



Comparative analysis on different solutions  
for accessibility of UNESCO sites

**Guidelines: a management model  
for accessibility to and enjoyment  
of UNESCO sites**

Innovative solutions for the Management  
and Promotion of the Heritage and Territory

## GUIDELINES

Activity carried out as part of the European Project  
USEFALL - UNESCO Site Experience For All, in Italy and Croatia.

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## USEFALL - UNESCO Site Experience For All

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*The general objective of the project is to guarantee accessibility for all users to the cultural heritage of Italy and Croatia and UNESCO sites in particular, so that they can become a driving force for sustainable and balanced territorial development, with inclusive management solutions. The USEFALL project exploits the existing potential of the cooperation networks established by the EXPO-AUS Project (IPA Adriatic), capitalising the management solutions of the previous project and focusing on improving an inclusive and participatory approach in the management of six UNESCO sites, providing pilot solutions for accessibility to them. The initiatives undertaken include educational workshops and activities, workshops for disabled kids and adults in collaboration with school institutes and the production of information material in Braille, videos in sign language and audio guides for the UNESCO sites. Above all, this project made it possible to perfect certain ideas and best practices that target the inclusion of all possible users in the activities and initiatives designed to promote the territory.*

*If shared by all the UNESCO sites involved in the project in both Italy and Croatia, the guidelines will make it possible for anyone - regardless of their physical condition - to access the content of universal heritage, flexibly creating their own visit experience. The harmonised management of cross-border UNESCO sites also promotes the unique marketing capacity of each territory and thanks to specific classroom-taught training lessons, increases the skills and know-how of operators on matters relating to accessible tourism.*

*Thanks to USEFALL, the Municipality of Ravenna, which is lead partner, has drafted a project that contemplates itineraries and technical aids with a unique vision and great civic sense, because it combines the cultural and tourism offers of the territory with the added value of full enjoyment "for all" of precisely those places that make our communities attractive and alive.*

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**FIRST PART**

**Comparative analysis  
on different solutions  
for accessibility of UNESCO sites**

## 1.1. Introduction

The regulatory scope that imposes the adoption of measures designed to guarantee the accessibility and use of cultural heritage – and therefore, sites, museums and monuments too – is quite varied and has expanded over the last decade, thanks to both targeted policies and interventions on closely-linked aspects.

More specifically, focus has increased in legislation of international standing, which in some cases are actual regulations, whilst in other cases they are shared strategies, in particular within the sphere of the European Union.

With regard to the scope and variability of the areas this report touches on, those indicated in the **Convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage** (Paris, 16 November 1972) are assumed. It indicates the following as cultural heritage (Art. 1):

- *“monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;”*
- *“groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;”*
- *“sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.”*

However, we should not forget that the same Convention also considers the natural heritage (Art. 2), in other words:

- *“natural features consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of outstanding universal value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view;”*
- *“geological and physiographical formations and precisely delineated areas which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation;”*
- *“natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty.”*

## 1.2. The concept of disability

Given that it is significant from a legal and cultural and, therefore an operational point of view – it is essential to immediately outline the definition of disability that should currently be referred to and that can be found in the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** (CRPD), approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations on **13 December 2006** and ratified by the European Union and all countries that adhere to it.

In this logical and ethical context, disability is defined as *“an evolving concept”* that *“results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”* [Preamble, letter e)].

Disability is no longer identified by the pathology or the impairment, but it is defined in relationship terms. It does not derive from subjective qualities, but rather from the relationship between the characteristics of people and how society is structured and organises access to rights, goods and services.

This also means that disability is not a static concept but rather, given that it is the result of interaction between people and barriers, it could change over time: disability changes along with the interaction that generates it. This evolution does not only have a historical and sociological meaning, regarding the evolution of an entire society, but it is also inherent to every single people whose conditions could change.

Recognizing and knowing how to detect this dynamicity also make it possible to assess the efficacy of general policies and services for people.

The interaction the UN Convention refers to is between persons who have an established impairment and the barriers these persons encounter.

Barriers can be either behavioural – attitudes, clichés, prejudices, practices, omissions – or environmental: inaccessible sites and services; absence of planning for all; lack of inclusive policies. At the same time, elements of facilitation can contribute to inclusion in conditions of equal opportunity.

## 1.3. Social inclusion, sustainability and cultural heritage

The close link between inclusion and culture and, therefore access to and fruition of cultural heritage, has been the linchpin of a series of programmes launched from the early 2000s on, including “Ariane”, “Raphael”, “Kaleidoscope”, “Culture 2000”, “Culture 2007-2013” and “Creative Europe”. Their common feature lies in focusing in particular, on disadvantaged people and on

recognizing culture as a factor of “social integration”, but also in committing to guaranteeing “improvement in access to and participation in culture [...] for the greatest number of possible citizens”.

The European Agenda for Culture (2007) then adopted structured cooperation in the cultural field, based on sharing know-how and best practices.

Meanwhile, the **European Agenda for Culture** (2015-2018) clearly established interventions for accessible and inclusive culture amongst its priorities (Priority A).

It recommends the need to “*promote better contribution of culture to the overall goals of the Europe 2020 strategy, given the sector’s role in achieving smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and considering its positive effects on areas such as employment, social inclusion, education and training, tourism, research and innovation, and regional development.*”

The theme of the accessibility to and usability of cultural heritage by persons with disabilities in EU policies and strategies is therefore, solidly based on explicit priorities: the realization of a culture accessible and open to all; the protection and promotion of the cultural heritage; the consolidation of the cultural and creative sectors, focusing on the creative economy and innovation; the promotion of cultural diversity, culture in EU external relations and mobility.

We should also remember the obligations assumed by the European Union through the **European Disability Strategy 2010-2020** (“a renewed commitment to a barrier-free Europe for disabled persons”) that, amongst other things, provides for the commitment to “*improve the accessibility of sports, leisure, cultural and recreational organisations, activities, events, venues, goods and services including audio-visual ones*” and also to support national policies designed to “*make sports, leisure, cultural and recreational organisations and activities accessible [...]*”.

Lastly, although certainly not in terms of importance, an act assumed by the 191 Member States of the **OUN** by adopting the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) and setting 2030 as the deadline for achieving them. The objective is to build a model of common life that respects people and the planet. The act associates to the principle of sustainability not only the activities that involve human interaction with the natural environment (SDGs 13, 14 and 15) or consumption of raw materials (SDG 12) and the production of products (SDGs 8 and 9) but, in a broader sense, every single aspect of individual and social life. These intentions also provide for the conservation and promotion of world cultural heritage.

In particular, goal 11.4 aims to promote policies, with a participatory approach,

that guarantee not only protection, but above all, responsible use of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage regardless of whether it refers to small or large communities or to the present or past.

#### 1.4. Disability and participation in cultural life, international acts

In this scenario, we should also consider other acts of international importance, above all, the aforementioned OUN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The CRPD establishes a clear message: it must be ensured that persons with disabilities enjoy the same human rights as everyone else in their community, with a view to guaranteeing inclusion.

If this is the presiding principle, the Convention also goes into the issue of *participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport* – dedicating it a specific article, Article 30.

In particular, we should remember the first paragraph of Article 30 that underlines the right of persons with disabilities to take part in cultural life on an equal level as others. The measures indicated concern access to cultural materials in accessible formats; access to television programmes, films, theatre shows and other cultural activities in accessible formats; access to places for cultural performances and services, such as theatres, museums, cinemas, libraries and tourism services and, as far as possible, access to key monuments and sites of national cultural importance.

**The Convention establishing a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** (London, 16 November 1945) is founded on the respect and promotion of human rights, but also on the sustainability mentioned above.

In fact, in the preamble to the Convention it is specified that UNESCO aims to “*contribute to the building of peace, eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information*” (...) “*for the purpose of advancing, through the educational and scientific and cultural relations of the peoples of the world, the objectives of international peace and of the common welfare of mankind.*”

And also, in Article 1, paragraph 1, “*(...) in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations.*”



On the theme of participation in cultural life, we should remember some EU provisions. The latest is undoubtedly the **European Disability Strategy 2010-2020** that notes how numerous barriers still prevent persons with disabilities from fully exercising their fundamental rights, including rights linked to citizenship of the European Union, and fully participating in society on equal terms with others. Restricted rights also include fully participating in cultural, recreational and sports activities. In fact, the Strategy commits the EU Commission to improving accessibility to sports, recreational and cultural organisations, activities, events, structures, goods and services, including audio-visual ones; to encouraging participation in sports events and the organisation of sports events specifically designed for persons with disabilities. The subsequent **Resolution of the European Parliament of 25 October 2011** returns to the question of mobility and the integration of persons with disabilities precisely in order to best implement the aforementioned European Disability Strategy 2010-2020. The Resolution (point 41) invites Member States, with the support of the Commission, to encourage the integration and acceptance in society of people with disabilities, improving access to sports, recreational and cultural facilities and activities, even through the promotion and exchange between Member States of cultural material accessible to the partially sighted, in line with the **Council Resolution of 6 May 2003** regarding accessibility to cultural infrastructures and activities for persons with disabilities (of which more below).

The same Resolution also focuses on minors with disabilities, recalling full respect of the rights declared in the **Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)**, including the right to play and education, to cultural and artistic participation in the life of the community, to access to the medical treatment their personal situation demands, the freedom to seek and receive information and ideas also targeting their full personal development, even in the cultural and spiritual field.

### 1.5. Accessibility to cultural heritage, Italian regulations

With regard to the usability of cultural heritage, the Italian legislators have provided operational indications targeting accessibility to sites of cultural interest thanks to the specific **Ministry of Cultural Heritage decree of 28 March 2008** (*Guidelines to overcome architectural barriers in cultural heritage sites*). That guideline document attempted to provide indications for the various areas of museum facilities and at various times and for various services, from the exterior, to hospitality, to exhibition itineraries.

For the first time, reference was made to the principle of *universal design*, which should be adopted in terms of criteria and guidelines for both planning and management. Alternative solutions were suggested for orientation and overcoming distances and height differences, and the usability of environmental units and fitting out of exhibition spaces was also addressed.

The guidelines then assumed some specific case studies that refer to different contexts: historical gardens and parks; archaeological areas and parks; urban spaces, monumental buildings and complexes; religious buildings; exhibitions areas, museums, archives and libraries. Compared to the 2008 decree, motions were expressed that targeted updating the guidelines taking into account the technological and cultural evolution that has taken place in the meantime, but also taking stock of any experience and best practices gained.

This was updated recently. Unfortunately, the outcome was not made official through a decree, but by **Ministry of Cultural Heritage circular of 6 July 2018**; an internal yet very well-structured and innovative document compared to the decree issued 10 years previously. Worth mentioning in particular, is the annex “Plan for the Elimination of Architectural Barriers (PEBA): a strategic plan for accessibility to museums, monumental complexes and archaeological areas and parks”.

It is worth pointing out that there has been greater and more determined focus on new technologies and therefore, also on their accessibility, more importance placed on solutions concerning sensory and intellectual disabilities, based precisely on real access to the works, rather than the buildings, and a better description of the quality of additional services (arriving, getting information, ticketing and online ticket booking).

In more detail, the guidelines are divided into macro-areas that then detail the various operational aspects and recommendations: accessibility from outside (signage, routes, maps, quality of websites and material), information and internal welcome, horizontal and vertical layout, the museum experience (with a strong focus on the itineraries, exhibition devices, multimedia stations, external exhibition spaces and communication), safety and management procedures.

Another element that can influence the diffusion of accessibility and usability can be found in **Ministry of Cultural Heritage decree of 21 February 2018**, which provides for the adoption of minimum uniform levels of quality for publicly-owned museums and cultural sites and launch of the National Museum System. In this, the absence of architectural barriers is considered a minimum essential requirement, along with other obligatory parameters, all connected with accessibility for peoples with disabilities: the design and use of internal spaces and safety, with particular focus on multimedia accessibility.

It is worth noting that in the **Strategic Plan for Tourism Development (2017-2022)**, one of the across-the-board principles adopted was physical and cultural accessibility/permeability. It is worth remembering that the strategies, interventions and actions of the Strategic Plan must contribute to the systematic reinforcement of physical and cultural accessibility to the sites and territories open to tourism development. *“This term has various meanings that concern accessibility to tourism for all persons, irrespective of their age or health; accessibility to sites and territories through sustainable mobility systems; giving visitors the opportunity to understand and interpret the history, complexity and variety of the heritage sites visited (cultural permeability).”*

### 1.6. Accessibility in international regulations

The Recommendation regarding accessibility to places for cultural performances and services is laid down in the first paragraph of the above-mentioned Article 30 of the CRPD.

Accessibility is not limited to buildings and sites hosting cultural activities, such as theatres, museums, cinemas, libraries and tourism services and, as far as possible, to key monuments and sites of national culture importance, but also extends to cultural products, which must be guaranteed in accessible formats; therefore, not only “containers”, but also “contents” and connected services.

Nevertheless, interpretation limited to Article 30 alone does not give us the real scope and reach of the ONU Convention on these aspects. As well as the founding principles (inclusion, non-discrimination, equal opportunity), other articles must also be taken into account. In particular, the Convention recognises accessibility as a right (Article 9 of the CRPD in particular, but also in Articles 3 and 21).

Nevertheless, the right to accessibility is a crucial factor across-the-board and allows and facilitates the exercising of all other civil, social, economic and cultural rights. Accessibility is therefore considered a human right because it refers to the possibility to participate, act, communicate and be informed, move around independently and in safety, as well as independent living (Article 19 of the CRPD). Therefore, the right to and concept of accessibility cannot be considered in isolation, but are connected to the various contexts of life and relationships.

According to the ONU Convention, accessibility does not merely concern the prevention and removal of barriers and obstacles of a physical nature in constructed space but also, for example, access to new technologies,

communication and information, transport, emergency, trade and cultural services, education, leisure and tourism, work and exercising the right to vote. In this respect, the solutions for guaranteeing and promoting accessibility concern the realization of products that are mutually available, as well as the availability of assistive technologies, the use of personal assistance and mediation (for example, interpreting) and a focus on information, communication and signage, in order to guarantee usability on equal terms for all.

Within this framework, a central concept expressed by the CRPD (Art. 2, paragraph 1, letter e) is that of “*universal design*”, meaning the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. Universal design shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of people with disabilities where this is needed. In the spirit of the right to accessibility, universal design takes into consideration the functional diversities of all, whether these are of a motor, sensory or intellectual nature.

Another concept referred to in the CRPD (Art. 2, paragraph 1, letter d) and that is also significant in terms of the right to accessibility is that of “**reasonable accommodation**”, which is defined as the “*necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms*”. However, reasonable accommodation cannot replace the duty to guarantee accessibility to infrastructures, to the built environment and to services, goods and products, based on the principles of universal design.

In this legislative framework, access to information is also a central right for the usability of cultural heritage. This is referred to in Article 21 of the CRPD, which calls on States to adopt adequate measures to guarantee, amongst other things, that people with disabilities exercise the right to the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas on an equal basis with others and through any form of communication of their choice. Operational recommendations include providing information intended for the general public to persons with disabilities in accessible forms and using technologies appropriate to different kinds of disability in a timely manner and without additional cost, accepting and facilitating the use of sign language, Braille, augmentative and alternative communication and all other accessible means, modes and formats of communication of their choice by persons with disabilities.



It is opportune to remember that the definition of communication laid down in Article 2 of the CRPD: *“includes languages, display of text, Braille, tactile communication, large print, accessible multimedia as well as written, audio, plain-language, human-reader and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, including accessible information and communication technology.”*

Focus is on all modes of communication, including facilitated language; *“easy to read”* consists in the simplification of concepts and use of words that are easy for everyone to understand. Communicating using this language means producing the information in an accessible format and using means of communication and products that are accessible to the largest number of people possible (based on the principle of universal design) such as, for example, persons with intellectual and relational disabilities, but also children, the elderly and non-native speakers. All this in respect of the right of all people, including those with disabilities, to have access to learning and information, with the opportune and necessary adaptations of written and non-written language.

As part of the European project **Pathways to Lifelong Learning for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities (Pathways II)**, promoted and managed since 2011 by Inclusion Europe, with the collaboration of associations in 8 different countries, a guidance was developed – **Information for all – European standards for making information easy to read and understand** – containing standards on how to write texts that should be as accessible as possible and guarantee and promote lifelong learning even for persons with intellectual, cognitive or relational disabilities.

Finally, we should mention the recommendation (which is of international importance) of the **Verona Charter** (8 - 9 November 2007) on the rescue of persons with disabilities in the case of disasters. Article 17 mentions that the built environment, which is based on an *“universal design”* approach, intends to consolidate conditions that favour the most efficient intervention for persons with disabilities in situations of risk. In situations of risk and in line with the universal design approach, appropriate measures should be adopted in order to ensure to persons with disabilities access to the surrounding environment, to transport, to information and communication and to IT systems and technologies, as well as to other services, such as common emergency numbers, on an equal level as others.

On the topic of transport too, the European Union has gradually introduced into its regulations specific recommendations to ensure to persons with disabilities

access to various transport systems;

- railways: **Regulation (EC) no. 1371/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007;**
- buses & coaches: **Regulation (EU) no. 181/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011;**
- sea travel: **Regulation (EU) no. 1177/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010;**
- air travel: **Regulation (EC) no. 1107/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006.**

The common features of the regulations concern the methods of organising the services and training of personnel targeting the rights of citizens with disabilities to have an equal opportunity to use mobility services. Another common feature is reference to complaint, control and third-party authority procedures.

### 1.7. Accessibility in Italian regulations

In Italy, before ratifying the ONU Convention, the legislators mainly concentrated on aspects concerning the definition of guidelines, above all, those of a technical nature and partially, in provisions that regarded checking and verifying compliance with the legislation.

The first regulatory effort that identified the technical legislation for guaranteeing accessibility to public buildings for persons with disabilities dates back to Presidential Decree 384/1978. Subsequently, technical legislation was introduced by **Ministry of Public Works decree no. 236 of 14 June 1989** and then, **Presidential decree no. 503 of 24 July 1996**. The former concerns private buildings and subsidized and assisted public residential buildings and outlines the quality levels of the built space, defining accessibility, visitability and adaptability.

Meanwhile, Presidential Decree 503/1996 established regulations for eliminating architectural barriers in public buildings, spaces and services. Amongst others, certain transport services and also school buildings were considered.

It should be noted that such provisions do not particularly identify specific dimensional and qualitative techniques that can help to identify and remove obstacles or offer accessibility solutions for people with limitations of a cognitive or relational nature, nor do they take into consideration the perspective of gender.

In this scenario, which pre-dates the CRPD, we should also recall **Italian law**

**no. 104 of 5 February 1992**, so-called “Framework Law on Disability”, for certain aspects that concern accessibility. In particular, Article 24 subordinated the issuing of building licences or authorisations for public buildings and those open to the public to assessment of compliance of the project by the technical department or a technician appointed by the competent municipality. Furthermore, in issuing the certificate of compliance to safety standards and habitability for such works, the mayor had to ascertain that they were built in compliance with existing applicable law regarding the elimination of architectural barriers. The procedure was partially revised by subsequent laws. In the event of violations of the law, the same article provided for penalties against the designer, the works supervisor, the technician appointed to ascertain compliance with safety standards and habitability and the tester who are each directly liable for their particular area of competence.

With regard to the accessibility of transport, we should point out the gradual implementation in Italy of European regulations, linked in particular to air transport, rail transport, road transport and transport by sea and navigable internal waters. It should be said that some of these regulations will become applicable gradually. In terms of the verification, control and correct application of such regulations, Italy has attributed jurisdiction to ENAC (Italian Civil Aviation Authority) and since 2011, the Italian Transport Regulation Authority, as provided for by European regulations.

### 1.8. ICT in international regulations

In this logic, another key reference for services connected to cultural assets is Article 21 of the CRPD, which concerns access to information and which reads as follows: “*providing information intended for the general public to persons with disabilities in accessible formats and technologies appropriate to different kinds of disabilities in a timely manner and without additional cost.*” This is a provision that impacts, for example, on the construction of websites, mobile device applications and other ICT technologies (Information and Communication Technologies) that are increasingly important. Furthermore, it is worth remembering the indications given in Article 4, paragraph 3 and Article 33 that recall the need for and importance of real and significant participation of organisations representing persons with disabilities when tackling accessibility problems. Therefore, the Convention dictates the need to comprehensively rethink

those places in a profoundly operational and practical way, applying solutions where necessary. The aforementioned aspect of accessibility to ICTs, linked to innovation in the sector of cultural assets too, it is clearly referenced in EU recommendations, not only in referencing international standards (W3C), but also in broadening and extending the range.

We should certainly recall **EU Directive 2016/2102 of the European Parliament and the Council of 26 October 2016** on the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public-sector bodies.

This explains the principles of accessibility in these areas: *perceivability*, meaning that information and user interface components must be presentable to users in ways they can perceive; *operability*, meaning that user interface components and navigation must be operable; *understandability*, meaning that information and the operation of the user interface must be understandable; and *robustness*, meaning that content must be robust enough to be interpreted reliably by a wide variety of user agents, including assistive technologies. The provisions contained in the directive apply, amongst other things, to the websites and mobile applications of public-sector bodies (including subsidiary companies) and NGOs. Methods of checking compliance to the various provisions are then provided for. The directive has already been partially implemented in various countries in the European Union.

In terms of ICTs, UNESCO expressed its own recommendations as early as 2003 (**UNESCO 20/21 May 2003, ICTs in the Service of Persons with Disabilities**), without entering into specific techniques, but underlining how those technologies and solutions had to be realized based on the principle of universal design and therefore, the design of products, structures, programmes and services that could be used by all people, in the broadest possible sense, without the need for adaptations or specialist designs. The same recommendations underline the importance of creating a network that makes the sharing of best practices and solutions in the field of accessibility to ICTs possible.

The importance and centrality of ICTs in access to and use of the cultural heritage is also referred to in the **UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-2021** (General Conference Resolution 37 C/Res. 1, point 88).

The coming into force of another European Union act – the directive known as the **European Accessibility Act (EAA)** – will consolidate these legislative trends and influence the operational consequences. This directive is approaching adoption, after the provisional agreement of the

European Parliament and of the Council reached on 8 November 2018. (*COM (2015) 615 final - Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States as regards the accessibility requirements for products and services*). For the sake of thoroughness, it is worth remembering that the legislative process began in December 2015.

The objective of the directive is to harmonize the administrative, legislative and regulatory provisions of Member States on the requirements of accessibility to certain products and services. The beneficiaries will not only include persons with disabilities, but also persons with functional limitations, linked in particular to ageing.

The directive and its indications are inspired by universal design and specifically concern some products that it is worth recalling, as they often also enter into museum services: hardware systems and general computer operating systems for consumers; terminal equipment with interactive information technology capacity for consumers used to access audio-visual media services; e-readers. The directive also concerns the following self-service terminals, which provide services: automatic help desks; payment terminals; ticket-issuing machines; check-in terminals used to register passengers in the field of passenger transport services; interactive self-service terminals for providing information, with the exception of machines installed as integral parts of vehicles, airplanes, ships or rolling stock.

Also significant is the focus on services provided for consumers and users. The directive concerns: electronic communication services; services that provide access to audio-visual media services; e-books and relevant software; e-commerce; bank services for consumers.

It should be said that the EAA establishes general accessibility objectives or rather, the performance and functional requisites for products and services. Basically, it defines what accessibility should be for a specific product or service in terms of performance, but does not indicate how to realize them technically. It will be the task of the Member States to review and transpose into national law the relevant laws, regulations and provisions necessary to comply with the directive within two years from its entry into force.

When the Act enters into force, producers and service providers will find it easier to export products and services that comply with European standards given that national legislation will be harmonized on the basis of common accessibility criteria.

Still with regard to ICTs, it is necessary to refer to the aforementioned Article 9 of the ONU Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which explicitly refers to the obligation of accessibility to information, communications and other services, including electronic services and emergency services (paragraph 1, letter b). It seems evident that guaranteeing the requisite of accessibility is one of the measures necessary in order to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters, as provided for in the Article 11 of the same Convention.

In the logic of *universal design*, accessibility does not only concern the suitable realization of the areas and technical instruments needed for rescue and emergencies, but also all alarm, call and contact systems with rescuers. Systems must therefore be able to be activated and used regardless of functional limitations (sensory, physical or cognitive). Basically, emergency activation systems should respond to the same requirements provided for with regard to access to information.

### 1.9. ICTs in Italian regulations

In Italy, some provisions on matters relating to the technical regulation of ICTs have been introduced in the field of IT tools, in particular those used by Public Administrations. In this sense, we should recall **Italian law no. 4 of 9 January 2004** and the applicative provisions, in particular **Presidential decree no. 75 of 1 March 2005** and Ministry for Public Administration Reform and Innovation decree of 30 April 2008 (accessibility to educational and training tools), as well as the subsequent production of the Agency for Digital Italy (AGID), in particular with regard to the accessibility of websites and more recently, on the specific techniques for assistive technologies.

For the sake of thoroughness, we should recall the particular definition of “accessibility” expressed in Italian law 4/2004: “*the ability of IT tools to provide services and information accessible to people who need assistive technologies and specific configurations, due to their disability, without discrimination, taking into account the limits imposed by technological knowledge.*”

Italian law 4/2004 was modified significantly by **Legislative decree no. 106 of 10 August 2018** (*Implementation of EU Directive 2016/2102 regarding accessibility to the websites and mobile applications of public-sector bodies*), in order to adapt to EU directive 2016/2102, also known as Web Accessibility Directive (WAD). The objective of the directive, as indicated in Article 1, is that of guaranteeing approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative

provisions of the Member States relating to the accessibility requirements of the websites and mobile applications of public-sector bodies that will favour greater accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public-sector bodies.

This need derives from the fact that several Member States (including Italy) have adopted measures based on international guidelines for designing accessible websites – but these measures often refer to versions or levels of conformity that are different to such guidelines – or have introduced different techniques on a national level with regard to accessible websites.

Thanks to the aforementioned decree, Italy is now adapting to the indications of the EU directive, in particular with regard to certain guidelines:

- the explicit inclusion of websites and mobile applications, mentioned by the directive, as one of the “IT systems” for which Italian law no. 4 of 2004 prescribes accessibility;
- inclusion in Italian legislation of the definition of “mobile applications” (application software designed and developed by or on behalf of the service providers), “website” (a structured series of web pages used to transmit information or provide services) and “data measured” (quantified results of the monitoring activity carried out in order to check the conformity of public-sector websites and mobile applications to provisions relating to accessibility);
- a definition of “service providers”, which are identified in legislation (Article 3, paragraph 1 of Italian law 4/2004);
- the introduction in Italian law of disproportionate burden that results in a toning down of the principle of accessibility; the definition of disproportionate burden it is provided by Article 14 of Enabling Act no. 163 of 2017, which envisages that measures that impose a disproportionate burden mean measures that generate an excessive organizational or financial burden on a public body or put at risk its ability to fulfil the pre-established purpose or to publish the information necessary or pertinent for its roles and services, whilst still taking into account the probable benefit or damage that would derive from it for persons with disabilities. Identification of the disproportionate burden is based solely on legitimate reasons; therefore, the lack of elements such as a priority nature, time and the absence of information cannot be considered a legitimate reason.

We should mention here the definition of “mobile applications”, which are: *“software applications designed and developed by or on behalf of service*

*providers, to be used on mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets; software that controls such devices (mobile operating systems) or the IT hardware itself is excluded”.*

The decree also outlines the principles of accessibility indicated in the directive (perceivability, operability, understandability and robustness). Such usability must also be guaranteed by means of:

- the uniformity of actions to carry out to obtain services and information;
  - the separation of content, presentation and interface functioning methods;
  - the availability of information through different sensory channels;
  - the independence of actions to carry out in order to obtain the services, from the device used for access;
- the absence of unjustified inconveniences or restrictions for users for accessing the service or information.

Definition of the technical rules necessary in order to guarantee accessibility is delegated to the definition of the guidelines given by the Agency for Digital Italy. Also disciplined is the declaration of accessibility – in other words, what the service providers have to provide regarding the conformity of IT tools (including websites and mobile applications, as mentioned) to provisions relating to accessibility. The declaration of accessibility must be provided in an accessible format and published on the website of the provider. For mobile applications, it must be provided at the time of downloading the application, along with other available information. The declaration must contain: an indication of the parts of the content not accessible due to disproportionate burden and relevant justifications, as well as indications of any alternative accessibility solutions provided; a description of the feedback mechanism (and relevant link) designed to allow anyone to notify service providers of any faults in the IT systems in terms of accessibility, as well as to make requests for non-accessible information; in the event of failure to reply (or if an unsatisfactory reply is given) within thirty days of the request for non-accessible information, a link to the complaints procedure.

The new decree entrusts the Agency for Digital Italy with verifying conformity of the declaration of accessibility to the guidelines (from the Agency itself), as well as verifying cases of inaccessibility. Meanwhile, it refers any decisions regarding accessibility, both in terms of complaints sent by the Agency for Digital Italy and those sent by users, to the digital ombudsman (as provided for by Article 17 of the Digital Administration Code); in these cases, the digital ombudsman can order corrective measures.

It is important to recall when the new legislation becomes effective:

- websites not published before 23 September 2018, from 23 September 2019;
- websites published before 23 September 2018, from 23 September 2020;
- mobile applications, from 23 June 2021.

The Agency for Digital Italy is responsible for defining the guidelines on technical requirements. Amongst other things, the guidelines establish and define the technical requisites for accessibility. In the meantime, abrogated Presidential Decree no. 75 of 1 March 2005 continues apply.

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|   | <i>Reference regulations</i>  |
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| Introduction  | Convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage (Paris, 1972)   |
| The concept of disability   | CRPD 2006   |
| Social inclusion, sustainability and cultural heritage            | European Agenda for Culture (2007)<br>European Agenda for Culture (2015-2018)<br>European Disability Strategy (2010-2020)<br>Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs; UN)   |
| Disability and participation in cultural life, international acts | CRPD 2006<br>Convention constituting the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (1945).<br>2010-2020 European Disability Strategy<br>European Parliament Resolution of 25 October 2011<br>European Union Council Resolution of 6 May 2003<br>UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) |
| Accessibility to cultural heritage, Italian regulations           | Ministry of Cultural Heritage decree of 28 March 2008<br>Ministry of Cultural Heritage decree of 21 February 2018<br>Ministry of Cultural Heritage circular of 6 July 2018<br>Tourism Development Strategic Plan (2017-2022)  |
| Accessibility in international regulations                        | CRPD 2006<br>Pathways II, Inclusion Europe (2011)<br>Verona Charter (2007)<br>Regulation (EC) no. 1371/2007<br>Regulation (EU) no. 181/2011<br>Regulation (EU) no. 1177/2010<br>Regulation (EC) no. 1107/2006   |
| Accessibility in Italian regulations                              | Ministerial decree no. 236 of 14 June 1989<br>Presidential decree no. 503 of 24 July 1996<br>Italian law no. 104 of 5 February 1992   |
| ICT in international regulations                                  | Directive 2016/2102/EU<br>UNESCO Recommendation, 20/21 May 2003<br>UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-2021<br>EAA, European Accessibility Act, 2018   |
| ICT in Italian regulations  | Italian law no. 4 of 9 January 2004<br>Presidential decree no. 75 of 1 March 2005<br>Legislative decree no. 106 of 10 August 2018   |





## **SECOND PART**

**Guidelines: for a management model  
for accessibility to and enjoyment  
of UNESCO sites “for all”**

## 2.1. Why “guidelines”?

As a tool, guidelines are both the rational collection of mutual experiences of problem solving and good practices and a series of indications, shared within a more or less vast community, of how best to deal with managing and organising the challenges that exist in similar environments and situations.

By their very definition, guidelines can never be considered conclusive given that, when they are effectively implemented, alternative, innovative or simpler solutions may develop. Similarly, other needs may arise or the context, in the broadest sense of the word, may change.

In the field of usability of the tourism and cultural offer, numerous indications and recommendations already exist that often focus on physical structures (for example, museums and art galleries), on particular aspects (for example, use of ICT - Information and Communication Technologies, planning of pedestrian routes, easy-to-read text) or on specific complex services (for example, urban mobility systems, emergency and assistance services).

## 2.2. UNESCO sites

The area these guidelines apply to - UNESCO sites - means that rational reorganisation and focus on the extreme variability of the contexts is essential. In fact, these guidelines focus on sites recognized by UNESCO as being World Heritage Sites.

The characteristics of each of these, the contexts they are located in and their history are very different and certainly not limited to a single building on which to intervene or focus, but rather on complex and varied realities:

- *historic centres*, open spaces and entire quarters such as, for example, the Historic Centres of Rome, Florence and Naples, the Old Town of Dubrovnik, the Historic City of Trogir, Stari Grad Plain, Castel del Monte;

- *architectural complexes* with several buildings such as, for example, the Early-Christian Monuments of Ravenna, the Episcopal Complex of the Euphrasian Basilica in the Historic Centre of Poreč, the Su Nuraxi of Barumini, Zadar’s Defensive System and the Historical Complex of Split with the Palace of Diocletian;

- *natural environments* and landscapes such as, for example, Porto Venere, Cinque Terre and the Islands, Paklenica National Park, National

Park of Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise, the Vineyard Landscape of Piedmont: Langhe-Roero and Monferrato, and the Dolomites;

- *archaeological sites*, which can be more or less vast such as, for example, the Archaeological Areas of Pompeii, Herculaneum and Torre Annunziata, Stećci Mediaeval Tombstone Graveyards, Rock Drawings in Valcamonica, the Sassi and the Park of the Rupestrian Churches of Matera, the Valley of the Temples and the Archaeological Area of Agrigento.

Even this brief summary clearly shows how varied the contexts and realities are and how vast the scale of interventions and the number of stakeholders that need to be involved in order to improve the quality of the offer.

In fact, scenarios and actions are not limited to a single building, but primarily concern a territory and a community, often also covering intangible heritage and content.

## 2.3. Persons with disabilities

In drafting these guidelines and therefore, the relevant indications, the presumed ideal final beneficiaries chosen were persons with disabilities, as defined in the legislative premise.

The aim was to identify solutions and recommendations that can be of assistance in the presence of visitors, users or customers with functional limitations; the way they aim to facilitate matters will be explained in greater detail below.

Reference to the functional limitations that generate different disabilities is as broad as possible as they are the result of an infinite range of human conditions that in turn, combine with age, personal inclinations, culture, origin and gender. Fully aware that different situations may coexist or may be more or less severe, in postulating possible solutions and formulating recommendations four macro-areas of functional limitation have always been taken into consideration:

- *motor*, in other words, related to general physical mobility, linked to deambulatory issues, as well as maintaining and changing position, fine and gross motor skills or dexterity, the ability to move objects or fatigue and exercise tolerance; it goes without saying that this does not refer strictly to functionality of the limbs or the locomotor apparatus alone, but also to other apparatuses (for example, respiratory, cardiocirculatory)

that make executing such functions possible.

- *intellectual, cognitive, behavioural*, in other words, general mental functions relating to the conscience, orientation, intellectual functions, general psychosocial functions, interpersonal functions and aptitude, functions relating to temperament and personality and the control of energy and impulses. This area also considers specific mental functions concerning thought and therefore, functions such as attention, memory, perception, assessment and processing of language and concerns both basic and superior cognitive functions. Psychomotor functions and those involving the processing of a sequence of complex movements are also covered.

- *sensory: vision-related* concerning both visual acuity and the field of vision through to limitations that cause blindness or visual impairment. However, this area also involves other sensations linked to the eyes such as, merely by way of example but without limitation, difficulties linked to twilight vision or difficulties caused by dim indoor lighting and altered or incorrect perception of colour (colour-blindness).

- *sensory: hearing-related and vestibular* concerning both hearing, in terms of the perception of sounds at different frequencies, and vestibular limitations, in other words, difficulties linked to balance or dizziness. Hearing loss has different levels of severity and some forms of hearing loss offer the possibility of using aids.

However, in this scenario, *other functional limitations* should also be considered as they may not fall within this generic breakdown. These include, for example, limitations linked to the voice and eloquence, which are key to communication, or certain neurological pathologies that are difficult to place in the aforementioned groups, such as epilepsy. It is also important not to forget problems that can affect the urological, endocrinological or metabolic apparatus (for example, diabetes).

In the general analysis, there is focus on pathologies and limitations typical of *ageing*, which very often cut across all the groups described above. This is necessary, not only from a methodological point of view, but also given the notable growth in the elderly population and the focus on policies and services promoting active ageing.

Adopting these limitations as a reference means focusing interventions and

experiences on potential barriers, obstacles and needs and subsequently, planning and managing contexts by adopting solutions that are as universal as possible, implementing elements to facilitate, mediate and support a broad user base target.

## 2.4. Keywords

In developing and drafting these guidelines, certain keywords have been adopted and recur often; they constitute the ideal baggage, which is also more topical and shared by the various stakeholders that in recent years have taken part in the debate on accessibility, participation and the right to access culture and its heritage.

Below are some brief definitions:

*Accessibility* is a very varied concept and principle with many meanings and common usages that in turn, have specific operational repercussions on the planning of interventions and strategies and subsequently, the concrete implementation of actions targeting qualification of the cultural and environmental heritage. Accessibility, a prerequisite to the usability and enjoyment of heritage, is both physical and cultural; it refers to sustainable mobility at sites and in territories, but also to information and accommodation systems and assistance and mediation services. In this sense, universal design becomes a planning method that generates products, buildings, programmes and services that can be used by everyone, in the broadest sense possible, without the need for special adaptations or planning.

This does not however, exclude the use of aids for particular groups of people with disabilities, where necessary.

*Usability* is the effective possibility of everyone being able to access and use products, places, itineraries and information, without distinctions linked to age or health. It is the first effect of awareness of the centrality of accessibility and its practical application.

*Enjoyment* is an added value with respect to the accessibility and usability of places, services and territories and is possible thanks to mature, careful and innovative focus on matters relating to the cultural permeability of heritage. It involves interventions that, having permitted access and usability, really make it possible for visitors to understand and interpret the history, complexity and variety of the heritage visited, appreciating the uniqueness and identity

of places and their characteristics and therefore, enjoying experiences of personal growth, enrichment and satisfaction.

This is a logic therefore, that goes beyond the mere elimination of barriers and obstacles, but intervenes to allow everyone to enjoy meaningful experiences.

*Interaction and integration* constitute a premise for effective pursuit of the goals of promoting the heritage, even more important precisely because of the peculiarity of UNESCO sites. Interaction is the necessary mature and sustained relationship between operators, tourism chain operators, stakeholders, policymakers and the local community. Integration is the result of this interaction and allows for exchanges between the systems that exist on a specific territory.

If this is true in general and regarding every specific action, it is even more so with regard to disability and the solutions that permit accessibility to and usability and enjoyment of not only UNESCO sites, but the entire territory a site is located in. As for potential visitors, the quality of the tourism, recreational and cultural experience is not exclusively limited to the museum complex, the environmental itinerary or the archaeological area, but includes all the other nearby services and opportunities and even visitors who are persons with disabilities harbour the same expectations.

*Innovation* concerns a vast range of fields spanning from the quality of services and products, to technologies, processes, organisational models, professional profiles and skills, communication and information. A central role is played by digitalization and ICTs that open up new scenarios and opportunities for both accessibility to and usability of the territory and the UNESCO site, as well as enjoyment of the same, given that they offer tools such as know-how and experience and do so in a potentially sustainable manner.

For visitors with disabilities, innovation is an added value when it guarantees more efficient access to information, provides orientation support or even when it makes it possible to access museum, cultural and environmental content using methods previously deemed prohibitive or unattainable. The development and spread of ICTs and other technologies therefore, open up new scenarios of inclusion, which must certainly be pursued in a rational and integrated manner, in this case too, applying the principle and methodologies of universal design, in order to avoid creating new barriers, instead of generating facilitators.

*Training and refresher training* of all operators who may come into contact with visitors with disabilities is not only a fundamental premise to the quality

of the offer, based on tangible know-how and awareness of the relevant conditions. It also offers a tool for working efficiently and correctly on a daily basis, interpreting and responding appropriately to specific and particular needs, avoiding blunders or conduct based on clichés or arising from lack of knowledge.

*Monitoring and observing* individual activities, contexts or processes or the overall system are functional to both the programming and planning of micro-interventions and the definition of global strategies.

Monitoring is also pertinent and key to assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of the solutions already adopted. In the logic of interaction, as mentioned above, monitoring too requires the direct involvement of both visitors (customer satisfaction questionnaires, dealing with suggestions and complaints, etc.) and stakeholders, in particular organisations representing persons with disabilities, through the use of public audits and/or tests and shared drafting of checklists. Monitoring is an integral part of interventions to promote and improve the quality of the offer.

## 2.5. Operators, stakeholders, partners

As mentioned above, the quality of the tourism and cultural offer presupposes the need to build and maintain interaction between difference subjects and systems. If this premise applies in general, it does so even more when the beneficiaries are persons with disabilities and a broader spectrum of users overall. This is even more binding in reference to UNESCO sites that, given their peculiarities, exist on a more diffused and more extensive territory and area with consequently, more widespread links with services, systems and communities.

Those listed below are subjects who, with their different characteristics, can contribute to the promotion and sustainability of heritage based on their particular skill sets and know-how, missions, expectations, background and applications, and can also help to achieve the key objectives for persons with disabilities.

In this respect, some of those listed can certify their participation in the network, whilst others may find new opportunities for participating in interaction by contributing know-how, relationships and resources, as well as project ideas and concrete work.

With this vision in mind, the following subjects must certainly be considered:

- *operators*, meaning bodies that guarantee management of the site, complex or area with all related services, including communication;
- *organisations representing persons with disabilities* that bring both requests and know-how and can collaborate in and test organisational solutions, products and services based on specific needs, as well as carrying out public tests;
- *local communities* through their consultation and representation organisations that can guarantee and consolidate desired interaction with the territory and the community where the cultural heritage exists and that should already have awareness of disability;
- *organisations representing tourism and hospitality businesses* near the UNESCO site, area or complex that can gain some advantage from promoting the cultural heritage and that can, at the same time, adapt their own particular offer to the needs of a broader user base; this refers to accommodation facilities, as well as commercial, catering and entertainment businesses;
- *tourism information and promotion offices* that guarantee a broad spectrum of information support, therefore not strictly connected to a UNESCO site, but also to other opportunities available on the local territory for a broader user base too;
- *voluntary organisations* on the territory, meaning groups with a broad spectrum of interests, not only supporting and assisting people, but also focusing on other aspects, such as culture, environment, promoting folklore, music, sport and any other elements that identify the territory; this area also incorporates foundations or similar bodies whose objectives include those indicated above;
- *bodies and companies that manage mobility services* that, from the perspective of integration and inter-modality, can greatly improve the quality of enjoyment of the heritage and pertinent territory; this category includes not only local public transport, but also taxi services and car and driver hire services, rent-a-bike services, the car park system and cycle path management - in other words, everything that guarantees mobility on the territory; in this case too, there is a focus on services targeting persons with disabilities and the elderly;

- *schools* have always been more than just a partner in bridging the gap between new generations and the cultural heritage and the opportune use of the latter for educational purposes as an approach to art, culture, the environment and the identifying history of the territory; schools are also a vehicle for the inclusion of students with disabilities and often guarantee staff who provide mediation and support for participation in visit itineraries, as well as in workshops at museum facilities;
- *the academic world* can be not only area where cultural heritage is studied and researched, but also where methods of alternative access to culture can be developed and innovative methodologies and techniques and communication or access to information tools can be experimented.

## 2.6. Focuses

Although based on different timescales and responsibilities, pursuit of objectives such as accessibility, usability, enjoyment and promotion of the cultural and environmental heritage and improvement of tourism quality focuses on the variability of all the elements, from the specific to the general, that characterise the context and the environment.

- *products and solutions*, whether real, in need of modification or yet to be created, with which visitors relate, especially those with disabilities, optimising use. In the areas covered by these guidelines, the term 'products' refers to information, orientation, mobility (at UNESCO sites and the surrounding area) and access to cultural content and heritage. These include digital applications used on mobile devices, sites and ticketing and booking tools, as well as all the ICTs that can permit audio descriptions and subtitling and easy-to-read graphic solutions or assisted-reading products; all products that support personal mobility inside buildings and constructed spaces in general are also included.
- *sites* are buildings and their relevant spaces, more or less anthropized outdoor itineraries and areas, the natural environment, itineraries, constructed space, the environment, areas and spaces for a huge variety of different services (lay-bys and parking areas, picnic and refreshment areas, waiting areas, etc.); the term also includes buildings or spaces used for hospitality, information, catering or commercial services. Sites



also include historic centres where the local community goes about its daily life, such as markets, public events and more.

- *services* are the organisational solutions adopted or those that will be adapted or introduced to improve the quality of the offer. Services are provided using products and human and concurrent resources and are based on usually quite complex systems. Organisational solutions also consider the management of human resources and their selection, guidance and training. In the areas these guidelines focus on, they refer not only to strictly museum or site services, but information, support, mobility, commercial, hospitality and catering services too.

- *systems* are the consolidated and structured outcome - although they can be subject to modifications - of policies (including the allocation of resources) and dynamics relating to areas typical of the community, meaning both the response to the needs of a community as well as economic development and production; this category undoubtedly includes the tourism offer system, the mobility system and the economic system for exploiting or promoting the resources of the territory.

## 2.7. Objectives and recommendations

This section aims to outline in operational terms the general objectives, applications and principles expressed thus far. The recommendations that stem from it should be considered neither comprehensive, nor definitive. As is clear, the recommendations concern different responsibilities and therefore, imply the different involvement of operators, stakeholders and policy makers. In part, formulating these objectives and recommendations picked up on some quite recent developments that were the result of shared work and should be considered reliable, with an attempt to integrate and adapt them to the context of reference of UNESCO sites.

More specifically, they comply with the internal Ministry of Cultural Heritage circular of 6 July 2018 and above all, the attachment "*Plan for the elimination of architectural barriers (PEBA): a strategic plan for accessibility to museums, monumental complexes and archaeological areas and parks*". Another useful source, above all in terms of the latter part, were the "*Guidelines for the enjoyment of the museum heritage of Emilia-Romagna for persons with disabilities*" (Emilia-Romagna Region, 2015).

**[EXPERIENCES:** On more than one occasion, the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) has focused on possible solutions for improving the quality of the tourism offer for people with disabilities.

At least three publications should be highlighted given that, as well as operational recommendations, they contain a series of good practices from around the world connected to buildings, historical centres, cities and mobility systems.

"*Manual on Accessible Tourism for All: Public-Private Partnerships and Good Practices*" (2015).

"*Recommendations on Accessible Information in Tourism*" (2016).

"*Manual on Accessible Tourism for All (Module V: Best Practices in Accessible Tourism)*" (2016).

These three manuals are available free from the official UNWTO site: <http://www2.unwto.org/>.

### 2.7.1. Accessibility to information for planning visits

*Description:* this area concerns information on content, services, opportunities and conditions useful when planning a visit or a stay, but also the series of solutions adopted in order to meet and manage visitor requests. It refers to the information provided via any channel or using any method, including the intervention of operators.

*General objectives:* to guarantee not only the comprehensiveness and efficiency, but also the accessibility and intelligibility of all the information needed to organise and carry out the visit in the best way possible and to promote a stay in the relevant territory.

**[EXPERIENCES:** As part of the MUST project (*Mobility UNESCO Sustainable Tourism*), the *Sicily for All* portal was created to group together information regarding the accessibility features of certain UNESCO sites in Sicily (Mount Etna, Late Baroque Towns of the Val di Noto, Roman Villa of Casale in Piazza Armerina, Aeolian Islands, Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale, Syracuse and the Rocky Necropolis of Pantalica, Archaeological Area of Agrigento) and their museums, churches and historical buildings, as well as accommodation facilities and more generally, services available to tourists with disabilities, allowing them to independently assess whether sites are able or not to accommodate their specific needs. According to the project promoters, it does not merely target persons with disabilities, but is designed for a wider range of users including, for example, those with trouble walking, children, the elderly, pregnant women and families with children in pushchairs. The ultimate goal is to create a network of ‘accessible operators’].

#### Products

*General objective:* to offer uniform and effective information using methods, languages and solutions that are different but integrated, in order to ensure potential visitors can access and absorb the same content, regardless of their personal difficulties and the channels or methods used.

*Across-the-board recommendations:*

- Coordinate products regarding the site in order to guarantee uniformity in terms of content, graphics and recognizability.

*printed information material (brochures/leaflets)*

*Objectives:* to offer material, destined in particular for distribution in loco, but also downloadable from the website, that provides a traditional consultation method.

*Recommendations:*

- Apply the principal rules of copywriting, with the aim of providing an immediate and intuitive interpretation of texts.
- Create brochures in large-font and easy-to-read formats and in Braille too.
- Brochures relating to the site, complex or itinerary should indicate at least the following content regarding accessibility and usability:
  - how to reach the site, complex or itinerary (public and private transport, cycle paths, pedestrian routes);
  - where to find key information on mobility in the territory;
  - if and where any parking bays for the disabled are located;
  - if there are restricted traffic zones and the applicable terms and conditions;
  - visiting times for the places of interest;
  - ticket costs and any applicable discounts;
  - methods for booking services and references;
  - characteristics of accessibility to the site or itinerary with a description of all accessible entrances, systems to move through spaces, features of lifts and their location, presence of tactile paving, services available (toilets, refreshments, auditory, etc.), equipment and aids available (audio guides fitted with devices for assisted listening and Braille keypads), manual wheelchairs, guided visits for the blind or with translation into sign language (national and international);
  - presence on the site, complex or itinerary of guidebooks or fact sheets in large font or Braille;
  - methods or contact details for requesting more information on accessibility.
- Brochures on the site, complex or itinerary should show or make reference to content relating to other opportunities on the territory.

**[EXPERIENCES:** *Article 27* is an information promoted by Omero Tactile Museum and the Italian Ministry of Cultural and Environmental Heritage, in collaboration with organisations representing persons with disability, with the goal of raising awareness on the Italian museums and cultural sites that have

created initiatives to favour access to cultural contents and inclusive and significant experiences for persons with disabilities. *Article 27*, available online at <http://www.museoomero.it>, facilitates the search for barrier-free museums and cultural sites, directly reporting those realities - state and private museums, libraries, superintendence offices - whose information has been collected via a special form. Information inherent to the cultural sites regulated by the Museums Directorate General of the Italian Ministry of Cultural and Environmental Heritage and in particular, institutes and museums of significant national interest, as well as museums, monuments and archaeological areas of national museum hubs, are instead collected via the “*AD. Art. Information. An information system for the quality of usability of cultural heritage by persons with specific needs*” project and are available on: [www.accessibilitamusei.beniculturali.it](http://www.accessibilitamusei.beniculturali.it). Two versions of the *Article 27* information are available: a graphic version that indicates, alongside the name of the museum or the cultural sites, logos regarding the type of disability - physical, vision or hearing-related, cognitive or a combination of these - for which didactic and educational activities and inclusive and significant experiential itineraries are guaranteed; and a text-only version for the blind or deafblind, with a list of the museums and cultural sites they can enjoy].

- *website and mobile apps*

*Objectives:* to make available information useful for visiting the site, complex or itinerary and a stay in the relevant territory, keep them up-to-date in a way that is congruent with other information tools, using ICTs in a way suited to and accessible even to peoples with disabilities regardless of their functional limitations.

*Recommendations:*

- In planning the website, follow the indications of directive (EU) 2016/2102 regarding accessibility to the websites and mobile applications of public-sector bodies (*Web Accessibility Directive - WAD*).
- Apply “responsive web design” strategies to favour the navigation and study of content even through mobile devices.
- In drafting information contents, follow the principal rules of web copywriting, with the aim of offering immediate and intuitive reading of texts.

- Apply organic SEO (*Search Engine Optimization*) strategies to contents to ensure they are highlighted and can be reached via search engines.
- The information on the site, complex or itinerary should indicate at least the following content regarding accessibility and usability:
  - how to reach the site, complex or itinerary (public and private transport, cycle paths, pedestrian access);
  - where to find key information on mobility in the territory;
  - if and where any parking bays for the disabled are located;
  - if there are restricted traffic zones and the applicable terms and conditions;
  - visiting times for the places of interest;
  - ticket costs and any applicable discounts;
  - methods for booking the services and references;
  - characteristics of accessibility to the site or itinerary with a description of all accessible entrances, systems to move through spaces, features of the lifts and their location, the presence of tactile paving, services available (toilets, refreshments, auditory, etc.), equipment and aids available (audio guides fitted with devices for assisted listening and Braille keypads), manual wheelchairs, guided visits for the blind or with translation into sign language (national and international);
  - presence on the site, complex or itinerary of guidebooks or fact sheets in large font or Braille;
  - methods or contact details for requesting more information on accessibility.
- In terms of consulting the site, provide equivalent alternatives with video and audio content: videos in sign language (to guarantee access to the deaf who sign), material (images, videos, etc.) with easy language targeted at particular special needs (autism, Alzheimer’s, etc.), subtitles and texts compliant with *easy-to-read* standards (ideal for both the deaf who prefer to use written language and for those with intellectual disabilities), texts and graphics that can be understood even if consulted in black and white (for the visually-impaired).
- Indicate or refer to contents relating to other opportunities on the territory and other information sites for accommodation and catering.
- Provide the possibility to download audio information (podcasts) and brochures printable in A4 format and drafted in compliance with *easy-to-read* standards, with large font and contrast between the written text and background.
- Also use the website as a channel for sending requests for information,

bookings and suggestions.

- In creating apps for mobile devices, provide for compliance with the indications of directive (EU) 2016/2102 on accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public-sector bodies (*Web Accessibility Directive - WAD*).

### Services

*General objective:* to guarantee information services that are integrated and that also interact with other services relating to mobility and hospitality (accommodation and catering) that work with awareness of disabilities and know-how of the solutions and opportunities that are present and possible on the local territory.

- *information and booking points (including online ticketing)*

*Objectives:* to provide information and booking points that are accessible on site and remotely and that guarantee the ability to locate and understand information that can be used to plan a visit and a stay on the territory.

*Recommendations:*

- Provide booking and telephone contact systems that are either directly or remotely accessible and staffed by appropriately-trained personnel.

- For large institutions or institutions in networks, provide a number dedicated to accessibility, guaranteeing front-line operators that are trained to adequately deal with requests for information concerning the different forms of accessibility and provide further information on the services provided by the site, complex or area.

- At the actual information points, guarantee:

- compliance with the criteria of accessibility both at the entrance and inside;

- accessibility and usability of furniture, in particular desks, display cabinets, information panels and Internet points if applicable;

- the presence of comfortable seating areas;

- accessibility to toilet facilities;

- the presence of the information material indicated in the previous chapter and material regarding the opportunities offered by the territory;

- general comfort in the rooms with a focus on limiting noises and sounds that could cause disturbances.

- Any totem or multimedia stations present must be created bearing

in mind access to the broadest possible user base (alternative audio descriptions, subtitling) or should refer to alternative solutions offering the same content.

- The area near the information point must guarantee adequate mobility: the presence of dedicated waiting areas, pedestrian routes that are free from obstacles and with the presence of orientation solutions, the presence of call systems that can be activated if necessary.

- Should the information point be located directly inside or at the entrance to a complex, area or museum building, interventions and solutions should be integrated in a global strategy.

- In the event of information points that are remote or also available remotely then:

- for telephone contacts provide for the use of video communication, online communication (integrating interventions on the website) or instant tools, such as chats, to guarantee prompt response times;

- for emails, guarantee the service responds within 12 hours.

- *training of front-line personnel*

*Objectives:* to guarantee efficient training and refresher training for personnel that comes into contact with potential visitors with disabilities, improving the quality of hospitality given by information or front-line services.

*Recommendations:*

- Provide basic training for all personnel that, in various different ways, may come into contact with persons with disabilities; training courses should focus on at least the following content:

- elements that raise awareness on disabilities, in particular in relation to access to information and cultural heritage;

- elements that can help to identify different potential disabilities and potential needs and solutions;

- elements that can help to establish a correct relationship with persons with disabilities and those accompanying them.

- In drafting and managing training and refresher training courses, provide for direct collaboration with organisations representing persons with disabilities.

- In routine personnel training and refresher training courses, provide for the transfer of know-how and information on the opportunities available on the territory, with elements that can promote enjoyment for persons with disabilities.

## Systems

*General objective:* to promote and guarantee integration in the territory pertinent to the UNESCO site and integration of the different information services or initiatives promoting the territory, in order to make the system more efficient and sustainable.

### Recommendations:

- Promote and incentivise interaction between operators and *stakeholders* in a network logic that focuses on sharing information and uniform development of information products.
- Promote correlation with the information systems typical of mobility, hospitality (accommodation facilities, catering), cultural promotion and entertainment and leisure systems.

**[EXPERIENCES:** The expression *easy-to-read* refers to a method for making information accessible to persons with intellectual disabilities. To learn new things, participate actively in social life, know and exercise their personal rights and make decisions and choices, persons with intellectual disabilities have the right to obtain information in a format that is easy for them to read and understand. With this goal in mind, as part of the European project “Creation of permanent training courses for persons with intellectual disabilities”, European guidelines have been developed containing standards for producing *easy-to-read* and *easy-to-understand* written (in printed and electronic format), audio and video materials. Although designed to support those with intellectual disabilities, *easy-to-read* standards can be adopted in order to make information easier to understand for many others too including, for example, those who don’t speak Italian well or those who have difficulty reading. The standards govern the use of words and sentences (for example: adopting simple words and short sentences and avoiding metaphors, foreign language words and acronyms), the organisation of information (for example: grouping together information inherent to the same topic and repeating key information), graphics and format (for example: refraining from using backgrounds that make reading difficult), writing (for example: using a font in a style and size that are easy to read), illustrations and use of the European “easy-to-read” logo. Furthermore, the guidelines

provide indications to guarantee accessibility to information provided through websites and electronic supports (CD-ROMs, videos or DVDs, audio).]

## 2.7.2. Reachability of sites

*Description:* this concern the distances that influence the reachability of the site, complex, area or itinerary. It therefore concerns public mobility, road access, signage and any other orientation solution, although not of direct competence of the operator managing the site. The level and nature of interventions clearly differ, based on whether the site itself coincides with an entire quarter, a centre or an extended itinerary.

*General objectives:* to guarantee reaching the site or several sites is easy, safe and not too expensive, regardless of the type of means used to get around.

### Products and solutions

- *signage*  
*Objectives:* to offer a signage system that is readily recognizable and identifiable, designed and positioned in such a way as to guarantee efficient orientation.  
*Recommendations:*
  - Create or refresh any signs along the route in an approach that is sustainable, low maintenance and makes a correct visual impact.
  - At complexes and on sites that offer several points of interest (sites, buildings, complexes, other), guarantee signs that permit easy and suitable links, at the same time restoring the perception of diffused heritage.
  - Assess the possibility of integrating signs towards the sites of interest with icons that make the final destination easily identifiable.
  - Assess the possibility of integrating general signage towards service areas (for example, stations or car parks) or along the itineraries with icons that make accessibility easier to understand.
  - Provide for the presence, at least along the main routes of access, of tactile paving and appropriately signalled tactile maps.
  - Also integrate and uniform the visual impact of orientation signage with external panels illustrating the sites or buildings.
- *parking areas*  
*Objectives:* to guarantee people with difficulties relating to independent



mobility, easier opportunities with regard to reaching points of interest.

*Recommendations:*

- In identifying and marking out bays for vehicles serving persons with disabilities, comply with applicable size standards, taking into account the potential larger encumbrance of such vehicles and the space required to get on and off them.
  - Provide for the positioning of an adequate number of reserved parking bays close to the site or points of greatest interest.
  - In the case of areas belonging to the site, complex or area, create parking bays reserved for cars with disabled badges or indicate zones for the temporary parking of vehicles available for those with disabilities, ensuring good links between the different areas.
- *distal routes*  
*Objectives:* to guarantee the best possible level of accessibility and usability of the routes towards the sites, complexes, areas or centres.  
*Recommendations:*
- Ensure that the routes concerned (pavements, paths, lanes, ramps, etc.) are of an appropriate width (>90 cm) and incline (<8%), do not have obstacles (posts, street furniture, temporary door openings) or loose or excessively slippery floors.
  - Should it be impossible to eliminate any architectural barriers, given the presence of unusual and unmodifiable morphological characteristics of context or historical buildings of particular importance, and in the absence of solutions with specific aids, provide for alternative routes, created with care, clearly signalled, illuminated, maintained and usable for all.
  - At least along the most demanding routes, provide seating and rest areas.
- *orientation solutions*  
*Objectives:* to guarantee solutions to support orientation and reachability of the places of interest and mobility in general.  
*Recommendations:*
- Provide for forms of orientation in the city with various communication devices, also using other forms of recognition that are alternative or additional to signage, such as lighting or street furniture.
  - Assess the possibility of developing mobile apps with integrated geolocation functions and audio descriptions of the sites.

### **Services**

*Objectives:* to offer support and assistance services, even through the use of human resources, that can favour the reachability of the sites and mobility.

*Recommendations:*

- Assess the possibility of providing a support service for orientation and mobility using operators who have been appropriately trained on disabilities too (“street” stewards), are easily identifiable and work in close proximity to the site, area or complex;
- Provide refresher training courses for local police operators on the disabilities of potential visitors.

### **Systems**

*Objectives:* to favour a shared assumption of responsibilities and interaction between bodies, services and stakeholders, with the goal of improving reachability, orientation and mobility close to the site, complex or area.

*Recommendations:*

- In carrying out ordinary and extraordinary maintenance of pedestrian and cycle paths, plan programmed interventions with the goal of improving the accessibility, usability and quality of the territory.
- Arrange appropriate checks to combat improper use of reserved parking bays even in terms of issuing service orders and intervention priorities to competent operators.
- In planning rest areas and parking systems, assess the incidence and distribution of these with particular focus on the flow of visitors with disabilities.
- In planning any controlled traffic zones, adopt solutions that are not too onerous from an administrative point of view for service vehicles for people with disabilities and favour diffused information on methods of accessing temporary permits.
- Involve organisations representing persons with disabilities in planning interventions, during community monitoring, auditing and testing of the solutions necessary or in the process of being realised, as well as in personnel training courses.

### 2.7.3. Access to the site, complex, itinerary or area

*Description:* this concerns elements in the immediate proximity of the building, site or itinerary that may depend directly on the operator or on third parties. It applies to what is immediately external to the building or site and that can influence the subsequent use of the spaces and services. It only partially applies when the site refers to an entire centre or a diffused and larger area.

*General objective:* to provide a context that guarantees orientation, mobility and support to the physical entrance to the site, complex, itinerary or area and that it is comfortable.

*Across-the-board recommendations:*

- Favour the realisation of a system of products and services that are integrated and uniform.

#### **Products and solutions**

##### - *parking and rest areas*

*Objectives:* to guarantee easy access with own means or the services.

*Recommendations:*

- In areas owned by the site, complex or area, create car parks reserved for vehicles displaying a disabled badge or indicate zones for the temporary parking of vehicles available for persons with disabilities, guaranteeing links with other areas.
- Adopt solutions that permit rapid identification, even at a distance, of reserved bays which should, if possible, be positioned close to the main entrance and in any case, adjacent to accessible paths.
- In identifying and marking out bays for vehicles serving persons with disabilities, comply with applicable size standards, taking into account the potential larger encumbrance of such vehicles and the space required to get on and off them.

##### - *access routes*

*Objectives:* to guarantee one or more entry and exit routes that permit easy orientation and mobility aimed at reaching the building or area.

*Recommendations:*

- Ensure that the access routes to the site, complex or area (pavements, paths, lanes, ramps, etc.) are of an appropriate width (>90 cm) and incline (<8%), do not have obstacles (posts, street furniture, temporary door openings) or loose or excessively slippery floors.
- Should it be impossible to eliminate any architectural barriers, given the presence of unusual and unmodifiable morphological

characteristics of context or historical buildings of particular importance, and in the absence of solutions with specific aids, provide for alternative routes, created with care, clearly signalled, illuminated, maintained and usable for all.

##### - *orientation and signage systems*

*Objectives:* to guarantee good orientation, especially in particularly large and complex areas, even for those with various types of functional limitations.

*Recommendations:*

- Create an architectural image of the entrance that shows the presence of the site, complex or area in the environmental context and permits the immediate identification of the entrance (storm roof, colour of the entrance door, banners, flags, difference in paving, lighting, etc.). For a complex or site with several venues, maintain uniformity in the architectural image.
- Guarantee basic information outside the museum (days it is closed, opening times, types of tickets available, telephone number for information, website, services for specific needs, etc.).
- Assess the need and efficacy of installing tactile paving and signage.
- Provide for an adequate presence of signage, easily identifiable even at a distance, making use of icons and symbols too.
- Provide for the presence of tactile maps, positioned in such a way as to improve orientation during the access phase.
- Assess other solutions to support orientation, also using alternative forms of recognition or that integrate with the signage, such as lighting or street furniture.

##### - *furniture and comfort*

*Objectives:* to offer a good level of comfort close to the access area, even using appropriate solutions and furniture.

*Recommendations:*

- Provide a projecting roof or other solution outside the building, complex or area, that can protect visitors from the elements (rain, sun, wind) in the event of long waiting times.
- Provide for water dispensers, bearing in mind their potential use even for assistance animals (for example, guides dogs for the blind).
- Provide for an adequate number of benches or seating, assessing also the benefits of using materials and solutions that are congruent with the environment.

- Assess the benefit of also using the external waiting or seating areas to position information panels or other solutions that prepare visitors to the content of the visit or that are capable of giving a sense of the context the visitor is in.
- *call systems*  
*Objectives:* to guarantee a point of contact for activating assistance, accompaniment or emergency services close to entrance points.  
*Recommendations:*
  - Provide for a call button that can activate assistance or accompaniment services, positioning and signalling it strategically.
  - Provide for a call button to activate (audio and visual) feedback so visitors understand their request has been heard and the time that services will reach them.

### Services

- *assistance and accompaniment services*  
*Objectives:* to guarantee solutions to support access to the site by visitors with disabilities that may require help and have requested it.  
*Recommendations:*
  - Allocate personnel to accompany visitors during access to the site, complex, area or itinerary in a logic of integration with other forms of support present inside.
  - Guarantee adequate communication regarding the service, not only through ordinary channels (websites, brochures, other), but also close to the site.
  - Provide basic training for all personnel that may in various ways come into contact with persons with disabilities.

**[EXPERIENCES:** *Museo per tutti (Museum for All)* is an experimental project introduced in 2015 and funded by the De Agostini Foundation. It was designed and set up by “Associazione L’Abilità Onlus” with the aim of developing and outlining guidelines, tools and pathways in four national museums, designed to favour, with a view to promoting inclusion, access to visits and collections to people with cognitive disabilities.

The Archaeological Museum of Cremona, the Palace of Venaria Reale in Turin and Castello d’Albertis Museum of World Cultures in Genoa, are the first three museums involved and are supported by the “L’Abilità Onlus” workgroup with specific

competences in the field of cultural heritage, history of art and museum accessibility. Collaboration has now also begun with the National Gallery in Rome and the Museum of the Innocents in Florence.

“*Bene Fai per Tutti*”, stemmed from the “*Museo per Tutti*” experience, creates accessible routes at heritage sites belonging to the “Fondo Ambiente Italiano” (*Italian National Trust*). After accessibility to Villa Panza in Varese and Villa Necchi Campiglio in Milan, also Masino Castle in Caravino (Turin), Villa dei Vescovi in Luvigliano di Torreglia (Padua) and Campatelli Tower-House in San Gimignano (Siena) have been made accessible to persons with intellectual disabilities.

Interventions focus specifically on training and participated planning between the workgroup experts and the staff of each museum that actively collaborate in all the phases, in order to create specific offers and materials regarding the individual museum contexts. The aim is to set up permanent accessible pathways within the educational offer of the individual museums: easy-to-read guides, *easy-to-read* cards and sensory maps are some of the main strengths of the project (<https://museopertutti.it/>).

### Systems

*Objectives:* to favour integration with the local mobility system, even with regard to access to the site, complex, area or itinerary.

*Recommendations:*

- Promote interaction and agreements with transport companies, taxi services and local administrations, in order to favour appropriate planning of the routes and the location and realisation of stops that are congruent with accessibility and orientation strategies in the access area.

**[EXPERIENCES:** Cagliari’s public transport company (CTM) is working on developing accessibility to local transport on two main city routes. On the one hand, it is aiming to improve accessibility of its fleet, which consists in new and technologically-advanced vehicles fitted with mechanisms to lower the floor at bus stops, deployable platform ramps for on-board access, video systems providing information and audio systems to indicate the next stop. On the other hand, it is focusing on the continual addition of new technologies for info-mobility. These include a smartphone

app called Busfinder introduced in 2012 that makes it possible to check bus timetables for a particular stop in real time, view news on the service, work out an itinerary and purchase all kinds of tickets, including season tickets integrated with other carriers, and validate them on board. In 2017, other functions were added to the app to allow the visually-impaired to use the transport service independently. In fact, two new functions were introduced called “Book Stop” and “Virtual Journey Assistant”. Thanks to the former, people can be automatically geolocated, choose the line transiting at their stop and with a click automatically send an email to the AVM (*Automatic Vehicle Monitoring*) operations room that will advise the bus driver to stop to allow them to get on. Once on board, the second function has been designed to provide passengers a virtual journey assistant to provide information via audio on where the bus is at any given time, which is the next stop and how to book it. Thanks to this voice assistance, it is therefore possible for bus users to follow their journey and be advised when they arrive at their chosen destination. These new app functions have been tested by potential beneficiaries of the service and their organisations on the territory.]

#### 2.7.4. Hospitality

*Description:* this refers to the part of the building, service or personnel concerning the entrance and initial welcome given to visitors, whether they are a prelude to a visit in the

strictest sense or whether they offer additional services that may or may not be preparatory to a visit.

*General objectives:* to guarantee visitors a good initial impact, in order to avoid unease and disorientation and favour immediate and easy access to the building or area, initial information and additional services.

**[EXPERIENCES:** The *La Falesia Dimenticata* (*The Forgotten Cliff*) project, promoted by “Dolomiti Open”, an amateur sports association, in collaboration with Sportfund, a foundation promoting sport, aims to return to the community in general an entire area that is part of the Dolomites of Brenta UNESCO World Heritage Site, opening climbing itineraries that are also suited to persons with disabilities. The forgotten cliff is a rock face overlooking the gorge of the Sarca River in San Lorenzo in Banale in Trentino. This area was extremely popular with climbers in the 1980s, but the spiked routes were subsequently removed and access to the public was denied by the landowner. Thanks to crowdfunding that attracted over 400 supporters, Dolomiti Open purchased the land the cliff is on and with the financial support of the Italian government, is working towards safely spiking some itineraries and fitting the area out with the facilities needed in order to offer hospitality, in particular toilet facilities and access routes for persons with disabilities.]

#### Products and solutions

- *the atrium; the entrance*

*Objectives:* to guarantee immediate orientation and adequate mobility at the entrance.

*Recommendations:*

- When possible, favour the use of automatic (if necessary, with a sound signal) or revolving doors or doors with push-pull systems that require little effort to open.
- Create appropriate bridging platforms if at the entrance there are two differences in height (<2.5 cm) in close proximity (<60 cm).
- Provide for a comfortable and welcoming waiting area where visitors

can sit and begin to enjoy the museum experience thanks to specific communication devices.

- If there is written communication, provide clear texts that consider the font size, line-spacing and contrast between the written text and the background and ensure there is adequate lighting and a level of facilitated communication, guarantee understanding of basic contents to those with cognitive or linguistic limitations using *easy-to-read* standards and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), use graphic elements (ideograms, illustrations, etc.) that simplify written communication and help to explain ideas.
- Position communication devices bearing in mind the height of use, including for children and the wheelchair-bound.

- *orientation (maps, tactile maps, signage)*

*Objectives:* to ensure visitors always know where they are; in the event of an emergency, to guarantee quick distancing from the situation and safety of all concerned.

*Recommendations:*

- Provide solutions for the immediate identification of the main services connected to the entrance (ticket office, assistance, toilet facilities, cloakroom, etc.), as well as the start of the exhibition itinerary, making coordinated use of signs, icons, lighting, colour differences, maps, tactile maps and tactile paving, if necessary.
- Add icons to the identification signs so they offer immediate information on the levels of accessibility available.
- Provide a tactile orientation map at the entrance to the museum that represents its various floors and/or a scale model of the museum building that makes it possible to explore the whole site; assess the possibility of adding audio description to this device.
- Create orientation signs based on ISO 23601 *Safety Identification - Escape and Evacuation Plan Signs*.
- Based on a wayfinding approach, work to ensure easy and immediate user relationship with the exhibition space, permitting quick individual orientation in order to enjoy the services and organise the visit based on personal preferences, as well as the possibility to evacuate the building quickly in an emergency.
- Signs must be easy-to-read, clearly visible, intuitive and coherent with the communication strategy of the site, complex, area or itinerary.
- In the event of electronic signs, key information must be guaranteed (especially for emergencies); guarantee accessibility to the signs based

on the various needs manifested, in particular, sensory and cognitive limitations, ensuring they are available in Braille, in *easy-to-read* fonts, with simplified texts and symbols (Augmentative and Alternative Communication, *easy-to-read*), and videos in sign language (Italian and international).

- *comfort*

*Objectives:* to favour a comfortable wait and stay, in particular in situations where there are large numbers of visitors or which may cause stress.

*Recommendations:*

- If possible, arrange for small comfort areas to be set up with armchairs, partitions for privacy to allow for mums to breastfeed new-born babies and points for recharging mobile devices; if possible, provide free wi-fi (which can be used to access other multimedia services).
- Focus on the risk of noise pollution, reverberations and echoes and the air and temperature quality.
- Assess the possibility of combining management of comfort areas with the offer of multimedia stations or the availability of information anticipating the content of the itinerary or on the cultural or environmental context the site concerns.

- *ticket office and front-office*

*Objectives:* to favour easy access to the ticket and front-office and a pleasant relationship with personnel from the very first phase of entry to the itinerary.

*Recommendations:*

- Equip site access spaces with communication drafted in clear and easy writing (images and short texts) to help those with hearing and cognitive disabilities that may have difficulty interacting with personnel or persons that require longer to take in and process information (ticket cost, free items, specific services such as audio guides, information brochures, orientation maps, etc.).
- Furniture in the ticket office and information and material distribution points must be of a height and cross-section that allows for a direct relationship between personnel and user, considering also wheelchair users or those of limited height.
- Ticket office and front-office personnel should be positioned in such a way as to guarantee their correct position with respect to face level, ensure appropriate lighting to permit lip reading, good acoustics to



- permit dialogue and integration with forms of written communication.
- *additional services: toilet facilities*  
*Objectives:* to make toilet facilities accessible, handy, functional and comfortable.  
*Recommendations:*
    - Avoid specialist solutions: toilet facilities should be adaptable to everyone's needs; leave the necessary room for manoeuvre in the layout of all toilet facilities.
    - If not in all toilet facilities, provide at least one with spaces and measurements that can permit the movement of a wheelchair or persons using particular aids.
    - Position the WC at a height of <45 cm and equip it with support aids; the toilet flush button should be positioned above the WC so it is easy to identify even for the blind.
    - Toilet doors must be easy to identify, even using colour contrasts; doors should open outwards and be fitted with locks that can be opened from the outside in the event of an emergency.
    - Fit toilet cubicles with one or more hooks for hanging bags and clothes at different heights, so they can be used by wheelchair users or those with limited height and can be functional for people with urostomies, ileostomies or colostomies.
    - Provide a shelf for catheterization operations inside the toilet cubicle; provide specific baskets for collecting disposable or hygiene aids.
    - Assess the possibility of providing toilet facilities for mums with babies with space for a buggy or with a small seat on which to temporarily place a child, as well as a nappy changing unit.
  - *additional services: cloakroom*  
*Objectives:* to ensure cloakroom services can be used independently.  
*Recommendations:*
    - Provide a cloakroom/bag deposit service, even if unstaffed, where it is possible to store clothes, umbrellas, small bags (hand baggage, etc.) and buggies.
    - Provide lockers that are accessible to wheelchair users or persons with specific needs, which must be of the right height and depth, as well as easy to open and close without the need for fine manual skills or much effort.
    - Make lockers easy to recognize and fit them with locks with numbers that are very easy to read and also in Braille.

- *additional services: refreshments, bookshop, drinks dispenser*  
*Objectives:* to permit full accessibility to the areas and equipment for public use and comfortable use of services, spaces and furnishings.  
*Recommendations:*
  - Organise the sales counters and display cabinets, arranging height levels to guarantee all types of public the possibility to dialogue with the personnel at the cash desk, ensure good views of products on sale and easy access for purchasing goods and taking packaged and other food where applicable.
  - Provide tables and food counters with enough space to allow easy access to wheelchairs or persons with motor difficulties or limitations.
  - Provide for access to assistance dogs.
  - In choosing drinks and food dispensers, consider how they can be used by people with sensory disabilities or motor difficulties or limitations, including fine mobility difficulties and favour the use of simple service messages; assess the possibility of providing an on-call assistance service.

### Services

- *the organisation of hospitality and training of personnel*  
*Objectives:* to create organisational and training processes for personnel based on the best hospitality and to favour the best possible success of the visit experience.  
*Recommendations:*
  - For the largest institutions with considerable influx of visitors, it would be opportune to offer assistance services to provide information and logistical support to visitors with specific needs (individuals or groups). Of these, consider accompaniment services, sign language readers and interpreters, apps for smartphones, simplified "dictionaries" (for words and images) for any technical terms that recur along the itinerary.
  - Provide priority entry for visitors with specific needs (persons with even temporary limited mobility, pregnant women, the elderly, children, etc.).
  - Allow access to assistance dogs.
  - Specify in the museum's Services Charter all the dedicated services, aids, equipment and any other element the institution dedicates to the theme of physical, sensory, cognitive or social accessibility.
  - Train front-office personnel so that the best possible communication strategies can be adopted and any needs expressed can be met:

hospitality, indications, explanation of itineraries and services and key information on opportunities offered by the territory.

- In designing and managing the training and refresher training courses, ensure direct collaboration with organisations representing persons with disabilities.
- In routine training and refreshing training of personnel, include the transfer of know-how and information on the opportunities present on the territory with the elements useful for their enjoyment by persons with disabilities.

**[EXPERIENCES:** As part of the European project *COME-IN! Cooperation for full accessibility to museums – Towards greater inclusion* interventions have been realised at the Archaeological Museum of Udine that are functional to fruition of the cultural heritage for all, in consideration of differing needs and types of limitations.

The castle that houses the museum has been fitted with internal and external signs, making entrances and accesses to lifts and toilet facilities (designed not only for the disabled, but for all) easily identifiable. The ticket office counter has been partially lowered. To prevent disorientation, confusion and fatigue, the number of seats has been increased, a relaxation room added and focus has been placed on the orientation of visitors, with the introduction of printed and tactile maps. The hospitality personnel, as well as the educational operators, have been trained to improve communication towards users. Panels and captions in the museum have been created using a coordinated communication system that integrates verbal, textual, symbolic, visual, tactile and technological communication. In the exhibition itinerary, short printed guides have been created in Italian and the main foreign languages, in simplified language and in Braille, as well as audio guides. Multimedia content is available in Italian sign language, simplified language and with subtitles. A multisensory station permits olfactory and tactile experiences linked to the rituals of burial in the Roman era and a two- and three-dimensional tactile itinerary on original artefacts completes the visit, which can be assisted by an app realised in collaboration with associations with persons with disabilities that uses Beacon technology.

All this is illustrated in the museum's Services Charter, which is available online in Italian, English and Italian sign language, where it is possible to also discover how to reach the hillside the castle is on independently, regardless of the presence of a shuttle bus.

As part of the COME-IN! project, an educational workshop called *Archeologia ConTatto* was set up that targeted sighted, visually-impaired and blind children whose aim was to create a tactile book to present to tactile illustrated book contests.]

### 2.7.5. Visit or access to content itineraries

*Description:* this refers to the quality of the museum itinerary, complex or site, it concerns orientation, the absence or overcoming barriers or height differences, but above all, access to works and contents and therefore, exhibition devices, solutions for difficulties of a sensory or cognitive nature. It concerns both products and organisational procedures and system strategies.

*Across-the-board recommendations:*

- Avoid itineraries differentiated by type of disability, the visit experience should mean sharing and inclusion. Whilst allowing the visitor the freedom to choose, consciously and independently, the method for constructing their cultural and emotional experience, it is also important to seize the opportunity for mediation, given by the identification of itineraries that select and order some works so as to:

- a) grade the complexity of understanding of the heritage starting from a simplified level suited to a public with basic literacy or with cognitive deficits;
- b) exalt multi-sensory perceptions even through the identification of a multi-structured itinerary (visual-tactile-auditory-olfactory-gustative);
- c) make it possible to manage visit times considering the needs of the public, but also the safety of some rooms.

#### Products and solutions

- *orientation and signage systems (including tactile maps and tactile paving)*

*Objectives:* to guarantee solutions supporting orientation at the site, itinerary or complex.

*Recommendations:*

- Highlight the main routes using various solutions on different sensory levels in order to favour both orientation and identification of the context the visitor is in. The itineraries and contexts can be highlighted using different colours, lighting, furnishings or appropriate signs and supported by icons, easy-to-read texts, background noise, smell diffusers, tactile paving or tactile maps. Externally, this can be consolidated by using bushes or variations in paving.

- In large areas in particular (parks, historic centres, diffused complexes), assess the possibility of developing mobile apps with integrated functions such as geolocation and audio description of the sites.

- For safety purposes, realise orientation signs based on ISO 23601 *Safety Identification - Escape and Evacuation Plan Signs*.

- Orientation maps must be complete and up-to-date and must correspond to the specific reality, be immediately perceptible, clear (simple and unambiguous), pragmatic (just a few, useful contacts), positioned in easily reachable points, well lit (without frequent glare effects), supported by coherent communication, complete with tactile communication and if necessary, integrated with accessible audio descriptions and videos in sign languages (national and international) and subtitling.

- *staging works or contents*

*Objectives:* to favour full access to contents and therefore the heritage not only from a physical, but also from an experience point of view.

*Recommendations:*

- Display cases and cabinets must allow for the visual fruition of the items they house and in some cases the communication apparatus (in relation to the height of children and visitors who are wheelchair users, etc.); avoid anything that can cause reflections, can dazzle visitors or can cast shadows.

- Create opportune colour and light contrasts between the items on display and the background in order to guarantee they can be seen clearly.

- Assess the line of vision to the objects in relation to height, accessibility, distances, temporary obstacles, captions, panels and signs.

- Any pedestals and the items placed on them should be fixed in order to stop the items displayed wobbling or falling over, especially with regard to tactile exploration of works.

- For external itineraries, if observation points have been created or identified, ensure there are no obstacles or barriers to the line of vision of wheelchair users.

- *printed materials and communication apparatus*

*Objectives:* to favour full access to contents and therefore the heritage, providing information support suited to everyone.

*Recommendations:*

- In communication devices, but also in brochures, totems, captions and fact sheets, use clear texts that consider the font size, line-spacing and contrast between the written text and the background and ensure there is adequate lighting and a level of facilitated communication,

guarantee understanding of basic contents to those with cognitive or linguistic limitations using easy-to-read practices and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), use graphic elements (ideograms, illustrations, etc.) that simplify written communication and help to explain ideas.

- Make available at the sites, complexes and areas printed material using the methods mentioned in the previous point regarding the territorial context, its peculiarities and the opportunities present.

- Position communication apparatus taking into account the appropriate height for children and wheelchair users too.

- For captions placed low down, check effective visibility in relation to the size of the characters, colour contrast, inclination of the reading plane and any possible shadows. Members of the public should not have to bend down to read captions and risk falling over, creating obstacles for others or putting works at risk.

- Provide Braille panels that can be used when standing erect.

- Provide simplified room or site fact sheets that can be downloaded in digital format (or alternatively, that can be collected in printed format at the ticket office or information points).

- *audio-guides or similar solutions (including QR code systems, Beacon, RFID and audio descriptions)*

*Objectives:* to favour full access to content and heritage using innovative technologies or using them rationally and in a way that is compatible with the technologies used by visitors.

*Recommendations:*

- It is opportune for any available audio-guides to offer audio descriptions (spatial and dimensional elements) and guidance signs, in order to guarantee usability by persons with sensory disabilities.

- Use QR code, RFID or Beacon systems provided that the system is compatible with assisted technologies (including software installed on mobile devices), even those owned by visitors.

- For sites, historic centres and large areas in particular, assess the possibility of developing mobile apps with integrated functions such as geolocation and audio description of the places of interest.

- Assess the possibility of providing tablets as a means of using the information services, virtual tours and applications to expand the visit experience or dedicated to particular user needs.

- *multimedia stations*

*Objectives:* to favour access to multimedia stations and the use of contents to the largest number of visitors possible.

*Recommendations:*

- For video stations and/or interactive tables, guarantee full accessibility in relation to specific needs (for example, for visitors on wheelchairs or with limited height).

- The height and visual angles of video stations to be used in a standing position must be set at a child's or wheelchair user's height, as should any controls, touch screens, keyboards and audio headsets; possible reflections on the monitor should be checked for and eliminated.

- Ensure audio-visually have subtitles to replace sound content, windows in sign language (national and international) or written material with clear font and suitable for the visually-impaired.

- Ensure a focus on language that is as simple as possible, assessing also the benefits of using easy language.

- Where not provided for, assess the possibility of having audio descriptions for persons with visual disabilities.

- In any audio aids, the narrating voice must be clear and any background noise should not dominate or become bothersome.

**[EXPERIENCES:** The exhibition entitled *Leonardo da Vinci. Designing the Future*, hosted by the Royal Museums of Turin to mark the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of the scientist, offers an accessible and inclusive itinerary thanks to the use of exhibition devices and technologies that guarantee not only sensory accessibility (for those with limited vision and hearing), but also broader cultural and linguistic inclusion, with the search for efficient solutions for different types of perceptive and cognitive needs. In fact, some multi-sensory tables have been placed along the visit itinerary with three-dimensional reproductions of works chosen from those by Leonardo and housed in the Royal Library of Turin, with text in Braille or easy-to-read. Using QR codes and NFC, visitors can also access multimedia contents through their mobile devices such as audio descriptions, subtitled videos and sign language explanations. At the ticket office at the entrance to the Royal Palace there is a tactile map on how to reach the exhibition and at the internal access there is a second one with an explanation of the itinerary and a text describing the exhibition itself.]

- *reproductions for tactile and sensory exploration*  
*Objectives:* to permit access to contents even through tactile exploration, as a solution possibly open to all visitors.  
*Recommendations:*
    - Without prejudice to restrictions protecting artefacts on display, assess the possibility that, although obviously with innate vulnerabilities, some items of particular interest can be enjoyed through tactile exploration via the use of particular devices.
    - Assess the possibility of making reproductions for tactile exploration available to the public.
- For three-dimensional objects:
- real copies;
  - scale copies.
- For paintings, mosaics or other kinds of figures:
- bas-relief reproductions;
  - relief designs;
  - schematic images in relief.
- For monuments, buildings, statues:
- scale architectural and volumetric models;
  - bas-relief of the facades;
  - tactile maps.
- Assess the possibility of finding ways to consolidate the visit experience that use sounds, noises and smells that are congruent with the contents and context.

**[EXPERIENCES:** The tactile itinerary *A portata di mano* (*Within hands reach*) introduces a multi-sensory approach to sculpture and architecture in the Duomo, the Municipal Tower and the Piazza Grande in Modena. It consists in four full-scale reproductions: two sculptures of the Duomo and two of Ghirlandina Tower. In addition, there is a 1:200 scale model of the entire site. Created in resin using 3D printing it has profiles of the buildings that overlook the square, which can be inspected internally and divided into several parts. All the works have captions in black and Braille and can be touched, admired and seen close up. Furthermore, a new section of the website contains small fact sheets with further information designed for all to use, but above all for the deaf, visually-impaired or dyslexic.

For schools, two educational kits have been created linked to the project *A scuola con l'UNESCO: il Duomo, la Torre e Piazza*

*Grande raccontano* (*At school with UNESCO: the Cathedral, the Tower and Piazza Grande narrate*). Each kit consists in three 1:200 scale reproductions of some parts of the Porta della Pescheria. The tactile itinerary of the UNESCO site of Modena is accessible to all.]

- *specific support solutions for the deaf or hearing impaired*  
*Objectives:* to guarantee specific solutions that permit access to and enjoyment of the cultural and natural heritage, even for persons that are deaf or hearing impaired.  
*Recommendations:*
  - Assess the possibility of integrating traditional communication with totems and screens that present information that can help the visit (type of tickets, visit itinerary, possibility to request a guide, video guides, etc.) in sign language (national and international) and with subtitles.
  - Consider the possibility of entering into agreements with organisations representing persons with disabilities to train personnel to promote sign language and other solutions that can help the deaf or hearing impaired.
- *solutions for physical and cognitive fatigue*  
*Objectives:* to adopt solutions that make it possible to curb the phenomena of physical and cognitive fatigue that could negatively influence the experience, in particular along demanding itineraries or on intense visits.  
*Recommendations:*
  - Plan or review the visit itineraries taking into account simplified stretches (ramps or small lifting platforms) and also exploiting the possibility of adapting plant systems (fire alarms, air-conditioning systems, etc.).
  - Consider museum, physical and cognitive fatigue, contemplating stops along the route in rooms or special areas where visitors can take a break, also providing small comfort areas for mums with new-born babies or parents with small children.
  - For external itineraries in particular, provide seating for rest breaks, favouring shaded areas that offer panoramic views or views that are strategic from the point of view of the museum experience.



- *external itineraries*

*Objectives:* to favour a good experience during the visit by adopting specific solutions even for external itineraries, in historic centres and in larger areas.

*Recommendations:*

- Guarantee visit experiences that focus on itineraries that are not excessively long and on surfaces that are not rough or too slippery. Routes should be large enough and have ramps that are not too inclined. If there are stairs, ensure the regular height of the steps and the presence of handrails on both sides. Ensure any obstacles are signalled.
- For archaeological areas and parks: in creating the itineraries, work in harmony with morphological elements and use materials that easily permit accessibility and safety (reversible and resistant materials, etc.) with limited maintenance.
- Provide opportunely-located orientation and integrated cultural communication signs (panels, tactile maps, indications with simplified texts, etc.).
- Add seating for resting, favouring shaded areas that feature panoramic views or views that are strategic from the point of view of the museum experience.
- Constantly check the presence of dangerous protruding elements, in particular in natural areas, ensuring constant maintenance of any greenery.
- Add drinking fountains with accessible height levels and taps that are opportune for different types of visitors, also remembering their possible use by assistance animals and other pets in general.
- In very large areas and areas with little supervision, arrange for alarm devices for use in the event of difficulty.
- Create points where visitors can look out onto areas that are not easy to reach and/or cover; alternatively, set up virtual fruition points.
- On very large cultural sites, provide for vehicle-accessible itineraries for the transport of visitors with specific needs on electric motorised vehicles.
- Provide a series of mobility aids (electric scooters, golf carts, etc.) for visitors to cope with long distances or steep inclines.
- In historic centres and sites where the cultural heritage is in the urban fabric, focus in particular on:
  - adopting and creating an overall accessibility and mobility plan for the entire area, even using progressive methods;

- guaranteeing the safety and accessibility of pedestrian zones and crossings in particular;
- favour the accessibility and usability of service areas and their intersection with sites of cultural interest;
- favour any intervention, solution or initiative that permits the access and enjoyment of the resources and recreational and accommodation opportunities of the territory.

**[EXPERIENCES:** In the archaeological areas of Pompeii, Herculaneum and Torre Annunziata, thanks to the itinerary *Pompeii for all*, work has focused on a model of fruition of the archaeological heritage of Pompeii that has made the main roads and Roman houses accessible to anyone who is motor-impaired: not only persons with disabilities, the wheel-chair bound, the blind or visually-impaired, but also parent with children in buggies, the elderly and the injured. The initial 3 km-long itinerary, which was inaugurated in 2016 as the longest assisted itinerary for a visit to an archaeological area in Italy, was subsequently extended in 2018 and now offers visitors the possibility to see the site's most prestigious public and private areas. In addition, a new technological support is being experimented: the CON-Me bracelet (a prototype that has come from the collaboration between the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and the National Research Council). It is a geolocation bracelet that makes it possible to monitor anyone wearing it along the itinerary, to send requests for help and to pinpoint the location of the wearer in an emergency. However, on request, it can also provide an audio support to describe the places visited.]

### Services

- *accompaniment and mediation services*

*Objectives:* to promote and offer additional services designed to support the specific needs of visitors with disabilities, but also to favour overall enjoyment of the heritage and the opportunities offered by the territory.

*Recommendations:*

- Assess the possibility that, even if not permanently guaranteed, some services which target extending accessibility to the visit experience can be used on certain days/times and/or subject to booking.

- When welcoming groups with particular needs (Alzheimer's, autism, etc.), agree the methods to adopt for the visit with specialist personnel (small groups, dedicated itineraries, etc.).
  - For guided visits, taking into account the type of public, provide for small groups and a simplified level of communication translated into several languages. For deaf people, ensure they always have visual accessibility to allow them to lip read and/or be able to understand the sign language interpreter (in this respect, good lighting is essential, as well as a focus on avoiding backlighting, talking whilst walking or whilst visual attention is focused on the works, etc.).
  - Consider entering into agreement with organisations representing persons with disabilities to train and guide personnel, in order to ensure persons with intellectual and relational disabilities are correctly and efficiently welcomed.
  - Consider the possibility of entering into agreements with private welfare services to guarantee accompaniment, transfer and transport services.
- *providing mobility aids*  
*Objectives:* to provide aids to favour easier mobility for those with motor difficulties, including the elderly, in order to favour a more comfortable visit experience and enjoyment of the heritage and its context.  
*Recommendations:*
- Assess the possibility of providing - and suitably publicizing - wheelchairs or portable stools to offer visitors to the complex, buildings or structures.
  - In historic centres, large areas and on long itineraries in particular, assess whether to offer golf carts, electric scooters, wheelchairs assisted by detachable motors and folding portable seats; hand-bikes could be offered for natural itineraries.
  - Select and assess the types of aids after listening to the opinions and assessments of organisations representing persons with disabilities.
  - In choosing products, consider the subsequent need for maintenance, checks and management.
- *training of operators and guides*  
*Objectives:* to guarantee efficient training and refresher training of personnel who come into contact with potential visitors with disabilities, improving the quality of services accompanying and supporting the visit experience.

*Recommendations:*

- Provide for basic training for all personnel who in various ways may come into contact with persons with disabilities; on training courses provide at least the following contents:
    - elements regarding awareness of disability, in particular in relation to access to information and cultural heritage;
    - elements that can help to identify the potential different disabilities, as well as potential needs and solutions;
    - elements that can help to establish a correct relationship with persons with disabilities and those accompanying them;
    - elements that can help to raise basic awareness on aids, orientation devices and assistive technologies.
  - Promote similar training for tourist guides and any other operators that may come into contact with visitors with disabilities.
  - In the development and management of training and refresher training courses, collaborate directly with organisations representing persons with disabilities.
  - In routine personnel training and refresher training courses, include the transfer of know-how and information on opportunities present on the territory with the elements that can promote enjoyment by persons with disabilities.
- *communication strategy*  
*Objectives:* to arrange a communication strategy that is coherent and also functional to full accessibility to and enjoyment of the heritage, promoting both at the same time.  
*Recommendations:*
- Define a global communication strategy that is coherent with its mission and that guarantees participation of all in cultural activities and in both the enjoyment and production of contents.
  - Adopt a visual design approach that considers environments, texts and images.
  - For written communication, provide clear texts that consider the font size, line-spacing and contrast between the written text and the background and ensure there is adequate lighting and a level of facilitated communication, guarantee understanding of basic contents to those with cognitive or linguistic limitations using easy-to-read practices and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), use graphic elements (ideograms, illustrations, etc.) that simplify written communication and help to explain ideas.

- Provide for focused technical analysis that guarantees the understanding of certain specialist terminology used in communication.
  - As well as catalogues and streamlined guidebooks, arrange for brochures with simple and easy-to-understand texts, translated into various languages and Braille.
  - Make the integration of written communication with downloadable podcast files, audio stations or apps for the transfer of specific contents possible. In the presence of audio and video material, check accessibility for persons with sensory and cognitive disabilities, provide for audio descriptions and their use in conjunction with videos in sign language and with subtitles.
  - In defining the web strategy - in compliance with the standards - consider social networks not only as a tool for communicating activities, but also as a means for reaching new audiences and actively relating to them, creating a dialogue with professionals, developing a sense of belonging to the heritage, receiving feedback and implementing experiments to support the production of new cultural contents.
  - Realise promotional activities through: printed material, trade magazines, tour operators specializing in accessible tourism, activities also realised in partnership with various sector associations and stakeholders.
- *managing safety and emergencies*  
*Objectives:* to guarantee the enjoyment of the heritage in conditions of safety, even in emergency situations.  
*Recommendations:*
    - Assess and adapt, if necessary, the procedures, solutions and training, carefully predicting the possible presence of persons with functional motor, sensory or cognitive limitations.
  - *monitoring*  
*Objectives:* to be able to rely on a well-structured and continuing system of monitoring the quality of the offer and services which can assist in analysing the data collected and subsequent actions.  
*Recommendations:*
    - Provide a system for measuring customer satisfaction that takes into account the quality of the service not only strictly connected to the site, complex or area, but also the wider territory. In creating tools for measuring satisfaction, take into account the possible functional difficulties of visitors and adopt easy language forms. Provide for

- periodical analysis of the data collected and sharing of the same with other operators and stakeholders.
- Arrange a simple system for reporting complaints and give evidence of the methods of access to the same and their subsequent management.
- Involving all operators accordingly, arrange for continuing feedback and a census of unexpected events, also identifying the subsequent processing and adoption methods and problem-solving strategies.

### **Systems**

*Objectives:* to favour the adoption of shared strategies for improved quality of the usability and enjoyment of the cultural, natural and intangible heritage, in particular, the sites that exist on routes and in centres that are deeply interwoven with the urban and environmental fabric of the territory.

#### *Recommendations:*

- Promote the adoption of mobility (pedestrian routes, street furniture, signage) and traffic plans (controlled traffic zones, parking systems, public transport) based on consultation with stakeholders and that focus in particular on flows linked to access to sites, complexes and routes and the presence of persons with disabilities.
- Promote and publicize the offer of additional accompaniment, mediation and access services and services that support enjoyment of cultural and environmental heritage, including those provided by private welfare bodies and profit-making organisations.



**THIRD PART**

**Innovative solutions  
for the Management and Promotion  
of the Heritage and Territory**

## ***Innovative solutions for the Management and Promotion of the Heritage and Territory***

**Description:** enjoyment of heritage derives from the adoption, promotion and management of strategies based on prudent and innovative focuses on the cultural permeability of the heritage itself. These strategies make it possible for visitors to understand and interpret the history, complexity and variety of the heritage visited, appreciating the uniqueness and identity of the sites and their characteristics and therefore, enjoying experiences which enhance and promote personal growth and satisfaction. It therefore concerns solutions that focus heavily on the inclusion of people in activities and initiatives aimed at promoting the territory, with solutions that make it possible to access contents and flexibly construct a personal visit experience, regardless of functional characteristics. This is a vision that goes beyond the logic of mere displaying or exhibiting of contents or the simple elimination of barriers and obstacles, creating added value for all.

For these goals to be effectively achieved they must be across-the-board, applying to both the planning and the overall management of the various services and systems.

### ***General recommendations***

In this sense and in light of subsequent recommendations too, it is fundamental for the relevant promotion and management a close collaboration and dialogue between UNESCO site managers, public administrations, public service companies and providers, tourism hospitality services, volunteer organisations - in particular, in the sector of territorial animation - organisations representing persons with disabilities and all other stakeholders involved in promotion of the territory.

The tools, circumstances and areas for collaboration and dialogue can be extremely varied, but must always focus on a logic of community of practice that shares know-how and experiences, socialises solutions and plans, manages and monitors initiatives, services and opportunities.

Identification of the methods and control of such activities must necessarily be a political choice of the territorial community concerned.

Below, every time recommendations designed to favour certain opportunities recur, it should be understood that it would be opportune:

- to provide (pre/post) opportunities for analysis and specific practical tests involving the organisations representing persons with different disabilities;
- to systematically collect transversal elements to assess customer satisfaction, not limited to the mere accessibility or usability of sites and contents, but also to overall enjoyment of the heritage and the territory;
- to share with all other service providers (tourism, information, museum, mobility, etc.) the tools for collecting customer satisfaction details and data analysis with a view to overall improvement of the offer and hospitality.

### ***Services and systems***

- *the permeability of contents, sites and itineraries*

**Objective:** to guarantee that visitors with disabilities can also fully comprehend the contexts and contents, so that they too can grow and enjoy emotional experiences.

#### ***Recommendations***

- When setting up and staging content, always focus on comprehension of the general context, even using solutions such as augmented reality, sensory reinforcement (sound, smell, colours, tactile exploration), simplified displays, animated or otherwise, and recreational experiences.
- When organising workshop experiences, arrange for persons with disabilities and functional characteristics to be present; draw up agreements and collaborations with school operators, even in function of special teaching that can guarantee an appropriate learning experience.
- When organising sites, in particular, urban itineraries, and solutions for contents, also consider references to the previous and current context, offering tools that favour overall permeability.
- Offer interpretation keys for the general heritage of the site and territory and/or theme interpretation keys as an opportunity for dialogue and for growth of the site itself, favouring implementation of contributions, including critical contributions.
- Favour enjoyment of theme interpretation keys, also testing them in terms of sensory, motor and cognitive-relational aspects.
- Even for specific disability conditions, favour the offer of general



and/or theme interpretation keys, seeking to develop them for the enjoyment of other specific conditions too.

- As far as possible, set up illustration of the general and/or theme interpretation keys from the point of interest or contact manifested by persons with disabilities.
- Test and perfect visits, workshops and tools and aids with the direct contribution of persons with disabilities.
- Verify the offer even with regard to emotive aspects and experiences, seeking to develop the highest possible levels of independence, self-sufficiency and self-esteem in the persons targeted.

**[EXPERIENCES:** *“Dolomiti Accessibili. Un patrimonio per tutti”* (*Accessible Dolomites. A Heritage for Everyone*) is a project that promotes social inclusion and aims to make the Dolomites a heritage accessible to all, guaranteeing direct experience of the natural environment to all those who live in the area or visit it, either independently or accompanied by an expert guide. Funded by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, the project aims to implement the objectives set by the Overall Management Strategy of the UNESCO site. The first phase of the project focused on gathering information and recommendations on itineraries that were suitable as itineraries for persons with limited motor abilities or could be adapted to become so. On the basis of these recommendations, an interactive map has been developed that is kept constantly updated and can be found on the website [www.visitdolomites.com](http://www.visitdolomites.com). Alongside this, a specific programme has been designed to train specialist professional figures to accompany persons with disabilities. The first two courses activated, targeting ski instructors and mountain guides and escorts, were organised by Accademia della Montagna (*Mountain Academy*), a body appointed by the training department of the Autonomous Province of Trento, with the involvement of various bodies active in the field of sport, outdoor experience and social inclusion and already operating on the territory of the Dolomites. Contents focused on motor and sensory disabilities and autism spectrum disorders.]

- *enjoyment of the territory*

*Objectives:* to favour enjoyment of the visit experience as a whole, including understanding of the meaning and history of the territory, in order to fully experience the opportunities that it offers or presents.

*Recommendations:*

- Favour the participation of persons with disabilities in cultural, recreational, folklore and food and wine initiatives on the territory, guaranteeing not only physical, sensory and cognitive accessibility, but also the premises for experiential and emotive involvement; ensure such initiatives are well publicised and promoted.
- Promote the quality and accessibility of hospitality in accommodation (including bed & breakfast accommodation) and restaurant facilities (including holiday farms), particularly if adjacent to sites, historic centres or nature trails, with the involvement of stakeholders and operators.
- Promote focus on disabilities and sensory, physical and cognitive peculiarities in the planning and management of particular theme itineraries, in particular in archaeological or natural areas or areas of historical interest.
- Favour the participation of persons with disabilities in popular events and commemorations typical of the territory, guaranteeing not only physical, sensory and cognitive accessibility but also the premises for experiential and emotive involvement.

**[EXPERIENCES:** In spring 2019, 16 hikers - of which 7 sighted and 9 blind or sight-impaired - walked together 70 km of the Transhumance Track from Cascina, in the Province of Pisa, to the coast. A four-day itinerary with an environmental excursionist guide, at the pace set by two donkeys who accompanied the journey (to carry light baggage), to discover the surrounding nature and context through the senses.

The initiative was part of the awareness-raising campaign #YellowTheWorld, inaugurated in 2014 by the NoisyVision association to promote the accessibility and mobility of persons with visual impairment. In May 2016, the association had already organised a walk for the visually-impaired along the Way of Gods, which connects Piazza Maggiore in Bologna to Piazza della Signoria in Florence: 130 km surrounded by the wonderful nature of the Apennines between Tuscany and Emilia and their history, enjoying the area's cultural, landscape and gastronomic

delights. It was made possible thanks to the help of volunteers who were members of CAI (Italian Alpine Club) and the support of numerous other people and institutions in the areas crossed, including the municipal administrations. With the support of Appennino Slow (a consortium of public and private-sector bodies that operates primarily in the sector of slow and sustainable tourism in the Apennines between Tuscany and Emilia), the initiative has become a repeatable format called In Montagna Siamo Tutti Uguali (*We're All the Same in the Mountains*).

The new aspect of this experience, "*Anche agli asini piace giallo*" (*Donkeys like yellow too*), lies in the formula adopted: all participants, whether disabled or not, contribute something to the itinerary, regardless of their sensory limitations - in fact, there's no distinction between those escorting and those being escorted. It is this breaking-down of roles that ensures everyone enjoys the same experience, whilst helping each other.]

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