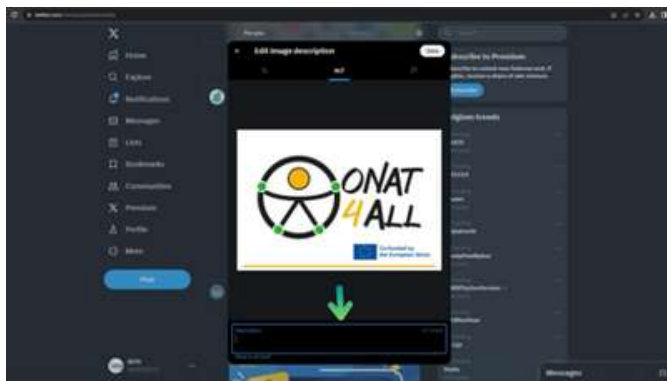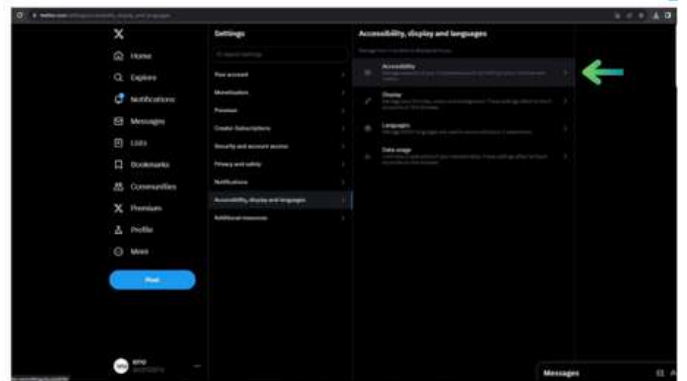**Figures 22.A to 22.D: How to use alt-text on Twitter**

Figure 23.C

If you want to be sure not to forget to add the alt-text to every tweet, Twitter/X has an image description reminder that can be turned on in the platform's accessibility settings (fig. 23.A - 23.D).

When this feature is activated and you post a tweet without an image description, the app will automatically remind you to fill out the alt-text field before publishing the tweet.
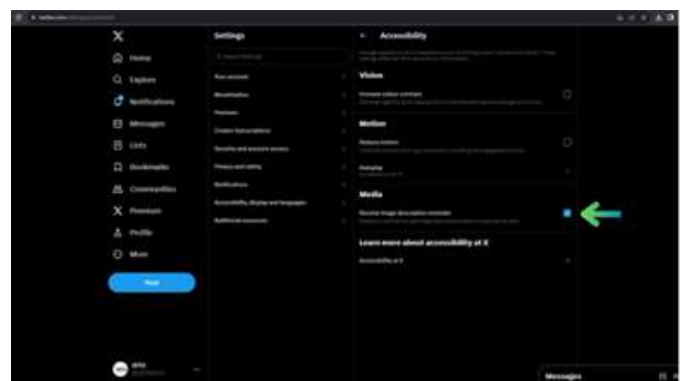
Figure 23.D

Figures 23.A to 23.D: How to activate Twitter's image description reminder

In regard to videos, if they are not pre-equipped with captions, it is possible to use the Media studio tool (or an equivalent app if you do not have a verified account to access this feature) to add them. To access, go to studio.x.com and log in using your Twitter/X credentials (you can also go to X.com, click on the "More" button within the side menu and then click on the "Media Studio" button).

Additionally, the iOS version of this platform allows users to create voice messages which can also be enhanced by automatically generated subtitles. To activate this feature, tap the "Post compose" icon and then the "Voice" icon. To start recording your message, click on the red record button, click on "Done" once you have finished recording. The maximum length of a voice message is 2 minutes and 20 seconds (if this time is exceeded, do not worry, the app will automatically start a thread).

5.4 Instagram

When creating your profile, remember to write all the information you can about your organisation so that you can be easily recognised by everyone.

The main means of communication on Instagram are media, be they pictures, reels or brief videos. So, how can you make them more accessible on this platform? Let us start with the pictures.

Like the other platforms, Instagram gives you the possibility to add alternative text to your posts. As a general rule, considering that you can add up to 10 images per post, if you post a series of pictures that all transmit the same information, the alt-text of every picture should contain the information pertaining to the whole group.

Onto more practical matters, if you want to activate this feature, the process is different according to the device you are using.

If you are working from a **mobile phone:**

ONCE YOU HAVE CHOSEN AN IMAGE TO POST AND MODIFIED IT ACCORDING TO YOUR PREFERENCES (FIG.24.A - 24.B), ON THE FINAL PUBLISHING SCREEN, YOU CAN ADD ALT-TEXT BY CLICKING ON "ADVANCED SETTINGS" AND THEN SELECT THE "WRITE ALT TEXT" LOCATED UNDER THE "ACCESSIBILITY" TAB.

THEN THE FINAL SCREEN WILL SHOW A FIELD FOR EACH UPLOADED IMAGE WHERE IMAGE DESCRIPTIONS CAN BE WRITTEN (FIG.24.B).

TO ADD THE ALT-TEXT TO AN OLD POST, IT IS SUFFICIENT TO CLICK ON THE THREE DOTS ON THE UPPER RIGHT CORNER, SELECT "MODIFY" AND THEN CLICK ON THE "MODIFY ALT-TEXT" ON THE LOWER RIGHT CORNER OF THE PICTURE.
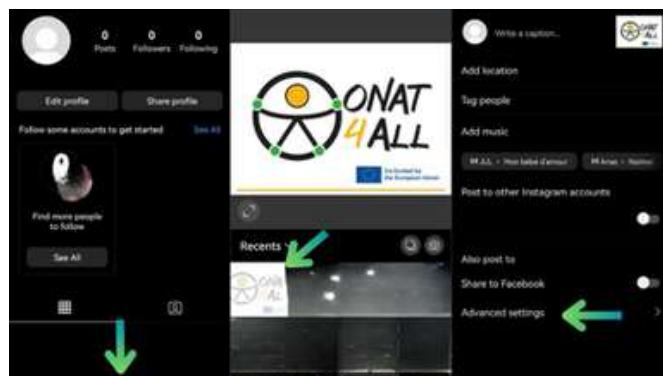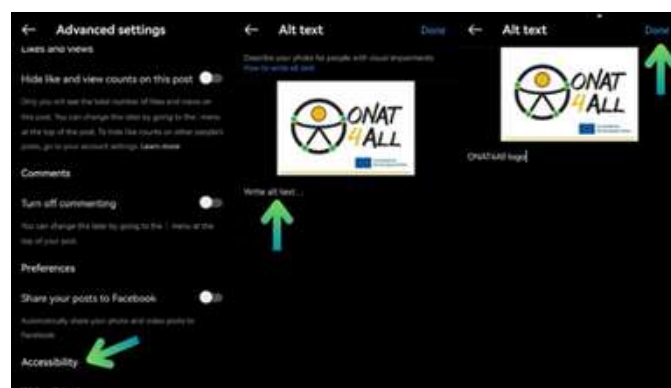

Figure 24.A

Figure 24.B

Figures 24.A to 24.B : How to use alt-text on Instagram (Mobile)

If, instead, you are working from your **computer**:

ADD AN ALT-TEXT BY CLICKING ON THE "ACCESSIBILITY" OPTION LOCATED BELOW THE CAPTION AREA ON THE FINAL PUBLISHING SCREEN (FIG.25.C).

ONCE SELECTED, THE EXPANDED VIEW WILL DISPLAY EACH UPLOADED IMAGE WITH AN ALT TEXT FIELD NEXT TO THEM WHERE IMAGE DESCRIPTIONS CAN BE WRITTEN (FIG. 25.D).
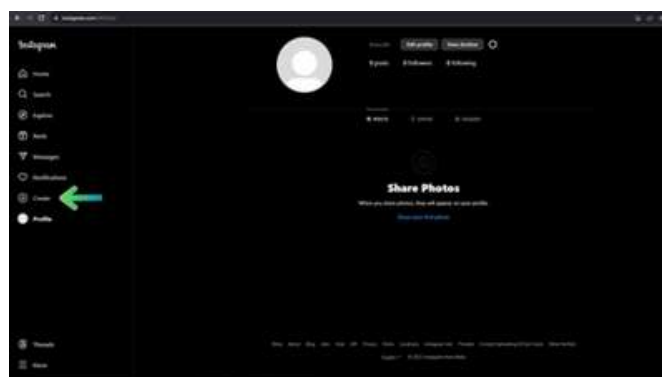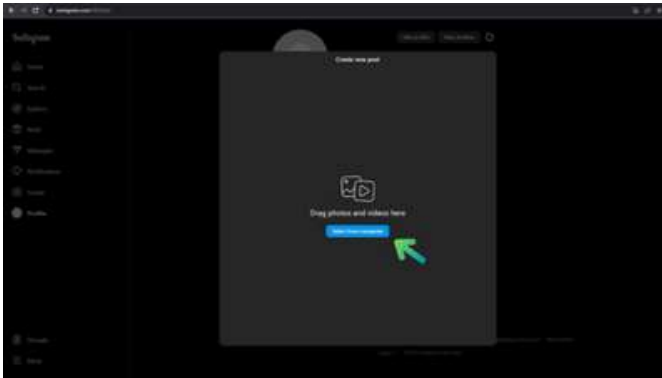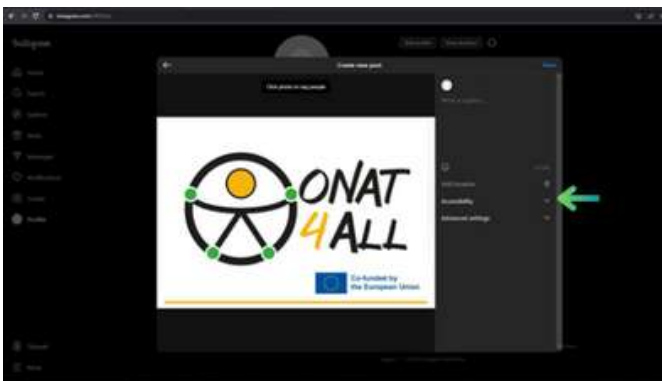

Figure 25.A

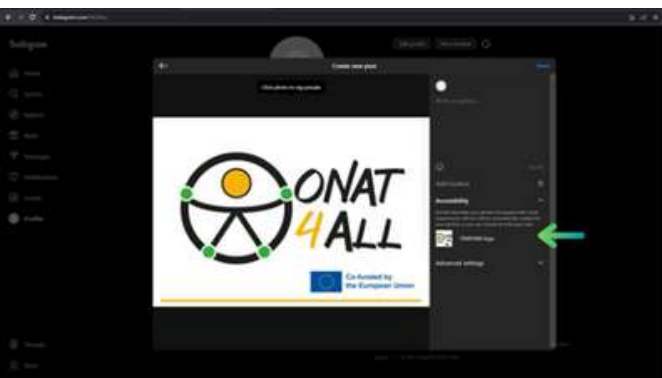**Figure 25.B**

Figure 25.C

Figure 25.D

Figures 25.A to 25.D: How to use alt-text on Instagram (Desktop)

In regard to videos and reels, the possibility to add captions or subtitles is not available on every device yet.

In general, you can follow the first steps for publication (selection of the content and general editing) and then select "Advanced settings". Here you can choose to enable the auto-generated subtitles option. On mobiles, there is also the possibility to modify the subtitles by clicking on the three dots visible on the lower right corner of the reel, select "Manage" and then "Modify".
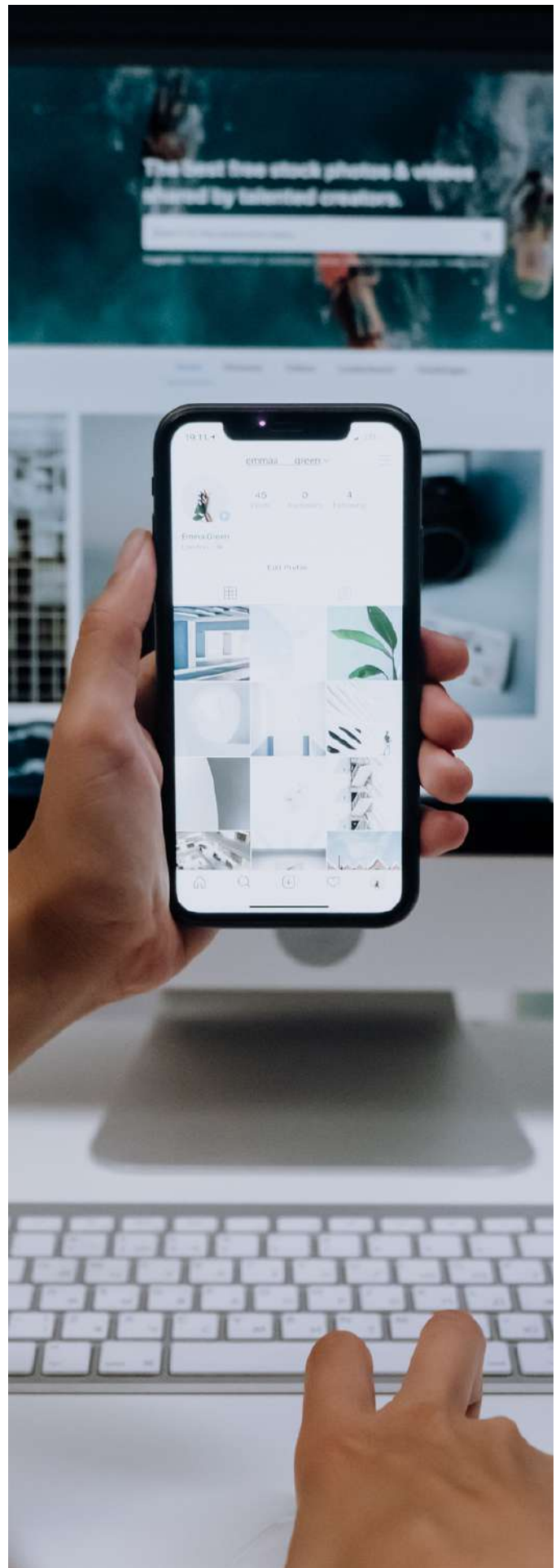
5.5 YouTube

Remember to always write all the information you can about your organisation when creating your profile to be as easily identifiable as possible.

As you well know, YouTube's core feature is the possibility to share videos, be they "stories" or longer productions.

Now, how can you enhance them so that they can be accessible to a larger audience?

You can work to achieve this objective both during the production of your content, hiring a sign language interpreter for the shooting for example, or in post production. In this case, you can upload a video with already embedded subtitles.

This process is more costly in both time and resources, but allows for better control in terms of style, timing and text. However, remember that, being the captions or subtitles embedded within the video, the viewer will not be able to eventually deactivate or hide them. You also have the option of working directly on YouTube Studio.

To **add subtitles** to your video from this platform, you can work even after you upload your video file. Once you have already published your video, go to its "Details" section (fig. 26).

Figure 26

Once you are here, you can proceed in two ways:

- On one hand, you can click on the "Subtitles" tab on the left side of the screen (fig. 27.A), this will bring you to a dedicated page where you can manage all the subtitles for your video. Once you add a language, you can click on the "Add" in the subtitles column for that language and either download your own subtitles file, type it manually or opt to use auto-generated subtitles (fig. 27.B -27.C).
- On the other hand, you can also click on the "Subtitles" tab on the right of your screen (fig. 27.D) and proceed to upload or type your subtitles directly from there (fig. 27.E).
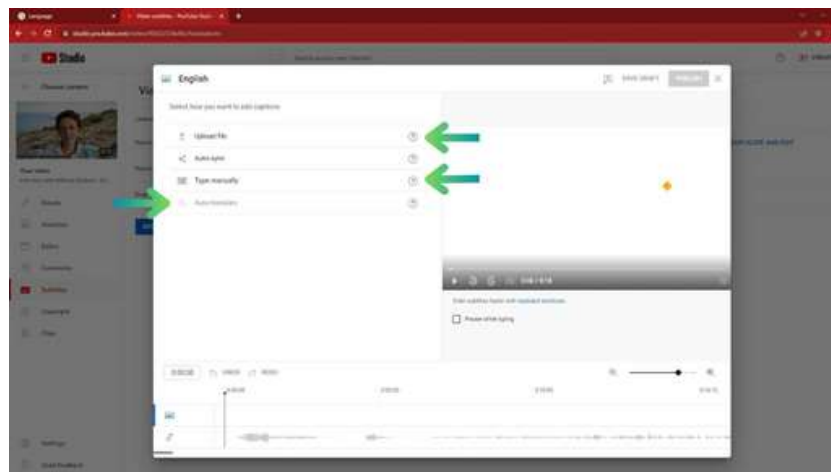
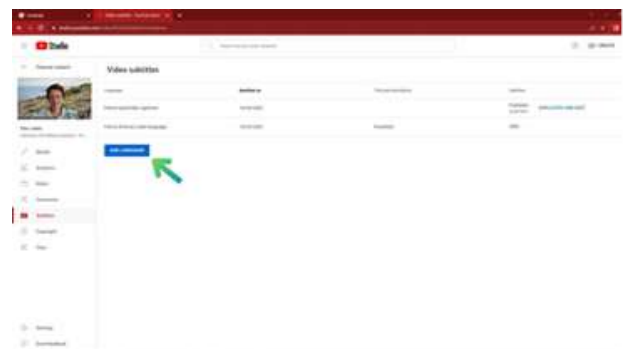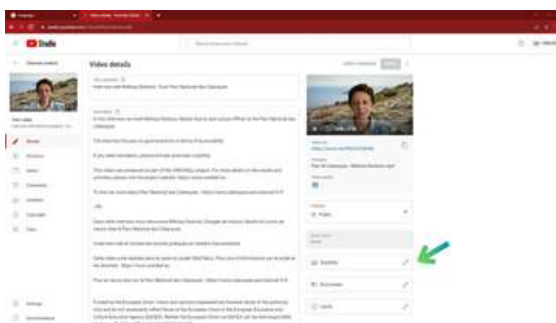

Figure 27.A

Figure 27.B

Figure 27.C

Figure 27.D

Figure 27.E

Figures 27.A to 27.E: How to activate subtitles on Youtube

6.TIPS FOR AN ACCESSIBLE MARKETING CAMPAIGN

6.1 Introduction

When it comes to marketing, your aim will be to reach as many potential customers as possible. When planning a marketing campaign, it is important from both a practical and ethical point of view, the importance of marketing to potential customers of all abilities.

Remember 'Embracing accessibility is not only a legal requirement but also a moral and ethical imperative'.

6.2 Looking back at previous sections

In this toolkit, you have learnt how to structure your content so that users understand how appropriate the content is for them and how to prioritise the most important information. Keep in mind the 'Inverted Pyramid Method' when planning your structure and content. Remember to use short paragraphs and sentences. Remember the importance of headings to convey and organise the structure of your content. Keep your heading structure consistent.

Avoid using certain fonts and texts. Use clear simple language and do not assume that everyone knows what your content is about. Remember to avoid abbreviations and unnecessary excess words. Use supporting images and graphics to facilitate explanations.

Accessible text formatting is crucial for ensuring that content is readable and navigable by a diverse audience, including individuals with disabilities.

Remember to keep these aspects in mind:
- THE FONT SIZE AND TYPE
- THE CONTRAST
- THE LINE SPACING DISTANCE
- SPARINGLY USE BOLD AND ITALIC
- TEXT ALIGNMENT
- AVOIDANCE OF USING ALL CAPITAL LETTERS FOR LARGE BLOCKS OF TEXT
- DO NOT RELY ON COLOUR TO CONVEY INFORMATION
- AVOID TEXT IN IMAGES
- ENSURE YOUR CONTENT IS READABLE ON VARIOUS DEVICES AND SCREEN SIZES
- HYPERLINK STYLING AND WHEN TO USE IT
- MAINTAIN A CONSISTENT FORMATTING STYLE
- USE BULLET POINTS TO BREAK DOWN INFORMATION INTO DIGESTIBLE CHUNKS
- ENSURE TABLES ARE CLEAR AND ACCESSIBLE

When providing links remember the importance of providing significant links in an accessible way.

The key to understanding where a link will lead is the text of the link itself. Keep the links short and descriptive.

Avoid saying things like *"Click Here"*. It can be useful to use a separate section to list links in bullet point form, rather than cramming a lot of links into your content. Use relevant keywords in the clickable text of your link. This also really helps your Search Engine Optimization (SEO).

When it comes to Mobile Accessibility, clear link text improves the touch targets usability. Providing clear links contributes to a more inclusive and universally usable digital environment.

Pay attention when creating Accessible Word documents, PDF's, Power Point Presentations and Excel Spreadsheets. Use Tools like the Microsoft Accessibilty Checker to check all of these and to find issues and get suggested solutions.

Remember that Accessible design involves creating marketing materials and contents that can be easily understood, navigated and interacted with by individuals of varying abilities.

When you prioritise Accessibility you expand your audience, enhance your brand's image and contribute to a more inclusive and equitable digital experience.

Providing alternative text (alt text) is another essential aspect in accessible design. Alt text ensures your content is inclusive. If your image contains text, make sure the text is easy to read with high contrast between text and background

WebAim is a tool you can use to check colour contrast. It is also very important to test your website with a screen reader or accessible evaluation tool to ensure that your Alt text is correctly implemented.

As you will have seen in all sections of this toolkit, colour and contrast are pivotal elements in inclusive design. The Web Content Accessibilty Guidelines (WCAG) is a useful tool to follow for specific contrast ratios.

Remember to avoid flashing or overly bright animation that can trigger seizures in individuals with epilepsy. It is also really important to remember to take into account and be aware of cultural and contextual factors when choosing colours.

The key to inclusive design is to prioritise user experience and ensure that your design choices make your content accessible to a broad range of people.

When it comes to your Website, we invite you to look back over the '10 Tips for getting started on web accessibility' provided in this toolkit. Remember the importance of integrating accessibility from the very beginning.

Key Board Navigation is very important as shown in this toolkit. The best practices for a keyboard accessible website are:

- TO USE SEMANTIC HTML
- ALL ELEMENTS SHOULD BE FINDABLE AND USABLE ON THE KEYBOARD
- CLEAR AND VISIBLE FOCUS STYLE
- EASY TO USE AND LOGICAL TAB ORDER
- SKIP TO MAIN CONTENT FUNCTIONALITY
- ADD A SEARCH ENGINE THAT IS EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY PRESSING THE TAB KEY

Remember the importance of designing your CTA buttons with accessibility in mind. Web Content Accessible Guidelines (WCAG) is useful again here in this area.

Tools such as The Wave Chrome Extension and the ave DevTools browser extension are valuable tools to text the accessibility of your website.

When it comes to Social Media, you will have found lots of useful tips in this toolkit in relation to Facebook, Twitter/X, Instagram and Youtube. Some of them include :

- WHAT TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION FROM THE STRUCTURE TO THE FORMAT OF YOUR POSTS ;
- THE USE OF LINKS AND HYPERTEXT ;
- IMAGES AND GIFS ;
- ALTERNATIVE TEXT ;
- VIDEOS ;
- CREATING A POST ON FACEBOOK USING META BUSINESS SPACE ;
- PAYING ATTENTION TO YOUR USERNAME, ESPECIALLY ON TWITTER ;
- BEING AWARE OF WHAT EMOJIS YOU USE. CHECK EMOJIPEDIA FOR CORRECT USE OF EMOJIS ;
- AVOID THE AMERICAN STANDARD CODE FOR INFORMATION INTERCHANGE (ASCII) AS THEY ARE NOT FULLY ACCESSIBLE.

Using the tips and guidelines provided in the previous chapter of this Toolkit will greatly enhance your accessibility when using Social Media.

6.3 10 tips for creating accessible marketing campaigns

To close this toolkit, we will look at **10 tips** for creating accessible marketing campaigns.

Start Early

Accessibility should be considered from the beginning. Do not treat it as an afterthought. Plan for it during the campaign's early stages to avoid overlooking important aspects.

Representation Matters

Ensure diverse representation in your marketing materials. Include people with disabilities in your visuals and messaging. This not only promotes inclusivity but also resonates with a broader audience.

Pay attention to website accessibility

Your website is often the first point of interaction between your brand and potential customers. Ensure that your website is accessible to everyone, including individuals with disabilities. We invite you to follow the advice in this toolkit, but you can also obtain the help of professionals who can assist you in designing or updating your website.

Legible Content

Make sure your ad and product descriptions are accessible. Use a legible font, easy-to-read color schemes, and proper color contrast. Please refer to the previous pages of this toolkit for more information.

Responsive design

Optimise your marketing materials for different devices and screen sizes. Responsive design not only enhances the user experience but also ensures that individuals using various assistive technologies, such as screen readers or voice commands, can easily access and navigate your content.

Social Media Accessibility

Social media is a powerful tool for reaching a broad audience. Ensure that your social media content is accessible by adding alt text to images, providing captioning for videos, and using inclusive language. Many social media platforms also offer accessibility features. Take advantage of these tools to enhance the user experience.

Accessible Email Marketing

If email marketing is part of your strategy, ensure that your emails are designed with accessibility in mind. Use a clear and concise layout, provide descriptive text for images, and use readable fonts and colors. Plus, consider things like video captions and podcast transcripts, use a simple layout and presentation, avoid technical language, include clear instructions when necessary, and steer clear of distracting animation. Make sure your email is easy to navigate, break up text into smaller sections, and avoid precise actions that would be difficult for someone with tremors or who is using a mouth stick. You can consider offering a text-only version for those who may have difficulty with HTML emails.

Clear Messaging

Keep your messaging clear and concise. Avoid jargon or complex language. Use straightforward language that everyone can understand.

Test with Focus Groups

Test your ads with randomised focus groups to eliminate biases. Sometimes, we are too close to a project to see what others see. Gather feedback and outside perspectives to improve your campaign.

Educate Your Team

Ensure that your team is aware of the principles of accessibility. Provide training on creating accessible content, using inclusive language, and understanding the importance of diverse representation in marketing materials. An educated team is crucial for maintaining a consistent commitment to accessibility across all campaigns.

6.4 Essential tools and strategies

Here are some of those essential tools and strategies to create an accessible marketing campaign that caters to a diverse audience:

ALT TEXT GENERATORS:

Use tools like ImageAlt or Alt Text Checker to generate descriptive alt text for images. Alt text ensures that screen readers convey the content of images to visually impaired users.

COLOUR CONTRAST CHECKERS

Tools like WebAIM's Color Contrast Checker help you verify that text and background colors meet accessibility standards (for instance, WCAG guidelines).

SCREEN READER TESTING:

Test your website and marketing materials using screen readers like NVDA (for Windows) or VoiceOver (for macOS/iOS). Understand how your content is presented to users who rely on screen readers.

KEYBOARD NAVIGATION TESTING:

Use keyboard navigation to explore your website. Ensure that all interactive elements (buttons, links, forms) are accessible via keyboard alone. Tools like Axe Dev Tool can help identify keyboard accessibility issues.

HEADINGS AND SEMANTIC STRUCTURE:

Maintain a logical heading structure (H1, H2, etc.) in your content. Headings provide context and improve navigation. Tools like WAVE can highlight missing or misused headings.

ACCESSIBLE SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS:

Platforms like Facebook Accessibility and Twitter Accessibility provide guidelines for creating accessible posts. Use features like alt text for images and captioning for videos.

PDF ACCESSIBILITY CHECKERS

If you share PDFs, use tools like Adobe Acrobat Pro to create accessible PDFs. Ensure proper tagging, alt text, and readable fonts.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE TOOLS

Tools like Grammarly can help you identify biassed or exclusive language. Use inclusive language that respects diverse identities and backgrounds.

Remember, accessibility benefits everyone, not just those with disabilities.
By incorporating these tools and practices, you'll create a more inclusive and effective marketing campaign.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines**

- **Comunicare in modo Accessibile nei Social Network - Video (IT)**

- **Social Media Accessibility Strategies - Video**

- **Accessibility Guidelines. Vox Media**

- **Introduction to Web Accessibility - W3C Web accessibility Initiative**

- **7 Ways to Make Your Website More Accessible. Bit Perfect website**

- **Accessible Icons: How to Make Them for Your Website**

- **How to do a quick SEO accessibility check. Search Engine Land**

- **Access Guide Website**

- **9 CTA Best Practices for UX Design & Web Accessibility**

- **National Disability Authority (NDA)**

- **Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD)**

ONAT4ALL – Outdoor activities and nature and adventure tourism for All